Critical and Historical Essays Volume 2 by Thomas Babington Macaulay

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CRITICAL AND HISTORICAL ESSAYS, VOLUME II

BY THOMAS BABINGTON MACAULAY

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MACHIAVELLI
(March 1827)

Oeuvres completes de MACHIAVEL, traduites par J. V. PERIER Paris:
1825.
Those who have attended to the practice of our literary tribunal are well aware that, by means of certain legal fictions similar to those of Westminster Hall, we are frequently enabled to take cognisance of cases lying beyond the sphere of our original jurisdiction. We need hardly say, therefore, that in the present instance M. Perier is merely a Richard Roe, who will not be mentioned in any subsequent stage of the proceedings, and whose name is used for the sole purpose of bringing Machiavelli into court.

We doubt whether any name in literary history be so generally odious as that of the man whose character and writings we now propose to consider. The terms in which he is commonly described would seem to import that he was the Tempter, the Evil Principle, the discoverer of ambition and revenge, the original inventor of perjury, and that, before the publication of his fatal Prince, there had never been a hypocrite, a tyrant, or a traitor, a simulated virtue, or a convenient crime. One writer gravely assures us that Maurice of Saxony learned all his fraudulent policy from that execrable volume. Another remarks that since it was translated into Turkish, the Sultans have been more addicted than formerly to the custom of strangling their brothers. Lord Lyttelton charges the poor Florentine with the manifold treasons of the house of Guise, and with the massacre of St. Bartholomew. Several authors have hinted that the Gunpowder Plot is to be primarily attributed to his doctrines, and seem to think that his
effigy ought to be substituted for that of Guy Faux, in those
processions by which the ingenious youth of England annually
commemorate the preservation of the Three Estates. The Church of
Rome has pronounced his works accursed things. Nor have our own
countrymen been backward in testifying their opinion of his
merits. Out of his surname they have coined an epithet for a
knave, and out of his Christian name a synonym for the Devil.

[Nick Machiavel had ne'er a trick,
Tho' he gave his name to our old Nick.

Hudibras, Part iii. Canto i.

But, we believe, there is a schism on this subject among the
antiquarians.]

It is indeed scarcely possible for any person, not well
acquainted with the history and literature of Italy, to read
without horror and amazement the celebrated treatise which has
brought so much obloquy on the name of Machiavelli. Such a
display of wickedness, naked yet not ashamed, such cool,
judicious, scientific atrocity, seemed rather to belong to a
fiend than to the most depraved of men. Principles which the most
hardened ruffian would scarcely hint to his most trusted
accomplice, or avow, without the disguise of some palliating
sophism, even to his own mind, are professed without the
slightest circumlocution, and assumed as the fundamental axioms of all political science.

It is not strange that ordinary readers should regard the author of such a book as the most depraved and shameless of human beings. Wise men, however, have always been inclined to look with great suspicion on the angels and daemons of the multitude: and in the present instance, several circumstances have led even superficial observers to question the justice of the vulgar decision. It is notorious that Machiavelli was, through life, a zealous republican. In the same year in which he composed his manual of King-craft, he suffered imprisonment and torture in the cause of public liberty. It seems inconceivable that the martyr of freedom should have designedly acted as the apostle of tyranny. Several eminent writers have, therefore, endeavoured to detect in this unfortunate performance some concealed meaning, more consistent with the character and conduct of the author than that which appears at the first glance.

One hypothesis is that Machiavelli intended to practise on the young Lorenzo de Medici a fraud similar to that which Sunderland is said to have employed against our James the Second, and that he urged his pupil to violent and perfidious measures, as the surest means of accelerating the moment of deliverance and revenge. Another supposition which Lord Bacon seems to countenance, is that the treatise was merely a piece of grave irony, intended to warn nations against the arts of ambitious
men. It would be easy to show that neither of these solutions is consistent with many passages in The Prince itself. But the most decisive refutation is that which is furnished by the other works of Machiavelli. In all the writings which he gave to the public, and in all those which the research of editors has, in the course of three centuries, discovered, in his Comedies, designed for the entertainment of the multitude, in his Comments on Livy, intended for the perusal of the most enthusiastic patriots of Florence, in his History, inscribed to one of the most amiable and estimable of the Popes, in his public despatches, in his private memoranda, the same obliquity of moral principle for which The Prince is so severely censured is more or less discernible. We doubt whether it would be possible to find, in all the many volumes of his compositions, a single expression indicating that dissimulation and treachery had ever struck him as discreditable.

After this, it may seem ridiculous to say that we are acquainted with few writings which exhibit so much elevation of sentiment, so pure and warm a zeal for the public good, or so just a view of the duties and rights of citizens, as those of Machiavelli. Yet so it is. And even from The Prince itself we could select many passages in support of this remark. To a reader of our age and country this inconsistency is, at first, perfectly bewildering. The whole man seems to be an enigma, a grotesque assemblage of incongruous qualities, selfishness and generosity, cruelty and benevolence, craft and simplicity, abject villainy and romantic heroism. One sentence is such as a veteran diplomatist would
scarcely write in cipher for the direction of his most
cidential spy; the next seems to be extracted from a theme
composed by an ardent schoolboy on the death of Leonidas. An act
of dexterous perfidy, and an act of patriotic self-devotion, call
forth the same kind and the same degree of respectful admiration.
The moral sensibility of the writer seems at once to be morbidly
obtuse and morbidly acute. Two characters altogether dissimilar
are united in him. They are not merely joined, but interwoven.
They are the warp and the woof of his mind; and their
combination, like that of the variegated threads in shot silk,
gives to the whole texture a glancing and ever-changing
appearance. The explanation might have been easy, if he had been
a very weak or a very affected man. But he was evidently neither
the one nor the other. His works prove, beyond all contradiction,
that his understanding was strong, his taste pure, and his sense
of the ridiculous exquisitely keen.

This is strange: and yet the strangest is behind. There is no
reason whatever to think, that those amongst whom he lived saw
anything shocking or incongruous in his writings. Abundant proofs
remain of the high estimation in which both his works and his
person were held by the most respectable among his
contemporaries. Clement the Seventh patronised the publication of
those very books which the Council of Trent, in the following
generation, pronounced unfit for the perusal of Christians. Some
members of the democratical party censured the Secretary for
dedicating The Prince to a patron who bore the unpopular name of
Medici. But to those immoral doctrines which have since called
forth such severe reprehensions no exception appears to have been
taken. The cry against them was first raised beyond the Alps, and
seems to have been heard with amazement in Italy. The earliest
assailant, as far as we are aware, was a countryman of our own,
Cardinal Pole. The author of the Anti-Machiavelli was a French
Protestant.

It is, therefore, in the state of moral feeling among the
Italians of those times that we must seek for the real
explanation of what seems most mysterious in the life and
writings of this remarkable man. As this is a subject which
suggests many interesting considerations, both political and
metaphysical, we shall make no apology for discussing it at some
length.

During the gloomy and disastrous centuries which followed the
downfall of the Roman Empire, Italy had preserved, in a far
greater degree than any other part of Western Europe, the traces
of ancient civilisation. The night which descended upon her was
the night of an Arctic summer. The dawn began to reappear before
the last reflection of the preceding sunset had faded from the
horizon. It was in the time of the French Merovingians and of the
Saxon Heptarchy that ignorance and ferocity seemed to have done
their worst. Yet even then the Neapolitan provinces, recognising
the authority of the Eastern Empire, preserved something of
Eastern knowledge and refinement. Rome, protected by the sacred
character of her Pontiffs, enjoyed at least comparative security
and repose. Even in those regions where the sanguinary Lombards
had fixed their monarchy, there was incomparably more of wealth,
of information, of physical comfort, and of social order, than
could be found in Gaul, Britain, or Germany.

That which most distinguished Italy from the neighbouring
countries was the importance which the population of the towns,
at a very early period, began to acquire. Some cities had been
founded in wild and remote situations, by fugitives who had
escaped from the rage of the barbarians. Such were Venice and
Genoa, which preserved their freedom by their obscurity, till
they became able to preserve it by their power. Other cities seem
to have retained, under all the changing dynasties of invaders,
under Odoacer and Theodoric, Narses and Alboin, the municipal
institutions which had been conferred on them by the liberal
policy of the Great Republic. In provinces which the central
government was too feeble either to protect or to oppress, these
institutions gradually acquired stability and vigour. The
citizens, defended by their walls, and governed by their own
magistrates and their own by-laws, enjoyed a considerable share
of republican independence. Thus a strong democratic spirit was
called into action. The Carlovingian sovereigns were too imbecile
to subdue it. The generous policy of Otho encouraged it. It might
perhaps have been suppressed by a close coalition between the
Church and the Empire. It was fostered and invigorated by their
disputes. In the twelfth century it attained its full vigour,
and, after a long and doubtful conflict, triumphed over the abilities and courage of the Swabian princes.

The assistance of the Ecclesiastical power had greatly contributed to the success of the Guelfs. That success would, however, have been a doubtful good, if its only effect had been to substitute a moral for a political servitude, and to exalt the Popes at the expense of the Caesars. Happily the public mind of Italy had long contained the seeds of free opinions, which were now rapidly developed by the genial influence of free institutions. The people of that country had observed the whole machinery of the Church, its saints and its miracles, its lofty pretensions and its splendid ceremonial, its worthless blessings and its harmless curses, too long and too closely to be duped. They stood behind the scenes on which others were gazing with childish awe and interest. They witnessed the arrangement of the pulleys, and the manufacture of the thunders. They saw the natural faces and heard the natural voices of the actors. Distant nations looked on the Pope as the Vicegerent of the Almighty, the oracle of the All-wise, the umpire from whose decisions, in the disputes either of theologians or of kings, no Christian ought to appeal. The Italians were acquainted with all the follies of his youth, and with all the dishonest arts by which he had attained power. They knew how often he had employed the keys of the Church to release himself from the most sacred engagements, and its wealth to pamper his mistresses and nephews. The doctrines and rites of the established religion they treated with decent
reverence. But though they still called themselves Catholics, they had ceased to be Papists. Those spiritual arms which carried terror into the palaces and camps of the proudest sovereigns excited only contempt in the immediate neighbourhood of the Vatican. Alexander, when he commanded our Henry the Second to submit to the lash before the tomb of a rebellious subject, was himself an exile. The Romans apprehending that he entertained designs against their liberties, had driven him from their city; and though he solemnly promised to confine himself for the future to his spiritual functions, they still refused to readmit him.

In every other part of Europe, a large and powerful privileged class trampled on the people and defied the Government. But in the most flourishing parts of Italy, the feudal nobles were reduced to comparative insignificance. In some districts they took shelter under the protection of the powerful commonwealths which they were unable to oppose, and gradually sank into the mass of burghers. In other places they possessed great influence; but it was an influence widely different from that which was exercised by the aristocracy of any Transalpine kingdom. They were not petty princes, but eminent citizens. Instead of strengthening their fastnesses among the mountains, they embellished their palaces in the market-place. The state of society in the Neapolitan dominions, and in some parts of the Ecclesiastical State, more nearly resembled that which existed in the great monarchies of Europe. But the Governments of Lombardy and Tuscany, through all their revolutions, preserved a different
character. A people, when assembled in a town, is far more
formidable to its rulers than when dispersed over a wide extent
of country. The most arbitrary of the Caesars found it necessary
to feed and divert the inhabitants of their unwieldy capital at
the expense of the provinces. The citizens of Madrid have more
than once besieged their sovereign in his own palace, and
extorted from him the most humiliating concessions. The Sultans
have often been compelled to propitiate the furious rabble of
Constantinople with the head of an unpopular Vizier. From the
same cause there was a certain tinge of democracy in the
monarchies and aristocracies of Northern Italy.

Thus liberty, partially indeed and transiently, revisited Italy;
and with liberty came commerce and empire, science and taste, all
the comforts and all the ornaments of life. The Crusades, from
which the inhabitants of other countries gained nothing but
relics and wounds, brought to the rising commonwealths of the
Adriatic and Tyrrhene seas a large increase of wealth, dominion,
and knowledge. The moral and geographical position of those
commonwealths enabled them to profit alike by the barbarism of
the West and by the civilisation of the East. Italian ships
covered every sea. Italian factories rose on every shore. The
tables of Italian moneychangers were set in every city.
Manufactures flourished. Banks were established. The operations
of the commercial machine were facilitated by many useful and
beautiful inventions. We doubt whether any country of Europe, our
own excepted, have at the present time reached so high a point
of wealth and civilisation as some parts of Italy had attained
details from which alone the real state of a community can be
collected. Hence posterity is too often deceived by the vague
hyperboles of poets and rhetoricians, who mistake the splendour
of a court for the happiness of a people. Fortunately, John
Villani has given us an ample and precise account of the state of
Florence in the early part of the fourteenth century. The revenue
of the Republic amounted to three hundred thousand florins; a sum
which, allowing for the depreciation of the precious metals, was
at least equivalent to six hundred thousand pounds sterling; a
larger sum than England and Ireland, two centuries ago, yielded
annually to Elizabeth. The manufacture of wool alone employed two
hundred factories and thirty thousand workmen. The cloth annually
produced sold, at an average, for twelve hundred thousand
florins; a sum fully equal in exchangeable value to two millions
and a half of our money. Four hundred thousand florins were
annually coined. Eighty banks conducted the commercial
operations, not of Florence only but of all Europe. The
transactions of these establishments were sometimes of a
magnitude which may surprise even the contemporaries of the
Barings and the Rothschilds. Two houses advanced to Edward the
Third of England upwards of three hundred thousand marks, at a
time when the mark contained more silver than fifty shillings of
the present day, and when the value of silver was more than
quadruple of what it now is. The city and its environs contained
a hundred and seventy thousand inhabitants. In the various
schools about ten thousand children were taught to read; twelve
hundred studied arithmetic; six hundred received a learned
education.

The progress of elegant literature and of the fine arts was
proportioned to that of the public prosperity. Under the despotic
successors of Augustus, all the fields of intellect had been
turned into arid wastes, still marked out by formal
boundaries, still retaining the traces of old cultivation, but
yielding neither flowers nor fruit. The deluge of barbarism came.
It swept away all the landmarks. It obliterated all the signs of
former tillage. But it fertilised while it devastated. When it
receded, the wilderness was as the garden of God, rejoicing on
every side, laughing, clapping its hands, pouring forth, in
spontaneous abundance, everything brilliant, or fragrant, or
nourishing. A new language, characterised by simple sweetness and
simple energy, had attained perfection. No tongue ever furnished
more gorgeous and vivid tints to poetry; nor was it long before a
poet appeared who knew how to employ them. Early in the
fourteenth century came forth the Divine Comedy, beyond
comparison the greatest work of imagination which had appeared
since the poems of Homer. The following generation produced
indeed no second Dante: but it was eminently distinguished by
general intellectual activity. The study of the Latin writers had
never been wholly neglected in Italy. But Petrarch introduced a
more profound, liberal, and elegant scholarship, and communicated
to his countrymen that enthusiasm for the literature, the
history, and the antiquities of Rome, which divided his own heart
with a frigid mistress and a more frigid Muse. Boccaccio turned their attention to the more sublime and graceful models of Greece.

From this time, the admiration of learning and genius became almost an idolatry among the people of Italy. Kings and republics, cardinals and doges, vied with each other in honouring and flattering Petrarch. Embassies from rival States solicited the honour of his instructions. His coronation agitated the Court of Naples and the people of Rome as much as the most important political transaction could have done. To collect books and antiques, to found professorships, to patronise men of learning, became almost universal fashions among the great. The spirit of literary research allied itself to that of commercial enterprise. Every place to which the merchant princes of Florence extended their gigantic traffic, from the bazars of the Tigris to the monasteries of the Clyde, was ransacked for medals and manuscripts. Architecture, painting, and sculpture, were munificently encouraged. Indeed it would be difficult to name an Italian of eminence, during the period of which we speak, who, whatever may have been his general character, did not at least affect a love of letters and of the arts.

Knowledge and public prosperity continued to advance together. Both attained their meridian in the age of Lorenzo the Magnificent. We cannot refrain from quoting the splendid passage, in which the Tuscan Thucydides describes the state of Italy at
that period. "Ridotta tutta in somma pace e tranquillità,
coltivata non meno ne' luoghi più montuosi e più sterili che
nelle pianure e regioni più fertili, ne sottoposta ad altro
imperio che de' suoi medesimi, non solo era abbondantissima d'
abitatori e di ricchezze; ma illustrata sommamente dalla
magnificenza di molti principi, dallo splendore di molte
nobilissime e bellissime città, dalla sedia e maestà della
religione, fioriva d' uomini prestantissimi nell' amministrazione
delle cose pubbliche, e d'ingegni molto nobili in tutte le
scienze, ed in qualunque arte preclara ed industriosa." When we
peruse this just and splendid description, we can scarcely
persuade ourselves that we are reading of times in which the
annals of England and France present us only with a frightful
spectacle of poverty, barbarity, and ignorance. From the
oppressions of illiterate masters, and the sufferings of a
degraded peasantry, it is delightful to turn to the opulent and
enlightened States of Italy, to the vast and magnificent cities,
the ports, the arsenals, the villas, the museums, the libraries,
the marts filled with every article of comfort or luxury, the
factories swarming with artisans, the Apennines covered with rich
cultivation up to their very summits, the Po wafting the harvests
of Lombardy to the granaries of Venice, and carrying back the
silks of Bengal and the furs of Siberia to the palaces of Milan.
With peculiar pleasure, every cultivated mind must repose on the
fair, the happy, the glorious Florence, the halls which rang with
the mirth of Pulci, the cell where twinkled the midnight lamp of
Politian, the statues on which the young eye of Michael Angelo
glared with the frenzy of a kindred inspiration, the gardens in
which Lorenzo meditated some sparkling song for the May-day dance
of the Etrurian virgins. Alas for the beautiful city! Alas for
the wit and the learning, the genius and the love!

"Le donne, e i cavalier, gli affanni, e gli agi,
Che ne ’nvogliava amore e cortesia
La dove i cuor son fatti si malvagi."

A time was at hand, when all the seven vials of the Apocalypse
were to be poured forth and shaken out over those pleasant
countries, a time of slaughter, famine, beggary, infamy, slavery,
despair.

In the Italian States, as in many natural bodies, untimely
decrepitude was the penalty of precocious maturity. Their early
greatness, and their early decline, are principally to be
attributed to the same cause, the preponderance which the towns
acquired in the political system.

In a community of hunters or of shepherds, every man easily and
necessarily becomes a soldier. His ordinary avocations are
perfectly compatible with all the duties of military service.
However remote may be the expedition on which he is bound, he
finds it easy to transport with him the stock from which he
derives his subsistence. The whole people is an army; the whole
year a march. Such was the state of society which facilitated the
gigantic conquests of Attila and Tamerlane.

But a people which subsists by the cultivation of the earth is in a very different situation. The husbandman is bound to the soil on which he labours. A long campaign would be ruinous to him. Still his pursuits are such as give to his frame both the active and the passive strength necessary to a soldier. Nor do they, at least in the infancy of agricultural science, demand his uninterrupted attention. At particular times of the year he is almost wholly unemployed, and can, without injury to himself, afford the time necessary for a short expedition. Thus the legions of Rome were supplied during its earlier wars. The season during which the fields did not require the presence of the cultivators sufficed for a short inroad and a battle. These operations, too frequently interrupted to produce decisive results, yet served to keep up among the people a degree of discipline and courage which rendered them, not only secure, but formidable. The archers and billmen of the middle ages, who, with provisions for forty days at their backs, left the fields for the camp, were troops of the same description.

But when commerce and manufactures begin to flourish a great change takes place. The sedentary habits of the desk and the loom render the exertions and hardships of war insupportable. The business of traders and artisans requires their constant presence and attention. In such a community there is little superfluous time; but there is generally much superfluous money. Some members
of the society are, therefore, hired to relieve the rest from a
task inconsistent with their habits and engagements.

The history of Greece is, in this, as in many other respects, the
best commentary on the history of Italy. Five hundred years
before the Christian era, the citizens of the republics round the
Aegean Sea formed perhaps the finest militia that ever existed.
As wealth and refinement advanced, the system underwent a gradual
alteration. The Ionian States were the first in which commerce
and the arts were cultivated, and the first in which the ancient
discipline decayed. Within eighty years after the battle of
Plataea, mercenary troops were everywhere plying for battles and
sieges. In the time of Demosthenes, it was scarcely possible to
persuade or compel the Athenians to enlist for foreign service.
The laws of Lycurgus prohibited trade and manufactures. The
Spartans, therefore, continued to form a national force long
after their neighbours had begun to hire soldiers. But their
military spirit declined with their singular institutions. In the
second century before Christ, Greece contained only one nation of
warriors, the savage highlanders of Aetolia, who were some
generations behind their countrymen in civilisation and
intelligence.

All the causes which produced these effects among the Greeks
acted still more strongly on the modern Italians. Instead of a
power like Sparta, in its nature warlike, they had amongst them
an ecclesiastical state, in its nature pacific. Where there are
numerous slaves, every freeman is induced by the strongest motives to familiarise himself with the use of arms. The commonwealths of Italy did not, like those of Greece, swarm with thousands of these household enemies. Lastly, the mode in which military operations were conducted during the prosperous times of Italy was peculiarly unfavourable to the formation of an efficient militia. Men covered with iron from head to foot, armed with ponderous lances, and mounted on horses of the largest breed, were considered as composing the strength of an army. The infantry was regarded as comparatively worthless, and was neglected till it became really so. These tactics maintained their ground for centuries in most parts of Europe. That foot-soldiers could withstand the charge of heavy cavalry was thought utterly impossible, till, towards the close of the fifteenth century, the rude mountaineers of Switzerland dissolved the spell, and astounded the most experienced generals by receiving the dreaded shock on an impenetrable forest of pikes.

The use of the Grecian spear, the Roman sword, or the modern bayonet, might be acquired with comparative ease. But nothing short of the daily exercise of years could train the man-at-arms to support his ponderous panoply, and manage his unwieldy weapon. Throughout Europe this most important branch of war became a separate profession. Beyond the Alps, indeed, though a profession, it was not generally a trade. It was the duty and the amusement of a large class of country gentlemen. It was the service by which they held their lands, and the diversion by
which, in the absence of mental resources, they beguiled their leisure. But in the Northern States of Italy, as we have already remarked, the growing power of the cities, where it had not exterminated this order of men, had completely changed their habits. Here, therefore, the practice of employing mercenaries became universal, at a time when it was almost unknown in other countries.

When war becomes the trade of a separate class, the least dangerous course left to a government is to force that class into a standing army. It is scarcely possible, that men can pass their lives in the service of one State, without feeling some interest in its greatness. Its victories are their victories. Its defeats are their defeats. The contract loses something of its mercantile character. The services of the soldier are considered as the effects of patriotic zeal, his pay as the tribute of national gratitude. To betray the power which employs him, to be even remiss in its service, are in his eyes the most atrocious and degrading of crimes.

When the princes and commonwealths of Italy began to use hired troops, their wisest course would have been to form separate military establishments. Unhappily this was not done. The mercenary warriors of the Peninsula, instead of being attached to the service of different powers, were regarded as the common property of all. The connection between the State and its defenders was reduced to the most simple and naked traffic. The
adventurer brought his horse, his weapons, his strength, and his experience, into the market. Whether the King of Naples or the Duke of Milan, the Pope or the Signory of Florence, struck the bargain, was to him a matter of perfect indifference. He was for the highest wages and the longest term. When the campaign for which he had contracted was finished, there was neither law nor punctilio to prevent him from instantly turning his arms against his late masters. The soldier was altogether disjoined from the citizen and from the subject.

The natural consequences followed. Left to the conduct of men who neither loved those whom they defended, nor hated those whom they opposed, who were often bound by stronger ties to the army against which they fought than to the State which they served, who lost by the termination of the conflict, and gained by its prolongation, war completely changed its character. Every man came into the field of battle impressed with the knowledge that, in a few days, he might be taking the pay of the power against which he was then employed, and, fighting by the side of his enemies against his associates. The strongest interests and the strongest feelings concurred to mitigate the hostility of those who had lately been brethren in arms, and who might soon be brethren in arms once more. Their common profession was a bond of union not to be forgotten even when they were engaged in the service of contending parties. Hence it was that operations, languid and indecisive beyond any recorded in history, marches and counter-marches, pillaging expeditions and blockades,
bloodless capitulations and equally bloodless combats, make up
the military history of Italy during the course of nearly two
centuries. Mighty armies fight from sunrise to sunset. A great
victory is won. Thousands of prisoners are taken; and hardly a
life is lost. A pitched battle seems to have been really less
dangerous than an ordinary civil tumult.

Courage was now no longer necessary even to the military
character. Men grew old in camps, and acquired the highest renown
by their warlike achievements, without being once required to
face serious danger. The political consequences are too well
known. The richest and most enlightened part of the world was
left undefended to the assaults of every barbarous invader, to
the brutality of Switzerland, the insolence of France, and the
fierce rapacity of Arragon. The moral effects which followed from
this state of things were still more remarkable.

Among the rude nations which lay beyond the Alps, valour was
absolutely indispensable. Without it none could be eminent; few
could be secure. Cowardice was, therefore, naturally considered
as the foulest reproach. Among the polished Italians, enriched by
commerce, governed by law, and passionately attached to
literature, everything was done by superiority and intelligence.
Their very wars, more pacific than the peace of their neighbours,
required rather civil than military qualifications. Hence, while
courage was the point of honour in other countries, ingenuity
became the point of honour in Italy.
From these principles were deduced, by processes strictly analogous, two opposite systems of fashionable morality. Through the greater part of Europe, the vices which peculiarly belong to timid dispositions, and which are the natural defence of weakness, fraud, and hypocrisy, have always been most disreputable. On the other hand, the excesses of haughty and daring spirits have been treated with indulgence, and even with respect. The Italians regarded with corresponding lenity those crimes which require self-command, address, quick observation, fertile invention, and profound knowledge of human nature.

Such a prince as our Henry the Fifth would have been the idol of the North. The follies of his youth, the selfish ambition of his manhood, the Lollards roasted at slow fires the prisoners massacred on the field of battle, the expiring lease of priestcraft renewed for another century, the dreadful legacy of a causeless and hopeless war bequeathed to a people who had no interest in its event, everything is forgotten but the victory of Agincourt. Francis Sforza, on the other hand, was the model of Italian heroes. He made his employers and his rivals alike his tools. He first overpowered his open enemies by the help of faithless allies; he then armed himself against his allies with the spoils taken from his enemies. By his incomparable dexterity, he raised himself from the precarious and dependent situation of a military adventurer to the first throne of Italy. To such a man much was forgiven, hollow friendship, ungenerous enmity, violated
faith. Such are the opposite errors which men commit, when their morality is not a science but a taste, when they abandon eternal principles for accidental associations.

We have illustrated our meaning by an instance taken from history. We will select another from fiction. Othello murders his wife; he gives orders for the murder of his lieutenant; he ends by murdering himself. Yet he never loses the esteem and affection of Northern readers. His intrepid and ardent spirit redeems everything. The unsuspecting confidence with which he listens to his adviser, the agony with which he shrinks from the thought of shame, the tempest of passion with which he commits his crimes, and the haughty fearlessness with which he avows them, give an extraordinary interest to his character. Iago, on the contrary, is the object of universal loathing. Many are inclined to suspect that Shakspeare has been seduced into an exaggeration unusual with him, and has drawn a monster who has no archetype in human nature. Now we suspect that an Italian audience in the fifteenth century would have felt very differently. Othello would have inspired nothing but detestation and contempt. The folly with which he trusts the friendly professions of a man whose promotion he had obstructed, the credulity with which he takes unsupported assertions, and trivial circumstances, for unanswerable proofs, the violence with which he silences the exculpation till the exculpation can only aggravate his misery, would have excited the abhorrence and disgust of the spectators. The conduct of Iago they would assuredly have condemned; but they would have
condemned it as we condemn that of his victim. Something of interest and respect would have mingled with their disapprobation. The readiness of the traitor's wit, the clearness of his judgment, the skill with which he penetrates the dispositions of others and conceals his own, would have ensured to him a certain portion of their esteem.

So wide was the difference between the Italians and their neighbours. A similar difference existed between the Greeks of the second century before Christ, and their masters the Romans. The conquerors, brave and resolute, faithful to their engagements, and strongly influenced by religious feelings, were, at the same time, ignorant, arbitrary, and cruel. With the vanquished people were deposited all the art, the science, and the literature of the Western world. In poetry, in philosophy, in painting, in architecture, in sculpture, they had no rivals. Their manners were polished, their perceptions acute, their invention ready; they were tolerant, affable, humane; but of courage and sincerity they were almost utterly destitute. Every rude centurion consoled himself for his intellectual inferiority, by remarking that knowledge and taste seemed only to make men atheists, cowards, and slaves. The distinction long continued to be strongly marked, and furnished an admirable subject for the fierce sarcasms of Juvenal.

The citizen of an Italian commonwealth was the Greek of the time of Juvenal and the Greek of the time of Pericles, joined in one.
Like the former, he was timid and pliable, artful and mean. But, like the latter, he had a country. Its independence and prosperity were dear to him. If his character were degraded by some base crimes, it was, on the other hand, ennobled by public spirit and by an honourable ambition,

A vice sanctioned by the general opinion is merely a vice. The evil terminates in itself. A vice condemned by the general opinion produces a pernicious effect on the whole character. The former is a local malady, the latter a constitutional taint. When the reputation of the offender is lost, he too often flings the remains of his virtue after it in despair. The Highland gentleman who, a century ago, lived by taking blackmail from his neighbours, committed the same crime for which Wild was accompanied to Tyburn by the huzzas of two hundred thousand people. But there can be no doubt that he was a much less depraved man than Wild. The deed for which Mrs. Brownrigg was hanged sinks into nothing, when compared with the conduct of the Roman who treated the public to a hundred pair of gladiators. Yet we should greatly wrong such a Roman if we supposed that his disposition was as cruel as that of Mrs. Brownrigg. In our own country, a woman forfeits her place in society by what, in a man, is too commonly considered as an honourable distinction, and, at worst, as a venial error. The consequence is notorious. The moral principle of a woman is frequently more impaired by a single lapse from virtue than that of a man by twenty years of intrigues. Classical antiquity would
furnish us with instances stronger, if possible, than those to which we have referred.

We must apply this principle to the case before us. Habits of dissimulation and falsehood, no doubt, mark a man of our age and country as utterly worthless and abandoned. But it by no means follows that a similar judgment would be just in the case of an Italian of the middle ages. On the contrary, we frequently find those faults which we are accustomed to consider as certain indications of a mind altogether depraved, in company with great and good qualities, with generosity, with benevolence, with disinterestedness. From such a state of society, Palamedes, in the admirable dialogue of Hume, might have drawn illustrations of his theory as striking as any of those with which Fourli furnished him. These are not, we well know, the lessons which historians are generally most careful to teach, or readers most willing to learn. But they are not therefore useless. How Philip disposed his troops at Chaeronea, where Hannibal crossed the Alps, whether Mary blew up Darnley, or Siquier shot Charles the Twelfth, and ten thousand other questions of the same description, are in themselves unimportant. The inquiry may amuse us, but the decision leaves us no wiser. He alone reads history aright who, observing how powerfully circumstances influence the feelings and opinions of men, how often vices pass into virtues and paradoxes into axioms, learns to distinguish what is accidental and transitory in human nature from what is essential and immutable.
In this respect no history suggests more important reflections
than that of the Tuscan and Lombard commonwealths. The character
of the Italian statesman seems, at first sight, a collection of
contradictions, a phantom as monstrous as the portress of hell in
Milton, half divinity, half snake, majestic and beautiful above,
grovelling and poisonous below. We see a man whose thoughts and
words have no connection with each other, who never hesitates at
an oath when he wishes to seduce, who never wants a pretext when
he is inclined to betray. His cruelties spring, not from the heat
of blood, or the insanity of uncontrolled power, but from deep
and cool meditation. His passions, like well-trained troops, are
impetuous by rule, and in their most headstrong fury never forget
the discipline to which they have been accustomed. His whole soul
is occupied with vast and complicated schemes of ambition: yet
his aspect and language exhibit nothing but philosophical
moderation. Hatred and revenge eat into his heart: yet every look
is a cordial smile, every gesture a familiar caress. He never
excites the suspicion of his adversaries by petty provocations.
His purpose is disclosed only when it is accomplished. His face
is unruffled, his speech is courteous, till vigilance is laid
asleep, till a vital point is exposed, till a sure aim is taken;
and then he strikes for the first and last time. Military
courage, the boast of the sottish German, of the frivolous and
prating Frenchman, of the romantic and arrogant Spaniard, he
neither possesses nor values. He shuns danger, not because he is
insensible to shame, but because, in the society in which he
lives, timidity has ceased to be shameful. To do an injury openly is, in his estimation, as wicked as to do it secretly, and far less profitable. With him the most honourable means are those which are the surest, the speediest, and the darkest. He cannot comprehend how a man should scruple to deceive those whom he does not scruple to destroy. He would think it madness to declare open hostilities against rivals whom he might stab in a friendly embrace, or poison in a consecrated wafer.

Yet this man, black with the vices which we consider as most loathsome, traitor, hypocrite, coward, assassin, was by no means destitute even of those virtues which we generally consider as indicating superior elevation of character. In civil courage, in perseverance, in presence of mind, those barbarous warriors, who were foremost in the battle or the breach, were far his inferiors. Even the dangers which he avoided with a caution almost pusillanimous never confused his perceptions, never paralysed his inventive faculties, never wrung out one secret from his smooth tongue, and his inscrutable brow. Though a dangerous enemy, and a still more dangerous accomplice, he could be a just and beneficent ruler. With so much unfairness in his policy, there was an extraordinary degree of fairness in his intellect. Indifferent to truth in the transactions of life, he was honestly devoted to truth in the researches of speculation. Wanton cruelty was not in his nature. On the contrary, where no political object was at stake, his disposition was soft and humane. The susceptibility of his nerves and the activity of his
imagination inclined him, to sympathise with the feelings of others, and to delight in the charities and courtesies of social life. Perpetually descending to actions which might seem to mark a mind diseased through all its faculties, he had nevertheless an exquisite sensibility, both for the natural and the moral sublime, for every graceful and every lofty conception. Habits of petty intrigue and dissimulation might have rendered him incapable of great general views, but that the expanding effect of his philosophical studies counteracted the narrowing tendency.

He had the keenest enjoyment of wit, eloquence, and poetry. The fine arts profited alike by the severity of his judgment, and by the liberality of his patronage. The portraits of some of the remarkable Italians of those times are perfectly in harmony with this description. Ample and majestic foreheads, brows strong and dark, but not frowning, eyes of which the calm full gaze, while it expresses nothing, seems to discern everything, cheeks pale with thought and sedentary habits, lips formed with feminine delicacy, but compressed with more than masculine decision, mark out men at once enterprising and timid, men equally skilled in detecting the purposes of others, and in concealing their own, men who must have been formidable enemies and unsafe allies, but men, at the same time, whose tempers were mild and equable, and who possessed an amplitude and subtlety of intellect which would have rendered them eminent either in active or in contemplative life, and fitted them either to govern or to instruct mankind.
Every age and every nation has certain characteristic vices, which prevail almost universally, which scarcely any person scruples to avow, and which even rigid moralists but faintly censure. Succeeding generations change the fashion of their morals, with the fashion of their hats and their coaches; take some other kind of wickedness under their patronage, and wonder at the depravity of their ancestors. Nor is this all. Posterity, that high court of appeal which is never tired of eulogising its own justice and discernment, acts on such occasions like a Roman dictator after a general mutiny. Finding the delinquents too numerous to be all punished, it selects some of them at hazard, to bear the whole penalty of an offence in which they are not more deeply implicated than those who escape. Whether decimation be a convenient mode of military execution, we know not; but we solemnly protest against the introduction of such a principle into the philosophy of history.

In the present instance, the lot has fallen on Machiavelli, a man whose public conduct was upright and honourable, whose views of morality, where they differed from those of the persons around him, seemed to have differed for the better, and whose only fault was, that, having adopted some of the maxims then generally received, he arranged them more luminously, and expressed them more forcibly, than any other writer.

Having now, we hope, in some degree cleared the personal character of Machiavelli, we come to the consideration of his
works. As a poet he is not entitled to a high place; but his comedies deserve attention.

The Mandragola, in particular, is superior to the best of Goldoni, and inferior only to the best of Moliere. It is the work of a man who, if he had devoted himself to the drama, would probably have attained the highest eminence, and produced a permanent and salutary effect on the national taste. This we infer, not so much from the degree, as from the kind of its excellence. There are compositions which indicate still greater talent, and which are perused with still greater delight, from which we should have drawn very different conclusions. Books quite worthless are quite harmless. The sure sign of the general decline of an art is the frequent occurrence, not of deformity, but of misplaced beauty. In general, Tragedy is corrupted by eloquence, and Comedy by wit.

The real object of the drama is the exhibition of human character. This, we conceive, is no arbitrary canon, originating in local and temporary associations, like those canons which regulate the number of acts in a play, or of syllables in a line. To this fundamental law every other regulation is subordinate. The situations which most signally develop character form the best plot. The mother tongue of the passions is the best style.

This principle rightly understood, does not debar the poet from
any grace of composition. There is no style in which some man may
not under some circumstances express himself. There is therefore
no style which the drama rejects, none which it does not
occasionally require. It is in the discernment of place, of time,
and of person, that the inferior artists fail. The fantastic
rhapsody of Mercutio, the elaborate declamation of Antony, are,
where Shakspeare has placed them, natural and pleasing. But
Dryden would have made Mercutio challenge Tybalt in hyperboles
as fanciful as those in which he describes the chariot of Mab.
Corneille would have represented Antony as scolding and coaxing
Cleopatra with all the measured rhetoric of a funeral oration.

No writers have injured the Comedy of England so deeply as
Congreve and Sheridan. Both were men of splendid wit and polished
taste. Unhappily, they made all their characters in their own
likeness. Their works bear the same relation to the legitimate
drama which a transparency bears to a painting. There are no
delicate touches, no hues imperceptibly fading into each other:
the whole is lighted up with an universal glare. Outlines and
tints are forgotten in the common blaze which illuminates all.
The flowers and fruits of the intellect abound; but it is the
abundance of a jungle, not of a garden, unwholesome, bewildering,
unprofitable from its very plenty rank from its very fragrance.
Every fop, every boor, every valet, is a man of wit. The very
butts and dupes, Tattle, Witwould, Puff, Acres, outshine the
whole Hotel of Rambouillet. To prove the whole system of this
school erroneous, it is only necessary to apply the test which
dissolved the enchanted Florimel, to place the true by the false
Thalia, to contrast the most celebrated characters which have
been drawn by the writers of whom we speak with the Bastard in
King John or the Nurse in Romeo and Juliet. It was not surely
from want of wit that Shakspeare adopted so different a manner.
Benedick and Beatrice throw Mirabel and Millamant into the shade.
All the good sayings of the facetious houses of Absolute and
Surface might have been clipped from the single character of
Falstaff, without being missed. It would have been easy for that
fertile mind to have given Bardolph and Shallow as much wit as
Prince Hal, and to have made Dogberry and Verges retort on each
other in sparkling epigrams. But he knew that such indiscriminate
prodigality was, to use his own admirable language, “from the
purpose of playing, whose end, both at the first and now, was,
and is, to hold, as it were, the mirror up to Nature.”

This digression will enable our readers to understand what we
mean when we say that in the Mandragola, Machiavelli has proved
that he completely understood the nature of the dramatic art, and
possessed talents which would have enabled him to excel in it. By
the correct and vigorous delineation of human nature, it produces
interest without a pleasing or skilful plot, and laughter without
the least ambition of wit. The lover, not a very delicate or
generous lover, and his adviser the parasite, are drawn with
spirit. The hypocritical confessor is an admirable portrait. He
is, if we mistake not, the original of Father Dominic, the best
comic character of Dryden. But old Nicias is the glory of the
piece. We cannot call to mind anything that resembles him. The follies which Moliere ridicules are those of affection, not those of fatuity. Coxcombs and pedants, not absolute simpletons, are his game. Shakspeare has indeed a vast assortment of fools; but the precise species of which we speak is not, if we remember right, to be found there. Shallow is a fool. But his animal spirits supply, to a certain degree, the place of cleverness. His talk is to that of Sir John what soda water is to champagne. It has the effervescence though not the body or the flavour. Slender and Sir Andrew Aguecheek are fools, troubled with an uneasy consciousness of their folly, which in the latter produces meekness and docility, and in the former, awkwardness, obstinacy, and confusion. Cloten is an arrogant fool, Osric a foppish fool, Ajax a savage fool; but Nicias is, as Thersites says of Patroclus, a fool positive. His mind is occupied by no strong feeling; it takes every character, and retains none; its aspect is diversified, not by passions, but by faint and transitory semblances of passion, a mock joy, a mock fear, a mock love, a mock pride, which chase each other like shadows over its surface, and vanish as soon as they appear. He is just idiot enough to be an object, not of pity or horror, but of ridicule. He bears some resemblance to poor Calandrino, whose mishaps, as recounted by Boccaccio, have made all Europe merry for more than four centuries. He perhaps resembles still more closely Simon da Villa, to whom Bruno and Buffalmacco promised the love of the Countess Civillari. Nicias is, like Simon, of a learned profession; and the dignity with which he wears the doctoral fur, renders his absurdities infinitely more grotesque. The old
Tuscan is the very language for such a being. Its peculiar simplicity gives even to the most forcible reasoning and the most brilliant wit an infantine air, generally delightful, but to a foreign reader sometimes a little ludicrous. Heroes and statesmen seem to lisp when they use it. It becomes Nicias incomparably, and renders all his silliness infinitely more silly.

We may add, that the verses with which the Mandragola is interspersed, appear to us to be the most spirited and correct of all that Machiavelli has written in metre. He seems to have entertained the same opinion; for he has introduced some of them in other places. The contemporaries of the author were not blind to the merits of this striking piece. It was acted at Florence with the greatest success. Leo the Tenth was among its admirers, and by his order it was represented at Rome.

[Nothing can be more evident than that Paulus Jovius designates the Mandragola under the name of the Nicias. We should not have noticed what is so perfectly obvious. were it not that this natural and palpable misnomer has led the sagacious and industrious Bayle into a gross error.]

The Clizia is an imitation of the Casina of Plautus, which is itself an imitation of the lost kleroumenoi of Diphilus. Plautus was, unquestionably, one of the best Latin writers; but the Casina is by no means one of his best plays; nor is it one which offers great facilities to an imitator. The story is as alien from modern habits of life, as the manner in which it is
developed from the modern fashion of composition. The lover rem
ains in the country and the heroine in her chamber during the whole action, leaving their fate to be decided by a foolish father, a cunning mother, and two knavish servants. Machiavelli has executed his task with judgment and taste. He has accommodated the plot to a different state of society, and has very dexterously connected it with the history of his own times. The relation of the trick put on the doting old lover is exquisitely humorous. It is far superior to the corresponding passage in the Latin comedy, and scarcely yields to the account which Falstaff gives of his ducking.

Two other comedies without titles, the one in prose, the other in verse, appear among the works of Machiavelli. The former is very short, lively enough, but of no great value. The latter we can scarcely believe to be genuine. Neither its merits nor its defects remind us of the reputed author. It was first printed in 1796, from a manuscript discovered in the celebrated library of the Strozzi. Its genuineness, if we have been rightly informed, is established solely by the comparison of hands. Our suspicions are strengthened by the circumstance, that the same manuscript contained a description of the plague of 1527, which has also, in consequence, been added to the works of Machiavelli. Of this last composition the strongest external evidence would scarcely induce us to believe him guilty. Nothing was ever written more detestable in matter and manner. The narrations, the reflections, the jokes, the lamentations, are all the very worst of their
respective kinds, at once trite and affected, threadbare tinsel
from the Rag Fairs and Monmouth Streets of literature. A foolish
schoolboy might write such a piece, and, after he had written it,
think it much finer than the incomparable introduction of the
Decameron. But that a shrewd statesman, whose earliest works are
characterised by manliness of thought and language, should, at
near sixty years of age, descend to such puerility, is utterly
inconceivable.

The little novel of Belphegor is pleasantly conceived and
pleasantly told. But the extravagance of the satire in some
measure injures its effect. Machiavelli was unhappily married;
and his wish to avenge his own cause and that of his brethren in
misfortune, carried him beyond even the licence of fiction.
Jonson seems to have combined some hints taken from this tale,
with others from Boccaccio, in the plot of The Devil is an Ass, a
play which, though not the most highly finished of his
compositions, is perhaps that which exhibits the strongest proofs
of genius.

The Political Correspondence of Machiavelli, first published in
1767, is unquestionably genuine, and highly valuable. The unhappy
circumstances in which his country was placed during the greater
part of his public life gave extraordinary encouragement to
diplomatic talents. From the moment that Charles the Eighth
descended from the Alps, the whole character of Italian politics
was changed. The governments of the Peninsula ceased to form an
independent system. Drawn from their old orbit by the attraction of the larger bodies which now approached them, they became mere satellites of France and Spain. All their disputes, internal and external, were decided by foreign influence. The contests of opposite factions were carried on, not as formerly in the senate-house or in the marketplace, but in the antechambers of Louis and Ferdinand. Under these circumstances, the prosperity of the Italian States depended far more on the ability of their foreign agents, than on the conduct of those who were intrusted with the domestic administration. The ambassador had to discharge functions far more delicate than transmitting orders of knighthood, introducing tourists, or presenting his brethren with the homage of his high consideration. He was an advocate to whose management the dearest interests of his clients were intrusted, a spy clothed with an inviolable character. Instead of consulting, by a reserved manner and ambiguous style, the dignity of those whom he represented, he was to plunge into all the intrigues of the Court at which he resided, to discover and flatter every weakness of the prince, and of the favourite who governed the prince, and of the lacquey who governed the favourite. He was to compliment the mistress and bribe the confessor, to panegyrise or supplicate, to laugh or weep, to accommodate himself to every caprice, to lull every suspicion, to treasure every hint, to be everything, to observe everything, to endure everything. High as the art of political intrigue had been carried in Italy, these were times which required it all.
On these arduous errands Machiavelli was frequently employed. He was sent to treat with the King of the Romans and with the Duke of Valentinois. He was twice ambassador of the Court of Rome, and thrice at that of France. In these missions, and in several others of inferior importance, he acquitted himself with great dexterity. His despatches form one of the most amusing and instructive collections extant. The narratives are clear and agreeably written; the remarks on men and things clever and judicious. The conversations are reported in a spirited and characteristic manner. We find ourselves introduced into the presence of the men who, during twenty eventful years, swayed the destinies of Europe. Their wit and their folly, their fretfulness and their merriment, are exposed to us. We are admitted to overhear their chat, and to watch their familiar gestures. It is interesting and curious to recognise, in circumstances which elude the notice of historians, the feeble violence and shallow cunning of Louis the Twelfth; the bustling insignificance of Maximilian, cursed with an impotent pruriency for renown, rash yet timid, obstinate yet fickle, always in a hurry, yet always too late; the fierce and haughty energy which gave dignity to the eccentricities of Julius; the soft and graceful manners which masked the insatiable ambition and the implacable hatred of Caesar Borgia.

We have mentioned Caesar Borgia. It is impossible not to pause for a moment on the name of a man in whom the political morality of Italy was so strongly personified, partially blended with the
sterner lineaments of the Spanish character. On two important occasions Machiavelli was admitted to his society; once, at the moment when Caesar's splendid villainy achieved its most signal triumph, when he caught in one snare and crushed at one blow all his most formidable rivals; and again when, exhausted by disease and overwhelmed by misfortunes, which no human prudence could have averted, he was the prisoner of the deadliest enemy of his house. These interviews between the greatest speculative and the greatest practical statesman of the age are fully described in the Correspondence, and form perhaps the most interesting part of it.

From some passages in The Prince, and perhaps also from some indistinct traditions, several writers have supposed a connection between those remarkable men much closer than ever existed. The Envoy has even been accused of prompting the crimes of the artful and merciless tyrant. But from the official documents it is clear that their intercourse, though ostensibly amicable, was in reality hostile. It cannot be doubted, however, that the imagination of Machiavelli was strongly impressed, and his speculations on government coloured, by the observations which he made on the singular character and equally singular fortunes of a man who under such disadvantages had achieved such exploits; who, when sensuality, varied through innumerable forms, could no longer stimulate his sated mind, found a more powerful and durable excitement in the intense thirst of empire and revenge; who emerged from the sloth and luxury of the Roman purple the
first prince and general of the age; who, trained in an unwarlike profession, formed a gallant army out of the dregs of an unwarlike people; who, after acquiring sovereignty by destroying his enemies, acquired popularity by destroying his tools; who had begun to employ for the most salutary ends the power which he had attained by the most atrocious means; who tolerated within the sphere of his iron despotism no plunderer or oppressor but himself; and who fell at last amidst the mingled curses and regrets of a people of whom his genius had been the wonder, and might have been the salvation. Some of those crimes of Borgia which to us appear the most odious would not, from causes which we have already considered, have struck an Italian of the fifteenth century with equal horror. Patriotic feeling also might induce Machiavelli to look with some indulgence and regret on the memory of the only leader who could have defended the independence of Italy against the confederate spoilers of Cambray.

On this subject Machiavelli felt most strongly. Indeed the expulsion of the foreign tyrants, and the restoration of that golden age which had preceded the irruption of Charles the Eighth, were projects which, at that time, fascinated all the master-spirits of Italy. The magnificent vision delighted the great but ill-regulated mind of Julius. It divided with manuscripts and sauces, painters, and falcons, the attention of the frivolous Leo. It prompted the generous treason of Morone. It imparted a transient energy to the feeble mind and body of the
last Sforza. It excited for one moment an honest ambition in the
false heart of Pescara. Ferocity and insolence were not among the
vices of the national character. To the discriminating cruelties
of politicians, committed for great ends on select victims, the
moral code of the Italians was too indulgent. But though they
might have recourse to barbarity as an expedient, they did not
require it as a stimulant. They turned with loathing from the
atrocities of the strangers who seemed to love blood for its own
sake, who, not content with subjugating, were impatient to
destroy, who found a fiendish pleasure in razing magnificent
cities, cutting the throats of enemies who cried for quarter, or
suffocating an unarmed population by thousands in the caverns to
which it had fled for safety. Such were the cruelties which daily
excited the terror and disgust of a people among whom, till
lately, the worst that a soldier had to fear in a pitched battle
was the loss of his horse and the expense of his ransom. The
swinish intemperance of Switzerland, the wolfish avarice of
Spain, the gross licentiousness of the French, indulged in
violation of hospitality, of decency, of love itself, the wanton
inhumanity which was common to all the invaders, had made them
objects of deadly hatred to the inhabitants of the Peninsula. The
wealth which had been accumulated during centuries of prosperity
and repose was rapidly melting away. The intellectual superiority
of the oppressed people only rendered them more keenly sensible
of their political degradation. Literature and taste, indeed,
still disguised with a flush of hectic loveliness and brilliancy
the ravages of an incurable decay. The iron had not yet entered
into the soul. The time was not yet come when eloquence was to be
gagged, and reason to be hoodwinked, when the harp of the poet
was to be hung on the willows of Arno, and the right hand of the
painter to forget its cunning. Yet a discerning eye might even
then have seen that genius and learning would not long survive
the state of things from which they had sprung, and that the
great men whose talents gave lustre to that melancholy period had
been formed under the influence of happier days, and would leave
no successors behind them. The times which shine with the
greatest splendour in literary history are not always those to
which the human mind is most indebted. Of this we may be
convinced, by comparing the generation which follows them with
that which had preceded them. The first fruits which are reaped
under a bad system often spring from seed sown under a good one.
Thus it was, in some measure, with the Augustan age. Thus it was
with the age of Raphael and Ariosto, of Aldus and Vida.

Machiavelli deeply regretted the misfortunes of his country, and
clearly discerned the cause and the remedy. It was the military
system of the Italian people which had extinguished their value
and discipline, and left their wealth an easy prey to every
foreign plunderer. The Secretary projected a scheme alike
honourable to his heart and to his intellect, for abolishing the
use of mercenary troops, and for organising a national militia.

The exertions which he made to effect this great object ought
alone to rescue his name from obloquy. Though his situation and
his habits were pacific, he studied with intense assiduity the
theory of war. He made himself master of all its details. The Florentine Government entered into his views. A council of war was appointed. Levies were decreed. The indefatigable minister flew from place to place in order to superintend the execution of his design. The times were, in some respects, favourable to the experiment. The system of military tactics had undergone a great revolution. The cavalry was no longer considered as forming the strength of an army. The hours which a citizen could spare from his ordinary employments, though by no means sufficient to familiarise him with the exercise of a man-at-arms, might render him an useful foot-soldier. The dread of a foreign yoke, of plunder, massacre, and conflagration, might have conquered that repugnance to military pursuits which both the industry and the idleness of great towns commonly generate. For a time the scheme promised well. The new troops acquitted themselves respectably in the field. Machiavelli looked with parental rapture on the success of his plan, and began to hope that the arms of Italy might once more be formidable to the barbarians of the Tagus and the Rhine. But the tide of misfortune came on before the barriers which should have withstood it were prepared. For a time, indeed, Florence might be considered as peculiarly fortunate. Famine and sword and pestilence had devastated the fertile plains and stately cities of the Po. All the curses denounced of old against Tyre seemed to have fallen on Venice. Her merchants already stood afar off, lamenting for their great city. The time seemed near when the sea-weed should overgrow her silent Rialto, and the fisherman wash his nets in her deserted arsenal. Naples had been four times conquered and reconquered by tyrants equally
indifferent to its welfare and equally greedy for its spoils.

Florence, as yet, had only to endure degradation and extortion, to submit to the mandates of foreign powers, to buy over and over again, at an enormous price, what was already justly her own, to return thanks for being wronged, and to ask pardon for being in the right. She was at length deprived of the blessings even of this infamous and servile repose. Her military and political institutions were swept away together. The Medici returned, in the train of foreign invaders, from their long exile. The policy of Machiavelli was abandoned; and his public services were requited with poverty, imprisonment, and torture.

The fallen statesman still clung to his project with unabated ardour. With the view of vindicating it from some popular objections and of refuting some prevailing errors on the subject of military science, he wrote his seven books on The Art of War. This excellent work is in the form of a dialogue. The opinions of the writer are put into the mouth of Fabrizio Colonna, a powerful nobleman of the Ecclesiastical State, and an officer of distinguished merit in the service of the King of Spain. Colonna visits Florence on his way from Lombardy to his own domains. He is invited to meet some friends at the house of Cosimo Rucellai, an amiable and accomplished young man, whose early death Machiavelli feelingly deprecates. After partaking of an elegant entertainment, they retire from the heat into the most shady recesses of the garden. Fabrizio is struck by the sight of some uncommon plants. Cosimo says that, though rare, in modern days,
they are frequently mentioned by the classical authors, and that
his grandfather, like many other Italians, amused himself with
practising the ancient methods of gardening. Fabrizio expresses
his regret that those who, in later times, affected the manners
of the old Romans should select for imitation the most trifling
pursuits. This leads to a conversation on the decline of military
discipline and on the best means of restoring it. The institution
of the Florentine militia is ably defended; and several
improvements are suggested in the details.

The Swiss and the Spaniards were, at that time, regarded as the
best soldiers in Europe. The Swiss battalion consisted of
pikemen, and bore a close resemblance to the Greek phalanx. The
Spaniards, like the soldiers of Rome, were armed with the sword
and the shield. The victories of Flamininus and Aemilius over the
Macedonian kings seem to prove the superiority of the weapons
used by the legions. The same experiment had been recently tried
with the same result at the battle of Ravenna, one of those
tremendous days into which human folly and wickedness compress
the whole devastation of a famine or a plague. In that memorable
conflict, the infantry of Arragon, the old companions of
Gonsalvo, deserted by all their allies, hewed a passage through
the thickest of the imperial pikes, and effected an unbroken
retreat, in the face of the gendarmerie of De Foix, and the
renowned artillery of Este. Fabrizio, or rather Machiavelli,
proposes to combine the two systems, to arm the foremost lines
with the pike for the purpose of repulsing cavalry, and those in
the rear with the sword, as being a weapon better adapted for
every other purpose. Throughout the work, the author expresses
the highest admiration of the military science of the ancient
Romans, and the greatest contempt for the maxims which had been
in vogue amongst the Italian commanders of the preceding
generation. He prefers infantry to cavalry, and fortified camps
to fortified towns. He is inclined to substitute rapid movements
and decisive engagements for the languid and dilatory operations
of his countrymen. He attaches very little importance to the
invention of gunpowder. Indeed he seems to think that it ought
scarcely to produce any change in the mode of arming or of
disposing troops. The general testimony of historians, it must be
allowed, seems to prove that the ill-constructed and ill-served
artillery of those times, though useful in a siege, was of little
value on the field of battle.

Of the tactics of Machiavelli we will not venture to give an
opinion: but we are certain that his book is most able and
interesting. As a commentary on the history of his times, it is
invaluable. The ingenuity, the grace, and the perspicuity of the
style, and the eloquence and animation of particular passages,
must give pleasure even to readers who take no interest in the
subject.

The Prince and the Discourses on Livy were written after the fall
of the Republican Government. The former was dedicated to the
young Lorenzo di Medici. This circumstance seems to have
disgusted the contemporaries of the writer far more than the
doctrines which have rendered the name of the work odious in
later times. It was considered as an indication of political
apostasy. The fact however seems to have been that Machiavelli,
despairing of the liberty of Florence, was inclined to support
any government which might preserve her independence. The
interval which separated a democracy and a despotism, Soderini
and Lorenzo, seemed to vanish when compared with the difference
between the former and the present state of Italy, between the
security, the opulence, and the repose which she had enjoyed
under her native rulers, and the misery in which she had been
plunged since the fatal year in which the first foreign tyrant
had descended from the Alps. The noble and pathetic exhortation
with which The Prince concludes shows how strongly the writer
felt upon this subject.

The Prince traces the progress of an ambitious man, the
Discourses the progress of an ambitious people. The same
principles on which, in the former work, the elevation of an
individual is explained, are applied in the latter, to the longer
duration and more complex interest of a society. To a modern
statesman the form of the Discourses may appear to be puerile. In
truth Livy is not an historian on whom implicit reliance can be
placed, even in cases where he must have possessed considerable
means of information. And the first Decade, to which Machiavelli
has confined himself, is scarcely entitled to more credit than
our Chronicle of British Kings who reigned before the Roman
invasion. But the commentator is indebted to Livy for little more than a few texts which he might as easily have extracted from the Vulgate or the Decameron. The whole train of thought is original.

On the peculiar immorality which has rendered The Prince unpopular, and which is almost equally discernible in the Discourses, we have already given our opinion at length. We have attempted to show that it belonged rather to the age than to the man, that it was a partial taint, and by no means implied general depravity. We cannot, however, deny that it is a great blemish, and that it considerably diminishes the pleasure which, in other respects, those works must afford to every intelligent mind.

It is, indeed, impossible to conceive a more healthful and vigorous constitution of the understanding than that which these works indicate. The qualities of the active and the contemplative statesman appear to have been blended in the mind of the writer into a rare and exquisite harmony. His skill in the details of business had not been acquired at the expense of his general powers. It had not rendered his mind less comprehensive; but it had served to correct his speculations and to impart to them that vivid and practical character which so widely distinguishes them from the vague theories of most political philosophers.

Every man who has seen the world knows that nothing is so useless as a general maxim. If it be very moral and very true, it may
serve for a copy to a charity-boy. If, like those of Rochefoucault, it be sparkling and whimsical, it may make an excellent motto for an essay. But few indeed of the many wise apophthegms which have been uttered, from the time of the Seven Sages of Greece to that of Poor Richard, have prevented a single foolish action. We give the highest and the most peculiar praise to the precepts of Machiavelli when we say that they may frequently be of real use in regulating conduct, not so much because they are more just or more profound than those which might be culled from other authors, as because they can be more readily applied to the problems of real life.

There are errors in these works. But they are errors which a writer, situated like Machiavelli, could scarcely avoid. They arise, for the most part, from a single defect which appears to us to pervade his whole system. In his political scheme, the means had been more deeply considered than the ends. The great principle, that societies and laws exist only for the purpose of increasing the sum of private happiness, is not recognised with sufficient clearness. The good of the body, distinct from the good of the members, and sometimes hardly compatible with the good of the members, seems to be the object which he proposes to himself. Of all political fallacies, this has perhaps had the widest and the most mischievous operation. The state of society in the little commonwealths of Greece, the close connection and mutual dependence of the citizens, and the severity of the laws of war, tended to encourage an opinion which, under such
circumstances, could hardly be called erroneous. The interests of every individual were inseparably bound up with those of the State. An invasion destroyed his corn-fields and vineyards, drove him from his home, and compelled him to encounter all the hardships of a military life. A treaty of peace restored him to security and comfort. A victory doubled the number of his slaves. A defeat perhaps made him a slave himself. When Pericles, in the Peloponnesian war, told the Athenians, that, if their country triumphed, their private losses would speedily be repaired, but, that, if their arms failed of success, every individual amongst them would probably be ruined, he spoke no more than the truth, He spoke to men whom the tribute of vanquished cities supplied with food and clothing, with the luxury of the bath and the amusements of the theatre, on whom the greatness of their Country conferred rank, and before whom the members of less prosperous communities trembled; to men who, in case of a change in the public fortunes, would, at least, be deprived of every comfort and every distinction which they enjoyed. To be butchered on the smoking ruins of their city, to be dragged in chains to a slave-market. to see one child torn from them to dig in the quarries of Sicily, and another to guard the harams of Persepolis, these were the frequent and probable consequences of national calamities. Hence, among the Greeks, patriotism became a governing principle, or rather an ungovernable passion. Their legislators and their philosophers took it for granted that, in providing for the strength and greatness of the state, they sufficiently provided for the happiness of the people. The writers of the Roman empire lived under despots, into whose dominion a hundred nations were
melted down, and whose gardens would have covered the little
commonwealths of Phlius and Plataea. Yet they continued to employ
the same language, and to cant about the duty of sacrificing
everything to a country to which they owed nothing.

Causes similar to those which had influenced the disposition of
the Greeks operated powerfully on the less vigorous and daring
character of the Italians. The Italians, like the Greeks, were
members of small communities. Every man was deeply interested in
the welfare of the society to which he belonged, a partaker in
its wealth and its poverty, in its glory and its shame. In the
age of Machiavelli this was peculiarly the case. Public events
had produced an immense sum of misery to private citizens. The
Northern invaders had brought want to their boards, infamy to
their beds, fire to their roofs, and the knife to their throats.
It was natural that a man who lived in times like these should
overrate the importance of those measures by which a nation is
rendered formidable to its neighbours, and undervalue those which
make it prosperous within itself.

Nothing is more remarkable in the political treatises of
Machiavelli than the fairness of mind which they indicate. It
appears where the author is in the wrong, almost as strongly as
where he is in the right. He never advances a false opinion
because it is new or splendid, because he can clothe it in a
happy phrase, or defend it by an ingenious sophism. His errors
are at once explained by a reference to the circumstances in
which he was placed. They evidently were not sought out; they lay in his way, and could scarcely be avoided. Such mistakes must necessarily be committed by early speculators in every science.

In this respect it is amusing to compare The Prince and the Discourses with the Spirit of Laws. Montesquieu enjoys, perhaps, a wider celebrity than any political writer of modern Europe. Something he doubtless owes to his merit, but much more to his fortune. He had the good luck of a Valentine.

He caught the eye of the French nation, at the moment when it was waking from the long sleep of political and religious bigotry; and, in consequence, he became a favourite. The English, at that time, considered a Frenchman who talked about constitutional checks and fundamental laws as a prodigy not less astonishing than the learned pig or the musical infant. Specious but shallow, studious of effect, indifferent to truth, eager to build a system, but careless of collecting those materials out of which alone a sound and durable system can be built, the lively President constructed theories as rapidly and as slightly as card-houses, no sooner projected than completed, no sooner completed than blown away, no sooner blown away than forgotten. Machiavelli errs only because his experience, acquired in a very peculiar state of society, could not always enable him to calculate the effect of institutions differing from those of which he had observed the operation. Montesquieu errs, because he has a fine thing to say, and is resolved to say it. If the
phaenomena which lie before him will not suit his purpose, all
history must be ransacked. If nothing established by authentic
testimony can be racked or chipped to suit his Procrustean
hypothesis, he puts up with some monstrous fable about Siam, or
Bantam, or Japan, told by writers compared with whom Lucian and
Gulliver were veracious, liars by a double right, as travellers
and as Jesuits.

Propriety of thought, and propriety of diction, are commonly
found together. Obscurity and affectation are the two greatest
faults of style. Obscurity of expression generally springs from
confusion of ideas; and the same wish to dazzle at any cost which
produces affectation in the manner of a writer, is likely to
produce sophistry in his reasonings. The judicious and candid
mind of Machiavelli shows itself in his luminous, manly, and
polished language. The style of Montesquieu, on the other hand,
indicates in every page a lively and ingenious, but an unsound
mind. Every trick of expression, from the mysterious conciseness
of an oracle to the flippancy of a Parisian coxcomb, is employed
to disguise the fallacy of some positions, and the triteness of
others. Absurdities are brightened into epigrams; truisms are
darkened into enigmas. It is with difficulty that the strongest
eye can sustain the glare with which some parts are illuminated,
or penetrate the shade in which others are concealed.

The political works of Machiavelli derive a peculiar interest
from the mournful earnestness which he manifests whenever he
touches on topics connected with the calamities of his native land. It is difficult to conceive any situation more painful than that of a great man, condemned to watch the lingering agony of an exhausted country, to tend it during the alternate fits of stupefaction and raving which precede its dissolution, and to see the symptoms of vitality disappear one by one, till nothing is left but coldness, darkness, and corruption. To this joyless and thankless duty was Machiavelli called. In the energetic language of the prophet, he was "mad for the sight of his eye which he saw," disunion in the council, effeminacy in the camp, liberty extinguished, commerce decaying, national honour sullied, an enlightened and flourishing people given over to the ferocity of ignorant savages. Though his opinions had no escaped the contagion of that political immorality which was common among his countrymen, his natural disposition seem to have been rather stern and impetuous than pliant and artful. When the misery and degradation of Florence and the foul outrage which he had himself sustained recur to his mind, the smooth craft of his profession and his nation is exchanged for the honest bitterness of scorn and anger. He speaks like one sick of the calamitous times and abject people among whom his lot is cast. He pines for the strength and glory of ancient Rome, for the fasces of Brutus, and the sword of Scipio, the gravity of the curule chair, and the bloody pomp of the triumphal sacrifice. He seems to be transported back to the days when eight hundred thousand Italian warriors sprung to arms at the rumour of a Gallic invasion. He breathes all the spirit of those intrepid and haughty senators who forgot the dearest ties of nature in the claims of public
duty, who looked with disdain on the elephants and on the gold of Pyrrhus, and listened with unaltered composure to the tremendous tidings of Cannae. Like an ancient temple deformed by the barbarous architecture of a later age, his character acquires an interest from the very circumstances which debase it. The original proportions are rendered more striking by the contrast which they present to the mean and incongruous additions.

The influence of the sentiments which we have described was not apparent in his writings alone. His enthusiasm, barred from the career which it would have selected for itself, seems to have found a vent in desperate levity. He enjoyed a vindictive pleasure in outraging the opinions of a society which he despised. He became careless of the decencies which were expected from a man so highly distinguished in the literary and political world. The sarcastic bitterness of his conversation disgusted those who were more inclined to accuse his licentiousness than their own degeneracy, and who were unable to conceive the strength of those emotions which are concealed by the jests of the wretched, and by the follies of the wise.

The historical works of Machiavelli still remain to be considered. The Life of Castruccio Castracani will occupy us for a very short time, and would scarcely have demanded our notice, had it not attracted a much greater share of public attention than it deserves. Few books, indeed, could be more interesting than a careful and judicious account, from such a pen, of the
illustrious Prince of Lucca, the most eminent of those Italian
chiefs who, like Pisistratus and Gelon, acquired a power felt
rather than seen, and resting, not on law or on prescription, but
on the public favour and on their great personal qualities. Such
a work would exhibit to us the real nature of that species of
sovereignty, so singular and so often misunderstood, which the
Greeks denominated tyranny, and which, modified in some degree by
the feudal system, reappeared in the commonwealths of Lombardy
and Tuscany. But this little composition of Machiavelli is in no
sense a history. It has no pretensions to fidelity. It is a
trifle, and not a very successful trifle. It is scarcely more
authentic than the novel of Belphegor, and is very much duller.

The last great work of this illustrious man was the history of
his native city. It was written by command of the Pope, who, as
chief of the house of Medici, was at that time sovereign of
Florence. The characters of Cosmo, of Piero, and of Lorenzo, are,
however, treated with a freedom and impartiality equally
honourable to the writer and to the patron. The miseries and
humiliations of dependence, the bread which is more bitter than
every other food, the stairs which are more painful than every
other ascent, had not broken the spirit of Machiavelli. The most
corrupting post in a corrupting profession had not depraved the
generous heart of Clement.

The History does not appear to be the fruit of much industry or
research. It is unquestionably inaccurate. But it is elegant,
lively, and picturesque, beyond any other in the Italian
language. The reader, we believe, carries away from it a more
vivid and a more faithful impression of the national character
and manners than from more correct accounts. The truth is, that
the book belongs rather to ancient than to modern literature. It
is in the style, not of Davila and Clarendon, but of Herodotus
and Tacitus. The classical histories may almost be called
romances founded in fact. The relation is, no doubt, in all its
principal points, strictly true. But the numerous little
incidents which heighten the interest, the words, the gestures,
the looks, are evidently furnished by the imagination of the
author. The fashion of later times is different. A more exact
narrative is given by the writer. It may be doubted whether more
exact notions are conveyed to the reader. The best portraits are
perhaps those in which there is a slight mixture of caricature,
and we are not certain that the best histories are not those in
which a little of the exaggeration of fictitious narrative is
judiciously employed. Something is lost in accuracy; but much is
gained in effect. The fainter lines are neglected but the great
characteristic features are imprinted on the mind for ever.

The History terminates with the death of Lorenzo de’ Medici.
Machiavelli had, it seems, intended to continue his narrative to
a later period. But his death prevented the execution of his
design; and the melancholy task of recording the desolation and
shame of Italy devolved on Guicciardini.
Machiavelli lived long enough to see the commencement of the last struggle for Florentine liberty. Soon after his death monarchy was finally established, not such a monarchy as that of which Cosmo had laid the foundations deep in the institution and feelings of his countryman, and which Lorenzo had embellished with the trophies of every science and every art; but a loathsome tyranny, proud and mean, cruel and feeble, bigoted and lascivious. The character of Machiavelli was hateful to the new masters of Italy; and those parts of his theory which were in strict accordance with their own daily practice afforded a pretext for blackening his memory. His works were misrepresented by the learned, misconstrued by the ignorant, censured by the Church, abused with all the rancour of simulated virtue by the tools of a base government, and the priests of a baser superstition. The name of the man whose genius had illuminated all the dark places of policy, and to whose patriotic wisdom an oppressed people had owed their last chance of emancipation and revenge, passed into a proverb of infamy. For more than two hundred years his bones lay undistinguished. At length, an English nobleman paid the as honours to the greatest statesman of Florence. In the church of Santa Croce a monument was erected to his memory, which is contemplated with reverence by all who can distinguish the virtues of a great mind through the corruptions of a degenerate age, and which will be approached with still deeper homage when the object to which his public life was devoted shall be attained, when the foreign yoke shall be broken, when a second Procida shall avenge the wrongs of Naples, when a
happier Rienzi shall restore the good estate of Rome, when the
streets of Florence and Bologna shall again resound with their
ancient war-cry, Popolo; popolo; muoiano i tiranni!

VON RANKE

(October 1840)

The Ecclesiastical and political History of the Popes of Rome,
during the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries. By LEOPOLD RANKE,
Professor in the University of Berlin: Translated from the
German, by SARAH AUSTIN. 3 vols. 8vo. London: 1840.

It is hardly necessary for us to say that this is an excellent
book excellently translated. The original work of Professor Ranke
is known and esteemed wherever German literature is studied, and
has been found interesting even in a most inaccurate and
dishonest French version. It is, indeed, the work of a mind
fitted both for minute researches and for large speculations. It
is written also in an admirable spirit, equally remote from
levity and bigotry, serious and earnest, yet tolerant and
impartial. It is, therefore, with the greatest pleasure that we
now see this book take its place among the English classics. Of
the translation we need only say that it is such as might be
expected from the skill, the taste, and the scrupulous integrity
of the accomplished lady who, as an interpreter between the mind
of Germany and the mind of Britain, has already deserved so well of both countries.

The subject of this book has always appeared to us singularly interesting. How it was that Protestantism did so much, yet did no more, how it was that the Church of Rome, having lost a large part of Europe, not only ceased to lose, but actually regained nearly half of what she had lost, is certainly a most curious and important question; and on this question Professor Ranke has thrown far more light than any other person who has written on it.

There is not, and there never was on this earth, a work of human policy so well deserving of examination as the Roman Catholic Church. The history of that Church joins together the two great ages of human civilisation. No other institution is left standing which carries the mind back to the times when the smoke of sacrifice rose from the Pantheon, and when camels and tigers bounded in the Flavian amphitheatre. The proudest royal houses are but of yesterday, when compared with the line of the Supreme Pontiffs. That line we trace back in an unbroken series, from the Pope who crowned Napoleon in the nineteenth century to the Pope who crowned Pepin in the eighth; and far beyond the time of Pepin the august dynasty extends, till it is lost in the twilight of fable. The republic of Venice came next in antiquity. But the republic of Venice was modern when compared with the Papacy; and the republic of Venice is gone, and the Papacy remains. The
Papacy remains, not in decay, not a mere antique, but full of life and youthful vigour. The Catholic Church is still sending forth to the farthest ends of the world missionaries as zealous as those who landed in Kent with Augustin, and still confronting hostile kings with the same spirit with which she confronted Attila. The number of her children is greater than in any former age. Her acquisitions in the New World have more than compensated for what she has lost in the Old. Her spiritual ascendency extends over the vast countries which lie between the plains of the Missouri and Cape Horn, countries which a century hence, may not improbably contain a population as large as that which now inhabits Europe. The members of her communion are certainly not fewer than a hundred and fifty millions; and it will be difficult to show that all other Christian sects united amount to a hundred and twenty millions. Nor do we see any sign which indicates that the term of her long dominion is approaching. She saw the commencement of all the governments and of all the ecclesiastical establishments that now exist in the world; and we feel no assurance that she is not destined to see the end of them all.

She was great and respected before the Saxon had set foot on Britain, before the Frank had passed the Rhine, when Grecian eloquence still flourished at Antioch, when idols were still worshipped in the temple of Mecca. And she may still exist in undiminished vigour when some traveller from New Zealand shall, in the midst of a vast solitude, take his stand on a broken arch of London Bridge to sketch the ruins of St. Paul's.
We often hear it said that the world is constantly becoming more
and more enlightened, and that this enlightening must be
favourable to Protestantism, and unfavourable to Catholicism. We
wish that we could think so. But we see great reason to doubt
whether this be a well-founded expectation. We see that during
the last two hundred and fifty years the human mind has been in
the highest degree active, that it has made great advances in
every branch of natural philosophy, that it has produced
innumerable inventions tending to promote the convenience of
life, that medicine, surgery, chemistry, engineering, have been
very greatly improved, that government, police, and law have been
improved, though not to so great an extent as the physical
sciences. Yet we see that, during these two hundred and fifty
years, Protestantism has made no conquests worth speaking of.
Nay, we believe that, as far as there has been a change, that
change has, on the whole, been in favour of the Church of Rome.
We cannot, therefore, feel confident that the progress of
knowledge will necessarily be fatal to a system which has, to say
the least, stood its ground in spite of the immense progress made
by the human race in knowledge since the days of Queen Elizabeth.

Indeed the argument which we are considering, seems to us to be
founded on an entire mistake. There are branches of knowledge
with respect to which the law of the human mind is progress. In
mathematics, when once a proposition has been demonstrated, it is
never afterwards contested. Every fresh story is as solid a basis
for a new superstructure as the original foundation was. Here,
therefore, there is a constant addition to the stock of truth. In
the inductive sciences again, the law is progress. Every day
furnishes new facts, and thus brings theory nearer and nearer to
perfection. There is no chance that, either in the purely
demonstrative, or in the purely experimental sciences, the world
will ever go back or even remain stationary. Nobody ever heard of
a reaction against Taylor's theorem, or of a reaction against
Harvey's doctrine of the circulation of the blood.

But with theology the case is very different. As respects natural
religion,—revelation being for the present altogether left out
of the question,—it is not easy to see that a philosopher of the
present day is more favourably situated than Thales or Simonides.
He has before him just the same evidences of design in the
structure of the universe which the early Greeks had. We say just
the same; for the discoveries of modern astronomers and
anatomists have really added nothing to the force of that
argument which a reflecting mind finds in every beast, bird,
insect, fish, leaf, flower and shell. The reasoning by which
Socrates, in Xenophon's hearing, confuted the little atheist
Aristodemus, is exactly the reasoning of Paley's Natural
Theology. Socrates makes precisely the same use of the statues of
Polycletus and the pictures of Zeuxis which Paley makes of the
watch. As to the other great question, the question, what becomes
of man after death, we do not see that a highly educated
European, left to his unassisted reason, is more likely to be in
the right than a Blackfoot Indian. Not a single one of the many
sciences in which we surpass the Blackfoot Indians throws the smallest light on the state of the soul after the animal life is extinct. In truth all the philosophers, ancient and modern, who have attempted, without the help of revelation to prove the immortality of man, from Plato down to Franklin, appear to us to have failed deplorably.

Then, again, all the great enigmas which perplex the natural theologian are the same in all ages. The ingenuity of a people just emerging from barbarism is quite sufficient to propound those enigmas. The genius of Locke or Clarke is quite unable to solve them. It is a mistake to imagine that subtle speculations touching the Divine attributes, the origin of evil, the necessity of human actions, the foundation of moral obligation, imply any high degree of intellectual culture. Such speculations, on the contrary, are in a peculiar manner the delight of intelligent children and of half civilised men. The number of boys is not small who, at fourteen, have thought enough on these questions to be fully entitled to the praise which Voltaire gives to Zadig. "Il en savait ce qu'on en a su dans tous les ages; c'est-a-dire, fort peu de chose." The book of Job shows that, long before letters and arts were known to Ionia, these vexing questions were debated with no common skill and eloquence, under the tents of the Idumean Emirs; nor has human reason, in the course of three thousand years, discovered any satisfactory solution of the riddles which perplexed Eliphaz and Zophar.
Natural theology, then, is not a progressive science. That knowledge of our origin and of our destiny which we derive from revelation is indeed of very different clearness, and of very different importance. But neither is revealed religion of the nature of a progressive science. All Divine truth is, according to the doctrine of the Protestant Churches, recorded in certain books. It is equally open to all who, in any age, can read those books; nor can all the discoveries of all the philosophers in the world add a single verse to any of those books. It is plain, therefore, that in divinity there cannot be a progress analogous to that which is constantly taking place in pharmacy, geology, and navigation. A Christian of the fifth Century with a Bible is neither better nor worse situated than a Christian of the nineteenth century with a Bible, candour and natural acuteness being, of course, supposed equal. It matters not at all that the compass, printing, gunpowder, steam, gas, vaccination, and a thousand other discoveries and inventions, which were unknown in the fifth century, are familiar to the nineteenth. None of these discoveries and inventions has the smallest bearing on the question whether man is justified by faith alone, or whether the invocation of saints is an orthodox practice. It seems to us, therefore, that we have no security for the future against the prevalence of any theological error that ever has prevailed in time past among Christian men. We are confident that the world will never go back to the solar system of Ptolemy; nor is our confidence in the least shaken by the circumstance, that even so great a man as Bacon rejected the theory of Galileo with scorn;
for Bacon had not all the means of arriving at a sound conclusion which are within our reach, and which secure people who would not have been worthy to mend his pens from falling into his mistakes. But when we reflect that Sir Thomas More was ready to die for the doctrine of transubstantiation, we cannot but feel some doubt whether the doctrine of transubstantiation may not triumph over all opposition. More was a man of eminent talents. He had all the information on the subject that we have, or that, while the world lasts, any human being will have. The text, "This is my body," was in his New Testament as it is in ours. The absurdity of the literal interpretation was as great and as obvious in the sixteenth century as it is now. No progress that science has made, or will make, can add to what seems to us the overwhelming force of the argument against the real presence. We are, therefore, unable to understand why what Sir Thomas More believed respecting transubstantiation may not be believed to the end of time by men equal in abilities and honesty to Sir Thomas More. But Sir Thomas More is one of the choice specimens of human wisdom and virtue; and the doctrine of transubstantiation is a kind of proof charge. A faith which stands that test will stand any test. The prophecies of Brothers and the miracles of Prince Hohenlohe sink to trifles in the comparison.

One reservation, indeed, must be made. The books and traditions of a sect may contain, mingled with propositions strictly theological, other propositions, purporting to rest on the same authority, which relate to physics. If new discoveries should
throw discredit on the physical propositions, the theological propositions, unless they can be separated from the physical propositions, will share in that discredit. In this way, undoubtedly, the progress of science may indirectly serve the cause of religious truth. The Hindoo mythology, for example, is bound up with a most absurd geography. Every young Brahmin, therefore, who learns geography in our colleges learns to smile at the Hindoo mythology. If Catholicism has not suffered to an equal degree from the Papal decision that the sun goes round the earth, this is because all intelligent Catholics now hold, with Pascal, that, in deciding the point at all, the Church exceeded her powers, and was, therefore, justly left destitute of that supernatural assistance which, in the exercise of her legitimate functions, the promise of her Founder authorised her to expect.

This reservation affects not at all the truth of our proposition, that divinity, properly so called, is not a progressive science. A very common knowledge of history, a very little observation of life, will suffice to prove that no learning, no sagacity, affords a security against the greatest errors on subjects relating to the invisible world. Bayle and Chillingworth, two of the most sceptical of mankind, turned Catholics from sincere conviction. Johnson, incredulous on all other points, was a ready believer in miracles and apparitions. He would not believe in Ossian; but he was willing to believe in the second sight. He would not believe in the earthquake of Lisbon; but he was willing to believe in the Cock Lane ghost.
For these reasons we have ceased to wonder at any vagaries of superstition. We have seen men, not of mean intellect or neglected education, but qualified by their talents and acquirements to attain eminence either in active or speculative pursuits, well-read scholars, expert logicians, keen observers of life and manners, prophesying, interpreting, talking unknown tongues, working miraculous cures, coming down with messages from God to the House of Commons. We have seen an old woman, with no talents beyond the cunning of a fortune-teller, and with the education of a scullion, exalted into a prophetess, and surrounded by tens of thousands of devoted followers, many of whom were, in station and knowledge, immeasurably her superiors; and all this in the nineteenth century; and all this in London.

Yet why not? For of the dealings of God with man no more has been revealed to the nineteenth century than to the first, or to London than to the wildest parish in the Hebrides. It is true that, in those things which concern this life and this world, man constantly becomes wiser and wiser. But it is no less true that, as respects a higher power and a future state, man, in the language of Goethe's scoffing friend,

"bleibt stets von gleichem Schlag,
Und ist so wunderlich als wie am ersten Tag."

The history of Catholicism strikingly illustrates these
observations. During the last seven centuries the public mind of Europe has made constant progress in every department of secular knowledge. But in religion we can trace no constant progress. The ecclesiastical history of that long period is a history of movement to and fro. Four times, since the authority of the Church of Rome was established in Western Christendom, has the human intellect risen up against her yoke. Twice that Church remained completely victorious. Twice she came forth from the conflict bearing the marks of cruel wounds, but with the principle of life still strong within her. When we reflect on the tremendous assaults which she has survived, we find it difficult to conceive in what way she is to perish.

The first of these insurrections broke out in the region where the beautiful language of Oc was spoken. That country, singularly favoured by nature, was, in the twelfth century, the most flourishing and civilised portion of Western Europe. It was in no wise a part of France. It had a distinct political existence, a distinct national character, distinct usages, and a distinct speech. The soil was fruitful and well cultivated; and amidst the cornfields and vineyards arose many rich cities each of which was a little republic, and many stately castles: each of which contained a miniature of an imperial court. It was there that the spirit of chivalry first laid aside its terrors, first took a humane and graceful form, first appeared as the inseparable associate of art and literature, of courtesy and love. The other
vernacular dialects which, since the fifth century, had sprung up in the ancient provinces of the Roman empire, were still rude and imperfect. The sweet Tuscan, the rich and energetic English, were abandoned to artisans and shepherds. No clerk had ever condescended to use such barbarous jargon for the teaching of science, for the recording of great events, or for the painting of life and manners. But the language of Provence was already the language of the learned and polite, and was employed by numerous writers, studious of all the arts of composition and versification. A literature rich in ballads, in war-songs, in satire, and, above all, in amatory poetry amused the leisure of the knights and ladies whose fortified mansions adorned the banks of the Rhone and Garonne. With civilisation had come freedom of thought. Use had taken away the horror with which misbelievers were elsewhere regarded. No Norman or Breton ever saw a Mussulman, except to give and receive blows on some Syrian field of battle. But the people of the rich countries which lay under the Pyrenees lived in habits of courteous and profitable intercourse with the Moorish kingdoms of Spain, and gave a hospitable welcome to skilful leeches and mathematicians who, in the schools of Cordova and Granada, had become versed in all the learning of the Arabians. The Greek, still preserving, in the midst of political degradation, the ready wit and the inquiring spirit of his fathers, still able to read the most perfect of human compositions, still speaking the most powerful and flexible of human languages, brought to the marts of Narbonne and Toulouse, together with the drugs and silks of remote climates, bold and subtle theories long unknown to the ignorant and
credulous West. The Paulician theology, a theology in which, as it should seem, many of the doctrines of the modern Calvinists were mingled with some doctrines derived from the ancient Manichees, spread rapidly through Provence and Languedoc. The clergy of the Catholic Church were regarded with loathing and contempt. "Viler than a priest," "I would as soon be a priest," became proverbial expressions. The Papacy had lost all authority with all classes, from the great feudal princes down to the cultivators of the soil.

The danger to the hierarchy was indeed formidable. Only one transalpine nation had emerged from barbarism; and that nation had thrown off all respect for Rome. Only one of the vernacular languages of Europe had yet been extensively employed for literary purposes; and that language was a machine in the hands of heretics. The geographical position of the sectaries made the danger peculiarly formidable. They occupied a central region communicating directly with France, with Italy, and with Spain. The provinces which were still untainted were separated from each other by this infected district. Under these circumstances, it seemed probable that a single generation would suffice to spread the reformed doctrine to Lisbon, to London, and to Naples. But this was not to be. Rome cried for help to the warriors of northern France. She appealed at once to their superstition and to their cupidity. To the devout believer she promised pardons as ample as those with which she had rewarded the deliverers of the Holy Sepulchre. To the rapacious and profligate she offered the
plunder of fertile plains and wealthy cities. Unhappily, the
ingenious and polished inhabitants of the Languedocian provinces
were far better qualified to enrich and embellish their country
than to defend it. Eminent in the arts of peace, unrivalled in
the "gay science," elevated above many vulgar superstitions, they
wanted that iron courage, and that skill in martial exercises,
which distinguished the chivalry of the region beyond the Loire,
and were ill fitted to face enemies who, in every country from
Ireland to Palestine, had been victorious against tenfold odds. A
war, distinguished even among wars of religion by merciless
atrocities, destroyed the Albigensian heresy, and with that heresy
the prosperity the civilisation, the literature, the national
existence, of what was once the most opulent and enlightened part
of the great European family. Rome, in the meantime, warned by
that fearful danger from which the exterminating swords of her
crusaders had narrowly saved her, proceeded to revise and to
strengthen her whole system of polity. At this period were
instituted the Order of Francis, the Order of Dominic, the
Tribunal of the Inquisition. The new spiritual police was
everywhere. No alley in a great city, no hamlet on a remote
mountain, was unvisited by the begging friar. The simple
Catholic, who was content to be no wiser than his fathers, found,
wherever he turned, a friendly voice to encourage him. The path
of the heretic was beset by innumerable spies; and the Church,
lately in danger of utter subversion, now appeared to be
impregnably fortified by the love, the reverence, and the terror
of mankind.
A century and a half passed away; and then came the second great rising up of the human intellect against the spiritual domination of Rome. During the two generations which followed the Albigensian crusade, the power of the Papacy had been at the height. Frederic the Second, the ablest and most accomplished of the long line of German Caesars, had in vain exhausted all the resources of military and political skill in the attempt to defend the rights of the civil power against the encroachments of the Church. The vengeance of the priesthood had pursued his house to the third generation. Manfred had perished on the field of battle, Conradian on the scaffold. Then a turn took place. The secular authority, long unduly depressed, regained the ascendant with startling rapidity. The change is doubtless to be ascribed chiefly to the general disgust excited by the way in which the Church had abused its power and its success. But something must be attributed to the character and situation of individuals. The man who bore the chief part in effecting this revolution was Philip the Fourth of France, surnamed the Beautiful, a despot by position, a despot by temperament, stern, implacable, and unscrupulous, equally prepared for violence and for chicanery, and surrounded by a devoted band of men of the sword and of men of law. The fiercest and most high minded of the Roman Pontiffs, while bestowing kingdoms and citing great princes to his judgment-seat, was seized in his palace by armed men, and so foully outraged that he died mad with rage and terror. "Thus," sang the great Florentine poet, "was Christ, in the person of his vicar, a second time seized by ruffians, a second time mocked, a
second time drenched with the vinegar and the gall." The seat of
the Papal court was carried beyond the Alps, and the Bishops of
Rome became dependants of France. Then came the great schism of
the West. Two Popes, each with a doubtful title, made all Europe
ring with their mutual invectives and anathemas. Rome cried out
against the corruptions of Avignon; and Avignon, with equal
justice, recriminated on Rome. The plain Christian people,
brought up in the belief that it was a sacred duty to be in
communion with the head of the Church, were unable to discover,
amidst conflicting testimonies and conflicting arguments, to
which of the two worthless priests who were cursing and reviling
each other, the headship of the Church rightfully belonged. It
was nearly at this juncture that the voice of John Wickliffe
began to make itself heard. The public mind of England was soon
stirred to its inmost depths: and the influence of the new
doctrines was soon felt, even in the distant kingdom of Bohemia.
In Bohemia, indeed, there had long been a predisposition to
heresy. Merchants from the Lower Danube were often seen in the
fairs of Prague; and the Lower Danube was peculiarly the seat of
the Paulician theology. The Church, torn by schism, and fiercely
assailed at once in England and in the German Empire, was in a
situation scarcely less perilous than at the crisis which
preceded the Albigensian crusade.

But this danger also passed by. The civil power gave its
strenuous support to the Church; and the Church made some show of
reforming itself. The Council of Constance put an end to the
schism. The whole Catholic world was again united under a single chief; and rules were laid down which seemed to make it improbable that the power of that chief would be grossly abused. The most distinguished teachers of the new doctrine were slaughtered. The English Government put down the Lollards with merciless rigour; and in the next generation, scarcely one trace of the second great revolt against the Papacy could be found, except among the rude population of the mountains of Bohemia.

Another century went by; and then began the third and the most memorable struggle for spiritual freedom. The times were changed. The great remains of Athenian and Roman genius were studied by thousands. The Church had no longer a monopoly of learning. The powers of the modern languages had at length been developed. The invention of printing had given new facilities to the intercourse of mind with mind. With such auspices commenced the great Reformation.

We will attempt to lay before our readers, in a short compass, what appears to us to be the real history of the contest which began with the preaching of Luther against the Indulgences, and which may, in one sense, be said, to have been terminated, a hundred and thirty years later, by the treaty of Westphalia.

In the northern parts of Europe the victory of Protestantism was rapid and decisive. The dominion of the Papacy was felt by the
nations of Teutonic blood as the dominion of Italians, of foreigners, of men who were aliens in language, manners, and intellectual constitution. The large jurisdiction exercised by the spiritual tribunals of Rome seemed to be a degrading badge of servitude. The sums which, under a thousand pretexts, were exacted by a distant court, were regarded both as a humiliating and as a ruinous tribute. The character of that court excited the scorn and disgust of a grave, earnest, sincere, and devout people. The new theology spread with a rapidity never known before. All ranks, all varieties of character, joined the ranks of the innovators. Sovereigns impatient to appropriate to themselves the prerogatives of the Pope, nobles desirous to share the plunder of abbeys, suitors exasperated by the extortions of the Roman Camera, patriots impatient of a foreign rule, good men scandalised by the corruptions of the Church, bad men desirous of the licence inseparable from great moral revolutions, wise men eager in the pursuit of truth, weak men allured by the glitter of novelty, all were found on one side. Alone among the northern nations the Irish adhered to the ancient faith: and the cause of this seems to have been that the national feeling which, in happier countries, was directed against Rome, was in Ireland directed against England. Within fifty years from the day on which Luther publicly renounced communion with the Papacy, and burned the bull of Leo before the gates of Wittenberg, Protestantism attained its highest ascendancy, an ascendancy which it soon lost, and which it has never regained. Hundreds, who could well remember Brother Martin a devout Catholic, lived to see the revolution of which he was the chief author,
victorious in half the states of Europe. In England, Scotland, Denmark, Sweden, Livonia, Prussia, Saxony, Hesse, Wurtemburg, the Palatinate, in several cantons of Switzerland, in the Northern Netherlands, the Reformation had completely triumphed; and in all the other countries on this side of the Alps and the Pyrenees, it seemed on the point of triumphing.

But while this mighty work was proceeding in the north of Europe, a revolution of a very different kind had taken place in the south. The temper of Italy and Spain was widely different from that of Germany and England. As the national feeling of the Teutonic nations impelled them to throw off the Italian supremacy, so the national feeling of the Italians impelled them to resist any change which might deprive their country of the honours and advantages which she enjoyed as the seat of the government of the Universal Church. It was in Italy that the tributes were spent of which foreign nations so bitterly complained. It was to adorn Italy that the traffic in Indulgences had been carried to that scandalous excess which had roused the indignation of Luther. There was among the Italians both much piety and much impiety; but, with very few exceptions, neither the piety nor the impiety took the turn of Protestantism. The religious Italians desired a reform of morals and discipline, but not a reform of doctrine, and least of all a schism. The irreligious Italians simply disbelieved Christianity, without hating it. They looked at it as artists or as statesmen; and, so looking at it, they liked it better in the established form than
in any other. It was to them what the old Pagan worship was to Trajan and Pliny. Neither the spirit of Savonarola nor the spirit of Machiavelli had anything in common with the spirit of the religious or political Protestants of the North.

Spain again was, with respect to the Catholic Church, in a situation very different from that of the Teutonic nations. Italy was, in truth, a part of the empire of Charles the Fifth; and the Court of Rome was, on many important occasions, his tool. He had not, therefore, like the distant princes of the North, a strong selfish motive for attacking the Papacy. In fact, the very measures which provoked the Sovereign of England to renounce all connection with Rome were dictated by the Sovereign of Spain. The feeling of the Spanish people concurred with the interest of the Spanish Government. The attachment of the Castilian to the faith of his ancestors was peculiarly strong and ardent. With that faith were inseparably bound up the institutions, the independence, and the glory of his country. Between the day when the last Gothic king was vanquished on the banks of the Xeres, and the day when Ferdinand and Isabella entered Granada in triumph, near eight hundred years had elapsed; and during those years the Spanish nation had been engaged in a desperate struggle against misbelievers. The Crusades had been merely an episode in the history of other nations. The existence of Spain had been one long Crusade. After fighting Mussulmans in the Old World, she began to fight heathens in the New. It was under the authority of a Papal bull that her children steered into unknown seas. It was
under the standard of the cross that they marched fearlessly into the heart of great kingdoms. It was with the cry of "St. James for Spain," that they charged armies which outnumbered them a hundredfold. And men said that the Saint had heard the call, and had himself, in arms, on a grey war-horse, led the onset before which the worshippers of false gods had given way. After the battle, every excess of rapacity or cruelty was sufficiently vindicated by the plea that the sufferers were unbaptized.

Avarice stimulated zeal. Zeal consecrated avarice. Proselytes and gold mines were sought with equal ardour. In the very year in which the Saxons, maddened by the exactions of Rome, broke loose from her yoke, the Spaniards, under the authority of Rome, made themselves masters of the empire and of the treasures of Montezuma. Thus Catholicism which, in the public mind of Northern Europe, was associated with spoliation and oppression, was in the public mind of Spain associated with liberty, victory, dominion, wealth, and glory.

It is not, therefore, strange that the effect of the great outbreak of Protestantism in one part of Christendom should have been to produce an equally violent outbreak of Catholic zeal in another. Two reformations were pushed on at once with equal energy and effect, a reformation of doctrine in the North, a reformation of manners and discipline in the South. In the course of a single generation, the whole spirit of the Church of Rome underwent a change. From the halls of the Vatican to the most secluded hermitage of the Apennines, the great revival was
everywhere felt and seen. All the institutions anciently devised for the propagation and defence of the faith were furbished up and made efficient. Fresh engines of still more formidable power were constructed. Everywhere old religious communities were remodelled and new religious communities called into existence. Within a year after the death of Leo, the order of Camaldoli was purified. The Capuchins restored the old Franciscan discipline, the midnight prayer and the life of silence. The Barnabites and the society of Somasca devoted themselves to the relief and education of the poor. To the Theatine order a still higher interest belongs. Its great object was the same with that of our early Methodists, namely to supply the deficiencies of the parochial clergy. The Church of Rome, wiser than the Church of England, gave every countenance to the good work. The members of the new brotherhood preached to great multitudes in the streets and in the fields, prayed by the beds of the sick, and administered the last sacraments to the dying. Foremost among them in zeal and devotion was Gian Pietro Caraffa, afterwards Pope Paul the Fourth. In the convent of the Theatines at Venice, under the eye of Caraffa, a Spanish gentleman took up his abode, tended the poor in the hospitals, went about in rags, starved himself almost to death, and often sallied into the streets, mounted on stones, and, waving his hat to invite the passers-by, began to preach in a strange jargon of mingled Castilian and Tuscan. The Theatines were among the most zealous and rigid of men; but to this enthusiastic neophyte their discipline seemed lax, and their movements sluggish; for his own mind, naturally passionate and imaginative, had passed through a training which
had given to all its peculiarities a morbid intensity and energy.

In his early life he had been the very prototype of the hero of
Cervantes. The single study of the young Hidalgo had been
chivalrous romance; and his existence had been one gorgeous day-
dream of princesses rescued and infidels subdued. He had chosen a
Dulcinea, "no countess, no duchess,"--these are his own words,--
"but one of far higher station"; and he flattered himself with
the hope of laying at her feet the keys of Moorish castles and
the jewelled turbans of Asiatic kings. In the midst of these
visions of martial glory and prosperous love, a severe wound
stretched him on a bed of sickness. His constitution was
shattered and he was doomed to be a cripple for life. The palm of
strength, grace, and skill in knightly exercises, was no longer
for him. He could no longer hope to strike down gigantic soldans,
or to find favour in the sight of beautiful women. A new vision
then arose in his mind, and mingled itself with his old delusions
in a manner which to most Englishmen must seem singular, but
which those who know how close was the union between religion and
chivalry in Spain will be at no loss to understand. He would
still be a soldier; he would still be a knight errant; but the
soldier and knight errant of the spouse of Christ. He would smite
the Great Red Dragon. He would be the champion of the Woman
clothed with the Sun. He would break the charm under which false
prophets held the souls of men in bondage. His restless spirit
led him to the Syrian deserts, and to the chapel of the Holy
Sepulchre. Thence he wandered back to the farthest West,
and astonished the convents of Spain and the schools of France
by his penances and vigils. The same lively imagination which
had been employed in picturing the tumult of unreal battles, and the charms of unreal queens, now peopled his solitude with saints and angels. The Holy Virgin descended to commune with him. He saw the Saviour face to face with the eye of flesh. Even those mysteries of religion which are the hardest trial of faith were in his case palpable to sight. It is difficult to relate without a pitying smile that, in the sacrifice of the mass, he saw transubstantiation take place, and that, as he stood praying on the steps of the Church of St. Dominic, he saw the Trinity in Unity, and wept aloud with joy and wonder. Such was the celebrated Ignatius Loyola, who, in the great Catholic reaction, bore the same part which Luther bore in the great Protestant movement.

Dissatisfied with the system of the Theatines, the enthusiastic Spaniard turned his face towards Rome. Poor, obscure, without a patron, without recommendations, he entered the city where now two princely temples, rich with painting and many-coloured marble, commemorate his great services to the Church; where his form stands sculptured in massive silver; where his bones, enshrined amidst jewels, are placed beneath the altar of God. His activity and zeal bore down all opposition; and under his rule the order of Jesuits began to exist, and grew rapidly to the full measure of his gigantic powers. With what vehemence, with what policy, with what exact discipline, with what dauntless courage, with what self-denial, with what forgetfulness of the dearest private ties, with what intense and stubborn devotion to a single
end, with what unscrupulous laxity and versatility in the choice
of means, the Jesuits fought the battle of their Church, is
written in every page of the annals of Europe during several
generations. In the order of Jesus was concentrated the
quintessence of the Catholic spirit; and the history of the order
of Jesus is the history of the great Catholic reaction. That
order possessed itself at once of all the strongholds which
command the public mind, of the pulpit, of the press, of the
confessional, of the academies. Wherever the Jesuit preached, the
church was too small for the audience. The name of Jesuit on a
title-page secured the circulation of a book. It was in the ears
of the Jesuit that the powerful, the noble, and the beautiful,
breathed the secret history of their lives. It was at the feet of
the Jesuit that the youth of the higher and middle classes were
brought up from childhood to manhood, from the first rudiments to
the courses of rhetoric and philosophy. Literature and science,
lately associated with infidelity or with heresy, now became the
allies of orthodoxy. Dominant in the South of Europe, the great
order soon went forth conquering and to conquer. In spite of
oceans and deserts, of hunger and pestilence, of spies and penal
laws, of dungeons and racks, of gibbets and quartering-blocks,
Jesuits were to be found under every disguise, and in every
country; scholars, physicians, merchants, serving-men; in the
hostile Court of Sweden, in the old manor-houses of Cheshire,
among the hovels of Connaught; arguing, instructing, consoling,
stealing away the hearts of the young, animating the courage of
the timid, holding up the crucifix before the eyes of the dying.
Nor was it less their office to plot against the thrones and
lives of apostate kings, to spread evil rumours, to raise
tumults, to inflame civil wars, to arm the hand of the assassin.
Inflexible in nothing but in their fidelity to the Church, they
were equally ready to appeal in her cause to the spirit of
loyalty and to the spirit of freedom. Extreme doctrines of
obedience and extreme doctrines of liberty, the right of rulers
to misgovern the people, the right of every one of the people to
plunge his knife in the heart of a bad ruler, were inculcated by
the same man, according as he addressed himself to the subject of
Philip or to the subject of Elizabeth. Some described these
divines as the most rigid, others as the most indulgent of
spiritual directors; and both descriptions were correct. The
correctly devout listened with awe to the high and saintly morality
of the Jesuit. The gay cavalier who had run his rival through the
body, the frail beauty who had forgotten her marriage-vow, found
in the Jesuit an easy well-bred man of the world, who knew how to
make allowance for the little irregularities of people of
fashion. The confessor was strict or lax, according to the temper
of the penitent. The first object was to drive no person out of
the pale of the Church. Since there were bad people, it was
better that they should be bad Catholics than bad Protestants. If
a person was so unfortunate as to be a bravo, a libertine, or a
gambler, that was no reason for making him a heretic too.

The Old World was not wide enough for this strange activity. The
Jesuits invaded all the countries which the great maritime
discoveries of the preceding age had laid open to European
enterprise. They were to be found in the depths of the Peruvian mines, at the marts of the African slave-caravans, on the shores of the Spice Islands, in the observatories of China. They made converts in regions which neither avarice nor curiosity had tempted any of their countrymen to enter; and preached and disputed in tongues of which no other native of the West understood a word.

The spirit which appeared so eminently in this order animated the whole Catholic world. The Court of Rome itself was purified. During the generation which preceded the Reformation, that Court had been a scandal to the Christian name. Its annals are black with treason, murder, and incest. Even its more respectable members were utterly unfit to be ministers of religion. They were men like Leo the Tenth; men who, with the Latinity of the Augustan age, had acquired its atheistical and scoffing spirit. They regarded those Christian mysteries, of which they were stewards, just as the Augur Cicero and the high Pontiff Caesar regarded the Sibylline books and the pecking of the sacred chickens. Among themselves, they spoke of the Incarnation, the Eucharist, and the Trinity, in the same tone in which Cotta and Velleius talked of the oracle of Delphi or the voice of Faunus in the mountains. Their years glided by in a soft dream of sensual and intellectual voluptuousness. Choice cookery, delicious wines, lovely women, hounds, falcons, horses, newly-discovered manuscripts of the classics, sonnets, and burlesque romances in the sweetest Tuscan, just as licentious as a fine sense of the
graceful would permit, plate from the hand of Benvenuto, designs for palaces by Michael Angelo, frescoes by Raphael, busts, mosaics, and gems just dug up from among the ruins of ancient temples and villas, these things were the delight and even the serious business of their lives. Letters and the fine arts undoubtedly owe much to this not inelegant sloth. But when the great stirring of the mind of Europe began, when doctrine after doctrine was assailed, when nation after nation withdrew from communion with the successor of St. Peter, it was felt that the Church could not be safely confided to chiefs whose highest praise was that they were good judges of Latin compositions, of paintings, and of statues, whose severest studies had a pagan character, and who were suspected of laughing in secret at the sacraments which they administered, and of believing no more of the Gospel than of the Morgante Maggiore. Men of a very different class now rose to the direction of ecclesiastical affairs, men whose spirit resembled that of Dunstan and of Becket. The Roman Pontiffs exhibited in their own persons all the austerity of the early anchorites of Syria. Paul the Fourth brought to the Papal throne the same fervent zeal which had carried him into the Theatine convent. Pius the Fifth, under his gorgeous vestments, wore day and night the hair shirt of a simple friar, walked barefoot in the streets at the head of processions, found, even in the midst of his most pressing avocations, time for private prayer, often regretted that the public duties of his station were unfavourable to growth in holiness, and edified his flock by innumerable instances of humility, charity, and forgiveness of personal injuries, while at the same time he upheld the authority
of his see, and the unadulterated doctrines of his Church, with all the stubbornness and vehemence of Hildebrand. Gregory the Thirteenth exerted himself not only to imitate but to surpass Pius in the severe virtues of his sacred profession. As was the head, such were the members. The change in the spirit of the Catholic world may be traced in every walk of literature and of art. It will be at once perceived by every person who compares the poem of Tasso with that of Ariosto, or the monuments Of Sixtus the Fifth with those of Leo the Tenth.

But it was not on moral influence alone that the Catholic Church relied. The civil sword in Spain and Italy was unsparingly employed in her support. The Inquisition was armed with new powers and inspired with a new energy. If Protestantism, or the semblance of Protestantism, showed itself in any quarter, it was instantly met, not by petty, teasing persecution, but by persecution of that sort which bows down and crushes all but a very few select spirits. Whoever was suspected of heresy, whatever his rank, his learning, or his reputation, knew that he must purge himself to the satisfaction of a severe and vigilant tribunal, or die by fire. Heretical books were sought out and destroyed with similar rigour. Works which were once in every house were so effectually suppressed that no copy of them is now to be found in the most extensive libraries. One book in particular, entitled Of the Benefits of the Death of Christ, had this fate. It was written in Tuscan, was many times reprinted, and was eagerly read in every part of Italy. But the inquisitors
detected in it the Lutheran doctrine of justification by faith alone. They proscribed it; and it is now as hopelessly lost as the second decade of Livy.

Thus, while the Protestant reformation proceeded rapidly at one extremity of Europe, the Catholic revival went on as rapidly at the other. About half a century after the great separation, there were, throughout the North, Protestant governments and Protestant nations. In the South were governments and nations actuated by the most intense zeal for the ancient Church. Between these two hostile regions lay, morally as well as geographically, a great debatable land. In France, Belgium, Southern Germany, Hungary, and Poland, the contest was still undecided. The governments of those countries had not renounced their connection with Rome; but the Protestants were numerous, powerful, bold, and active. In France, they formed a commonwealth within the realm, held fortresses, were able to bring great armies into the field, and had treated with their sovereign on terms of equality. In Poland, the King was still a Catholic; but the Protestants had the upper hand in the Diet, filled the chief offices in the administration, and, in the large towns, took possession of the parish churches. "It appeared," says the Papal nuncio, "that in Poland, Protestantism would completely supersede Catholicism." In Bavaria, the state of things was nearly the same. The Protestants had a majority in the Assembly of the States, and demanded from the duke concessions in favour of their
religion, as the price of their subsidies. In Transylvania, the House of Austria was unable to prevent the Diet from confiscating, by one sweeping decree, the estates of the Church. In Austria Proper it was generally said that only one-thirtieth part of the population could be counted on as good Catholics. In Belgium the adherents of the new opinions were reckoned by hundreds of thousands.

The history of the two succeeding generations is the history of the struggle between Protestantism possessed of the North of Europe, and Catholicism possessed of the South, for the doubtful territory which lay between. All the weapons of carnal and of spiritual warfare were employed. Both sides may boast of great talents and of great virtues. Both have to blush for many follies and crimes. At first, the chances seemed to be decidedly in favour of Protestantism; but the victory remained with the Church of Rome. On every point she was successful. If we overleap, another half century, we find her victorious and dominant in France, Belgium, Bavaria, Bohemia, Austria, Poland, and Hungary. Nor has Protestantism, in the course of two hundred years, been able to reconquer any portion of what was then lost.

It is, moreover, not to be dissembled that this triumph of the Papacy is to be chiefly attributed, not to the force of arms, but to a great reflux in public opinion. During the first half century after the commencement of the Reformation, the current of feeling, in the countries on this side of the Alps and of the
Pyrenees, ran impetuously towards the new doctrines. Then the
tide turned, and rushed as fiercely in the opposite direction.
Neither during the one period, nor during the other, did much
depend upon the event of battles or sieges. The Protestant
movement was hardly checked for an instant by the defeat at
Muhlberg. The Catholic reaction went on at full speed in spite of
the destruction of the Armada. It is difficult to say whether the
violence of the first blow or of the recoil was the greater.
Fifty years after the Lutheran separation, Catholicism could
scarcely maintain itself on the shores of the Mediterranean. A
hundred years after the separation, Protestantism could scarcely
maintain itself on the shores of the Baltic. The causes of this
memorable turn in human affairs well deserve to be investigated.

The contest between the two parties bore some resemblance to the
fencing-match in Shakspeare; "Laertes wounds Hamlet; then, in
scuffling, they change rapiers, and Hamlet wounds Laertes." The
war between Luther and Leo was a war between firm faith and
unbelief, between zeal and apathy, between energy and indolence,
between seriousness and frivolity, between a pure morality and
vice. Very different was the war which degenerate Protestantism
had to wage against regenerate Catholicism. To the debauchees,
the poisoners, the atheists, who had worn the tiara during the
generation which preceded the Reformation, had succeeded Popes
who, in religious fervour and severe sanctity of manners, might
bear a comparison with Cyprian or Ambrose. The order of Jesuits
alone could show many men not inferior in sincerity, constancy,
courage, and austerity of life, to the apostles of the
Reformation. But while danger had thus called forth in the bosom
of the Church of Rome many of the highest qualities of the
Reformers, the Reformers had contracted some of the corruptions
which had been justly censured in the Church of Rome. They had
become lukewarm and worldly. Their great old leaders had been
borne to the grave, and had left no successors. Among the
Protestant princes there was little or no hearty Protestant
feeling. Elizabeth herself was a Protestant rather from policy
than from firm conviction. James the First, in order to effect
his favourite object of marrying his son into one of the great
continental houses, was ready to make immense concessions to
Rome, and even to admit a modified primacy in the Pope. Henry the
Fourth twice abjured the reformed doctrines from interested
motives. The Elector of Saxony, the natural head of the
Protestant party in Germany, submitted to become, at the most
important crisis of the struggle, a tool in the hands of the
Papists. Among the Catholic sovereigns, on the other hand, we
find a religious zeal often amounting to fanaticism. Philip the
Second was a Papist in a very different sense from that in which
Elizabeth was a Protestant. Maximilian of Bavaria, brought up
under the teaching of the Jesuits, was a fervent missionary
wielding the powers of a prince. The Emperor Ferdinand the Second
deliberately put his throne to hazard over and over again, rather
than make the smallest concession to the spirit of religious
innovation. Sigismund of Sweden lost a crown which he might have
preserved if he would have renounced the Catholic faith. In
short, everywhere on the Protestant side we see languor;
everywhere on the Catholic side we see ardour and devotion.

Not only was there, at this time, a much more intense zeal among the Catholics than among the Protestants; but the whole zeal of the Catholics was directed against the Protestants, while almost the whole zeal of the Protestants was directed against each other. Within the Catholic Church there were no serious disputes on points of doctrine. The decisions of the Council of Trent were received; and the Jansenian controversy had not yet arisen. The whole force of Rome was, therefore, effective for the purpose of carrying on the war against the Reformation. On the other hand, the force which ought to have fought the battle of the Reformation was exhausted in civil conflict. While Jesuit preachers, Jesuit confessors, Jesuit teachers of youth, overspread Europe, eager to expend every faculty of their minds and every drop of their blood in the cause of their Church, Protestant doctors were confuting, and Protestant rulers were punishing, sectaries who were just as good Protestants as themselves.

"Cumque superba foret BABYLON spolianda tropaeis,
Bella geri placuit nullos habitura triumphos."

In the Palatinate, a Calvinistic prince persecuted the Lutherans.

In Saxony, a Lutheran prince persecuted the Calvinists. Everybody who objected to any of the articles of the Confession of Augsburg
was banished from Sweden. In Scotland, Melville was disputing with other Protestants on questions of ecclesiastical government.

In England the gaols were filled with men, who, though zealous for the Reformation, did not exactly agree with the Court on all points of discipline and doctrine. Some were persecuted for denying the tenet of reprobation; some for not wearing surplices. The Irish people might at that time have been, in all probability, reclaimed from Popery, at the expense of half the zeal and activity which Whitgift employed in oppressing Puritans, and Martin Marprelate in reviling bishops.

As the Catholics in zeal and in union had a great advantage over the Protestants, so had they also an infinitely superior organisation. In truth, Protestantism, for aggressive purposes, had no organisation at all. The Reformed Churches were mere national Churches. The Church of England existed for England alone. It was an institution as purely local as the Court of Common Pleas, and was utterly without any machinery for foreign operations. The Church of Scotland, in the same manner, existed for Scotland alone. The operations of the Catholic Church, on the other hand, took in the whole world. Nobody at Lambeth or at Edinburgh troubled himself about what was doing in Poland or Bavaria. But Cracow and Munich were at Rome objects of as much interest as the purlieus of St. John Lateran. Our island, the head of the Protestant interest, did not send out a single missionary or a single instructor of youth to the scene of the great spiritual war. Not a single seminary was established here.
for the purpose of furnishing a supply of such persons to foreign
countries. On the other hand, Germany, Hungary, and Poland were
filled with able and active Catholic emissaries of Spanish or
Italian birth; and colleges for the instruction of the northern
youth were founded at Rome. The spiritual force of Protestantism
was a mere local militia, which might be useful in case of an
invasion, but could not be sent abroad, and could therefore make
no conquests. Rome had such a local militia; but she had also a
force disposable at a moment's notice for foreign service,
however dangerous or disagreeable. If it was thought at head-
quarters that a Jesuit at Palermo was qualified by his talents
and character to withstand the Reformers in Lithuania, the order
was instantly given and instantly obeyed. In a month, the
faithful servant of the Church was preaching, catechising,
confessing, beyond the Niemen.

It is impossible to deny that the polity of the Church of Rome is
the very master-piece of human wisdom. In truth, nothing but such
a polity could, against such assaults, have borne up such
doctrines. The experience of twelve hundred eventful years, the
ingenuity and patient care of forty generations of statesmen,
have improved that polity to such perfection that, among the
contrivances which have been devised for deceiving and oppressing
mankind, it occupies the highest place. The stronger our
conviction that reason and scripture were decidedly on the side
of Protestantism, the greater is the reluctant admiration with
which we regard that system of tactics against which reason and
scripture were employed in vain.

If we went at large into this most interesting subject we should fill volumes. We will, therefore, at present, advert to only one important part of the policy of the Church of Rome. She thoroughly understands, what no other Church has ever understood, how to deal with enthusiasts. In some sects, particularly in infant sects, enthusiasm is suffered to be rampant. In other sects, particularly in sects long established and richly endowed, it is regarded with aversion. The Catholic Church neither submits to enthusiasm nor proscribes it, but uses it. She considers it as a great moving force which in itself, like the muscular power of a fine horse, is neither good nor evil, but which may be so directed as to produce great good or great evil; and she assumes the direction to herself. It would be absurd to run down a horse like a wolf. It would be still more absurd to let him run wild, breaking fences, and trampling down passengers. The rational course is to subjugate his will without impairing his vigour, to teach him to obey the rein, and then to urge him to full speed. When once he knows his master, he is valuable in proportion to his strength and spirit. Just such has been the system of the Church of Rome with regard to enthusiasts. She knows that, when religious feelings have obtained the complete empire of the mind, they impart a strange energy, that they raise men above the dominion of pain and pleasure, that obloquy becomes glory, that death itself is contemplated only as the beginning of a higher and happier life. She knows that a person in this state is no
object of contempt. He may be vulgar, ignorant, visionary, extravagant; but he will do and suffer things which it is for her interest that somebody should do and suffer, yet from which calm and sober-minded men would shrink. She accordingly enlists him in her service, assigns to him some forlorn hope, in which intrepidity and impetuosity are more wanted than judgment and self-command, and sends him forth with her benedictions and her applause.

In England it not unfrequently happens that a tinker or coal-heaver hears a sermon or falls in with a tract which alarms him about the state of his soul. If he be a man of excitable nerves and strong imagination, he thinks himself given over to the Evil Power. He doubts whether he has not committed the unpardonable sin. He imputes every wild fancy that springs up in his mind to the whisper of a fiend. His sleep is broken by dreams of the great judgment-seat, the open books, and the unquenchable fire. If, in order to escape from these vexing thoughts, he flies to amusement or to licentious indulgence, the delusive relief only makes his misery darker and more hopeless. At length a turn takes place. He is reconciled to his offended Maker. To borrow the fine imagery of one who had himself been thus tried, he emerges from the Valley of the Shadow of Death, from the dark land of gins and snares, of quagmires and precipices, of evil spirits and ravenous beasts. The sunshine is on his path. He ascends the Delectable Mountains, and catches from their summit a distant view of the shining city which is the end of his pilgrimage. Then arises in
his mind a natural and surely not a censurable desire, to impart
to others the thoughts of which his own heart is full, to warn
the careless, to comfort those who are troubled in spirit. The
impulse which urges him to devote his whole life to the teaching
of religion is a strong passion in the guise of a duty. He
exhorts his neighbours; and, if he be a man of strong parts, he
often does so with great effect. He pleads as if he were pleading
for his life, with tears, and pathetic gestures, and burning
words; and he soon finds with delight, not perhaps wholly unmixed
with the alloy of human infirmity, that his rude eloquence rouses
and melts hearers who sleep very composedly while the rector
preaches on the apostolical succession. Zeal for God, love for
his fellow-creatures, pleasure in the exercise of his newly
discovered powers, impel him to become a preacher. He has no
quarrel with the establishment, no objection to its formularies,
its government, or its vestments. He would gladly be admitted
among its humblest ministers, but, admitted or rejected, he feels
that his vocation is determined. His orders have come down to
him, not through a long and doubtful series of Arian and Popish
bishops, but direct from on high. His commission is the same that
on the Mountain of Ascension was given to the Eleven. Nor will
he, for lack of human credentials, spare to deliver the glorious
message with which he is charged by the true Head of the Church.
For a man thus minded, there is within the pale of the
establishment no place. He has been at no college; he cannot
construe a Greek author or write a Latin theme; and he is told
that, if he remains in the communion of the Church, he must do so
as a hearer, and that, if he is resolved to be a teacher, he must
begin by being a schismatic. His choice is soon made. He harangues on Tower Hill or in Smithfield. A congregation is formed. A licence is obtained. A plain brick building, with a desk and benches, is run up, and named Ebenezer or Bethel. In a few weeks the Church has lost for ever a hundred families, not one of which entertained the least scruple about her articles, her liturgy, her government, or her ceremonies.

Far different is the policy of Rome. The ignorant enthusiast whom the Anglican Church makes an enemy, and whatever the polite and learned may think, a most dangerous enemy, the Catholic Church makes a champion. She bids him nurse his beard, covers him with a gown and hood of coarse dark stuff, ties a rope round his waist, and sends him forth to teach in her name. He costs her nothing. He takes not a ducat away from the revenues of her beneficed clergy. He lives by the alms of those who respect his spiritual character, and are grateful for his instructions. He preaches, not exactly in the style of Massillon, but in a way which moves the passions of uneducated hearers; and all his influence is employed to strengthen the Church of which he is a minister. To that Church he becomes as strongly attached as any of the cardinals whose scarlet carriages and liveries crowd the entrance of the palace on the Quirinal. In this way the Church of Rome unites in herself all the strength of establishment, and all the strength of dissent. With the utmost pomp of a dominant hierarchy above, she has all the energy of the voluntary system below. It would be easy to mention very recent instances in which the
hearts of hundreds of thousands, estranged from her by the
selfishness, sloth, and cowardice of the beneficed clergy, have
been brought back by the zeal of the begging friars.

Even for female agency there is a place in her system. To devout
women she assigns spiritual functions, dignities, and
magistracies. In our country, if a noble lady is moved by more
than ordinary zeal for the propagation of religion, the chance is
that, though she may disapprove of no doctrine or ceremony of the
Established Church, she will end by giving her name to a new
schism. If a pious and benevolent woman enters the cells of a
prison to pray with the most unhappy and degraded of her own sex,
she does so without any authority from the Church. No line of
action is traced out for her; and it is well if the Ordinary does
not complain of her intrusion, and if the Bishop does not shake
his head at such irregular benevolence. At Rome, the Countess of
Huntingdon would have a place in the calendar as St. Selina, and
Mrs. Fry would be foundress and first Superior of the Blessed
Order of Sisters of the Gaols.

Place Ignatius Loyola at Oxford. He is certain to become the head
of a formidable secession. Place John Wesley at Rome. He is
certain to be the first General of a new society devoted to the
interests and honour of the Church. Place St. Theresa in London.
Her restless enthusiasm ferments into madness, not untinctured
with craft. She becomes the prophetess, the mother of the
faithful, holds disputations with the devil, issues sealed
pardons to her adorers, and lies in of the Shiloh. Place Joanna Southcote at Rome. She founds an order of barefooted Carmelites, every one of whom is ready to suffer martyrdom for the Church; a solemn service is consecrated to her memory; and her statue, placed over the holy water, strikes the eye of every stranger who enters St. Peter's.

We have dwelt long on this subject, because we believe that of the many causes to which the Church of Rome owed her safety and her triumph at the close of the sixteenth century, the chief was the profound policy with which she used the fanaticism of such persons as St. Ignatius and St. Theresa.

The Protestant party was now indeed vanquished and humbled. In France, so strong had been the Catholic reaction that Henry the Fourth found it necessary to choose between his religion and his crown. In spite of his clear hereditary right, in spite of his eminent personal qualities, he saw that, unless he reconciled himself to the Church of Rome, he could not count on the fidelity even of those gallant gentlemen whose impetuous valour had turned the tide of battle at Ivry. In Belgium, Poland, and Southern Germany, Catholicism had obtained complete ascendency. The resistance of Bohemia was put down. The Palatinate was conquered. Upper and Lower Saxony were overflowed by Catholic invaders. The King of Denmark stood forth as the Protector of the Reformed Churches: he was defeated, driven out of the empire, and attacked in his own possessions. The armies of the House of Austria
pressed on, subjugated Pomerania, and were stopped in their progress only by the ramparts of Stralsund.

And now again the tide turned. Two violent outbreaks of religious feeling in opposite directions had given a character to the whole history of a whole century. Protestantism had at first driven back Catholicism to the Alps and the Pyrenees. Catholicism had rallied, and had driven back Protestantism even to the German Ocean. Then the great southern reaction began to slacken, as the great northern movement had slackened before. The zeal of the Catholics waxed cool. Their union was dissolved. The paroxysm of religious excitement was over on both sides. One party had degenerated as far from the spirit of Loyola as the other from the spirit of Luther. During three generations religion had been the mainspring of politics. The revolutions and civil wars of France, Scotland, Holland, Sweden, the long struggle between Philip and Elizabeth, the bloody competition for the Bohemian crown, had all originated in theological disputes. But a great change now took place. The contest which was raging in Germany lost its religious character. It was now, on one side, less a contest for the spiritual ascendancy of the Church of Rome than for the temporal ascendancy of the House of Austria. On the other side, it was less a contest for the reformed doctrines than for national independence. Governments began to form themselves into new combinations, in which community of political interest was far more regarded than community of religious belief. Even at Rome the progress of the Catholic arms was observed with mixed
feelings. The Supreme Pontiff was a sovereign prince of the second rank, and was anxious about the balance of power as well as about the propagation of truth. It was known that he dreaded the rise of an universal monarchy even more than he desired the prosperity of the Universal Church. At length a great event announced to the world that the war of sects had ceased, and that the war of states had succeeded. A coalition, including Calvinists, Lutherans, and Catholics, was formed against the House of Austria. At the head of that coalition were the first statesman and the first warrior of the age; the former a prince of the Catholic Church, distinguished by the vigour and success with which he had put down the Huguenots; the latter a Protestant king who owed his throne to a revolution caused by hatred of Popery. The alliance of Richelieu and Gustavus marks the time at which the great religious struggle terminated. The war which followed was a war for the equilibrium of Europe. When, at length, the peace of Westphalia was concluded, it appeared that the Church of Rome remained in full possession of a vast dominion which in the middle of the preceding century she seemed to be on the point of losing. No part of Europe remained Protestant, except that part which had become thoroughly Protestant before the generation which heard Luther preach had passed away.

Since that time there has been no religious war between Catholics and Protestants as such. In the time of Cromwell, Protestant England was united with Catholic France, then governed by a priest, against Catholic Spain. William the Third, the eminently
Protestant hero, was at the head of a coalition which included many Catholic powers, and which was secretly favoured even by Rome, against the Catholic Lewis. In the time of Anne, Protestant England and Protestant Holland joined with Catholic Savoy and Catholic Portugal, for the purpose of transferring the crown of Spain from one bigoted Catholic to another.

The geographical frontier between the two religions has continued to run almost precisely where it ran at the close of the Thirty Years’ War; nor has Protestantism given any proofs of that “expansive power” which has been ascribed to it. But the Protestant boasts, and boasts most justly, that wealth, civilisation, and intelligence, have increased far more on the northern than on the southern side of the boundary, and that countries so little favoured by nature as Scotland and Prussia are now among the most flourishing and best governed portions of the world, while the marble palaces of Genoa are deserted, while banditti infest the beautiful shores of Campania, while the fertile sea-coast of the Pontifical State is abandoned to buffaloes and wild boars. It cannot be doubted that, since the sixteenth century, the Protestant nations have made decidedly greater progress than their neighbours. The progress made by those nations in which Protestantism, though not finally successful, yet maintained a long struggle, and left permanent traces, has generally been considerable. But when we come to the Catholic Land, to the part of Europe in which the first spark of reformation was trodden out as soon as it appeared, and from
which proceeded the impulse which drove Protestantism back, we
find, at best, a very slow progress, and on the whole a
retrogression. Compare Denmark and Portugal. When Luther began to
preach, the superiority of the Portuguese was unquestionable. At
present, the superiority of the Danes is no less so. Compare
Edinburgh and Florence. Edinburgh has owed less to climate, to
soil, and to the fostering care of rulers than any capital,
Protestant or Catholic. In all these respects, Florence has been
singularly happy. Yet whoever knows what Florence and Edinburgh
were in the generation preceding the Reformation, and what they
are now, will acknowledge that some great cause has, during the
last three Centuries, operated to raise one part of the European
family, and to depress the other. Compare the history of England
and that of Spain during the last century. In arms, arts,
sciences, letters, commerce, agriculture, the contrast is most
striking. The distinction is not confined to this side of the
Atlantic. The colonies planted by England in America have
immeasurably outgrown in power those planted by Spain. Yet we
have no reason to believe that, at the beginning of the sixteenth
century, the Castilian was in any respect inferior to the
Englishman. Our firm belief is, that the North owes its great
civilisation and prosperity chiefly to the moral effect of the
Protestant Reformation, and that the decay of the southern
countries of Europe is to be mainly ascribed to the great
Catholic revival.

About a hundred years after the final settlement of the boundary
line between Protestantism and Catholicism, began to appear the signs of the fourth great peril of the Church of Rome. The storm which was now rising against her was of a very different kind from those which had preceded it. Those who had formerly attacked her had questioned only a part of her doctrines. A school was now growing up which rejected the whole. The Albigenses, the Lollards, the Lutherans, the Calvinists, had a positive religious system, and were strongly attached to it. The creed of the new sectaries was altogether negative. They took one of their premises from the Protestants, and one from the Catholics. From the latter they borrowed the principle, that Catholicism was the only pure and genuine Christianity. With the former, they held that some parts of the Catholic system were contrary to reason. The conclusion was obvious. Two propositions, each of which separately is compatible with the most exalted piety, formed, when held in conjunction, the ground-work of a system of irreligion. The doctrine of Bossuet, that transubstantiation is affirmed in the Gospel, and the doctrine of Tillotson, that transubstantiation is an absurdity, when put together, produced by logical necessity, the inferences of Voltaire.

Had the sect which was rising at Paris been a sect of mere scoffers, it is very improbable that it would have left deep traces of its existence in the institutions and manners of Europe. Mere negation, mere Epicurean infidelity, as Lord Bacon most justly observes, has never disturbed the peace of the world. It furnishes no motive for action. It inspires no enthusiasm. It
has no missionaries, no crusaders, no martyrs. If the Patriarch of the Holy Philosophical Church had contented himself with making jokes about Saul's asses and David's wives, and with criticising the poetry of Ezekiel in the same narrow spirit in which he criticised that of Shakspeare, Rome would have had little to fear. But it is due to him and to his compeers to say that the real secret of their strength lay in the truth which was mingled with their errors, and in the generous enthusiasm which was hidden under their flippancy. They were men who, with all their faults, moral and intellectual, sincerely and earnestly desired the improvement of the condition of the human race, whose blood boiled at the sight of cruelty and injustice, who made manful war, with every faculty which they possessed, on what they considered as abuses, and who on many signal occasions placed themselves gallantly between the powerful and the oppressed. While they assailed Christianity with a rancour and an unfairness disgraceful to men who called themselves philosophers, they yet had, in far greater measure than their opponents, that charity towards men of all classes and races which Christianity enjoins. Religious persecution, judicial torture, arbitrary imprisonment, the unnecessary multiplication of capital punishments, the delay and chicanery of tribunals, the exactions of farmers of the revenue, slavery, the slave trade, were the constant subjects of their lively satire and eloquent disquisitions. When an innocent man was broken on the wheel at Toulouse, when a youth, guilty only of an indiscretion, was beheaded at Abbeville, when a brave officer, borne down by public injustice, was dragged, with a gag in his mouth, to die on the Place de Greve, a voice instantly
went forth from the banks of Lake Leman, which made itself heard
from Moscow to Cadiz, and which sentenced the unjust judges to
the contempt and detestation of all Europe. The really efficient
weapons with which the philosophers assailed the evangelical
faith were borrowed from the evangelical morality. The ethical
and dogmatical parts of the Gospel were unhappily turned against
each other. On one side was a Church boasting of the purity of a
doctrine derived from the Apostles, but disgraced by the massacre
of St. Bartholomew, by the murder of the best of kings, by the
war of Cevennes, by the destruction of Port-Royal. On the other
side was a sect laughing at the Scriptures, shooting out the
tongue at the sacraments, but ready to encounter principalities
and powers in the cause of justice, mercy and toleration.

Irreligion, accidentally associated with philanthropy, triumphed
for a time over religion accidentally associated with political
and social abuses. Everything gave way to the zeal and activity
of the new reformers. In France, every man distinguished in
letters was found in their ranks. Every year gave birth to works
in which the fundamental principles of the Church were attacked
with argument, invective, and ridicule. The Church made no
defence, except by acts of power. Censures were pronounced: books
were seized: insults were offered to the remains of infidel
writers; but no Bossuet, no Pascal, came forth to encounter
Voltaire. There appeared not a single defence of the Catholic
doctrine which produced any considerable effect, or which is
now even remembered. A bloody and unsparing persecution, like
that which put down the Albigenses, might have put down the
philosophers. But the time for De Montforts and Dominics had
gone by. The punishments which the priests were still able
to inflict were sufficient to irritate, but not sufficient to
destroy. The war was between power on one side, and wit on
the other; and the power was under far more restraint than
the wit. Orthodoxy soon became a synonyme for ignorance and
stupidity. It was as necessary to the character of an
accomplished man that he should despise the religion of his
country, as that he should know his letters. The new doctrines
spread rapidly through Christendom. Paris was the capital of the
whole Continent. French was everywhere the language of polite
circles. The literary glory of Italy and Spain had departed. That
of Germany had not dawned. That of England shone, as yet, for the
English alone. The teachers of France were the teachers of
Europe. The Parisian opinions spread fast among the educated
classes beyond the Alps: nor could the vigilance of the
Inquisition prevent the contraband importation of the new heresy
into Castile and Portugal. Governments, even arbitrary
governments, saw with pleasure the progress of this philosophy.
Numerous reforms, generally laudable, sometimes hurried on
without sufficient regard to time, to place, and to public
feeling, showed the extent of its influence. The rulers of
Prussia, of Russia, of Austria, and of many smaller states, were
supposed to be among the initiated.

The Church of Rome was still, in outward show, as stately and
splendid as ever; but her foundation was undermined. No state had 
quitted her communion or confiscated her revenues; but the 
reverence of the people was everywhere departing from her.

The first great warning-stroke was the fall of that society 
which, in the conflict with Protestantism, had saved the Catholic 
Church from destruction. The Order of Jesus had never recovered 
from the injury received in the struggle with Port-Royal. It was 
now still more rudely assailed by the philosophers. Its spirit 
was broken; its reputation was tainted. Insulted by all the men 
of genius in Europe, condemned by the civil magistrate, feebly 
defended by the chiefs of the hierarchy, it fell: and great was 
the fall of it.

The movement went on with increasing speed. The first generation 
of the new sect passed away. The doctrines of Voltaire were 
inherited and exaggerated by successors, who bore to him the same 
relation which the Anabaptists bore to Luther, or the Fifth-
Monarchy men to Pym. At length the Revolution came. Down went the 
old Church of France, with all its pomp and wealth. Some of its 
priests purchased a maintenance by separating themselves from 
Rome, and by becoming the authors of a fresh schism. Some, 
rejoicing in the new licence, flung away their sacred vestments, 
proclaimed that their whole life had been an imposture, insulted 
and persecuted the religion of which they had been ministers, and 
distinguished themselves, even in the Jacobin Club and the 
Commune of Paris, by the excess of their impudence and ferocity.
Others, more faithful to their principles, were butchered by scores without a trial, drowned, shot, hung on lamp-posts. Thousands fled from their country to take sanctuary under the shade of hostile altars. The churches were closed; the bells were silent; the shrines were plundered; the silver crucifixes were melted down. Buffoons, dressed in copes and surplices, came dancing the carmagnole even to the bar of the Convention. The bust of Marat was substituted for the statues of the martyrs of Christianity. A prostitute, seated on a chair of state in the chancel of Notre Dame, received the adoration of thousands, who exclaimed that at length, for the first time, those ancient Gothic arches had resounded with the accents of truth. The new unbelief was as intolerant as the old superstition. To show reverence for religion was to incur the suspicion of disaffectation. It was not without imminent danger that the priest baptized the infant, joined the hands of lovers, or listened to the confession of the dying. The absurd worship of the Goddess of Reason was, indeed, of short duration; but the deism of Robespierre and Lepaux was not less hostile to the Catholic faith than the atheism of Clootz and Chaumette.

Nor were the calamities of the Church confined to France. The revolutionary spirit, attacked by all Europe, beat all Europe back, became conqueror in its turn, and, not satisfied with the Belgian cities and the rich domains of the spiritual electors, went raging over the Rhine and through the passes of the Alps. Throughout the whole of the great war against Protestantism,
Italy and Spain had been the base of the Catholic operations. Spain was now the obsequious vassal of the infidels. Italy was subjugated by them. To her ancient principalities succeeded the Cisalpine republic, and the Ligurian republic, and the Parthenopean republic. The shrine of Loretto was stripped of the treasures piled up by the devotion of six hundred years. The convents of Rome were pillaged. The tricoloured flag floated on the top of the Castle of St. Angelo. The successor of St. Peter was carried away captive by the unbelievers. He died a prisoner in their hands; and even the honours of sepulture were long withheld from his remains.

It is not strange that in the year 1799, even sagacious observers should have thought that, at length, the hour of the Church of Rome was come. An infidel power ascendant, the Pope dying in captivity, the most illustrious prelates of France living in a foreign country on Protestant alms, the noblest edifices which the munificence of former ages had consecrated to the worship of God turned into temples of Victory, or into banqueting-houses for political societies, or into Theophilanthropic chapels, such signs might well be supposed to indicate the approaching end of that long domination.

But the end was not yet. Again doomed to death, the milk-white hind was still fated not to die. Even before the funeral rites had been performed over the ashes of Pius the Sixth, a great reaction had commenced, which, after the lapse of more than forty
years, appears to be still in progress. Anarchy had had its day. A new order of things rose out of the confusion, new dynasties, new laws, new titles; and amidst them emerged the ancient religion. The Arabs have a fable that the Great Pyramid was built by antediluvian kings, and alone, of all the works of men, bore the weight of the flood. Such as this was the fate of the Papacy. It had been buried under the great inundation; but its deep foundations had remained unshaken; and when the waters abated, it appeared alone amidst the ruins of a world which had passed away. The republic of Holland was gone, and the empire of Germany, and the great Council of Venice, and the old Helvetian League, and the House of Bourbon, and the parliaments and aristocracy of France. Europe was full of young creations, a French empire, a kingdom of Italy, a Confederation of the Rhine. Nor had the late events affected only territorial limits and political institutions. The distribution of property, the composition and spirit of society, had, through great part of Catholic Europe, undergone a complete change. But the unchangeable Church was still there.

Some future historian, as able and temperate as Professor Ranke, will, we hope, trace the progress of the Catholic revival of the nineteenth century. We feel that we are drawing too near our own time, and that, if we go on, we shall be in danger of saying much which may be supposed to indicate, and which will certainly excite, angry feelings. We will, therefore, make only one more observation, which, in our opinion, is deserving of serious
During the eighteenth century, the influence of the Church of Rome was constantly on the decline. Unbelief made extensive conquests in all the Catholic countries of Europe, and in some countries obtained a complete ascendency. The Papacy was at length brought so low as to be an object of derision to infidels, and of pity rather than of hatred to Protestants. During the nineteenth century, this fallen Church has been gradually rising from her depressed state and reconquering her old dominion. No person who calmly reflects on what, within the last few years, has passed in Spain, in Italy, in South America, in Ireland, in the Netherlands, in Prussia, even in France, can doubt that the power of this Church over the hearts and minds of men, is now greater far than it was when the Encyclopaedia and the Philosophical Dictionary appeared. It is surely remarkable, that neither the moral revolution of the eighteenth century, nor the moral counter-revolution of the nineteenth, should, in any perceptible degree, have added to the domain of Protestantism. During the former period, whatever was lost to Catholicism was lost also to Christianity; during the latter, whatever was regained by Christianity in Catholic countries was regained also by Catholicism. We should naturally have expected that many minds, on the way from superstition to infidelity, or on the way back from infidelity to superstition, would have stopped at an intermediate point. Between the doctrines taught in the schools of the Jesuits, and those which were maintained at the little
supper parties of the Baron Holbach, there is a vast interval, in which the human mind, it should seem, might find for itself some resting-place more satisfactory than either of the two extremes. And at the time of the Reformation, millions found such a resting-place. Whole nations then renounced Popery without ceasing to believe in a first cause, in a future life, or in the Divine mission of Jesus. In the last century, on the other hand, when a Catholic renounced his belief in the real Presence, it was a thousand to one that he renounced his belief in the Gospel too; and, when the reaction took place, with belief in the Gospel came back belief in the real presence.

We by no means venture to deduce from these phenomena any general law; but we think it a most remarkable fact, that no Christian nation, which did not adopt the principles of the Reformation before the end of the sixteenth century, should ever have adopted them. Catholic communities have, since that time, become infidel and become Catholic again; but none has become Protestant.

Here we close this hasty sketch of one of the most important portions of the history of mankind. Our readers will have great reason to feel obliged to us if we have interested them sufficiently to induce them to peruse Professor Ranke's book. We will only caution them against the French translation, a performance which, in our opinion, is just as discreditable to the moral character of the person from whom it proceeds as a false affidavit or a forged bill of exchange would have been, and
advise them to study either the original, or the English version, in which the sense and spirit of the original are admirably preserved.

WAR OF THE SUCCESSION IN SPAIN

(January 1833)


The days when Miscellanies in Prose and Verse by a Person of Honour, and Romances of M. Scuderi, done into English by a Person of Quality, were attractive to readers and profitable to booksellers, have long gone by. The literary privileges once enjoyed by lords are as obsolete as their right to kill the king's deer on their way to Parliament, or as their old remedy of scandalum magnatum. Yet we must acknowledge that, though our political opinions are by no means aristocratical, we always feel kindly disposed towards noble authors. Industry, and a taste for intellectual pleasures, are peculiarly respectable in those who can afford to be idle and who have every temptation to be dissipated. It is impossible not to wish success to a man who, finding himself placed, without any exertion or any merit on his part, above the mass of society, voluntarily descends from his eminence in search of distinctions which he may justly call his own.
This is, we think, the second appearance of Lord Mahon in the character of an author. His first book was creditable to him, but was in every respect inferior to the work which now lies before us. He has undoubtedly some of the most valuable qualities of a historian, great diligence in examining authorities, great judgment in weighing testimony, and great impartiality in estimating characters. We are not aware that he has in any instance forgotten the duties belonging to his literary functions in the feelings of a kinsman. He does no more than justice to his ancestor Stanhope; he does full justice to Stanhope's enemies and rivals. His narrative is very perspicuous, and is also entitled to the praise, seldom, we grieve to say, deserved by modern writers, of being very concise. It must be admitted, however, that, with many of the best qualities of a literary veteran, he has some of the faults of a literary novice. He has not yet acquired a great command of words. His style is seldom easy, and is now and then unpleasantly stiff. He is so bigoted a purist that he transforms the Abbe d'Estrees into an Abbot. We do not like to see French words introduced into English composition; but, after all, the first law of writing, that law to which all other laws are subordinate, is this, that the words employed shall be such as convey to the reader the meaning of the writer. Now an Abbot is the head of a religious house; an Abbe is quite a different sort of person. It is better undoubtedly to use an English word than a French word; but it is better to use a French word than to misuse an English word.
Lord Mahon is also a little too fond of uttering moral reflections in a style too sententious and oracular. We shall give one instance: "Strange as it seems, experience shows that we usually feel far more animosity against those whom we have injured than against those who injure us: and this remark holds good with every degree of intellect, with every class of fortune, with a prince or a peasant, a stripling or an elder, a hero or a prince." This remark might have seemed strange at the Court of Nimrod or Chedorlaomer; but it has now been for many generations considered as a truism rather than a paradox. Every boy has written on the thesis "Odisse quem loeseris." Scarcely any lines in English poetry are better known than that vigorous couplet,

"Forgiveness to the injured does belong;
But they ne'er pardon who have done the wrong."

The historians and philosophers have quite done with this maxim, and have abandoned it, like other maxims which have lost their gloss, to bad novelists, by whom it will very soon be worn to rags.

It is no more than justice to say that the faults of Lord Mahon's book are precisely the faults which time seldom fails to cure, and that the book, in spite of those faults, is a valuable addition to our historical literature.
Whoever wishes to be well acquainted with the morbid anatomy of
governments, whoever wishes to know how great states may be made
feeble and wretched, should study the history of Spain. The
empire of Philip the Second was undoubtedly one of the most
powerful and splendid that ever existed in the world. In Europe,
he ruled Spain, Portugal, the Netherlands on both sides of the
Rhine, Franche Comte, Roussillon, the Milanese, and the Two
Sicilies. Tuscany, Parma, and the other small states of Italy,
were as completely dependent on him as the Nizam and the Rajah of
Berar now are on the East India Company. In Asia, the King of
Spain was master of the Philippines and of all those rich
settlements which the Portuguese had made on the coast of Malabar
and Coromandel, in the Peninsula of Malacca, and in the Spice-
islands of the Eastern Archipelago. In America his dominions
extended on each side of the equator into the temperate zone.
There is reason to believe that his annual revenue amounted, in
the season of his greatest power, to a sum near ten times as
large as that which England yielded to Elizabeth. He had a
standing army of fifty thousand excellent troops, at a time when
England had not a single battalion in constant pay. His ordinary
naval force consisted of a hundred and forty galleys. He held,
what no other prince in modern times has held, the dominion both
of the land and of the sea. During the greater part of his reign,
he was supreme on both elements. His soldiers marched up to the
capital of France; his ships menaced the shores of England.
It is no exaggeration to say that, during several years, his power over Europe was greater than even that of Napoleon. The influence of the French conqueror never extended beyond low-water mark. The narrowest strait was to his power what it was of old believed that a running stream was to the sorceries of a witch. While his army entered every metropolis from Moscow to Lisbon, the English fleets blockaded every port from Dantzic to Trieste. Sicily, Sardinia, Majorca, Guernsey, enjoyed security through the whole course of a war which endangered every throne on the Continent. The victorious and imperial nation which had filled its museums with the spoils of Antwerp, of Florence, and of Rome, was suffering painfully from the want of luxuries which use had made necessaries. While pillars and arches were rising to commemorate the French conquests, the conquerors were trying to manufacture coffee out of succory and sugar out of beet-root. The influence of Philip on the Continent was as great as that of Napoleon. The Emperor of Germany was his kinsman. France, torn by religious dissensions, was never a formidable opponent, and was sometimes a dependent ally. At the same time, Spain had what Napoleon desired in vain, ships, colonies, and commerce. She long monopolised the trade of America and of the Indian Ocean. All the gold of the West, and all the spices of the East, were received and distributed by her. During many years of war, her commerce was interrupted only by the predatory enterprises of a few roving privateers. Even after the defeat of the Armada, English statesmen continued to look with great dread on the maritime power of Philip. "The King of Spain," said the Lord Keeper to the
two Houses in 1593, "since he hath usurped upon the Kingdom of Portugal, hath thereby grown mighty, by gaining the East Indies: so as, how great soever he was before, he is now thereby manifestly more great: . . . He keepeth a navy armed to impeach all trade of merchandise from England to Gascoigne and Guienne which he attempted to do this last vintage; so as he is now become as a frontier enemy to all the west of England, as well as all the south parts, as Sussex, Hampshire, and the Isle of Wight. Yea, by means of his interest in St. Maloes, a port full of shipping for the war, he is a dangerous neighbour to the Queen's isles of Jersey and Guernsey, ancient possessions of this Crown, and never conquered in the greatest wars with France."

The ascendancy which Spain then had in Europe was, in one sense, well deserved. It was an ascendancy which had been gained by unquestioned superiority in all the arts of policy and of war. In the sixteenth century, Italy was not more decidedly the land of the fine arts, Germany was not more decidedly the land of bold theological speculation, than Spain was the land of statesmen and of soldiers. The character which Virgil has ascribed to his countrymen might have been claimed by the grave and haughty chiefs, who surrounded the throne of Ferdinand the Catholic, and of his immediate successors. That majestic art, "regere imperio populos," was not better understood by the Romans in the proudest days of their republic, than by Gonsalvo and Ximenes, Cortes and Alva. The skill of the Spanish diplomatists was renowned throughout Europe. In England the name of Gondomar is still
remembered. The sovereign nation was unrivalled both in regular and irregular warfare. The impetuous chivalry of France, the serried phalanx of Switzerland, were alike found wanting when brought face to face with the Spanish infantry. In the wars of the New World, where something different from ordinary strategy was required in the general and something different from ordinary discipline in the soldier, where it was every day necessary to meet by some new expedient the varying tactics of a barbarous enemy, the Spanish adventurers, sprung from the common people, displayed a fertility of resource, and a talent for negotiation and command, to which history scarcely affords a parallel.

The Castilian of those times was to the Italian what the Roman, in the days of the greatness of Rome, was to the Greek. The conqueror had less ingenuity, less taste, less delicacy of perception than the conquered; but far more pride, firmness, and courage, a more solemn demeanour, a stronger sense of honour. The subject had more subtlety in speculation, the ruler more energy in action. The vices of the former were those of a coward; the vices of the latter were those of a tyrant. It may be added, that the Spaniard, like the Roman, did not disdain to study the arts and the language of those whom he oppressed. A revolution took place in the literature of Spain, not unlike that revolution which, as Horace tells us, took place in the poetry of Latium: "Capta ferum victorem cepit." The slave took prisoner the enslaver. The old Castilian ballads gave place to sonnets in the style of Petrarch, and to heroic poems in the stanza of Ariosto,
as the national songs of Rome were driven out by imitations of
Theocritus, and translations from Menander.

In no modern society, not even in England during the reign of
Elizabeth, has there been so great a number of men eminent at
once in literature and in the pursuits of active life, as Spain
produced during the sixteenth century. Almost every distinguished
writer was also distinguished as a soldier or a politician.

Boscan bore arms with high reputation. Garcilaso de Vega, the
author of the sweetest and most graceful pastoral poem of modern
times, after a short but splendid military career, fell sword in
hand at the head of a storming party. Alonzo de Ercilla bore a
conspicuous part in that war of Arauco, which he afterwards
celebrated in one of the best heroic poems that Spain has
produced. Hurtado de Mendoza, whose poems have been compared to
those of Horace, and whose charming little novel is evidently the
model of Gil-Blas, has been handed down to us by history as one
of the sternest of those iron proconsuls who were employed by the
House of Austria to crush the lingering public spirit of Italy.

Lope sailed in the Armada; Cervantes was wounded at Lepanto.

It is curious to consider with how much awe our ancestors in
those times regarded a Spaniard. He was, in their apprehension, a
kind of daemon, horribly malevolent, but withal most sagacious
and powerful. "They be verye wyse and politicke," says an honest
Englishman, in a memorial addressed to Mary, "and can, thorowe
ther wysdome, reform and brydell theyr owne natures for a tyme,
and applye their conditions to the maners of those men with whom they meddell gladlye by friendshippe; whose mischievous maners a man shall never knowe untill he come under ther subjection: but then shall he perfectlye perceyve and fele them: which thynge I praye God England never do: for in dissimulations untill they have ther purposes, and afterwards in oppression and tyrarnnye, when they can obtayne them, they do exceed all other nations upon the earthe." This is just such language as Arminius would have used about the Romans, or as an Indian statesman of our times might use about the English. It is the language of a man burning with hatred, but cowed by those whom he hates; and painfully sensible of their superiority, not only in power, but in intelligence.

But how art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer son of the morning! How art thou cut down to the ground, that didst weaken the nations! If we overleap a hundred years, and look at Spain towards the close of the seventeenth century, what a change do we find! The contrast is as great as that which the Rome of Gallienus and Honorius presents to the Rome of Marius and Caesar. Foreign conquest had begun to eat into every part of that gigantic monarchy on which the sun never set. Holland was gone, and Portugal, and Artois, and Roussillon, and Franche Comte. In the East, the empire founded by the Dutch far surpassed in wealth and splendour that which their old tyrants still retained. In the West, England had seized, and still held, settlements in the midst of the Mexican sea.
The mere loss of territory was, however, of little moment. The reluctant obedience of distant provinces generally costs more than it is worth. Empires which branch out widely are often more flourishing for a little timely pruning. Adrian acted judiciously when he abandoned the conquests of Trajan; and England was never so rich, so great, so formidable to foreign princes, so absolutely mistress of the sea, as since the loss of her American colonies. The Spanish Empire was still, in outward appearance, great and magnificent. The European dominions subject to the last feeble Prince of the House of Austria were far more extensive than those of Lewis the Fourteenth. The American dependencies of the Castilian Crown still extended far to the North of Cancer and far to the South of Capricorn. But within this immense body there was an incurable decay, an utter want of tone, an utter prostration of strength. An ingenious and diligent population, eminently skilled in arts and manufactures, had been driven into exile by stupid and remorseless bigots. The glory of the Spanish pencil had departed with Velasquez and Murillo. The splendid age of Spanish literature had closed with Solis and Calderon. During the seventeenth century many states had formed great military establishments. But the Spanish army, so formidable under the command of Alva and Farnese, had dwindled away to a few thousand men, ill paid and ill disciplined. England, Holland, and France had great navies. But the Spanish navy was scarcely equal to the tenth part of that mighty force which, in the time of Philip the Second, had been the terror of the Atlantic and the
Mediterranean. The arsenals were deserted. The magazines were unprovided. The frontier fortresses were ungarrisoned. The police was utterly inefficient for the protection of the people. Murders were committed in the face of day with perfect impunity. Bravoes and discarded serving-men, with swords at their sides,. swaggered every day through the most public streets and squares of the capital, disturbing the public peace, and setting at defiance the ministers of justice. The finances were in frightful disorder. The people paid much. The Government received little. The American viceroys and the farmers of the revenue became rich, while the merchants broke, while the peasantry starved, while the body-servants of the sovereign remained unpaid, while the soldiers of the royal guard repaired daily to the doors of convents, and battled there with the crowd of beggars for a porringer of broth and a morsel of bread. Every remedy which was tried aggravated the disease. The currency was altered; and this frantic measure produced its never-failing effects. It destroyed all credit, and increased the misery which it was intended to relieve. The American gold, to use the words of Ortiz, was to the necessities of the State but as a drop of water to the lips of a man raging with thirst. Heaps of unopened despatches accumulated in the offices, while the ministers were concerting with bedchamber-women and Jesuits the means of tripping up each other. Every foreign power could plunder and insult with impunity the heir of Charles the Fifth. Into such a state had the mighty kingdom of Spain fallen, while one of its smallest dependencies, a country not so large as the province of Estremadura or Andalusia, situated under an inclement sky, and preserved only by
artificial means from the inroads of the ocean, had become a
power of the first class, and treated on terms of equality with
the Courts of London and Versailles.

The manner in which Lord Mahon explains the financial situation
of Spain by no means satisfies us. "It will be found," says he,
"that those individuals deriving their chief income from mines,
whose yearly produce is uncertain and varying, and seems rather
to spring from fortune than to follow industry, are usually
careless, unthrifty, and irregular in their expenditure. The
example of Spain might tempt us to apply the same remark to
states." Lord Mahon would find it difficult, we suspect, to make
out his analogy. Nothing could be more uncertain and varying than
the gains and losses of those who were in the habit of putting
into the State lotteries. But no part of the public income was
more certain than that which was derived from the lotteries. We
believe that this case is very similar to that of the American
mines. Some veins of ore exceeded expectation; some fell below
it. Some of the private speculators drew blanks, and others
gained prizes. But the revenue of the State depended, not on any
particular vein, but on the whole annual produce of two great
continents. This annual produce seems to have been almost
constantly on the increase during the seventeenth century. The
Mexican mines were, through the reigns of Philip the Fourth and
Charles the Second, in a steady course of improvement; and in
South America, though the district of Potosi was not so
productive as formerly, other places more than made up for the
deficiency. We very much doubt whether Lord Mahon can prove that
the income which the Spanish Government derived from the mines of
America fluctuated more than the income derived from the internal
taxes of Spain itself.

All the causes of the decay of Spain resolve themselves into one
cause, bad government. The valour, the intelligence, the energy
which, at the close of the fifteenth and the beginning of the
sixteenth century, had made the Spaniards the first nation in the
world, were the fruits of the old institutions of Castile and
Arragon, institutions eminently favourable to public liberty.
These institutions the first Princes of the House of Austria
attacked and almost wholly destroyed. Their successors expiated
the crime. The effects of a change from good government to bad
government are not fully felt for some time after the change has
taken place. The talents and the virtues which a good
constitution generates may for a time survive that constitution.
Thus the reigns of princes, who have established absolute
monarchy on the ruins of popular forms of government often shine
in history with a peculiar brilliancy. But when a generation or
two has passed away, then comes signally to pass that which was
written by Montesquieu, that despotic governments resemble those
savages who cut down the tree in order to get at the fruit.
During the first years of tyranny, is reaped the harvest sown
during the last years of liberty. Thus the Augustan age was rich
in great minds formed in the generation of Cicero and Caesar. The
fruits of the policy of Augustus were reserved for posterity.
Philip the Second was the heir of the Cortes and of the Justiza Mayor; and they left him a nation which seemed able to conquer all the world. What Philip left to his successors is well known.

The shock which the great religious schism of the sixteenth century gave to Europe, was scarcely felt in Spain. In England, Germany, Holland, France, Denmark, Switzerland, Sweden, that shock had produced, with some temporary evil, much durable good. The principles of the Reformation had triumphed in some of those countries. The Catholic Church had maintained its ascendency in others. But though the event had not been the same in all, all had been agitated by the conflict. Even in France, in Southern Germany, and in the Catholic cantons of Switzerland, the public mind had been stirred to its inmost depths. The hold of ancient prejudice had been somewhat loosened. The Church of Rome, warned by the danger which she had narrowly escaped, had, in those parts of her dominion, assumed a milder and more liberal character. She sometimes condescended to submit her high pretensions to the scrutiny of reason, and availed herself more sparingly than in former times of the aid of the secular arm. Even when persecution was employed, it was not persecution in the worst and most frightful shape. The severities of Lewis the Fourteenth, odious as they were, cannot be compared with those which, at the first dawn of the Reformation, had been inflicted on the heretics in many parts of Europe.

The only effect which the Reformation had produced in Spain had
been to make the Inquisition more vigilant and the commonalty more bigoted. The times of refreshing came to all neighbouring countries. One people alone remained, like the fleece of the Hebrew warrior, dry in the midst of that benignant and fertilising dew. While other nations were putting away childish things, the Spaniard still thought as a child and understood as a child. Among the men of the seventeenth century, he was the man of the fifteenth century or of a still darker period, delighted to behold an Auto da fé, and ready to volunteer on a Crusade.

The evils produced by a bad government and a bad religion, seemed to have attained their greatest height during the last years of the seventeenth century. While the kingdom was in this deplorable state, the King, Charles, second of the name, was hastening to an early grave. His days had been few and evil. He had been unfortunate in all his wars, in every part of his internal administration, and in all his domestic relations. His first wife, whom he tenderly loved, died very young. His second wife exercised great influence over him, but seems to have been regarded by him rather with fear than with love. He was childless; and his constitution was so completely shattered that, at little more than thirty years of age, he had given up all hopes of posterity. His mind was even more distempered than his body. He was sometimes sunk in listless melancholy, and sometimes harassed by the wildest and most extravagant fancies. He was not, however, wholly destitute of the feelings which became his station. His sufferings were aggravated by the thought
that his own dissolution might not improbably be followed by the
dissolution of his empire.

Several princes laid claim to the succession. The King's eldest
sister had married Lewis the Fourteenth. The Dauphin would,
therefore, in the common course of inheritance, have succeeded to
the crown. But the Infanta had, at the time of her espousals,
solemnly renounced, in her own name, and in that of her
posterity, all claim to the succession. This renunciation had
been confirmed in due form by the Cortes. A younger sister of the
King had been the first wife of Leopold, Emperor of Germany. She
too had at her marriage renounced her claims to the Spanish
crown; but the Cortes had not sanctioned the renunciation, and it
was therefore considered as invalid by the Spanish jurists. The
fruit of this marriage was a daughter, who had espoused the
Elector of Bavaria. The Electoral Prince of Bavaria inherited her
claim to the throne of Spain. The Emperor Leopold was son of a
daughter of Philip the Third, and was therefore first cousin to
Charles. No renunciation whatever had been exacted from his
mother at the time of her marriage.

The question was certainly very complicated. That claim which,
according to the ordinary rules of inheritance, was the
strongest, had been barred by a contract executed in the most
binding form. The claim of the Electoral Prince of Bavaria was
weaker. But so also was the contract which bound him not to
prosecute his claim. The only party against whom no instrument of
renunciation could be produced was the party who, in respect of
blood, had the weakest claim of all.

As it was clear that great alarm would be excited throughout
Europe if either the Emperor or the Dauphin should become King of
Spain, each of those Princes offered to waive his pretensions in
favour of his second son, the Emperor, in favour of the Archduke
Charles, the Dauphin, in favour of Philip Duke of Anjou.

Soon after the peace of Ryswick, William the Third and Lewis the
Fourteenth determined to settle the question of the succession
without consulting either Charles or the Emperor. France,
England, and Holland, became parties to a treaty by which it was
stipulated that the Electoral Prince of Bavaria should succeed to
Spain, the Indies, and the Netherlands. The Imperial family were
to be bought off with the Milanese; and the Dauphin was to have
the Two Sicilies.

The great object of the King of Spain and of all his counsellors
was to avert the dismemberment of the monarchy. In the hope of
attaining this end, Charles determined to name a successor. A
will was accordingly framed by which the crown was bequeathed to
the Bavarian Prince. Unhappily, this will had scarcely been
signed when the Prince died. The question was again unsettled,
and presented greater difficulties than before.
A new Treaty of Partition was concluded between France, England, and Holland. It was agreed that Spain, the Indies, and the Netherlands, should descend to the Archduke Charles. In return for this great concession made by the Bourbons to a rival house, it was agreed that France should have the Milanese, or an equivalent in a more commodious situation. The equivalent in view was the province of Lorraine.

Arbuthnot, some years later, ridiculed the Partition Treaty with exquisite humour and ingenuity. Everybody must remember his description of the paroxysm of rage into which poor old Lord Strutt fell, on hearing that his runaway servant Nick Frog, his clothier John Bull, and his old enemy Lewis Baboon, had come with quadrants, poles, and inkhorns, to survey his estate, and to draw his will for him. Lord Mahon speaks of the arrangement with grave severity. He calls it "an iniquitous compact, concluded without the slightest reference to the welfare of the states so readily parcelled and allotted; insulting to the pride of Spain, and tending to strip that country of its hard-won conquests." The most serious part of this charge would apply to half the treaties which have been concluded in Europe quite as strongly as to the Partition Treaty. What regard was shown in the Treaty of the Pyrenees to the welfare of the people of Dunkirk and Roussillon, in the Treaty of Nimeguen to the welfare of the people of Franche Comte, in the Treaty of Utrecht to the welfare of the people of Flanders, in the treaty of 1735 to the welfare of the people of Tuscany? All Europe remembers, and our latest posterity will, we
fear, have reason to remember how coolly, at the last great pacification of Christendom, the people of Poland, of Norway, of Belgium, and of Lombardy, were allotted to masters whom they abhorred. The statesmen who negotiated the Partition Treaty were not so far beyond their age and ours in wisdom and virtue as to trouble themselves much about the happiness of the people whom they were apportioning among foreign rulers. But it will be difficult to prove that the stipulations which Lord Mahon condemns were in any respect unfavourable to the happiness of those who were to be transferred to new sovereigns. The Neapolitans would certainly have lost nothing by being given to the Dauphin, or to the Great Turk. Addison, who visited Naples about the time at which the Partition Treaty was signed, has left us a frightful description of the misgovernment under which that part of the Spanish Empire groaned. As to the people of Lorraine, an union with France would have been the happiest event which could have befallen them. Lewis was already their sovereign for all purposes of cruelty and exaction. He had kept their country during many years in his own hands. At the peace of Ryswick, indeed, their Duke had been allowed to return. But the conditions which had been imposed on him made him a mere vassal of France.

We cannot admit that the Treaty of Partition was objectionable because it "tended to strip Spain of hard-won conquests." The inheritance was so vast, and the claimants so mighty, that without some dismemberment it was scarcely possible to make a peaceable arrangement. If any dismemberment was to take place,
the best way of effecting it surely was to separate from the monarchy those provinces which were at a great distance from Spain, which were not Spanish in manners, in language, or in feelings, which were both worse governed and less valuable than the old kingdoms of Castile and Aragon, and which, having always been governed by foreigners, would not be likely to feel acutely the humiliation of being turned over from one master to another.

That England and Holland had a right to interfere is plain. The question of the Spanish succession was not an internal question, but an European question. And this Lord Mahon admits. He thinks that when the evil had been done, and a French prince was reigning at the Escorial, England and Holland were justified in attempting, not merely to strip Spain of its remote dependencies, but to conquer Spain itself; that they were justified in attempting to put, not merely the passive Flemings and Italians, but the reluctant Castilians and Asturians, under the dominion of a stranger. The danger against which the Partition Treaty was intended to guard was precisely the same danger which afterwards was made the ground of war. It will be difficult to prove that a danger which was sufficient to justify the war was insufficient to justify the provisions of the treaty. If, as Lord Mahon contends, it was better that Spain should be subjugated by main force than that she should be governed by a Bourbon, it was surely better that she should be deprived of Sicily and the Milanese than that she should be governed by a Bourbon.
Whether the treaty was judiciously framed is quite another question. We disapprove of the stipulations. But we disapprove of them, not because we think them bad, but because we think that there was no chance of their being executed. Lewis was the most faithless of politicians. He hated the Dutch. He hated the Government which the Revolution had established in England. He had every disposition to quarrel with his new allies. It was quite certain that he would not observe his engagements, if it should be for his interest to violate them. Even if it should be for his interest to observe them, it might well be doubted whether the strongest and clearest interest would induce a man so haughty and self-willed to co-operate heartily with two governments which had always been the objects of his scorn and aversion.

When intelligence of the second Partition Treaty arrived at Madrid, it roused to momentary energy the languishing ruler of a languishing state. The Spanish ambassador at the Court of London was directed to remonstrate with the Government of William; and his remonstrances were so insolent that he was commanded to leave England. Charles retaliated by dismissing the English and Dutch ambassadors. The French King, though the chief author of the Partition Treaty, succeeded in turning the whole wrath of Charles and of the Spanish people from himself, and in directing it against the two maritime powers. Those powers had now no agent at Madrid. Their perfidious ally was at liberty to carry on his intrigues unchecked; and he fully availed himself of this
A long contest was maintained with varying success by the factions which surrounded the miserable King. On the side of the Imperial family was the Queen, herself a Princess of that family. With her were allied the confessor of the King, and most of the ministers. On the other side were two of the most dexterous politicians of that age, Cardinal Porto Carrero, Archbishop of Toledo, and Harcourt, the ambassador of Lewis.

Harcourt was a noble specimen of the French aristocracy in the days of its highest splendour, a finished gentleman, a brave soldier, and a skilful diplomatist. His courteous and insinuating manners, his Parisian vivacity tempered with Castilian gravity, made him the favourite of the whole Court. He became intimate with the grandees. He caressed the clergy. He dazzled the multitude by his magnificent style of living. The prejudices which the people of Madrid had conceived against the French character, the vindictive feelings generated during centuries of national rivalry, gradually yielded to his arts; while the Austrian ambassador, a surly, pompous, niggardly German, made himself and his country more and more unpopular every day.

Harcourt won over the Court and the city: Porto Carrero managed the King. Never were knave and dupe better suited to each other. Charles was sick, nervous, and extravagantly superstitious. Porto
Carrero had learned in the exercise of his profession the art of exciting and soothing such minds; and he employed that art with the calm and demure cruelty which is the characteristic of wicked and ambitious priests.

He first supplanted the confessor. The state of the poor King, during the conflict between his two spiritual advisers, was horrible. At one time he was induced to believe that his malady was the same with that of the wretches described in the New Testament, who dwelt among the tombs, whom no chains could bind, and whom no man dared to approach. At another time a sorceress who lived in the mountains of the Asturias was consulted about his malady. Several persons were accused of having bewitched him. Porto Carrero recommended the appalling rite of exorcism, which was actually performed. The ceremony made the poor King more nervous and miserable than ever. But it served the turn of the Cardinal, who, after much secret trickery, succeeded in casting out, not the devil, but the confessor.

The next object was to get rid of the ministers. Madrid was supplied with provisions by a monopoly. The Government looked after this most delicate concern as it looked after everything else. The partisans of the House of Bourbon took advantage of the negligence of the administration. On a sudden the supply of food failed. Exorbitant prices were demanded. The people rose. The royal residence was surrounded by an immense multitude. The Queen harangued them. The priests exhibited the host. All was in vain.
It was necessary to awaken the King from his uneasy sleep, and to carry him to the balcony. There a solemn promise was given that the unpopular advisers of the Crown should be forthwith dismissed. The mob left the palace and proceeded to pull down the houses of the ministers. The adherents of the Austrian line were thus driven from power, and the government was intrusted to the creatures of Porto Carrero. The King left the city in which he had suffered so cruel an insult for the magnificent retreat of the Escorial. Here his hypochondriac fancy took a new turn. Like his ancestor Charles the Fifth, he was haunted by the strange curiosity to pry into the secrets of that grave to which he was hastening. In the cemetery which Philip the Second had formed beneath the pavement of the church of St. Lawrence, reposed three generations of Castilian princes. Into these dark vaults the unhappy monarch descended by torchlight, and penetrated to that superb and gloomy chamber where, round the great black crucifix, were ranged the coffins of the kings and queens of Spain. There he commanded his attendants to open the massy chests of bronze in which the relics of his predecessors decayed. He looked on the ghastly spectacle with little emotion till the coffin of his first wife was unclosed, and she appeared before him—such was the skill of the embalmer—in all her well-remembered beauty. He cast one glance on those beloved features, unseen for eighteen years, those features over which corruption seemed to have no power, and rushed from the vault, exclaiming, "She is with God; and I shall soon be with her." The awful sight completed the ruin of his body and mind. The Escorial became hateful to him; and he hastened to Aranjuez. But the shades and waters of that delicious
island-garden, so fondly celebrated in the sparkling verse of Calderon, brought no solace to their unfortunate master. Having tried medicine, exercise, and amusement in vain, he returned to Madrid to die.

He was now beset on every side by the bold and skilful agents of the House of Bourbon. The leading politicians of his Court assured him that Lewis, and Lewis alone, was sufficiently powerful to preserve the Spanish monarchy undivided, and that Austria would be utterly unable to prevent the Treaty of Partition from being carried into effect. Some celebrated lawyers gave it as their opinion that the act of renunciation executed by the late Queen of France ought to be construed according to the spirit, and not according to the letter. The letter undoubtedly excluded the French princes. The spirit was merely this, that ample security should be taken against the union of the French and Spanish Crowns on one head.

In all probability, neither political nor legal reasonings would have sufficed to overcome the partiality which Charles felt for the House of Austria. There had always been a close connection between the two great royal lines which sprang from the marriage of Philip and Juana. Both had always regarded the French as their natural enemies. It was necessary to have recourse to religious terrors; and Porto Carrero employed those terrors with true professional skill. The King's life was drawing to a close. Would the most Catholic prince commit a great sin on the brink of the
grave? And what could be a greater sin than, from an unreasonable attachment to a family name, from an unchristian antipathy to a rival house, to set aside the rightful heir of an immense monarchy? The tender conscience and the feeble intellect of Charles were strongly wrought upon by these appeals. At length Porto Carrero ventured on a master-stroke. He advised Charles to apply for counsel to the Pope. The King, who, in the simplicity of his heart, considered the successor of St. Peter as an infallible guide in spiritual matters, adopted the suggestion; and Porto Carrero, who knew that his Holiness was a mere tool of France, awaited with perfect confidence the result of the application. In the answer which arrived from Rome, the King was solemnly reminded of the great account which he was soon to render, and cautioned against the flagrant injustice which he was tempted to commit. He was assured that the right was with the House of Bourbon, and reminded that his own salvation ought to be dearer to him than the House of Austria. Yet he still continued irresolute. His attachment to his family, his aversion to France, were not to be overcome even by Papal authority. At length he thought himself actually dying. Then the cardinal redoubled his efforts. Divine after divine, well tutored for the occasion, was brought to the bed of the trembling penitent. He was dying in the commission of known sin. He was defrauding his relatives. He was bequeathing civil war to his people. He yielded, and signed that memorable testament, the cause of many calamities to Europe. As he affixed his name to the instrument, he burst into tears.

"God," he said, "gives kingdoms and takes them away. I am already one of the dead."
The will was kept secret during the short remainder of his life.

On the third of November 1700 he expired. All Madrid crowded to the palace. The gates were thronged. The antechamber was filled with ambassadors and grandees, eager to learn what dispositions the deceased sovereign had made. At length the folding doors were flung open. The Duke of Abrantes came forth, and announced that the whole Spanish monarchy was bequeathed to Philip, Duke of Anjou. Charles had directed that, during the interval which might elapse between his death and the arrival of his successor, the government should be administered by a council, of which Porto Carrero was the chief member.

Lewis acted, as the English ministers might have guessed that he would act. With scarcely the show of hesitation, he broke through all the obligations of the Partition Treaty, and accepted for his grandson the splendid legacy of Charles. The new sovereign hastened to take possession of his dominions. The whole Court of France accompanied him to Sceaux. His brothers escorted him to that frontier which, as they weakly imagined, was to be a frontier no longer. "The Pyrenees," said Lewis, "have ceased to exist." Those very Pyrenees, a few years later, were the theatre of a war between the heir of Lewis and the prince whom France was now sending to govern Spain.

If Charles had ransacked Europe to find a successor whose moral
and intellectual character resembled his own, he could not have
chosen better. Philip was not so sickly as his predecessor, but
he was quite as weak, as indolent, and as superstitious; he very
soon became quite as hypochondriacal and eccentric; and he was
even more uxorious. He was indeed a husband of ten thousand. His
first object, when he became King of Spain, was to procure a
wife. From the day of his marriage to the day of her death, his
first object was to have her near him, and to do what she wished.
As soon as his wife died, his first object was to procure
another. Another was found, as unlike the former as possible. But
she was a wife; and Philip was content. Neither by day nor by
night, neither in sickness nor in health, neither in time of
business nor in time of relaxation, did he ever suffer her to be
absent from him for half an hour. His mind was naturally feeble;
and he had received an enfeebling education. He had been brought
up amidst the dull magnificence of Versailles. His grandfather
was as imperious and as ostentatious in his intercourse with the
royal family as in public acts. All those who grew up immediately
under the eye of Lewis had the manners of persons who had never
known what it was to be at ease. They were all taciturn, shy, and
awkward. In all of them, except the Duke of Burgundy, the evil
went further than the manners. The Dauphin, the Duke Of Berri,
Philip of Anjou, were men of insignificant characters.

They had no energy, no force of will. They had been so little
accustomed to judge or to act for themselves that implicit
dependence had become necessary to their comfort. The new King of
Spain, emancipated from control, resembled that wretched German captive who, when the irons which he had worn for years were knocked off, fell prostrate on the floor of his prison. The restraints which had enfeebled the mind of the young Prince were required to support it. Till he had a wife he could do nothing; and when he had a wife he did whatever she chose.

While this lounging, moping boy was on his way to Madrid, his grandfather was all activity. Lewis had no reason to fear a contest with the Empire single-handed. He made vigorous preparations to encounter Leopold. He overawed the States-General by means of a great army. He attempted to soothe the English Government by fair professions. William was not deceived. He fully returned the hatred of Lewis; and, if he had been free to act according to his own inclinations, he would have declared war as soon as the contents of the will were known. But he was bound by constitutional restraints. Both his person and his measures were unpopular in England. His secluded life and his cold manners disgusted a people accustomed to the graceful affability of Charles the Second. His foreign accent and his foreign attachments were offensive to the national prejudices. His reign had been a season of distress, following a season of rapidly increasing prosperity. The burdens of the late war and the expense of restoring the currency had been severely felt. Nine clergymen out of ten were Jacobites at heart, and had sworn allegiance to the new dynasty, only in order to save their benefices. A large proportion of the country gentlemen belonged
to the same party. The whole body of agricultural proprietors was
hostile to that interest which the creation of the national debt
had brought into notice, and which was believed to be peculiarly
favoured by the Court, the monied interest. The middle classes
were fully determined to keep out James and his family. But they
regarded William only as the less of two evils; and, as long as
there was no imminent danger of a counter-revolution, were
disposed to thwart and mortify the sovereign by whom they were,
nevertheless, ready to stand, in case of necessity, with their
lives and fortunes. They were sullen and dissatisfied. "There
was," as Somers expressed it in a remarkable letter to William,
"a deadness and want of spirit in the nation universally."

Everything in England was going on as Lewis could have wished.
The leaders of the Whig party had retired from power, and were
extremely unpopular on account of the unfortunate issue of the
Partition Treaty. The Tories, some of whom still cast a lingering
look towards St. Germains, were in office, and had a decided
majority in the House of Commons. William was so much embarrassed
by the state of parties in England that he could not venture to
make war on the House of Bourbon. He was suffering under a
complication of severe and incurable diseases. There was every
reason to believe that a few months would dissolve the fragile
tie which bound up that feeble body with that ardent and
unconquerable soul. If Lewis could succeed in preserving peace
for a short time, it was probable that all his vast designs would
be securely accomplished. Just at this crisis, the most important
crisis of his life, his pride and his passions hurried him into an error, which undid all that forty years of victory and intrigue had done, which produced the dismemberment of the kingdom of his grandson, and brought invasion, bankruptcy, and famine on his own.

James the Second died at St. Germains. Lewis paid him a farewell visit, and was so much moved by the solemn parting, and by the grief of the exiled queen, that, losing sight of all considerations of policy, and actuated, as it should seem, merely by compassion and by a not ungenerous vanity, he acknowledged the Prince of Wales as King of England.

The indignation which the Castilians had felt when they heard that three foreign powers had undertaken to regulate the Spanish succession was nothing to the rage with which the English learned that their good neighbour had taken the trouble to provide them with a king. Whigs and Tories joined in condemning the proceedings of the French Court. The cry for war was raised by the city of London, and echoed and re-echoed from every corner of the realm. William saw that his time was come. Though his wasted and suffering body could hardly move without support, his spirit was as energetic and resolute as when, at twenty-three, he bade defiance to the combined forces of England and France. He left the Hague, where he had been engaged in negotiating with the States and the Emperor a defensive treaty against the ambitious designs of the Bourbons. He flew to London. He remodelled the
Ministry. He dissolved the Parliament. The majority of the new House of Commons was with the King; and the most vigorous preparations were made for war.

Before the commencement of active hostilities William was no more. But the Grand Alliance of the European Princes against the Bourbons was already constructed. "The master workman died," says Mr. Burke; "but the work was formed on true mechanical principles, and it was as truly wrought." On the fifteenth of May, 1702, war was proclaimed by concert at Vienna, at London, and at the Hague.

Thus commenced that great struggle by which Europe, from the Vistula to the Atlantic Ocean, was agitated during twelve years. The two hostile coalitions were, in respect of territory, wealth, and population, not unequally matched. On the one side were France, Spain, and Bavaria; on the other, England, Holland, the Empire, and a crowd of inferior Powers.

That part of the war which Lord Mahon has undertaken to relate, though not the least important, is certainly the least attractive. In Italy, in Germany, and in the Netherlands, great means were at the disposal of great generals. Mighty battles were fought. Fortress after fortress was subdued. The iron chain of the Belgian strongholds was broken. By a regular and connected series of operations extending through several years, the French
were driven back from the Danube and the Po into their own provinces. The war in Spain, on the contrary, is made up of events which seem to have no dependence on each other. The turns of fortune resemble those which take place in a dream. Victory and defeat are not followed by their usual consequences. Armies spring out of nothing, and melt into nothing. Yet, to judicious readers of history, the Spanish conflict is perhaps more interesting than the campaigns of Marlborough and Eugene. The fate of the Milanese and of the Low Countries was decided by military skill. The fate of Spain was decided by the peculiarities of the national character.

When the war commenced, the young King was in a most deplorable situation. On his arrival at Madrid, he found Porto Carrero at the head of affairs, and he did not think fit to displace the man to whom he owed his crown. The Cardinal was a mere intriguer, and in no sense a statesman. He had acquired, in the Court and in the confessional, a rare degree of skill in all the tricks by which weak minds are managed. But of the noble science of government, of the sources of national prosperity, of the causes of national decay, he knew no more than his master. It is curious to observe the contrast between the dexterity with which he ruled the conscience of a foolish valetudinarian, and the imbecility which he showed when placed at the head of an empire. On what grounds Lord Mahon represents the Cardinal as a man "of splendid genius," "of vast abilities," we are unable to discover. Lewis was of a very different opinion, and Lewis was very seldom mistaken in his
judgment of character. "Everybody," says he, in a letter to his ambassador, "knows how incapable the Cardinal is. He is an object of contempt to his countrymen."

A few miserable savings were made, which ruined individuals without producing any perceptible benefit to the State. The police became more and more inefficient. The disorders of the capital were increased by the arrival of French adventurers, the refuse of Parisian brothels and gaming-houses. These wretches considered the Spaniards as a subjugated race whom the countrymen of the new sovereign might cheat and insult with impunity. The King sate eating and drinking all night, lay in bed all day, yawned at the council table, and suffered the most important papers to lie unopened for weeks. At length he was roused by the only excitement of which his sluggish nature was susceptible. His grandfather consented to let him have a wife. The choice was fortunate. Maria Louisa, Princess of Savoy, a beautiful and graceful girl of thirteen, already a woman in person and mind at an age when the females of colder climates are still children, was the person selected. The King resolved to give her the meeting in Catalonia. He left his capital, of which he was already thoroughly tired. At setting out he was mobbed by a gang of beggars. He, however, made his way through them, and repaired to Barcelona.

Lewis was perfectly aware that the Queen would govern Philip. He, accordingly, looked about for somebody to govern the Queen. He
selected the Princess Orsini to be first lady of the bedchamber, no insignificant post in the household of a very young wife, and a very uxorious husband. The Princess was the daughter of a French peer, and the widow of a Spanish grandee. She was, therefore, admirably fitted by her position to be the instrument of the Court of Versailles at the Court of Madrid. The Duke of Orleans called her, in words too coarse for translation, the Lieutenant of Captain Maintenon: and the appellation was well deserved. She aspired to play in Spain the part which Madame de Maintenon had played in France. But, though at least equal to her model in wit, information, and talents for intrigue, she had not that self-command, that patience, that imperturbable evenness of temper, which had raised the widow of a buffoon to be the consort of the proudest of kings. The Princess was more than fifty years old, but was still vain of her fine eyes, and her fine shape; she still dressed in the style of a girl; and she still carried her flirtations so far as to give occasion for scandal. She was, however, polite, eloquent, and not deficient in strength of mind. The bitter Saint Simon owns that no person whom she wished to attach could long resist the graces of her manners and of her conversation.

We have not time to relate how she obtained, and how she preserved, her empire over the young couple in whose household she was placed, how she became so powerful, that neither minister of Spain nor ambassador from France could stand against her, how Lewis himself was compelled to court her, how she received orders
from Versailles to retire, how the Queen took part with her
favourite attendant, how the King took part with the Queen, and
how, after much squabbling, lying, shuffling, bullying, and
coaxing, the dispute was adjusted. We turn to the events of the
war.

When hostilities were proclaimed at London, Vienna, and the
Hague, Philip was at Naples. He had been with great difficulty
prevailed upon, by the most urgent representations from
Versailles, to separate himself from his wife, and to repair
without her to his Italian dominions, which were then menaced by
the Emperor. The Queen acted as Regent, and, child as she was,
seems to have been quite as competent to govern the kingdom as
her husband or any of his ministers.

In August 1702, an armament, under the command of the Duke of
Ormond, appeared off Cadiz. The Spanish authorities had no funds
and no regular troops. The national spirit, however, supplied, in
some degree, what was wanting. The nobles and farmers advanced
money. The peasantry were formed into what the Spanish writers
call bands of heroic patriots, and what General Stanhope calls “a
rascally foot militia.” If the invaders had acted with vigour and
judgment, Cadiz would probably have fallen. But the chiefs of the
expedition were divided by national and professional feelings,
Dutch against English, and land against sea. Sparre, the Dutch
general, was sulky and perverse. Bellasys, the English general,
embezzled the stores. Lord Mahon imputes the ill-temper of Sparre
to the influence of the republican institutions of Holland. By
parity of reason, we suppose that he would impute the peculations
of Bellasys to the influence of the monarchical and
aristocratical institutions of England. The Duke of Ormond, who
had the command of the whole expedition, proved on this occasion,
as on every other, destitute of the qualities which great
emergencies require. No discipline was kept; the soldiers were
suffered to rob and insult those whom it was most desirable to
conciliate. Churches were robbed, images were pulled down; nuns
were violated. The officers shared the spoil instead of punishing
the spoilers; and at last the armament, loaded, to use the words
of Stanhope, "with a great deal of plunder and infamy," quitted
the scene of Essex's glory, leaving the only Spaniard of note who
had declared for them to be hanged by his countrymen. The fleet
was off the coast of Portugal, on the way back to England, when
the Duke of Ormond received intelligence that the treasure-ships
from America had just arrived in Europe, and had, in order to
avoid his armament, repaired to the harbour of Vigo. The cargo
consisted, it was said, of more than three millions sterling in
gold and silver, besides much valuable merchandise. The prospect
of plunder reconciled all disputes. Dutch and English admirals
and generals, were equally eager for action. The Spaniards might
with the greatest ease have secured the treasure by simply
landing it; but it was a fundamental law of Spanish trade that
the galleons should unload at Cadiz, and at Cadiz only. The
Chamber of Commerce at Cadiz, in the true spirit of monopoly,
refused, even at this conjuncture, to bate one jot of its
privilege. The matter was referred to the Council of the Indies.
That body deliberated and hesitated just a day too long. Some feeble preparations for defence were made. Two ruined towers at the mouth of the bay of Vigo were garrisoned by a few ill-armed and untrained rustics; a boom was thrown across the entrance of the basin; and a few French ships of war, which had convoyed the galleons from America, were moored within. But all was to no purpose. The English ships broke the boom; Ormond and his soldiers scaled the forts; the French burned their ships, and escaped to the shore. The conquerors shared some millions of dollars; some millions more were sunk. When all the galleons had been captured or destroyed came an order in due form allowing them to unload.

When Philip returned to Madrid in the beginning of 1703, he found the finances more embarrassed, the people more discontented and the hostile coalition more formidable than ever. The loss of the galleons had occasioned a great deficiency in the revenue. The Admiral of Castile, one of the greatest subjects in Europe, had fled to Lisbon and sworn allegiance to the Archduke. The King of Portugal soon after acknowledged Charles as King of Spain, and prepared to support the title of the House of Austria by arms.

On the other side, Lewis sent to the assistance of his grandson an army of 12,000 men, commanded by the Duke of Berwick. Berwick was the son of James the Second and Arabella Churchill. He had been brought up to expect the highest honours which an English subject could enjoy; but the whole course of his life was changed
by the revolution which overthrew his infatuated father. Berwick became an exile, a man without a country; and from that time forward his camp was to him in the place of a country, and professional honour was his patriotism. He ennobled his wretched calling. There was a stern, cold, Brutus-like virtue in the manner in which he discharged the duties of a soldier of fortune. His military fidelity was tried by the strongest temptations, and was found invincible. At one time he fought against his uncle; at another time he fought against the cause of his brother; yet he was never suspected of treachery or even of slackness.

Early in 1704 an army, composed of English, Dutch, and Portuguese, was assembled on the western frontier of Spain. The Archduke Charles had arrived at Lisbon, and appeared in person at the head of his troops. The military skill of Berwick held the Allies, who were commanded by Lord Galway, in check through the whole campaign. On the south, however, a great blow was struck. An English fleet, under Sir George Rooke, having on board several regiments commanded by the Prince of Hesse Darmstadt, appeared before the rock of Gibraltar. That celebrated stronghold, which nature has made all but impregnable, and against which all the resources of the military art have been employed in vain, was taken as easily as if it had been an open village in a plain. The garrison went to say their prayers instead of standing on their guard. A few English sailors climbed the rock. The Spaniards capitulated; and the British flag was placed on those ramparts from which the combined armies and navies of France and Spain
have never been able to pull it down. Rooke proceeded to Malaga, gave battle in the neighbourhood of that port to a French squadron, and after a doubtful action returned to England.

But greater events were at hand. The English Government had determined to send an expedition to Spain, under the command of Charles Mordaunt, Earl of Peterborough. This man was, if not the greatest, yet assuredly the most extraordinary character of that age, the King of Sweden himself not excepted. Indeed, Peterborough may be described as a polite, learned, and amorous Charles the Twelfth. His courage had all the French impetuosity, and all the English steadiness. His fertility and activity of mind were almost beyond belief. They appeared in everything that he did, in his campaigns, in his negotiations, in his familiar correspondence, in his lightest and most unstudied conversation. He was a kind friend, a generous enemy, and in deportment a thorough gentleman. But his splendid talents and virtues were rendered almost useless to his country, by his levity, his restlessness, his irritability, his morbid craving for novelty and for excitement. His weaknesses had not only brought him, on more than one occasion, into serious trouble; but had impelled him to some actions altogether unworthy of his humane and noble nature. Repose was insupportable to him. He loved to fly round Europe faster than a travelling courier. He was at the Hague one week, at Vienna the next. Then he took a fancy to see Madrid; and he had scarcely reached Madrid, when he ordered horses and set off for Copenhagen. No attendants could keep up with his speed.
No bodily infirmities could confine him. Old age, disease, imminent death, produced scarcely any effect on his intrepid spirit. Just before he underwent the most horrible of surgical operations, his conversation was as sprightly as that of a young man in the full vigour of health. On the day after the operation, in spite of the entreaties of his medical advisers, he would set out on a journey. His figure was that of a skeleton. But his elastic mind supported him under fatigues and sufferings which seemed sufficient to bring the most robust man to the grave. Change of employment was as necessary to him as change of place. He loved to dictate six or seven letters at once. Those who had to transact business with him complained that though he talked with great ability on every subject, he could never be kept to the point. "Lord Peterborough," said Pope, "would say very pretty and lively things in his letters, but they would be rather too gay and wandering; whereas, were Lord Bolingbroke to write to an emperor, or to a statesman, he would fix on that point which was the most material, would set it in the strongest and fiercest light, and manage it so as to make it the most serviceable to his purpose." What Peterborough was to Bolingbroke as a writer, he was to Marlborough as a general. He was, in truth, the last of the knights-errant, brave to temerity, liberal to profusion, courteous in his dealings with enemies, the Protector of the oppressed, the adorer of women. His virtues and vices were those of the Round Table. Indeed, his character can hardly be better summed up, than in the lines in which the author of that clever little poem, Monks and Giants, has described Sir Tristram.
"His birth, it seems, by Merlin's calculation,
Was under Venus, Mercury, and Mars;
His mind with all their attributes was mixed,
And, like those planets, wandering and unfixed.

"From realm to realm he ran, and never staid:
Kingdoms and crowns he won, and gave away:
It seemed as if his labours were repaid
By the mere noise and movement of the fray:
No conquests or acquirements had he made;
His chief delight was, on some festive day
To ride triumphant, prodigal, and proud,
And shower his wealth amidst the shouting crowd.

"His schemes of war were sudden, unforeseen,
Inexplicable both to friend and foe;
It seemed as if some momentary spleen
Inspired the project, and impelled the blow;
And most his fortune and success were seen
With means the most inadequate and low;
Most master of himself, and least encumbered,
When overmatched, entangled, and outnumbered."

In June 1705, this remarkable man arrived in Lisbon with five
thousand Dutch and English soldiers. There the Archduke embarked
with a large train of attendants, whom Peterborough entertained
magnificently during the voyage at his own expense. From Lisbon
the armament proceeded to Gibraltar, and, having taken the Prince
of Hesse Darmstadt on board, steered towards the north-east along
the coast of Spain.

The first place at which the expedition touched, after leaving
Gibraltar, was Altea in Valencia. The wretched misgovernment of
Philip had excited great discontent throughout this province. The
invaders were eagerly welcomed. The peasantry flocked to the
shore, bearing provisions, and shouting, "Long live Charles the
Third." The neighbouring fortress of Denia surrendered without a
blow.

The imagination of Peterborough took fire. He conceived the hope
of finishing the war at one blow. Madrid was but a hundred and
fifty miles distant. There was scarcely one fortified place on
the road. The troops of Philip were either on the frontiers of
Portugal or on the coast of Catalonia. At the capital there was
no military force, except a few horse who formed a guard of
honour round the person of Philip. But the scheme of pushing into
the heart of a great kingdom with an army of only seven thousand
men, was too daring to please the Archduke.

The Prince of Hesse Darmstadt, who, in the reign of the late King
of Spain, had been Governor of Catalonia, and who overrated his
own influence in that province, was of opinion that they ought
instantly to proceed thither, and to attack Barcelona,
Peterborough was hampered by his instructions, and found it
necessary to submit.

On the sixteenth of August the fleet arrived before Barcelona;
and Peterborough found that the task assigned to him by the
Archduke and the Prince was one of almost insuperable difficulty.
One side of the city was protected by the sea; the other by the
strong fortifications of Monjuich. The walls were so extensive,
that thirty thousand men would scarcely have been sufficient to
invest them. The garrison was as numerous as the besieging army.
The best officers in the Spanish service were in the town. The
hopes which the Prince of Darmstadt had formed of a general
rising in Catalonia were grievously disappointed. The invaders
were joined only by about fifteen hundred armed peasants, whose
services cost more than they were worth.

No general was ever in a more deplorable situation than that in
which Peterborough was now placed. He had always objected to the
scheme of besieging Barcelona. His objections had been overruled.
He had to execute a project which he had constantly represented
as impracticable. His camp was divided into hostile factions and
he was censured by all. The Archduke and the Prince blamed him
for not proceeding instantly to take the town; but suggested no
plan by which seven thousand men could be enabled to do the work
of thirty thousand. Others blamed their general for giving up his
own opinion to the childish whims of Charles, and for sacrificing his men in an attempt to perform what was impossible. The Dutch commander positively declared that his soldiers should not stir: Lord Peterborough might give what orders he chose; but to engage in such a siege was madness; and the men should not be sent to certain death when there was no chance of obtaining any advantage.

At length, after three weeks of inaction, Peterborough announced his fixed determination to raise the siege. The heavy cannon were sent on board. Preparations were made for re-embarking the troops. Charles and the Prince of Hesse were furious, but most of the officers blamed their general for having delayed so long the measure which he had at last found it necessary to take. On the twelfth of September there were rejoicings and public entertainments in Barcelona for this great deliverance. On the following morning the English flag was flying on the ramparts of Monjuich. The genius and energy of one man had supplied the place of forty battalions.

At midnight Peterborough had called out the Prince of Hesse, with whom he had not for some time been on speaking terms, "I have resolved, sir," said the Earl, "to attempt an assault; you may accompany us, if you think fit, and see whether I and my men deserve what you have been pleased to say of us." The Prince was startled. The attempt, he said, was hopeless; but he was ready to take his share; and, without further discussion, he called for
his horse.

Fifteen hundred English soldiers were assembled under the Earl. A thousand more had been posted as a body of reserve, at a neighbouring convent, under the command of Stanhope. After a winding march along the foot of the hills, Peterborough and his little army reached the walls of Monjuich. There they halted till daybreak. As soon as they were descried, the enemy advanced into the outer ditch to meet them. This was the event on which Peterborough had reckoned, and for which his men were prepared. The English received the fire, rushed forward, leaped into the ditch, put the Spaniards to flight, and entered the works together with the fugitives. Before the garrison had recovered from their first surprise, the Earl was master of the outworks, had taken several pieces of cannon, and had thrown up a breastwork to defend his men. He then sent off for Stanhope's reserve. While he was waiting for this reinforcement, news arrived that three thousand men were marching from Barcelona towards Monjuich. He instantly rode out to take a view of them; but no sooner had he left his troops than they were seized with a panic. Their situation was indeed full of danger; they had been brought into Monjuich, they scarcely knew how; their numbers were small; their general was gone: their hearts failed them, and they were proceeding to evacuate the fort. Peterborough received information of these occurrences in time to stop the retreat. He galloped up to the fugitives, addressed a few words to them, and put himself at their head. The sound of his voice and the sight
of his face restored all their courage, and they marched back to their former position.

The Prince of Hesse had fallen in the confusion of the assault; but everything else went well. Stanhope arrived; the detachment which had marched out of Barcelona retreated; the heavy cannon were disembarked, and brought to bear on the inner fortifications of Monjuich, which speedily fell. Peterborough, with his usual generosity, rescued the Spanish soldiers from the ferocity of his victorious army, and paid the last honours with great pomp to his rival the Prince of Hesse.

The reduction of Monjuich was the first of a series of brilliant exploits. Barcelona fell; and Peterborough had the glory of taking, with a handful of men, one of the largest and strongest towns of Europe. He had also the glory, not less dear to his chivalrous temper, of saving the life and honour of the beautiful Duchess of Popoli, whom he met flying with dishevelled hair from the fury of the soldiers. He availed himself dexterously of the jealousy with which the Catalonians regarded the inhabitants of Castile. He guaranteed to the province in the capital of which he was now quartered all its ancient rights and liberties, and thus succeeded in attaching the population to the Austrian cause.

The open country now declared in favour of Charles. Tarragona, Tortosa, Gerona, Lerida, San Mateo, threw open their gates. The
Spanish Government sent the Count of Las Torres with seven thousand men to reduce San Mateo. The Earl of Peterborough, with only twelve hundred men, raised the siege. His officers advised him to be content with this extraordinary success. Charles urged him to return to Barcelona; but no remonstrances could stop such a spirit in the midst of such a career. It was the depth of winter. The country was mountainous. The roads were almost impassable. The men were ill-clothed. The horses were knocked up. The retreating army was far more numerous than the pursuing army. But difficulties and dangers vanished before the energy of Peterborough. He pushed on, driving Las Torres before him. Nules surrendered to the mere terror of his name; and, on the fourth of February, 1706 he arrived in triumph at Valencia. There he learned that a body of four thousand men was on the march to join Las Torres. He set out at dead of night from Valencia, passed the Xucar, came unexpectedly on the encampment of the enemy, and slaughtered, dispersed, or took the whole reinforcement. The Valencians could scarcely believe their eyes when they saw the prisoners brought in.

In the meantime the Courts of Madrid and Versailles, exasperated and alarmed by the fall of Barcelona and by the revolt of the surrounding country, determined to make a great effort. A large army, nominally commanded by Philip, but really under the orders of Marshal Tesse, entered Catalonia. A fleet under the Count of Toulouse, one of the natural children of Lewis the Fourteenth, appeared before the port of Barcelona, The city was attacked at
once by sea and land. The person of the Archduke was in considerable danger. Peterborough, at the head of about three thousand men, marched with great rapidity from Valencia. To give battle, with so small a force, to a great regular army under the conduct of a Marshal of France, would have been madness. The Earl therefore made war after the fashion of the Minas and Empecinados of our own time. He took his post on the neighbouring mountains, harassed the enemy with incessant alarms, cut off their stragglers, intercepted their communications with the interior, and introduced supplies, both of men and provisions, into the town. He saw, however, that the only hope of the besieged was on the side of the sea. His commission from the British Government gave him supreme power, not only over the army, but, whenever he should be actually on board, over the navy also. He put out to sea at night in an open boat, without communicating his design to any person. He was picked up several leagues from the shore, by one of the ships of the English squadron. As soon as he was on board, he announced himself as first in command, and sent a pinnace with his orders to the Admiral. Had these orders been given a few hours earlier, it is probable that the whole French fleet would have been taken. As it was, the Count of Toulouse put out to sea. The port was open. The town was relieved. On the following night the enemy raised the siege and retreated to Roussillon. Peterborough returned to Valencia, a place which he preferred to every other in Spain; and Philip, who had been some weeks absent from his wife, could endure the misery of separation no longer, and flew to rejoin her at Madrid.
At Madrid, however, it was impossible for him or for her to remain. The splendid success which Peterborough had obtained on the eastern coast of the Peninsula had inspired the sluggish Galway with emulation. He advanced into the heart of Spain. Berwick retreated. Alcantara, Ciudad Rodrigo, and Salamanca fell, and the conquerors marched towards the capital.

Philip was earnestly pressed by his advisers to remove the seat of government to Burgos. The advance guard of the allied army was already seen on the heights above Madrid. It was known that the main body was at hand. The unfortunate Prince fled with his Queen and his household. The royal wanderers, after travelling eight days on bad roads, under a burning sun, and sleeping eight nights in miserable hovels, one of which fell down and nearly crushed them both to death, reached the metropolis of Old Castile. In the meantime the invaders had entered Madrid in triumph, and had proclaimed the Archduke in the streets of the imperial city. Arragon, ever jealous of the Castilian ascendency, followed the example of Catalonia. Saragossa revolted without seeing an enemy. The governor whom Philip had set over Carthagena betrayed his trust, and surrendered to the Allies the best arsenal and the last ships which Spain possessed.

Toledo had been for some time the retreat of two ambitious, turbulent and vindicative intriguers, the Queen Dowager and Cardinal Porto Carrero. They had long been deadly enemies. They
had led the adverse factions of Austria and France. Each had in
turn domineered over the weak and disordered mind of the late
King. At length the impostures of the priest had triumphed over
the blandishments of the woman; Porto Carrero had remained
victorious; and the Queen had fled in shame and mortification,
from the Court where she had once been supreme. In her retirement
she was soon joined by him whose arts had destroyed her
influence. The Cardinal, having held power just long enough to
convince all parties of his incompetency, had been dismissed to
his See, cursing his own folly and the ingratitude of the House
which he had served too well. Common interests and common
enmities reconciled the fallen rivals. The Austrian troops were
admitted into Toledo without opposition. The Queen Dowager flung
off that mournful garb which the widow of a King of Spain wears
through her whole life, and blazed forth in jewels. The Cardinal
blessed the standards of the invaders in his magnificent
cathedral, and lighted up his palace in honour of the great
deliverance. It seemed that the struggle had terminated in favour
of the Archduke, and that nothing remained for Philip but a
prompt flight into the dominions of his grandfather.

So judged those who were ignorant of the character and habits of
the Spanish people. There is no country in Europe which it is so
easy to overrun as Spain, there is no country in Europe which it
is more difficult to conquer. Nothing can be more contemptible
than the regular military resistance which Spain offers to an
invader; nothing more formidable than the energy which she puts
forth when her regular military resistance has been beaten down.

Her armies have long borne too much resemblance to mobs; but her mobs have had, in an unusual degree, the spirit of armies. The soldier, as compared with other soldiers, is deficient in military qualities; but the peasant has as much of those qualities as the soldier. In no country have such strong fortresses been taken by surprise: in no country have unfortified towns made so furious and obstinate a resistance to great armies. War in Spain has, from the days of the Romans, had a character of its own; it is a fire which cannot be raked out; it burns fiercely under the embers; and long after it has, to all seeming, been extinguished, bursts forth more violently than ever. This was seen in the last war. Spain had no army which could have looked in the face an equal number of French or Prussian soldiers; but one day laid the Prussian monarchy in the dust; one day put the crown of France at the disposal of invaders. No Jena, no Waterloo, would have enabled Joseph to reign in quiet at Madrid.

The conduct of the Castilians throughout the War of the Succession was most characteristic. With all the odds of number and situation on their side, they had been ignominiously beaten. All the European dependencies of the Spanish crown were lost. Catalonia, Arragon, and Valencia had acknowledged the Austrian Prince. Gibraltar had been taken by a few sailors; Barcelona stormed by a few dismounted dragoons. The invaders had penetrated into the centre of the Peninsula, and were quartered at Madrid.
and Toledo. While these events had been in progress, the nation had scarcely given a sign of life. The rich could hardly be prevailed on to give or to lend for the support of war; the troops had shown neither discipline nor courage; and now at last, when it seemed that all was lost, when it seemed that the most sanguine must relinquish all hope, the national spirit awoke, fierce, proud, and unconquerable. The people had been sluggish when the circumstances might well have inspired hope; they reserved all their energy for what appeared to be a season of despair. Castile, Leon, Andalusia, Estremadura, rose at once; every peasant procured a firelock or a pike; the Allies were masters only of the ground on which they trod. No soldier could wander a hundred yards from the main body of the invading army without imminent risk of being poniarded. The country through which the conquerors had passed to Madrid, and which, as they thought, they had subdued, was all in arms behind them. Their communications with Portugal were cut off. In the meantime, money began, for the first time, to flow rapidly into the treasury of the fugitive King. "The day before yesterday," says the Princess Orsini, in a letter written at this time, "the priest of a village which contains only a hundred and twenty houses brought a hundred and twenty pistoles to the Queen. 'My flock,' said he, 'are ashamed to send you so little; but they beg you to believe that in this purse there are a hundred and twenty hearts faithful even to the death.' The good man wept as he spoke; and indeed we wept too. Yesterday another small village, in which there are only twenty houses, sent us fifty pistoles."
While the Castilians were everywhere arming in the cause of Philip, the Allies were serving that cause as effectually by their mismanagement. Galway staid at Madrid, where his soldiers indulged in such boundless licentiousness that one half of them were in the hospitals. Charles remained dawdling in Catalonia. Peterborough had taken Requena, and wished to march from Valencia towards Madrid, and to effect a junction with Galway; but the Archduke refused his consent to the plan. The indignant general remained accordingly in his favourite city, on the beautiful shores of the Mediterranean, reading Don Quixote, giving balls and suppers, trying in vain to get some good sport out of the Valencia bulls, and making love, not in vain, to the Valencian women.

At length the Archduke advanced into Castile, and ordered Peterborough to join him. But it was too late. Berwick had already compelled Galway to evacuate Madrid; and, when the whole force of the Allies was collected at Guadalaxara, it was found to be decidedly inferior in numbers to that of the enemy.

Peterborough formed a plan for regaining possession of the capital. His plan was rejected by Charles. The patience of the sensitive and vainglorious hero was worn out. He had none of that serenity of temper which enabled Marlborough to act in perfect harmony with Eugene, and to endure the vexatious interference of the Dutch deputies. He demanded permission to leave the army.
Permission was readily granted; and he set out for Italy. That there might be some pretext for his departure, he was commissioned by the Archduke to raise a loan in Genoa, on the credit of the revenues of Spain.

From that moment to the end of the campaign the tide of fortune ran strong against the Austrian cause. Berwick had placed his army between the Allies and the frontiers of Portugal. They retreated on Valencia, and arrived in that Province, leaving about ten thousand prisoners in the hands of the enemy.

In January 1707, Peterborough arrived at Valencia from Italy, no longer bearing a public character, but merely as a volunteer. His advice was asked, and it seems to have been most judicious. He gave it as his decided opinion that no offensive operations against Castile ought to be undertaken. It would be easy, he said, to defend Arragon, Catalonia, and Valencia, against Philip. The inhabitants of those parts of Spain were attached to the cause of the Archduke; and the armies of the House of Bourbon would be resisted by the whole population. In a short time the enthusiasm of the Castilians might abate. The government of Philip might commit unpopular acts. Defeats in the Netherlands might compel Lewis to withdraw the succours which he had furnished to his grandson. Then would be the time to strike a decisive blow. This excellent advice was rejected. Peterborough, who had now received formal letters of recall from England, departed before the opening of the campaign; and with him
departed the good fortune of the Allies. Scarcely any general had ever done so much with means so small. Scarcely any general had ever displayed equal originality and boldness. He possessed, in the highest degree, the art of conciliating those whom he had subdued. But he was not equally successful in winning the attachment of those with whom he acted. He was adored by the Catalonians and Valencians; but he was hated by the prince whom he had all but made a great king, and by the generals whose fortune and reputation were staked on the same venture with his own. The English Government could not understand him. He was so eccentric that they gave him no credit for the judgment which he really possessed. One day he took towns with horse-soldiers; then again he turned some hundreds of infantry into cavalry at a minute's notice. He obtained his political intelligence chiefly by means of love affairs, and filled his despatches with epigrams. The ministers thought that it would be highly impolitic to intrust the conduct of the Spanish war to so volatile and romantic a person. They therefore gave the command to Lord Galway, an experienced veteran, a man who was in war what Molière's doctors were in medicine, who thought it much more honourable to fail according to rule, than to succeed by innovation, and who would have been very much ashamed of himself if he had taken Monjuich by means so strange as those which Peterborough employed. This great commander conducted the campaign of 1707 in the most scientific manner. On the plain of Almanza he encountered the army of the Bourbons. He drew up his troops according to the methods prescribed by the best writers, and in a few hours lost eighteen thousand men, a hundred and
twenty standards, all his baggage and all his artillery. Valencia
and Arragon were instantly conquered by the French, and, at the
close of the year, the mountainous province of Catalonia was the
only part of Spain which still adhered to Charles.

"Do you remember, child," says the foolish woman in the Spectator
to her husband, "that the pigeon-house fell the very afternoon
that our careless wench spilt the salt upon the table?" "Yes, my
dear," replies the gentleman, "and the next post brought us an
account of the battle of Almanza." The approach of disaster in
Spain had been for some time indicated by omens much clearer than
the mishap of the salt-cellar; an ungrateful prince, an
undisciplined army, a divided council, envy triumphant over
merit, a man of genius recalled, a pedant and a sluggard
intrusted with supreme command. The battle of Almanza decided the
fate of Spain. The loss was such as Marlborough or Eugene could
scarcely have retrieved, and was certainly not to be retrieved by
Stanhope and Staremberg.

Stanhope, who took the command of the English army in Catalonia,
was a man of respectable abilities, both in military and civil
affairs, but fitter, we conceive, for a second than for a first
place. Lord Mahon, with his usual candour, tells us, what we
believe was not known before, that his ancestor's most
distinguished exploit, the conquest of Minorca, was suggested by
Marlborough. Staremberg, a methodical tactician of the German
school, was sent by the emperor to command in Spain. Two languid
campaigns followed, during which neither of the hostile armies did anything memorable, but during which both were nearly starved.

At length, in 1710, the chiefs of the Allied forces resolved to venture on bolder measures. They began the campaign with a daring move, pushed into Arragon, defeated the troops of Philip at Almenara, defeated them again at Saragossa, and advanced to Madrid. The King was again a fugitive. The Castilians sprang to arms with the same enthusiasm which they had displayed in 1706. The conquerors found the capital a desert. The people shut themselves up in their houses, and refused to pay any mark of respect to the Austrian prince. It was necessary to hire a few children to shout before him in the streets. Meanwhile, the Court of Philip at Valladolid was thronged by nobles and prelates. Thirty thousand people followed their King from Madrid to his new residence. Women of rank, rather than remain behind, performed the journey on foot. The peasants enlisted by thousands. Money, arms, and provisions, were supplied in abundance by the zeal of the people. The country round Madrid was infested by small parties of irregular horse. The Allies could not send off a despatch to Arragon, or introduce a supply of provisions into the capital. It was unsafe for the Archduke to hunt in the immediate vicinity of the palace which he occupied.

The wish of Stanhope was to winter in Castile. But he stood alone in the council of war; and, indeed it is not easy to understand
how the Allies could have maintained themselves, through so
unpropitious a season, in the midst of so hostile a population.

Charles, whose personal safety was the first object of the
generals, was sent with an escort of cavalry to Catalonia in
November; and in December the army commenced its retreat towards
Arragon.

But the Allies had to do with a master-spirit. The King of France
had lately sent the Duke of Vendome to command in Spain. This man
was distinguished by the filthiness of his person, by the
brutality of his demeanour, by the gross buffoonery of his
conversation, and by the impudence with which he abandoned
himself to the most nauseous of all vices. His sluggishness was
almost incredible. Even when engaged in a campaign, he often
passed whole days in his bed. His strange torpidity had been the
cause of some of the most serious disasters which the armies of
the House of Bourbon had sustained. But when he was roused by any
great emergency, his resources, his energy, and his presence of
mind, were such as had been found in no French general since the
death of Luxembourg.

At this crisis, Vendome was all himself. He set out from Talavera
with his troops, and pursued the retreating army of the Allies
with a speed perhaps never equalled, in such a season, and in
such a country. He marched night and day. He swam, at the head of
his cavalry, the flooded stream of Henares, and, in a few days,
overtook Stanhope, who was at Brihuega with the left wing of the
Allied army. "Nobody with me," says the English general, imagined that they had any foot within some days' march of us and our misfortune is owing to the incredible diligence which their army made." Stanhope had but just time to send off a messenger to the centre of the army, which was some leagues from Brihuega, before Vendome was upon him. The town was invested on every side. The walls were battered with cannon. A mine was sprung under one of the gates. The English kept up a terrible fire till their powder was spent. They then fought desperately with the bayonet against overwhelming odds. They burned the houses which the assailants had taken. But all was to no purpose. The British general saw that resistance could produce only a useless carnage. He concluded a capitulation; and his gallant little army became prisoners of war on honourable terms.

Scarcely had Vendome signed the capitulation, when he learned that Staremberg was marching to the relief of Stanhope. Preparations were instantly made for a general action. On the day following that on which the English had delivered up their arms, was fought the obstinate and bloody fight of Villa Viciosa. Staremberg remained master of the field. Vendome reaped all the fruits of the battle. The Allies spiked their cannon, and retired towards Arragon. But even in Arragon they found no place to rest. Vendome was behind them. The guerilla parties were around them. They fled to Catalonia; but Catalonia was invaded by a French army from Roussillon. At length the Austrian general, with six thousand harassed and dispirited men, the remains of a great and
victorious army, took refuge in Barcelona, almost the only place in Spain which still recognised the authority of Charles.

Philip was now much safer at Madrid than his grandfather at Paris. All hope of conquering Spain in Spain was at an end. But in other quarters the House of Bourbon was reduced to the last extremity. The French armies had undergone a series of defeats in Germany, in Italy, and in the Netherlands. An immense force, flushed with victory, and commanded by the greatest generals of the age, was on the borders of France. Lewis had been forced to humble himself before the conquerors. He had even offered to abandon the cause of his grandson; and his offer had been rejected. But a great turn in affairs was approaching.

The English administration which had commenced the war against the House of Bourbon was an administration composed of Tories. But the war was a Whig war. It was the favourite scheme of William, the Whig King. Lewis had provoked it by recognising, as sovereign of England, a prince peculiarly hateful to the Whigs. It had placed England in a position of marked hostility to that power from which alone the Pretender could expect efficient succour. It had joined England in the closest union to a Protestant and republican State, to a State which had assisted in bringing about the Revolution, and which was willing to guarantee the execution of the Act of Settlement. Marlborough and Godolphin found that they were more zealously supported by their old opponents than by their old associates. Those ministers who were
zealous for the war were gradually converted to Whiggism. The rest dropped off, and were succeeded by Whigs. Cowper became Chancellor. Sunderland, in spite of the very just antipathy of Anne, was made Secretary of State. On the death of the Prince of Denmark a more extensive change took place. Wharton became Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, and Somers, President of the Council. At length the administration was wholly in the hands of the Low Church party.

In the year 1710 a violent change took place. The Queen had always been a Tory at heart. Her religious feelings were all on the side of the Established Church. Her family feelings pleaded in favour of her exiled brother. Her selfish feelings disposed her to favour the zealots of prerogative. The affection which she felt for the Duchess of Marlborough was the great security of the Whigs. That affection had at length turned to deadly aversion. While the great party which had long swayed the destinies of Europe was undermined by bedchamber women at St. James's, a violent storm gathered in the country. A foolish parson had preached a foolish sermon against the principles of the Revolution. The wisest members of the Government were for letting the man alone. But Godolphin, inflamed with all the zeal of a new-made Whig, and exasperated by a nickname which was applied to him in this unfortunate discourse, insisted that the preacher should be impeached. The exhortations of the mild and sagacious Somers were disregarded. The impeachment was brought; the doctor was convicted; and the accusers were ruined. The clergy came to
the rescue of the persecuted clergyman. The country gentlemen came to the rescue of the clergy. A display of Tory feelings, such as England had not witnessed since the closing years of Charles the Second's reign, appalled the ministers and gave boldness to the Queen. She turned out the Whigs, called Harley and St. John to power, and dissolved the Parliament. The elections went strongly against the late Government. Stanhope, who had in his absence, been put in nomination for Westminster, was defeated by a Tory candidate. The new ministers, finding themselves masters of the new Parliament, were induced by the strongest motives to conclude a peace with France. The whole system of alliance in which the country was engaged was a Whig system. The general by whom the English armies had constantly been led to victory, and for whom it was impossible to find a substitute, was now whatever he might formerly have been, a Whig general. If Marlborough were discarded it was probable that some great disaster would follow. Yet if he were to retain his command, every great action which he might perform would raise the credit of the party in opposition.

A peace was therefore concluded between England and the Princes of the House of Bourbon. Of that peace Lord Mahon speaks in terms of the severest reprehension. He is, indeed, an excellent Whig of the time of the first Lord Stanhope. "I cannot but pause for a moment," says he, "to observe how much the course of a century has inverted the meaning of our party nicknames, how much a modern Tory resembles a Whig of Queen Anne's reign, and a Tory of
We grant one half of Lord Mahon's proposition: from the other half we altogether dissent. We allow that a modern Tory resembles, in many things, a Whig of Queen Anne's reign. It is natural that such should be the case. The worst things of one age often resemble the best things of another. A modern shopkeeper's house is as well furnished as the house of a considerable merchant in Anne's reign. Very plain people now wear finer cloth than Beau Fielding or Beau Edgeworth could have procured in Queen Anne's reign. We would rather trust to the apothecary of a modern village than to the physician of a large town in Anne's reign. A modern boarding-school miss could tell the most learned professor of Anne's reign some things in geography, astronomy, and chemistry, which would surprise him.

The science of government is an experimental science; and therefore it is, like all other experimental sciences, a progressive science. Lord Mahon would have been a very good Whig in the days of Harley. But Harley, whom Lord Mahon censures so severely, was very Whiggish when compared even with Clarendon; and Clarendon was quite a democrat when compared with Lord Burleigh. If Lord Mahon lives, as we hope he will, fifty years longer, we have no doubt that, as he now boasts of the resemblance which the Tories of our time bear to the Whigs of the Revolution, he will then boast of the resemblance borne by the Tories of 1882 to those immortal patriots, the Whigs of the
Society, we believe, is constantly advancing in knowledge. The tail is now where the head was some generations ago. But the head and the tail still keep their distance. A nurse of this century is as wise as a justice of the quorum and custalorum in Shallow's time. The wooden spoon of this year would puzzle a senior wrangler of the reign of George the Second. A boy from the National School reads and spells better than half the knights of the shire in the October Club. But there is still as wide a difference as ever between justices and nurses, senior wranglers and wooden spoons, members of Parliament and children at charity schools. In the same way, though a Tory may now be very like what a Whig was a hundred and twenty years ago, the Whig is as much in advance of the Tory as ever. The stag, in the Treatise on the Bathos, who "feared his hind feet would o'ertake the fore," was not more mistaken than Lord Mahon, if he thinks that he has really come up with the Whigs. The absolute position of the parties has been altered; the relative position remains unchanged. Through the whole of that great movement, which began before these party-names existed, and which will continue after they have become obsolete, through the whole of that great movement of which the Charter of John, the institution of the House of Commons, the extinction of Villanage, the separation from the see of Rome, the expulsion of the Stuarts, the reform of the Representative System, are successive stages, there have been, under some name or other, two sets of men, those who were
before their age, and those who were behind it, those who were
the wisest among their contemporaries, and those who gloried in
being no wiser than their great-grandfathers. It is dreadful to
think, that, in due time, the last of those who straggle in the
rear of the great march will occupy the place now occupied by the
advanced guard. The Tory Parliament of 1710 would have passed for
a most liberal Parliament in the days of Elizabeth; and there are
at present few members of the Conservative Club who would not
have been fully qualified to sit with Halifax and Somers at the
Kit-cat.

Though, therefore, we admit that a modern Tory bears some
resemblance to a Whig of Queen Anne's reign, we can by no means
admit that a Tory of Anne's reign resembled a modern Whig. Have
the modern Whigs passed laws for the purpose of closing the
entrance of the House of Commons against the new interests
created by trade? Do the modern Whigs hold the doctrine of divine
right? Have the modern Whigs laboured to exclude all Dissenters
from office and power? The modern Whigs are, indeed, at the
present moment, like the Tories of 1712, desirous of peace, and
of close union with France. But is there no difference between
the France of 1712 and the France of 1832? Is France now the
stronghold of the "Popish tyranny" and the "arbitrary power"
against which our ancestors fought and prayed? Lord Mahon will
find, we think, that his parallel is, in all essential
circumstances, as incorrect as that which Fluellen drew between
Macedon and Monmouth, or as that which an ingenious Tory lately
discovered between Archbishop Williams and Archbishop Vernon.

We agree with Lord Mahon in thinking highly of the Whigs of Queen Anne's reign. But that part of their conduct which he selects for especial praise is precisely the part which we think most objectionable. We revere them as the great champions of political and of intellectual liberty. It is true that, when raised to power, they were not exempt from the faults which power naturally engenders. It is true that they were men born in the seventeenth century, and that they were therefore ignorant of many truths which are familiar to the men of the nineteenth century. But they were, what the reformers of the Church were before them, and what the reformers of the House of Commons have been since, the leaders of their species in a right direction. It is true that they did not allow to political discussion that latitude which to us appears reasonable and safe; but to them we owe the removal of the Censorship. It is true that they did not carry the principle of religious liberty to its full extent; but to them we owe the Toleration Act.

Though, however, we think that the Whigs of Anne's reign were, as a body, far superior in wisdom and public virtue to their contemporaries the Tories, we by no means hold ourselves bound to defend all the measures of our favourite party. A life of action, if it is to be useful, must be a life of compromise. But speculation admits of no compromise. A public man is often under the necessity of consenting to measures which he dislikes, lest
he should endanger the success of measures which he thinks of vital importance. But the historian lies under no such necessity. On the contrary, it is one of his most sacred duties to point out clearly the errors of those whose general conduct he admires.

It seems to us, then, that, on the great question which divided England during the last four years of Anne's reign, the Tories were in the right, and the Whigs in the wrong. That question was, whether England ought to conclude peace without exacting from Philip a resignation of the Spanish crown?

No parliamentary struggle, from the time of the Exclusion Bill to the time of the Reform Bill, has been so violent as that which took place between the authors of the Treaty of Utrecht and the War Party. The Commons were for peace; the Lords were for vigorous hostilities. The Queen was compelled to choose which of her two highest prerogatives she would exercise, whether she would create Peers, or dissolve the Parliament.

The ties of party superseded the ties of neighbourhood and of blood. The members of the hostile factions would scarcely speak to each other, or bow to each other. The women appeared at the theatres bearing the badges of their political sect. The schism extended to the most remote counties of England. Talents, such as had seldom before been displayed in political controversy, were enlisted in the service of the hostile parties. On one side was
Steele, gay, lively, drunk with animal spirits and with factious animosity, and Addison, with his polished satire, his inexhaustible fertility of fancy, and his graceful simplicity of style. In the front of the opposite ranks appeared a darker and fiercer spirit, the apostate politician, the ribald priest, the perjured lover, a heart burning with hatred against the whole human race, a mind richly stored with images from the dung-hill and the lazar-house. The ministers triumphed, and the peace was concluded. Then came the reaction. A new sovereign ascended the throne. The Whigs enjoyed the confidence of the King and of the Parliament. The unjust severity with which the Tories had treated Marlborough and Walpole was more than retaliated. Harley and Prior were thrown into prison; Bolingbroke and Ormond were compelled to take refuge in a foreign land. The wounds inflicted in this desperate conflict continued to rankle for many years. It was long before the members of either party could discuss the question of the peace of Utrecht with calmness and impartiality. That the Whig ministers had sold us to the Dutch; that the Tory ministers had sold us to the French; that the war had been carried on only to fill the pockets of Marlborough; that the peace had been concluded only to facilitate the return of the Pretender; these imputations and many others, utterly ungrounded, or grossly exaggerated, were hurled backward and forward by the political disputants of the last century. In our time the question may be discussed without irritation. We will state, as concisely as possible, the reasons which have led us to the conclusion at which we have arrived.
The dangers which were to be apprehended from the peace were two; first, the danger that Philip might be induced, by feelings of private affection, to act in strict concert with the elder branch of his house, to favour the French trade at the expense of England, and to side with the French Government in future wars; secondly, the danger that the posterity of the Duke of Burgundy might become extinct, that Philip might become heir by blood to the French crown, and that thus two great monarchies might be united under one sovereign.

The first danger appears to us altogether chimerical. Family affection has seldom produced much effect on the policy of princes. The state of Europe at the time of the peace of Utrecht proved that in politics the ties of interest are much stronger than those of consanguinity or affinity. The Elector of Bavaria had been driven from his dominions by his father-in-law; Victor Amadeus was in arms against his sons-in-law; Anne was seated on a throne from which she had assisted to push a most indulgent father. It is true that Philip had been accustomed from childhood to regard his grandfather with profound veneration. It was probable, therefore, that the influence of Lewis at Madrid would be very great. But Lewis was more than seventy years old; he could not live long; his heir was an infant in the cradle. There was surely no reason to think that the policy of the King of Spain would be swayed by his regard for a nephew whom he had never seen.
In fact, soon after the peace, the two branches of the House of Bourbon began to quarrel. A close alliance was formed between Philip and Charles, lately competitors for the Castilian crown. A Spanish princess, betrothed to the King of France, was sent back in the most insulting manner to her native country; and a decree was put forth by the Court of Madrid commanding every Frenchman to leave Spain. It is true that, fifty years after the peace of Utrecht, an alliance of peculiar strictness was formed between the French and Spanish Governments. But both Governments were actuated on that occasion, not by domestic affection, but by common interests and common enmities. Their compact, though called the Family Compact, was as purely a political compact as the league of Cambrai or the league of Pilnitz.

The second danger was that Philip might have succeeded to the crown of his native country. This did not happen; but it might have happened; and at one time it seemed very likely to happen. A sickly child alone stood between the King of Spain and the heritage of Lewis the Fourteenth. Philip, it is true, solemnly renounced his claim to the French crown. But the manner in which he had obtained possession of the Spanish crown had proved the inefficacy of such renunciations. The French lawyers declared Philip's renunciation null, as being inconsistent with the fundamental law of the realm. The French people would probably have sided with him whom they would have considered as the rightful heir. Saint Simon, though much less zealous for
hereditary monarchy than most of his countrymen, and though
strongly attached to the Regent, declared, in the presence of
that prince, that he never would support the claims of the House
of Orleans against those of the King of Spain. "If such," he
said, "be my feelings, what must be the feelings of others?"
Bolingbroke, it is certain, was fully convinced that the
renunciation was worth no more than the paper on which it was
written, and demanded it only for the purpose of blinding the
English Parliament and people.

Yet, though it was at one time probable that the posterity of the
Duke of Burgundy would become extinct, and though it is almost
certain that, if the posterity of the Duke of Burgundy had become
extinct, Philip would have successfully preferred his claim to
the crown of France, we still defend the principle of the Treaty
of Utrecht. In the first place, Charles had, soon after the
battle of Villa-Viciosa, inherited, by the death of his elder
brother, all the dominions of the House of Austria. Surely, if to
these dominions he had added the whole monarchy of Spain, the
balance of power would have been seriously endangered. The union
of the Austrian dominions and Spain would not, it is true, have
been so alarming an event as the union of France and Spain. But
Charles was actually Emperor. Philip was not, and never might be,
King of France. The certainty of the less evil might well be set
against the chance of the greater evil.

But, in fact, we do not believe that Spain would long have
remained under the government either of an Emperor or of a King of France. The character of the Spanish people was a better security to the nations of Europe than any will, any instrument of renunciation, or any treaty. The same energy which the people of Castile had put forth when Madrid was occupied by the Allied armies, they would have again put forth as soon as it appeared that their country was about to become a French province. Though they were no longer masters abroad, they were by no means disposed to see foreigners set over them at home. If Philip had attempted to govern Spain by mandates from Versailles, a second Grand Alliance would easily have effected what the first had failed to accomplish. The Spanish nation would have rallied against him as zealously as it had before rallied round him. And of this he seems to have been fully aware. For many years the favourite hope of his heart was that he might ascend the throne of his grandfather; but he seems never to have thought it possible that he could reign at once in the country of his adoption and in the country of his birth.

These were the dangers of the peace; and they seem to us to be of no very formidable kind. Against these dangers are to be set off the evils of war and the risk of failure. The evils of the war, the waste of life, the suspension of trade, the expenditure of wealth, the accumulation of debt, require no illustration. The chances of failure it is difficult at this distance of time to calculate with accuracy. But we think that an estimate approximating to the truth may, without much difficulty, be
formed. The Allies had been victorious in Germany, Italy, and Flanders. It was by no means improbable that they might fight their way into the very heart of France. But at no time since the commencement of the war had their prospects been so dark in that country which was the very object of the struggle. In Spain they held only a few square leagues. The temper of the great majority of the nation was decidedly hostile to them. If they had persisted, if they had obtained success equal to their highest expectations, if they had gained a series of victories as splendid as those of Blenheim and Ramilies, if Paris had fallen, if Lewis had been a prisoner, we still doubt whether they would have accomplished their object. They would still have had to carry on interminable hostilities against the whole population of a country which affords peculiar facilities to irregular warfare, and in which invading armies suffer more from famine than from the sword.

We are, therefore, for the peace of Utrecht. We are indeed no admirers of the statesmen who concluded that peace. Harley, we believe, was a solemn trifler, St. John a brilliant knave. The great body of their followers consisted of the country clergy and the country gentry; two classes of men who were then inferior in intelligence to decent shopkeepers or farmers of our time. Parson Barnabas, Parson Trulliber, Sir Wilful Witwould, Sir Francis Wronghead, Squire Western, Squire Sullen, such were the people who composed the main strength of the Tory party during the sixty years which followed the Revolution. It is true that the means by
which the Tories came into power in 1710 were most disreputable.
It is true that the manner in which they used their power was
often unjust and cruel. It is true that, in order to bring about
their favourite project of peace, they resorted to slander and
deception, without the slightest scruple. It is true that they
passed off on the British nation a renunciation which they knew
to be invalid. It is true that they gave up the Catalans to the
vengeance of Philip, in a manner inconsistent with humanity and
national honour. But on the great question of Peace or War, we
cannot but think that, though their motives may have been selfish
and malevolent, their decision was beneficial to the State.

But we have already exceeded our limits. It remains only for us
to bid Lord Mahon heartily farewell, and to assure him that,
whatever dislike we may feel for his political opinions, we shall
always meet him with pleasure on the neutral ground of
literature.

FREDERIC THE GREAT

(April 1842)

Frederic the Great and his Times. Edited, with an Introduction,
THIS work, which has the high honour of being introduced to the
world by the author of Lochiel and Hohenlinden, is not wholly
unworthy of so distinguished a chaperon. It professes, indeed, to
be no more than a compilation; but it is an exceedingly amusing
compilation, and we shall be glad to have more of it. The
narrative comes down at present only to the commencement of the
Seven Years' War, and therefore does not comprise the most
interesting portion of Frederic's reign.

It may not be unacceptable to our readers that we should take
this opportunity of presenting them with a slight sketch of the
life of the greatest king that has, in modern times, succeeded by
right of birth to a throne. It may, we fear, be impossible to
compress so long and eventful a story within the limits which we
must prescribe to ourselves. Should we be compelled to break off,
we may perhaps, when the continuation of this work appears,
return to the subject.

The Prussian monarchy, the youngest of the great European,
states, but in population and revenue the fifth among them, and
in art, science, and civilisation entitled to the third, if not
to the second place, sprang from a humble origin. About the
beginning of the fifteenth century, the marquisate of Brandenburg
was bestowed by the Emperor Sigismund on the noble family of
Hohenzollern. In the sixteenth century that family embraced the
Lutheran doctrines. It obtained from the King of Poland, early in
the seventeenth century, the investiture of the duchy of Prussia.
Even after this accession of territory, the chiefs of the house of Hohenzollern hardly ranked with the Electors of Saxony and Bavaria. The soil of Brandenburg was for the most part sterile. Even round Berlin, the capital of the province, and round Potsdam, the favourite residence of the Margraves, the country was a desert. In some places, the deep sand could with difficulty be forced by assiduous tillage to yield thin crops of rye and oats. In other places, the ancient forests, which the conquerors of the Roman Empire had descended on the Danube, remained untouched by the hand of man. Where the soil was rich it was generally marshy, and its insalubrity repelled the cultivators whom its fertility attracted. Frederic William, called the Great Elector, was the prince to whose policy his successors have agreed to ascribe their greatness. He acquired by the peace of Westphalia several valuable possessions, and among them the rich city and district of Magdeburg; and he left to his son Frederic a principality as considerable as any which was not called a kingdom.

Frederic aspired to the style of royalty. Ostentatious and profuse, negligent of his true interests and of his high duties, insatiably eager for frivolous distinctions, he added nothing to the real weight of the state which he governed; perhaps he transmitted his inheritance to his children impaired rather than augmented in value; but he succeeded in gaining the great object of his life, the title of King. In the year 1700 he assumed this new dignity. He had on that occasion to undergo all the
mortifications which fall to the lot of ambitious upstarts.

Compared with the other crowned heads of Europe, he made a figure resembling that which a Nabob or a Commissary, who had bought a title, would make in the Company of Peers whose ancestors had been attainted for treason against the Plantagenets. The envy of the class which Frederic quitted, and the civil scorn of the class into which he intruded himself, were marked in very significant ways. The Elector of Saxony at first refused to acknowledge the new Majesty. Lewis the Fourteenth looked down on his brother King with an air not unlike that with which the Count in Moliere's play regards Monsieur Jourdain, just fresh from the mummery of being made a gentleman. Austria exacted large sacrifices in return for her recognition, and at last gave it ungraciously.

Frederic was succeeded by his son, Frederic William, a prince who must be allowed to have possessed some talents for administration, but whose character was disfigured by odious vices, and whose eccentricities were such as had never before been seen out of a madhouse. He was exact and diligent in the transacting of business; and he was the first who formed the design of obtaining for Prussia a place among the European powers, altogether out of proportion to her extent and population by means of a strong military organisation. Strict economy enabled him to keep up a peace establishment of sixty thousand troops. These troops were disciplined in such a manner, that, placed beside them, the household regiments of Versailles and St.
James's would have appeared an awkward squad. The master of such a force could not but be regarded by all his neighbours as a formidable enemy and a valuable ally.

But the mind of Frederic William was so ill regulated, that all his inclinations became passions, and all his passions partook of the character of moral and intellectual disease. His parsimony degenerated into sordid avarice. His taste for military pomp and order became a mania, like that of a Dutch burgomaster for tulips, or that of a member of the Roxburghe Club for Caxtons. While the envoys of the Court of Berlin were in a state of such squalid poverty as moved the laughter of foreign capitals, while the food placed before the princes and princesses of the blood-royal of Prussia was too scanty to appease hunger, and so bad that even hunger loathed it, no price was thought too extravagant for tall recruits. The ambition of the King was to form a brigade of giants, and every country was ransacked by his agents for men above the ordinary stature. These researches were not confined to Europe. No head that towered above the crowd in the bazaars of Aleppo, of Cairo, or of Surat, could escape the crimps of Frederic William. One Irishman more than seven feet high, who was picked up in London by the Prussian ambassador, received a bounty of near thirteen hundred pounds sterling, very much more than the ambassador's salary. This extravagance was the more absurd, because a stout youth of five feet eight, who might have been procured for a few dollars, would in all probability have been a much more valuable soldier. But to Frederic William, this huge
Irishman was what a brass Otho, or a Vinegar Bible, is to a
collector of a different kind.

It is remarkable, that though the main end of Frederic William's
administration was to have a great military force, though his
reign forms an important epoch in the history of military
discipline, and though his dominant passion was the love of
military display he was yet one of the most pacific of princes.
We are afraid that his aversion to war was not the effect of
humanity, but was merely one of his thousand whims. His feeling
about his troops seems to have resembled a miser's feeling about
his money. He loved to collect them, to count them, to see them
increase; but he could not find it in his heart to break in upon
the precious hoard. He looked forward to some future time when
his Patagonian battalions were to drive hostile infantry before
them like sheep; but this future time was always receding; and it
is probable that, if his life had been prolonged thirty years,
his superb army would never have seen any harder service than a
sham fight in the fields near Berlin. But the great military
means which he had collected were destined to be employed by a
spirit far more daring and inventive than his own.

Frederic, surnamed the Great, son of Frederic William, was born
in January 1712. It may safely be pronounced that he had received
from nature a strong and sharp understanding, and a rare firmness
of temper and intensity of will. As to the other parts of his
character, it is difficult to say whether they are to be ascribed
to nature, or to the strange training which he underwent. The history of his boyhood is painfully interesting. Oliver Twist in the parish workhouse, Smike at Dotheboys Hall, were petted children when compared with this heir apparent of a crown. The nature of Frederic William was hard and bad, and the habit of exercising arbitrary power had made him frightfully savage. His rage constantly vented itself to right and left in curses and blows. When his Majesty took a walk, every human being fled before him, as if a tiger had broken loose from a menagerie. If he met a lady in the street, he gave her a kick, and told her to go home and mind her brats. If he saw a clergyman staring at the soldiers, he admonished the reverend gentleman to betake himself to study and prayer, and enforced this pious advice by a sound caning, administered on the spot. But it was in his own house that he was most unreasonable and ferocious. His palace was hell, and he the most execrable of fiends, a cross between Moloch and Puck. His son Frederic and his daughter Wilhelmina, afterwards Margravine of Bareuth, were in an especial manner objects of his aversion. His own mind was uncultivated. He despised literature. He hated infidels, papists, and metaphysicians, and did not very well understand in what they differed from each other. The business of life, according to him, was to drill and to be drilled. The recreations suited to a prince, were to sit in a cloud of tobacco smoke, to sip Swedish beer between the puffs of the pipe, to play backgammon for three halfpence a rubber, to kill wild hogs, and to shoot partridges by the thousand. The Prince Royal showed little inclination either for the serious employments or for the amusements of his father. He shirked the
duties of the parade; he detested the fume of tobacco; he had no
taste either for backgammon or for field sports. He had an
exquisite ear, and performed skilfully on the flute. His earliest
instructors had been French refugees, and they had awakened in
him a strong passion for French literature and French society.
Frederic William regarded these tastes as effeminate and
contemptible, and, by abuse and persecution, made them still
stronger. Things became worse when the Prince Royal attained that
time of life at which the great revolution in the human mind and
body takes place. He was guilty of some youthful indiscretions,
which no good and wise parent would regard with severity. At a
later period he was accused, truly or falsely, of vices from
which History averts her eyes, and which even Satire blushes to
name, vices such that, to borrow the energetic language of Lord
Keeper Coventry, "the depraved nature of man, which of itself
carrieth man to all other sin, abhorreth them." But the offences
of his youth were not characterised by any peculiar turpitude.
They excited, however, transports of rage in the King, who hated
all faults except those to which he was himself inclined, and who
conceived that he made ample atonement to Heaven for his
brutality, by holding the softer passions in detestation. The
Prince Royal, too, was not one of those who are content to take
their religion on trust. He asked puzzling questions, and brought
forward arguments which seemed to savour of something different
from pure Lutheranism. The King suspected that his son was
inclined to be a heretic of some sort or other, whether Calvinist
or Atheist his Majesty did not very well know. The ordinary
malignity of Frederic William was bad enough. He now thought
malignity a part of his duty as a Christian man, and all the conscience that he had stimulated his hatred. The flute was broken: the French books were sent out of the palace: the Prince was kicked and cudgelled, and pulled by the hair. At dinner the plates were hurled at his head: sometimes he was restricted to bread and water: sometimes he was forced to swallow food so nauseous that he could not keep it on his stomach. Once his father knocked him down, dragged him along the floor to a window, and was with difficulty prevented from strangling him with the cord of the curtain. The Queen, for the crime of not wishing to see her son murdered, was subjected to the grossest indignities. The Princess Wilhelmina, who took her brother’s part, was treated almost as ill as Mrs. Brownrigg's apprentices. Driven to despair, the unhappy youth tried to run away. Then the fury of the old tyrant rose to madness. The Prince was an officer in the army: his flight was therefore desertion; and, in the moral code of Frederic William, desertion was the highest of all crimes. "Desertion," says this royal theologian, in one of his half-crazy letters, "is from hell. It is a work of the children of the Devil. No child of God could possibly be guilty of it." An accomplice of the Prince, in spite of the recommendation of a court martial, was mercilessly put to death. It seemed probable that the Prince himself would suffer the same fate. It was with difficulty that the intercession of the States of Holland, of the Kings of Sweden and Poland, and of the Emperor of Germany, saved the House of Brandenburg from the stain of an unnatural murder. After months of cruel suspense, Frederic learned that his life would be spared. He remained, however, long a prisoner; but he
was not on that account to be pitied. He found in his gaolers a
tenderness which he had never found in his father; his table was
not sumptuous, but he had wholesome food in sufficient quantity
to appease hunger: he could read the Henriade without being
kicked, and could play on his flute without having it broken over
his head.

When his confinement terminated he was a man. He had nearly
completed his twenty-first year, and could scarcely be kept much
longer under the restraints which had made his boyhood miserable.
Suffering had matured his understanding, while it had hardened
his heart and soured his temper. He had learnt self-command and
dissimulation; he affected to conform to some of his father's
views, and submissively accepted a wife, who was a wife only in
name, from his father's hand. He also served with credit, though
without any opportunity of acquiring brilliant distinction, under
the command of Prince Eugene, during a campaign marked by no
extraordinary events. He was now permitted to keep a separate
establishment, and was therefore able to indulge with caution his
own tastes. Partly in order to conciliate the King, and partly,
no doubt, from inclination, he gave up a portion of his time to
military and political business, and thus gradually acquired
such an aptitude for affairs as his most intimate associates were
not aware that he possessed.

His favourite abode was at Rheinsberg, near the frontier which
separates the Prussian dominions from the Duchy of Mecklenburg.
Rheinsberg, is a fertile and smiling spot, in the midst of the sandy waste of the Marquisate. The mansion, surrounded by woods of oak and beech, looks out upon a spacious lake. There Frederic amused himself by laying out gardens in regular alleys and intricate mazes, by building obelisks, temples, and conservatories, and by collecting rare fruits and flowers. His retirement was enlivened by a few companions, among whom he seems to have preferred those who, by birth or extraction, were French. With these intimates he dined and supped well, drank freely, and amused himself sometimes with concerts, and sometimes with holding chapters of a fraternity which he called the Order of Bayard; but literature was his chief resource.

His education had been entirely French. The long ascendency which Lewis the Fourteenth had enjoyed, and the eminent merit of the tragic and comic dramatists, of the satirists, and of the preachers who had flourished under that magnificent prince, had made the French language predominant in Europe. Even in countries which had a national literature, and which could boast of names greater than those of Racine, of Moliere, and of Massillon, in the country of Dante, in the country of Cervantes, in the country of Shakspeare and Milton, the intellectual fashions of Paris had been to a great extent adopted. Germany had not yet produced a single masterpiece of poetry or eloquence. In Germany, therefore, the French taste reigned without rival and without limit. Every youth of rank was taught to speak and write French. That he should speak and write his own tongue with politeness, or even...
with accuracy and facility, was regarded as comparatively an unimportant object. Even Frederic William, with all his rugged Saxon prejudices, thought it necessary that his children should know French, and quite unnecessary that they should be well versed in German. The Latin was positively interdicted. "My son," his Majesty wrote, "shall not learn Latin; and, more than that, I will not suffer anybody even to mention such a thing to me." One of the preceptors ventured to read the Golden Bull in the original with the Prince Royal. Frederic William entered the room, and broke out in his usual kingly style.

"Rascal, what are you at there?"

"Please your Majesty," answered the preceptor, "I was explaining the Golden Bull to his Royal Highness."

"I'll Golden Bull you, you rascal! roared the Majesty of Prussia. Up went the King's cane away ran the terrified instructor; and Frederic's classical studies ended for ever. He now and then affected to quote Latin sentences, and produced such exquisitely Ciceronian phrases as these: "Stante pede morire"--"De gustibus non est disputandus,"--"Tot verbas tot spondera." Of Italian, he had not enough to read a page of Metastasio with ease; and of the Spanish and English, he did not, as far as we are aware, understand a single word.
As the highest human compositions to which he had access were those of the French writers, it is not strange that his admiration for those writers should have been unbounded. His ambitious and eager temper early prompted him to imitate what he admired. The wish, perhaps, dearest to his heart was, that he might rank among the masters of French rhetoric and poetry. He wrote prose and verse as indefatigably as if he had been a starving hack of Cave or Osborn; but Nature, which had bestowed on him, in a large measure, the talents of a captain and of an administrator, had withheld from him those higher and rarer gifts, without which industry labours in vain to produce immortal eloquence and song. And, indeed, had he been blessed with more imagination, wit, and fertility of thought, than he appears to have had, he would still have been subject to one great disadvantage, which would, in all probability, have for ever prevented him from taking a high place among men of letters. He had not the full command of any language. There was no machine of thought which he could employ with perfect ease, confidence, and freedom. He had German enough to scold his servants, or to give the word of command to his grenadiers; but his grammar and pronunciation were extremely bad. He found it difficult to make out the meaning even of the simplest German poetry. On one occasion a version of Racine's Iphigenie was read to him. He held the French original in his hand; but was forced to own that, even with such help, he could not understand the translation. Yet, though he had neglected his mother tongue in order to bestow all his attention on French, his French was, after all, the
French of a foreigner. It was necessary for him to have always at his beck some men of letters from Paris to point out the solecisms and false rhymes of which, to the last, he was frequently guilty. Even had he possessed the poetic faculty, of which, as far as we can judge, he was utterly destitute, the want of a language would have prevented him from being a great poet. No noble work of imagination, as far as we recollect, was ever composed by any man, except in a dialect which he had learned without remembering how or when, and which he had spoken with perfect ease before he had ever analysed its structure. Romans of great abilities wrote Greek verses; but how many of those verses have deserved to live? Many men of eminent genius have, in modern times, written Latin poems; but, as far as we are aware, none of those poems, not even Milton's, can be ranked in the first class of art, or even very high in the second. It is not strange, therefore, that, in the French verses of Frederic, we can find nothing beyond the reach of any man of good parts and industry, nothing above the level of Newdigate and Seatonian poetry. His best pieces may perhaps rank with the worst in Dodsley's collection. In history, he succeeded better. We do not, indeed, find, in any of his voluminous Memoirs, either deep reflection or vivid painting. But the narrative is distinguished by clearness, conciseness, good sense, and a certain air of truth and simplicity, which is singularly graceful in a man who, having done great things, sits down to relate them. On the whole, however, none of his writings are so agreeable to us as his Letters, particularly those which are written with earnestness, and are not embroidered with verses.
It is not strange that a young man devoted to literature, and acquainted only with the literature of France, should have looked with profound veneration on the genius of Voltaire. "A man who has never seen the sun," says Calderon, in one of his charming comedies, "cannot be blamed for thinking that no glory can exceed that of the moon. A man who has seen neither moon nor sun, cannot be blamed for talking of the unrivalled brightness of the morning star." Had Frederic been able to read Homer and Milton or even Virgil and Tasso, his admiration of the Henriade would prove that he was utterly destitute of the power of discerning what is excellent in art. Had he been familiar with Sophocles or Shakspeare, we should have expected him to appreciate Zaire more justly. Had he been able to study Thucydides and Tacitus in the original Greek and Latin, he would have known that there were heights in the eloquence of history far beyond the reach of the author of the Life of Charles the Twelfth. But the finest heroic poem, several of the most powerful tragedies, and the most brilliant and picturesque historical work that Frederic had ever read, were Voltaire's. Such high and various excellence moved the young Prince almost to adoration. The opinions of Voltaire on religious and philosophical questions had not yet been fully exhibited to the public. At a later period, when an exile from his country, and at open war with the Church, he spoke out. But when Frederic was at Rheinsberg, Voltaire was still a courtier; and, though he could not always curb his petulant wit, he had as yet published nothing that could exclude him from Versailles, and
little that a divine of the mild and generous school of Grotius
and Tillotson might not read with pleasure. In the Henriade, in
Zaire, and in Alzire, Christian piety is exhibited in the most
amiable form; and, some years after the period of which we are
writing, a Pope condescended to accept the dedication of Mahomet.
The real sentiments of the poet, however, might be clearly
perceived by a keen eye through the decent disguise with which he
veiled them, and could not escape the sagacity of Frederic, who
held similar opinions, and had been accustomed to practise
similar dissimulation.

The Prince wrote to his idol in the style of a worshipper; and
Voltaire replied with exquisite grace and address. A
correspondence followed, which may be studied with advantage by
those who wish to become proficient in the ignoble art of
flattery. No man ever paid compliments better than Voltaire. His
sweetest confectionery had always a delicate, yet stimulating
flavour, which was delightful to palates wearied by the coarse
preparations of inferior artists. It was only from his hand that
so much sugar could be swallowed without making the swallower
sick. Copies of verses, writing-desks, trinkets of amber, were
exchanged between the friends. Frederic confided his writings to
Voltaire; and Voltaire applauded, as if Frederic had been Racine
and Bossuet in one. One of his Royal Highness's performances was
a refutation of Machiavelli. Voltaire undertook to convey it to
the press. It was entitled the Anti-Machiavel, and was an
edifying homily against rapacity, perfidy, arbitrary government,
unjust war, in short, against almost everything for which its author is now remembered among men.

The old King uttered now and then a ferocious growl at the diversions of Rheinsberg. But his health was broken; his end was approaching; and his vigour was impaired. He had only one pleasure left, that of seeing tall soldiers. He could always be propitiated by a present of a grenadier of six feet four or six feet five; and such presents were from time to time judiciously offered by his son.

Early in the year 1740, Frederic William met death with a firmness and dignity worthy of a better and wiser man; and Frederic, who had just completed his twenty-eighth year, became King of Prussia. His character was little understood. That he had good abilities, indeed, no person who had talked with him, or corresponded with him, could doubt. But the easy Epicurean life which he had led, his love of good cookery and good wine, of music, of conversation, of light literature, led many to regard him as a sensual and intellectual voluptuary. His habit of canting about moderation, peace, liberty, and the happiness which a good mind derives from the happiness of others, had imposed on some who should have known better. Those who thought best of him, expected a Telemachus after Fenelon's pattern. Others predicted the approach of a Medicean age, an age propitious to learning and art, and not unpropitious to pleasure. Nobody had the least suspicion that a tyrant of extraordinary military and political
talents, of industry more extraordinary still, without fear,
without faith, and without mercy, had ascended the throne.

The disappointment of Falstaff at his old boon-companion's
coronation was not more bitter than that which awaited some of
the inmates of Rheinsberg. They had long looked forward to the
accession of their patron, as to the event from which their own
prosperity and greatness was to date. They had at last reached
the promised land, the land which they had figured to themselves
as flowing with milk and honey; and they found it a desert. "No
more of these fooleries," was the short, sharp admonition given
by Frederic to one of them. It soon became plain that, in the
most important points, the new sovereign bore a strong family
likeness to his predecessor. There was indeed a wide difference
between the father and the son as respected extent and vigour of
intellect, speculative opinions, amusements, studies, outward
demeanour. But the groundwork of the character was the same in
both. To both were common the love of order, the love of
business, the military taste, the parsimony, the imperious
spirit, the temper irritable even to ferocity, the pleasure in
the pain and humiliation of others. But these propensities had in
Frederic William partaken of the general unsoundness of his mind,
and wore a very different aspect when found in company with the
strong and cultivated understanding of his successor. Thus, for
example, Frederic was as anxious as any prince could be about the
efficiency of his army. But this anxiety never degenerated into a
monomania, like that which led his father to pay fancy prices for
giants. Frederic was as thrifty about money as any prince or any private man ought to be. But he did not conceive, like his father, that it was worth while to eat unwholesome cabbages for the purpose of saving four or five rixdollars in the year. Frederic was, we fear, as malevolent as his father; but Frederic's wit enabled him often to show his malevolence in ways more decent than those to which his father resorted, and to inflict misery and degradation by a taunt instead of a blow. Frederic, it is true, by no means relinquished his hereditary privilege of kicking and cudgelling. His practice, however, as to that matter, differed in some important respects from his father's. To Frederic William, the mere circumstance that any persons whatever, men, women, or children, Prussians or foreigners, were within reach of his toes and of his cane, appeared to be a sufficient reason for proceeding to belabour them. Frederic required provocation as well as vicinity; nor was he ever known to inflict this paternal species of correction on any but his born subjects; though on one occasion M. Thiebault had reason, during a few seconds, to anticipate the high honour of being an exception to this general rule.

The character of Frederic was still very imperfectly understood either by his subjects or by his neighbours, when events occurred which exhibited it in a strong light. A few months after his accession died Charles the Sixth, Emperor of Germany, the last descendant, in the male line, of the House of Austria.
Charles left no son, and had, long before his death, relinquished all hopes of male issue. During the latter part of his life, his principal object had been to secure to his descendants in the female line the many crowns of the House of Hapsburg. With this view, he had promulgated a new law of succession, widely celebrated throughout Europe under the name of the Pragmatic Sanction. By virtue of this law, his daughter, the Archduchess Maria Theresa, wife of Francis of Lorraine, succeeded to the dominions of her ancestors.

No sovereign has ever taken possession of a throne by a clearer title. All the politics of the Austrian cabinet had, during twenty years, been directed to one single end, the settlement of the succession. From every person whose rights could be considered as injuriously affected, renunciations in the most solemn form had been obtained. The new law had been ratified by the Estates of all the kingdoms and principalities which made up the great Austrian monarchy. England, France, Spain, Russia, Poland, Prussia, Sweden, Denmark, the Germanic body, had bound themselves by treaty to maintain the Pragmatic Sanction. That instrument was placed under the protection of the public faith of the whole civilized world.

Even if no positive stipulations on this subject had existed, the arrangement was one which no good man would have been willing to disturb. It was a peaceable arrangement. It was an arrangement
acceptable to the great population whose happiness was chiefly
cconcerned. It was an arrangement which made no change in the
distribution of power among the states of Christendom. It was an
arrangement which could be set aside only by means of a general
war; and, if it were set aside, the effect would be, that the
equilibrium of Europe would be deranged, that the loyal and
patriotic feelings of millions would be cruelly outraged, and
that great provinces which had been united for centuries would be
torn from each other by main force.

The sovereigns of Europe were, therefore, bound by every
obligation which those who are intrusted with power over their
fellow-creatures ought to hold most sacred, to respect and defend
the rights of the Archduchess. Her situation and her personal
qualities were such as might be expected to move the mind of any
generous man to pity, admiration, and chivalrous tenderness. She
was in her twenty-fourth year. Her form was majestic, her
features beautiful, her countenance sweet and animated, her voice
musical, her deportment gracious and dignified. In all domestic
relations she was without reproach. She was married to a husband
whom she loved, and was on the point of giving birth to a child,
when death deprived her of her father. The loss of a parent, and
the new cares of empire, were too much for her in the delicate
state of her health. Her spirits were depressed, and her cheek
lost its bloom. Yet it seemed that she had little cause for
anxiety. It seemed that justice, humanity, and the faith of
treaties would have their due weight, and that the settlement so
solemnly guaranteed would be quietly carried into effect.

England, Russia, Poland, and Holland, declared in form their intention to adhere to their engagements. The French ministers made a verbal declaration to the same effect. But from no quarter did the young Queen of Hungary receive stronger assurances of friendship and support than from the King of Prussia.

Yet the King of Prussia, the Anti-Machiavel, had already fully determined to commit the great crime of violating his plighted faith, of robbing the ally whom he was bound to defend, and of plunging all Europe into a long, bloody, and desolating war; and all this for no end whatever, except that he might extend his dominions, and see his name in the gazettes. He determined to assemble a great army with speed and secrecy, to invade Silesia before Maria Theresa should be apprised of his design, and to add that rich province to his kingdom.

We will not condescend to refute at length the pleas which the compiler of the Memoirs before us has copied from Doctor Preuss. They amount to this, that the House of Brandenburg had some ancient pretensions to Silesia, and had in the previous century been compelled, by hard usage on the part of the Court of Vienna, to waive those pretensions. It is certain that, whoever might originally have been in the right, Prussia had submitted. Prince after prince of the House of Brandenburg had acquiesced in the existing arrangement. Nay, the Court of Berlin had recently been allied with that of Vienna, and had guaranteed the integrity of
the Austrian states. Is it not perfectly clear that, if antiquated claims are to be set up against recent treaties and long possession, the world can never be at peace for a day? The laws of all nations have wisely established a time of limitation, after which titles, however illegitimate in their origin, cannot be questioned. It is felt by everybody, that to eject a person from his estate on the ground of some injustice committed in the time of the Tudors would produce all the evils which result from arbitrary confiscation, and would make all property insecure. It concerns the commonwealth--so runs the legal maxim--that there be an end of litigation. And surely this maxim is at least equally applicable to the great commonwealth of states; for in that commonwealth litigation means the devastation of provinces, the suspension of trade and industry, sieges like those of Badajoz and St. Sebastian, pitched fields like those of Eylau and Borodino. We hold that the transfer of Norway from Denmark to Sweden was an unjustifiable proceeding; but would the King of Denmark be therefore justified in landing, without any new provocation in Norway, and commencing military operations there? The King of Holland thinks, no doubt, that he was unjustly deprived of the Belgian provinces. Grant that it were so. Would he, therefore, be justified in marching with an army on Brussels? The case against Frederic was still stronger, inasmuch as the injustice of which he complained had been committed more than a century before. Nor must it be forgotten that he owed the highest personal obligations to the House of Austria. It may be doubted whether his life had not been preserved by the intercession of the prince whose daughter he was about to plunder.
To do the King justice, he pretended to no more virtue than he had. In manifestoes he might, for form's sake, insert some idle stories about his antiquated claim on Silesia; but in his conversations and Memoirs he took a very different tone. His own words are: "Ambition, interest, the desire of making people talk about me, carried the day; and I decided for war."

Having resolved on his course, he acted with ability and vigour. It was impossible wholly to conceal his preparations; for throughout the Prussian territories regiments, guns, and baggage were in motion. The Austrian envoy at Berlin apprised his court of these facts, and expressed a suspicion of Frederic's designs; but the ministers of Maria Theresa refused to give credit to so black an imputation on a young prince, who was known chiefly by his high professions of integrity and philanthropy. "We will not," they wrote, "we cannot, believe it."

In the meantime the Prussian forces had been assembled. Without any declaration of war, without any demand for reparation, in the very act of pouring forth compliments and assurances of goodwill, Frederic commenced hostilities. Many thousands of his troops were actually in Silesia before the Queen of Hungary knew that he had set up any claim to any part of her territories. At length he sent her a message which could be regarded only as an insult. If she would but let him have Silesia, he would, he said, stand by
her against any power which should try to deprive her of her
other dominions; as if he was not already bound to stand by her,
or as if his new promise could be of more value than the old one.

It was the depth of winter. The cold was severe, and the roads
heavy with mire. But the Prussians pressed on. Resistance was
impossible. The Austrian army was then neither numerous nor
efficient. The small portion of that army which lay in Silesia
was unprepared for hostilities. Glogau was blockaded; Breslau
opened its gates; Ohlau was evacuated. A few scattered garrisons
still held out; but the whole open country was subjugated: no
enemy ventured to encounter the King in the field; and, before
the end of January 1741, he returned to receive the
congratulations of his subjects at Berlin.

Had the Silesian question been merely a question between Frederic
and Maria Theresa, it would be impossible to acquit the Prussian
King of gross perfidy. But when we consider the effects which his
policy produced, and could not fail to produce, on the whole
community of civilised nations, we are compelled to pronounce a
condemnation still more severe. Till he began the war, it seemed
possible, even probable, that the peace of the world would be
preserved. The plunder of the great Austrian heritage was indeed
a strong temptation; and in more than one cabinet ambitious
schemes were already meditated. But the treaties by which the
Pragmatic Sanction had been guaranteed were express and recent.
To throw all Europe into confusion for a purpose clearly unjust,
was no light matter. England was true to her engagements. The voice of Fleury had always been for peace. He had a conscience. He was now in extreme old age, and was unwilling, after a life which, when his situation was considered, must be pronounced singularly pure, to carry the fresh stain of a great crime before the tribunal of his God. Even the vain and unprincipled Belle-Isle, whose whole life was one wild day-dream of conquest and spoliation, felt that France, bound as she was by solemn stipulations, could not, without disgrace, make a direct attack on the Austrian dominions. Charles, Elector of Bavaria, pretended that he had a right to a large part of the inheritance which the Pragmatic Sanction gave to the Queen of Hungary; but he was not sufficiently powerful to move without support. It might, therefore, not unreasonably be expected that, after a short period of restlessness, all the potentates of Christendom would acquiesce in the arrangements made by the late Emperor. But the selfish rapacity of the King of Prussia gave the signal to his neighbours. His example quieted their sense of shame. His success led them to underrate the difficulty of dismembering the Austrian monarchy. The whole world sprang to arms. On the head of Frederic is all the blood which was shed in a war which raged during many years and in every quarter of the globe, the blood of the column of Fontenoy, the blood of the mountaineers who were slaughtered at Culloden. The evils produced by his wickedness were felt in lands where the name of Prussia was unknown; and, in order that he might rob a neighbour whom he had promised to defend, black men fought on the coast of Coromandel, and red men scalped each other by the Great Lakes of North America.
Silesia had been occupied without a battle; but the Austrian troops were advancing to the relief of the fortresses which still held out. In the spring Frederic rejoined his army. He had seen little of war, and had never commanded any great body of men in the field. It is not, therefore, strange that his first military operations showed little of that skill which, at a later period, was the admiration of Europe. What connoisseurs say of some pictures painted by Raphael in his youth, may be said of this campaign. It was in Frederic's early bad manner. Fortunately for him, the generals to whom he was opposed were men of small capacity. The discipline of his own troops, particularly of the infantry, was unequalled in that age; and some able and experienced officers were at hand to assist him with their advice. Of these, the most distinguished was Field-Marshal Schwerin, a brave adventurer of Pomeranian extraction, who had served half the governments in Europe, had borne the commissions of the States-General of Holland and of the Duke of Mecklenburg, had fought under Marlborough at Blenheim, and had been with Charles the Twelfth at Bender.

Frederic's first battle was fought at Molwitz; and never did the career of a great commander open in a more inauspicious manner. His army was victorious. Not only, however, did he not establish his title to the character of an able general; but he was so unfortunate as to make it doubtful whether he possessed the vulgar courage of a soldier. The cavalry, which he commanded in
person, was put to flight. Unaccustomed to the tumult and carnage of a field of battle, he lost his self-possession, and listened too readily to those who urged him to save himself. His English grey carried him many miles from the field, while Schwerin, though wounded in two places, manfully upheld the day. The skill of the old Field-Marshal and the steadiness of the Prussian battalions prevailed; and the Austrian army was driven from the field with the loss of eight thousand men.

The news was carried late at night to a mill in which the King had taken shelter. It gave him a bitter pang. He was successful; but he owed his success to dispositions which others had made, and to the valour of men who had fought while he was flying. So unpromising was the first appearance of the greatest warrior of that age.

The battle of Molwitz was the signal for a general explosion throughout Europe. Bavaria took up arms. France, not yet declaring herself a principal in the war, took part in it as an ally of Bavaria. The two great statesmen to whom mankind had owed many years of tranquillity, disappeared about this time from the scene, but not till they had both been guilty of the weakness of sacrificing their sense of justice and their love of peace to the vain hope of preserving their power. Fleury, sinking under age and infirmity, was borne down by the impetuosity of Belle-Isle. Walpole retired from the service of his ungrateful country to his woods and paintings at Houghton; and his power devolved on the
daring and eccentric Carteret. As were the ministers, so were the nations. Thirty years during which Europe had, with few interruptions, enjoyed repose, had prepared the public mind for great military efforts. A new generation had grown up, which could not remember the siege of Turin or the slaughter of Malplaquet; which knew war by nothing but its trophies; and which, while it looked with pride on the tapestries at Blenheim, or the statue in the Place of Victories, little thought by what privations, by what waste of private fortunes, by how many bitter tears, conquests must be purchased.

For a time fortune seemed adverse to the Queen of Hungary. Frederic invaded Moravia. The French and Bavarians penetrated into Bohemia, and were there joined by the Saxons. Prague was taken. The Elector of Bavaria was raised by the suffrages of his colleagues to the Imperial throne, a throne which the practice of centuries had almost entitled the House of Austria to regard as a hereditary possession.

Yet was the spirit of the haughty daughter of the Caesars unbroken. Hungary was still hers by an unquestionable title; and although her ancestors had found Hungary the most mutinous of all their kingdoms, she resolved to trust herself to the fidelity of a people, rude indeed, turbulent, and impatient of oppression, but brave, generous, and simple-hearted. In the midst of distress and peril she had given birth to a son, afterwards the Emperor Joseph the Second. Scarcely had she arisen from her couch, when
she hastened to Presburg. There, in the sight of an innumerable multitude, she was crowned with the crown and robed with the robe of St. Stephen. No spectator could restrain his tears when the beautiful young mother, still weak from child-bearing, rode, after the fashion of her fathers, up the Mount of Defiance, unsheathed the ancient sword of state, shook it towards north and south, east and west, and, with a glow on her pale face, challenged the four corners of the world to dispute her rights and those of her boy. At the first sitting of the Diet she appeared clad in deep mourning for her father, and in pathetic and dignified words implored her people to support her just cause. Magnates and deputies sprang up, half drew their sabres, and with eager voices vowed to stand by her with their lives and fortunes. Till then, her firmness had never once forsaken her before the public eye; but at that shout she sank down upon her throne, and wept aloud. Still more touching was the sight when, a few days later, she came again before the Estates of her realm, and held up before them the little Archduke in her arms. Then it was that the enthusiasm of Hungary broke forth into that war-cry which soon resounded throughout Europe, "Let us die for our King, Maria Theresa!"

In the meantime, Frederic was meditating a change of policy. He had no wish to raise France to supreme power on the Continent, at the expense of the House of Hapsburg. His first object was to rob the Queen of Hungary. His second object was that, if possible, nobody should rob her but himself. He had entered into
engagements with the powers leagued against Austria; but these
engagements were in his estimation of no more force than the
guarantee formerly given to the Pragmatic Sanction. His plan now
was to secure his share of the plunder by betraying his
accomplices. Maria Theresa was little inclined to listen to any
such compromise; but the English Government represented to her so
strongly the necessity of buying off Frederic, that she agreed to
negotiate. The negotiation would not, however, have ended in a
treaty, had not the arms of Frederic been crowned with a second
victory. Prince Charles of Lorraine, brother-in-law to Maria
Theresa, a bold and active, though unfortunate general, gave
battle to the Prussians at Chotusitz, and was defeated. The King
was still only a learner of the military art. He acknowledged, at
a later period, that his success on this occasion was to be
attributed, not at all to his own generalship, but solely to the
valour and steadiness of his troops. He completely effaced,
however, by his personal courage and energy, the stain which
Molwitz had left on his reputation.

A peace, concluded under the English mediation, was the fruit of
this battle. Maria Theresa ceded Silesia: Frederic abandoned his
allies: Saxony followed his example; and the Queen was left at
liberty to turn her whole force against France and Bavaria. She
was everywhere triumphant. The French were compelled to evacuate
Bohemia, and with difficulty effected their escape. The whole
line of their retreat might be tracked by the corpses of
thousands who had died of cold, fatigue, and hunger. Many of
those who reached their country carried with them the seeds of
death. Bavaria was overrun by bands of ferocious warriors from
that bloody debatable land which lies on the frontier between
Christendom and Islam. The terrible names of the Pandoor, the
Croat, and the Hussar, then first became familiar to Western
Europe. The unfortunate Charles of Bavaria, vanquished by
Austria, betrayed by Prussia, driven from his hereditary states,
and neglected by his allies, was hurried by shame and remorse to
an untimely end. An English army appeared in the heart of
Germany, and defeated the French at Dettingen. The Austrian
captains already began to talk of completing the work of
Marlborough and Eugene, and of compelling France to relinquish
Alsace and the three Bishoprics.

The Court of Versailles, in this peril, looked to Frederic for
help. He had been guilty of two great treasons: perhaps he might
be induced to commit a third. The Duchess of Chateauroux then
held the chief influence over the feeble Lewis. She, determined
to send an agent to Berlin; and Voltaire was selected for the
mission. He eagerly undertook the task; for, while his literary
fame filled all Europe, he was troubled with a childish craving
for political distinction. He was vain, and not without reason,
of his address, and of his insinuating eloquence: and he
flattered
himself that he possessed boundless influence over the King of
Prussia. The truth was that he knew, as yet, only one corner of
Frederic's character. He was well acquainted with all the petty
vanities and affectations of the poetaster; but was not aware
that these foibles were united with all the talents and vices
which lead to success in active life, and that the unlucky
versifier who pestered him with reams of middling Alexandrines,
was the most vigilant, suspicious, and severe of politicians.

Voltaire was received with every mark of respect and friendship,
was lodged in the palace, and had a seat daily at the royal
table. The negotiation was of an extraordinary description.
Nothing can be conceived more whimsical than the conferences
which took place between the first literary man and the first
practical man of the age, whom a strange weakness had induced to
exchange their parts. The great poet would talk of nothing but
treaties and guarantees, and the great King of nothing but
metaphors and rhymes. On one occasion Voltaire put into his
Majesty's hands a paper on the state of Europe, and received it
back with verses scrawled on the margin. In secret they both
laughed at each other. Voltaire did not spare the King's poems;
and the King has left on record his opinion of Voltaire's
diplomacy. "He had no credentials," says Frederic, "and the whole
mission was a joke, a mere farce."

But what the influence of Voltaire could not effect, the rapid
progress of the Austrian arms effected. If it should be in the
power of Maria Theresa and George the Second to dictate terms of
peace to France, what chance was there that Prussia would long
retain Silesia? Frederic's conscience told him that he had acted
perfidiously and inhumanly towards the Queen of Hungary. That her resentment was strong she had given ample proof; and of her respect for treaties he judged by his own. Guarantees, he said, were mere filigree, pretty to look at, but too brittle to bear the slightest pressure. He thought it his safest course to ally himself closely to France, and again to attack the Empress Queen. Accordingly, in the autumn of 1744, without notice, without any decent pretext, he recommenced hostilities, marched through the electorate of Saxony without troubling himself about the permission of the Elector, invaded Bohemia, took Prague, and even menaced Vienna.

It was now that, for the first time, he experienced the inconstancy of fortune. An Austrian army under Charles of Lorraine threatened his communications with Silesia. Saxony was all in arms behind him. He found it necessary to save himself by a retreat. He afterwards owned that his failure was the natural effect of his own blunders. No general, he said, had ever committed greater faults. It must be added, that to the reverses of this campaign he always ascribed his subsequent successes. It was in the midst of difficulty and disgrace that he caught the first clear glimpse of the principles of the military art.

The memorable year 1745 followed. The war raged by sea and land, in Italy, in Germany, and in Flanders; and even England, after many years of profound internal quiet, saw, for the last time, hostile armies set in battle array against each other. This year
is memorable in the life of Frederic, as the date at which his
noviciate in the art of war may be said to have terminated. There
have been great captains whose precocious and self-taught
military skill resembled intuition. Conde, Clive, and Napoleon
are examples. But Frederic was not one of these brilliant
portents. His proficiency in military science was simply the
proficiency which a man of vigorous faculties makes in any
science to which he applies his mind with earnestness and
industry. It was at Hohenfriedberg that he first proved how much
he had profited by his errors, and by their consequences. His
victory on that day was chiefly due to his skilful dispositions,
and convinced Europe that the prince who, a few years before, had
stood aghast in the rout of Molwitz, had attained in the military
art a mastery equalled by none of his contemporaries, or equalled
by Saxe alone. The victory of Hohenfriedberg was speedily
followed by that of Sorr.

In the meantime, the arms of France had been victorious in the
Low Countries. Frederic had no longer reason to fear that Maria
Theresa would be able to give law to Europe, and he began to
meditate a fourth breach of his engagements. The Court of
Versailles was alarmed and mortified. A letter of earnest
expostulation, in the handwriting of Lewis, was sent to Berlin;
but in vain. In the autumn of 1745, Frederic made Peace with
England, and, before the close of the year, with Austria also.
The pretensions of Charles of Bavaria could present no obstacle
to an accommodation. That unhappy Prince was no more; and Francis
of Lorraine, the husband of Maria Theresa, was raised, with the
general assent of the Germanic body, to the Imperial throne.

Prussia was again at peace; but the European war lasted till, in
the year 1748, it was terminated by the treaty of Aix-la
Chapelle. Of all the powers that had taken part in it, the only
gainer was Frederic. Not only had he added to his patrimony the
fine province of Silesia: he had, by his unprincipled dexterity,
succeeded so well in alternately depressing the scale of Austria
and that of France, that he was generally regarded as holding the
balance of Europe, a high dignity for one who ranked lowest among
kings, and whose great-grandfather had been no more than a
Margrave. By the public, the King of Prussia was considered as a
politician destitute alike of morality and decency, insatiably
rapacious, and shamelessly false; nor was the public much in the
wrong. He was at the same time, allowed to be a man of parts, a
rising general, a shrewd negotiator and administrator. Those
qualities wherein he surpassed all mankind, were as yet unknown
to others or to himself; for they were qualities which shine out
only on a dark ground. His career had hitherto, with little
interruption, been prosperous; and it was only in adversity, in
adversity which seemed without hope or resource, in adversity
which would have overwhelmed even men celebrated for strength of
mind, that his real greatness could be shown.

He had, from the commencement of his reign, applied himself to
public business after a fashion unknown among kings. Lewis the
Fourteenth, indeed, had been his own prime minister, and had
exercised a general superintendence over all the departments of
the Government; but this was not sufficient for Frederic. He was
not content with being his own prime minister: he would be his
own sole minister. Under him there was no room, not merely for a
Richelieu or a Mazarin, but for a Colbert, a Louvois, or a Torcy.
A love of labour for its own sake, a restless and insatiable
longing to dictate, to intermeddle, to make his power felt, a
profound scorn and distrust of his fellow-creatures, made him
unwilling to ask counsel, to confide important secrets, to
delegate ample powers. The highest functionaries under his
government were mere clerks, and were not so much trusted by him
as valuable clerks are often trusted by the heads of departments.
He was his own treasurer, his own commander-in-chief, his own
intendant of public works, his own minister for trade and
justice, for home affairs and foreign affairs, his own master of
the horse, steward, and chamberlain. Matters of which no chief of
an office in any other government would ever hear, were, in this
singular monarchy, decided by the King in person. If a traveller
wished for a good place to see a review, he had to write to
Frederic, and received next day, from a royal messenger,
Frederic's answer signed by Frederic's own hand. This was an
extravagant, a morbid activity. The public business would
assuredly have been better done if each department had been put
under a man of talents and integrity, and if the King had
contented himself with a general control. In this manner the
advantages which belong to unity of design, and the advantages
which belong to the division of labour, would have been to a
great extent combined. But such a system would not have suited
the peculiar temper of Frederic. He could tolerate no will, no
reason, in the State, save his own. He wished for no abler
assistance than that of penmen who had just understanding enough
to translate and transcribe, to make out his scrawls, and to put
his concise Yes and No into an official form. Of the higher
intellectual faculties, there is as much in a copying machine, or
a lithographic press, as he required from a secretary of the
cabinet.

His own exertions were such as were hardly to be expected from a
human body or a human mind. At Potsdam, his ordinary residence,
he rose at three in summer and four in winter. A page soon
appeared, with a large basket full of all the letters which had
arrived for the King by the last courier, despatches from
ambassadors, reports from officers of revenue, plans of
buildings, proposals for draining marshes, complaints from
persons who thought themselves aggrieved, applications from
persons who wanted titles, military commissions, and civil
situations. He examined the seals with a keen eye; for he was
never for a moment free from the suspicion that some fraud might
be practised on him. Then he read the letters, divided them into
several packets, and signified his pleasure, generally by a mark,
often by two or three words, now and then by some cutting
epigram. By eight he had generally finished this part of his
task. The adjutant-general was then in attendance, and received
instructions for the day as to all the military arrangements of
the kingdom. Then the King went to review his guards, not as
kings ordinarily review their guards, but with the minute
attention and severity of an old drill-sergeant. In the meantime
the four cabinet secretaries had been employed in answering the
letters on which the King had that morning signified his will.
These unhappy men were forced to work all the year round like
negro slaves in the time of the sugar-crop. They never had a
holiday. They never knew what it was to dine. It was necessary
that, before they stirred, they should finish the whole of their
work. The King, always on his guard against treachery, took from
the heap a handful of letters at random, and looked into them to
see whether his instructions had been exactly followed. This was
no bad security against foul play on the part of the secretaries;
for if one of them were detected in a trick, he might think
himself fortunate if he escaped with five years of imprisonment
in a dungeon. Frederic then signed the replies, and all were sent
off the same evening.

The general principles on which this strange government was
conducted, deserve attention. The policy of Frederic was
essentially the same as his father's; but Frederic, while he
carried that policy to lengths to which his father never thought
of carrying it, cleared it at the same time from the absurdities
with which his father had encumbered it. The King's first object
was to have a great, efficient, and well-trained army. He had a
kingdom which in extent and population was hardly in the second
rank of European powers; and yet he aspired to a place not
inferior to that of the sovereigns of England, France, and Austria. For that end it was necessary that Prussia should be all sting. Lewis the Fifteenth, with five times as many subjects as Frederic, and more than five times as large a revenue, had not a more formidable army. The proportion which the soldiers in Prussia bore to the people seems hardly credible. Of the males in the vigour of life, a seventh part were probably under arms; and this great force had, by drilling, by reviewing, and by the unsparing use of cane and scourge, been taught to form all evolutions with a rapidity and a precision which would have astonished Villars or Eugene. The elevated feelings which are necessary to the best kind of army were then wanting to the Prussian service. In those ranks were not found the religious and political enthusiasm which inspired the pikemen of Cromwell, the patriotic ardour, the thirst of glory, the devotion to a great leader, which inflamed the Old Guard of Napoleon. But in all the mechanical parts of the military calling, the Prussians were as superior to the English and French troops of that day as the English and French troops to a rustic militia.

Though the pay of the Prussian soldier was small, though every rixdollar of extraordinary charge was scrutinised by Frederic with a vigilance and suspicion such as Mr. Joseph Hume never brought to the examination of an army estimate, the expense of such an establishment was, for the means of the country, enormous. In order that it might not be utterly ruinous, it was necessary that every other expense should be cut down to the
lowest possible point. Accordingly Frederic, though his dominions bordered on the sea, had no navy. He neither had nor wished to have colonies. His judges, his fiscal officers, were meanly paid. His ministers at foreign courts walked on foot, or drove shabby old carriages till the axle-trees gave way. Even to his highest diplomatic agents, who resided at London and Paris, he allowed less than a thousand pounds sterling a year. The royal household was managed with a frugality unusual in the establishments of opulent subjects, unexampled in any other palace. The King loved good eating and drinking, and during great part of his life took pleasure in seeing his table surrounded by guests; yet the whole charge of his kitchen was brought within the sum of two thousand pounds sterling a year. He examined every extraordinary item with a care which might be thought to suit the mistress of a boarding-house better than a great prince. When more than four rixdollars were asked of him for a hundred oysters, he stormed as if he had heard that one of his generals had sold a fortress to the Empress Queen. Not a bottle of champagne was uncorked without his express order. The game of the royal parks and forests, a serious head of expenditure in most kingdoms, was to him a source of profit. The whole was farmed out; and though the farmers were almost ruined by their contract, the King would grant them no remission. His wardrobe consisted of one fine gala dress, which lasted him all his life; of two or three old coats fit for Monmouth Street, of yellow waistcoats soiled with snuff, and of huge boots embrowned by time. One taste alone sometimes allured him beyond the limits of parsimony, nay, even beyond the limits of prudence, the taste for building. In all other things his economy was such as we
might call by a harsher name, if we did not reflect that his
funds were drawn from a heavily taxed people, and that it was
impossible for him, without excessive tyranny, to keep up at once
a formidable army and a splendid court.

Considered as an administrator, Frederic had undoubtedly many
titles to praise. Order was strictly maintained throughout his
dominions. Property was secure. A great liberty of speaking and
of writing was allowed. Confident in the irresistible strength
derived from a great army, the King looked down on malcontents
and libellers with a wise disdain; and gave little encouragement
to spies and informers. When he was told of the disaffection of
one of his subject, he merely asked, "How many thousand men can
he bring into the field?" He once saw a crowd staring at
something on a wall. He rode up and found that the object of
curiosity was a scurrilous placard against himself. The placard
had been posted up so high that it was not easy to read it.
Frederic ordered his attendants to take it down and put it lower.
"My people and I," he said, "have come to an agreement which
satisfies us both. They are to say what they please, and I am to
do what I please." No person would have dared to publish in
London satires on George the Second approaching to the atrocity
of those satires on Frederic, which the booksellers at Berlin
sold with impunity. One bookseller sent to the palace a copy of
the most stinging lampoon that perhaps was ever written in the
world, the Memoirs of Voltaire, published by Beaumarchais, and
asked for his Majesty's orders. "Do not advertise it in an
offensive manner," said the King; "but sell it by all means. I
hope it will pay you well." Even among statesmen accustomed to
the licence of a free press, such steadfastness of mind as this
is not very common.

It is due also to the memory of Frederic to say that he earnestly
laboured to secure to his people the great blessing of cheap and
speedy Justice. He was one of the first rulers who abolished the
cruel and absurd practice of torture. No sentence of death,
pronounced by the ordinary tribunals, was executed without his
sanction; and his sanction, except in cases of murder, was rarely
given. Towards his troops he acted in a very different manner.
Military offences were punished with such barbarous scourging
that to be shot was considered by the Prussian soldier as a
secondary punishment. Indeed, the principle which pervaded
Frederic's whole policy was this, that the more severely the army
is governed, the safer it is to treat the rest of the community
with lenity.

Religious persecution was unknown under his government, unless
some foolish and unjust restrictions which lay upon the Jews may
be regarded as forming an exception. His policy with respect to
the Catholics of Silesia presented an honourable contrast to the
policy which, under very similar circumstances, England long
followed with respect to the Catholics of Ireland. Every form of
religion and irreligion found an asylum in the States. The
scoffer whom the parliaments of France had sentenced to a cruel
death, was consoled by a commission in the Prussian service. The Jesuit who could show his face nowhere else, who in Britain was still subject to penal laws, who was proscribed by France, Spain, Portugal, and Naples, who had been given up even by the Vatican, found safety and the means of subsistence in the Prussian dominions.

Most of the vices of Frederic's administration resolve selves into one vice, the spirit of meddling. The indefatigable activity of his intellect, his dictatorial temper, his military habits, all inclined him to this great fault. He drilled his people as he drilled his grenadiers. Capital and industry were diverted from their natural direction by a crowd of preposterous regulations. There was a monopoly of coffee, a monopoly of tobacco, a monopoly of refined sugar. The public money, of which the King was generally so sparing, was lavishly spent in ploughing bogs, in planting mulberry trees amidst the sand, in bringing sheep from Spain to improve the Saxon wool, in bestowing prizes for fine yarn, in building manufactories of porcelain, manufactories of carpets, manufactories of hardware, manufactories of lace. Neither the experience of other rulers, nor his own, could ever teach him that something more than an edict and a grant of public money was required to create a Lyons, a Brussels, or a Birmingham.

For his commercial policy, however, there was some excuse. He had on his side illustrious examples and popular prejudice.
Grievously as he erred, he erred in company with his age. In other departments his meddling was altogether without apology. He interfered with the course of justice as well as with the course of trade; and set up his own crude notions of equity against the law as expounded by the unanimous voice of the gravest magistrates. It never occurred to him that men whose lives were passed in adjudicating on questions of civil right were more likely to form correct opinions on such questions than a prince whose attention was divided among a thousand objects, and who had never read a law-book through. The resistance opposed to him by the tribunals inflamed him to fury. He reviled his Chancellor. He kicked the shins of his judges. He did not, it is true, intend to act unjustly. He firmly believed that he was doing right, and defending the cause of the poor against the wealthy. Yet this well-meant meddling probably did far more harm than all the explosions of his evil passions during the whole of his long reign. We could make shift to live under a debauchee or a tyrant; but to be ruled by a busybody is more than human nature can bear.

The same passion for directing and regulating appeared in every part of the King's policy. Every lad of a certain station in life was forced to go to certain schools within the Prussian dominions. If a young Prussian repaired, though but for a few weeks, to Leyden or Gottingen for the purpose of study, the offence was punished with civil disabilities, and sometimes with the confiscation of property. Nobody was to travel without the royal permission. If the permission were granted, the pocket-
money of the tourist was fixed by royal ordinance. A merchant might take with him two hundred and fifty rixdollars in gold, a noble was allowed to take four hundred; for it may be observed, in passing, that Frederic studiously kept up the old distinction between the nobles and the community. In speculation, he was a French philosopher, but in action, a German prince. He talked and wrote about the privileges of blood in the style of Sieyes; but in practice no chapter in the empire looked with a keener eye to genealogies and quarterings.

Such was Frederic the Ruler. But there was another Frederic, the Frederic of Rheinsberg, the fiddler and flute-player, the poetaster and metaphysician. Amidst the cares of State the King had retained his passion for music, for reading, for writing, for literary society. To these amusements he devoted all the time that he could snatch from the business of war and government; and perhaps more light is thrown on his character by what passed during his hours of relaxation, than by his battles or his laws.

It was the just boast of Schiller that, in his country, no Augustus, no Lorenzo, had watched over the infancy of poetry. The rich and energetic language of Luther, driven by the Latin from the schools of pedants, and by the French from the palaces of kings, had taken refuge among the people. Of the powers of that language Frederic had no notion. He generally spoke of it, and of those who used it, with the contempt of ignorance. His library consisted of French books; at his table nothing was heard but
French conversation. The associates of his hours of relaxation were, for the most part, foreigners. Britain furnished to the royal circle two distinguished men, born in the highest rank, and driven by civil dissensions from the land to which, under happier circumstances, their talents and virtues might have been a source of strength and glory. George Keith, Earl Marischal of Scotland, had taken arms for the House of Stuart in 1715; and his younger brother James, then only seventeen years old, had fought gallantly by his side. When all was lost they retired together to the Continent, roved from country to country, served under various standards, and so bore themselves as to win the respect and good-will of many who had no love for the Jacobite cause. Their long wanderings terminated at Potsdam; nor had Frederic any associates who deserved or obtained so large a share of his esteem. They were not only accomplished men, but nobles and warriors, capable of serving him in war and diplomacy, as well as of amusing him at supper. Alone of all his companions, they appear never to have had reason to complain of his demeanour towards them. Some of those who knew the palace best pronounced that the Lord Marischal was the only human being whom Frederic ever really loved.

Italy sent to the parties at Potsdam the ingenious and amiable Algarotti, and Bastiani, the most crafty, cautious, and servile of Abbes. But the greater part of the society which Frederic had assembled round him, was drawn from France. Maupertuis had acquired some celebrity by the journey which he had made to
Lapland, for the purpose of ascertaining, by actual measurement, the shape of our planet. He was placed in the chair of the Academy of Berlin, a humble imitation of the renowned academy of Paris. Baculard D'Arnaud, a young poet, who was thought to have given promise of great things, had been induced to quit his country, and to reside at the Prussian Court. The Marquess D'Argens was among the King's favourite companions, on account, as it should seem, of the strong opposition between their characters. The parts of D'Argens were good, and his manners those of a finished French gentleman; but his whole soul was dissolved in sloth, timidity, and self-indulgence. He was one of that abject class of minds which are superstitious without being religious. Hating Christianity with a rancour which made him incapable of rational inquiry, unable to see in the harmony and beauty of the universe the traces of divine power and wisdom, he was the slave of dreams and omens, would not sit down to table with thirteen in company, turned pale if the salt fell towards him, begged his guests not to cross their knives and forks on their plates, and would not for the world commence a journey on Friday. His health was a subject of constant anxiety to him. Whenever his head ached, or his pulse beat quick, his dastardly fears and effeminate precautions were the jest of all Berlin. All this suited the King's purpose admirably. He wanted somebody by whom he might be amused, and whom he might despise. When he wished to pass half an hour in easy polished conversation, D'Argens was an excellent companion; when he wanted to vent his spleen and contempt, D'Argens was an excellent butt.
With these associates, and others of the same class, Frederic loved to spend the time which he could steal from public cares. He wished his supper parties to be gay and easy. He invited his guests to lay aside all restraint, and to forget that he was at the head of a hundred and sixty thousand soldiers, and was absolute master of the life and liberty of all who sat at meat with him. There was, therefore, at these parties the outward show of ease. The wit and learning of the company were ostentatiously displayed. The discussions on history and literature were often highly interesting. But the absurdity of all the religions known among men was the chief topic of conversation; and the audacity with which doctrines and names venerated throughout Christendom were treated on these occasions startled even persons accustomed to the society of French and English freethinkers. Real liberty, however, or real affection, was in this brilliant society not to be found. Absolute kings seldom have friends: and Frederic's faults were such as, even where perfect equality exists, make friendship exceedingly precarious. He had indeed many qualities which, on a first acquaintance were captivating. His conversation was lively; his manners, to those whom he desired to please, were even caressing. No man could flatter with more delicacy. No man succeeded more completely in inspiring those who approached him with vague hopes of some great advantage from his kindness. But under this fair exterior he was a tyrant, suspicious, disdainful, and malevolent. He had one taste which may be pardoned in a boy, but which, when habitually and deliberately indulged by a man of mature age and strong understanding, is almost invariably the
sign of a bad heart—a taste for severe practical jokes. If a courtier was fond of dress, oil was flung over his richest suit. If he was fond of money, some prank was invented to make him disburse more than he could spare. If he was hypochondriacal, he was made to believe that he had the dropsy. If he had particularly set his heart on visiting a place, a letter was forged to frighten him from going thither. These things, it may be said, are trifles. They are so; but they are indications, not to be mistaken, of a nature to which the sight of human suffering and human degradation is an agreeable excitement.

Frederic had a keen eye for the foibles of others, and loved to communicate his discoveries. He had some talent for sarcasm, and considerable skill in detecting the sore places where sarcasm would be most acutely felt. His vanity, as well as his malignity, found gratification in the vexation and confusion of those who smarted under his caustic jests. Yet in truth his success on these occasions belonged quite as much to the king as to the wit. We read that Commodus descended, sword in hand, into the arena, against a wretched gladiator, armed only with a foil of lead, and, after shedding the blood of the helpless victim, struck medals to commemorate the inglorious victory. The triumphs of Frederic in the war of repartee were of much the same kind. How to deal with him was the most puzzling of questions. To appear constrained in his presence was to disobey his commands, and to spoil his amusement. Yet if his associates were enticed by his graciousness to indulge in the familiarity of a cordial
intimacy, he was certain to make them repent of their presumption by some cruel humiliation. To resent his affronts was perilous; yet not to resent them was to deserve and to invite them. In his view, those who mutinied were insolent and ungrateful; those who submitted were curs made to receive bones and kickings with the same fawning patience. It is, indeed, difficult to conceive how anything short of the rage of hunger should have induced men to bear the misery of being the associates of the Great King. It was no lucrative post. His Majesty was as severe and economical in his friendships as in the other charges of his establishment, and as unlikely to give a rixdollar too much for his guests as for his dinners. The sum which he allowed to a poet or a philosopher was the very smallest sum for which such poet or philosopher could be induced to sell himself into slavery; and the bondsman might think himself fortunate, if what had been so grudgingly given was not, after years of suffering, rudely and arbitrarily withdrawn.

Potsdam was, in truth, what it was called by one of its most illustrious inmates, the Palace of Alcina. At the first glance it seemed to be a delightful spot, where every intellectual and physical enjoyment awaited the happy adventurer. Every newcomer was received with eager hospitality, intoxicated with flattery, encouraged to expect prosperity and greatness. It was in vain that a long succession of favourites who had entered that abode with delight and hope, and who, after a short term of delusive happiness, had been doomed to expiate their folly by years of
wretchedness and degradation, raised their voices to warn the
aspirant who approached the charmed threshold. Some had wisdom
enough to discover the truth early, and spirit enough to fly
without looking back; others lingered on to a cheerless and
unhonoured old age. We have no hesitation in saying that the
poorest author of that time in London, sleeping on a bulk, dining
in a cellar, with a cravat of paper, and a skewer for a shirt-
pin, was a happier man than any of the literary inmates of
Frederic's Court.

But of all who entered the enchanted garden in the inebriation of
delight, and quitted it in agonies of rage and shame, the most
remarkable was Voltaire. Many circumstances had made him desirous
of finding a home at a distance from his country. His fame had
raised him up enemies. His sensibility gave them a formidable
advantage over him. They were, indeed, contemptible assailants.
Of all that they wrote against him, nothing has survived except
what he has himself preserved. But the constitution of his mind
resembled the constitution of those bodies in which the slightest
scratch of a bramble, or the bite of a gnat, never fails to
fester. Though his reputation was rather raised than lowered by
the abuse of such writers as Freron and Desfontaines, though the
vengeance which he took on Freron and Desfontaines was such, that
scourging, branding, pillorying, would have been a trifle to it,
there is reason to believe that they gave him far more pain than
he ever gave them. Though he enjoyed during his own lifetime the
reputation of a classic, though he was extolled by his
contemporaries above all poets, philosophers, and historians, though his works were read with as much delight and admiration at Moscow and Westminster, at Florence and Stockholm, as at Paris itself, he was yet tormented by that restless jealousy which should seem to belong only to minds burning with the desire of fame, and yet conscious of impotence. To men of letters who could by no possibility be his rivals, he was, if they behaved well to him, not merely just, not merely courteous, but often a hearty friend and a munificent benefactor. But to every writer who rose to a celebrity approaching his own, he became either a disguised or an avowed enemy. He sily depreciated Montesquieu and Buffon. He publicly, and with violent outrage, made war on Rousseau. Nor had he the heart of hiding his feelings under the semblance of good humour or of contempt. With all his great talents, and all his long experience of the world, he had no more self-command than a petted child, or a hysterical woman. Whenever he was mortified, he exhausted the whole rhetoric of anger and sorrow to express his mortification. His torrents of bitter words, his stamping and cursing, his grimaces and his tears of rage, were a rich feast to those abject natures, whose delight is in the agonies of powerful spirits and in the abasement of immortal names. These creatures had now found out a way of galling him to the very quick. In one walk, at least, it had been admitted by envy itself that he was without a living competitor. Since Racine had been laid among the great men whose dust made the holy precinct of Port-Royal holier, no tragic poet had appeared who could contest the palm with the author of Zaire, of Alzire, and of Merope. At length a rival was announced. Old Crebillon, who,
many years before, had obtained some theatrical success, and who had long been forgotten, came forth from his garret in one of the meanest lanes near the Rue St. Antoine, and was welcomed by the acclamations of envious men of letters, and of a capricious populace. A thing called Catiline, which he had written in his retirement, was acted with boundless applause. Of this execrable piece it is sufficient to say, that the plot turns on a love affair, carried on in all the forms of Scudery, between Catiline, whose confidant is the Praetor Lentulus, and Tullia, the daughter of Cicero. The theatre resounded with acclamations. The King pensioned the successful poet; and the coffee-houses pronounced that Voltaire was a clever man, but that the real tragic inspiration, the celestial fire which had glowed in Corneille and Racine, was to be found in Crebillon alone.

The blow went to Voltaire’s heart. Had his wisdom and fortitude been in proportion to the fertility of his intellect, and to the brilliancy of his wit, he would have seen that it was out of the power of all the puffers and detractors in Europe to put Catiline above Zaire; but he had none of the magnanimous patience with which Milton and Bentley left their claims to the unerring judgment of time. He eagerly engaged in an undignified competition with Crebillon, and produced a series of plays on the same subjects which his rival had treated. These pieces were coolly received. Angry with the court, angry with the capital, Voltaire began to find pleasure in the prospect of exile. His attachment for Madame du Chatelet long prevented him from
executing his purpose. Her death set him at liberty; and he
determined to take refuge at Berlin.

To Berlin he was invited by a series of letters, couched in terms
of the most enthusiastic friendship and admiration. For once the
rigid parsimony of Frederic seemed to have relaxed. Orders,
honourable offices, a liberal pension, a well-served table,
stately apartments under a royal roof, were offered in return for
the pleasure and honour which were expected from the society of
the first wit of the age. A thousand louis were remitted for the
charges of the journey. No ambassador setting out from Berlin for
a court of the first rank, had ever been more amply supplied. But
Voltaire was not satisfied. At a later period, when he possessed
an ample fortune, he was one of the most liberal of men; but till
his means had become equal to his wishes, his greediness for
lucre was unrestrained either by justice or by shame. He had the
effrontery to ask for a thousand louis more, in order to enable
him to bring his niece, Madame Denis, the ugliest of coquettes,
in his company. The indelicate rapacity of the poet produced its
natural effect on the severe and frugal King. The answer was a
dry refusal. "I did not," said his Majesty, "solicit the honour
of the lady's society." On this, Voltaire went off into a
paroxysm of childish rage. "Was there ever such avarice? He has
hundreds of tubs full of dollars in his vaults, and haggles with
me about a poor thousand louis." It seemed that the negotiation
would be broken off; but Frederic, with great dexterity, affected
indifference, and seemed inclined to transfer his idolatry to
Baculard D'Arnaud. His Majesty even wrote some bad verses, of which the sense was, that Voltaire was a setting sun, and that D'Arnaud was rising. Good-natured friends soon carried the lines to Voltaire. He was in his bed. He jumped out in his shirt, danced about the room with rage, and sent for his passport and his post-horses. It was not difficult to foresee the end of a connection which had such a beginning.

It was in the year 1750 that Voltaire left the great capital, which he was not to see again till, after the lapse of near thirty years, he returned bowed down by extreme old age, to die in the midst of a splendid and ghastly triumph. His reception in Prussia was such as might well have elated a less vain and excitable mind. He wrote to his friends at Paris, that the kindness and the attention with which he had been welcomed surpassed description, that the King was the most amiable of men, that Potsdam was the paradise of philosophers. He was created chamberlain, and received, together with his gold key, the cross of an order, and a patent ensuring to him a pension of eight hundred pounds sterling a year for life. A hundred and sixty pounds a year were promised to his niece if she survived him. The royal cooks and coachmen were put at his disposal. He was lodged in the same apartments in which Saxe had lived, when, at the height of power and glory, he visited Prussia. Frederic, indeed, stooped for a time even to use the language of adulation. He pressed to his lips the meagre hand of the little grinning skeleton, whom he regarded as the dispenser of immortal renown.
He would add, he said, to the titles which he owed to his
ancestors and his sword, another title, derived from his last and
proudest acquisition. His style should run thus: Frederic, King
of Prussia, Margrave of Brandenburg, Sovereign Duke of Silesia,
Possessor of Voltaire. But even amidst the delights of the
honeymoon, Voltaire's sensitive vanity began to take alarm. A few
days after his arrival, he could not help telling his niece that
the amiable King had a trick of giving a sly scratch with one
hand while patting and stroking with the other. Soon came hints
not the less alarming, because mysterious. "The supper parties
are delicious. The King is the life of the company. But--I have
operas and comedies, reviews and concerts, my studies and books.
But--but--Berlin is fine, the princesses charming, the maids of
honour handsome. But--"

This eccentric friendship was fast cooling. Never had there met
two persons so exquisitely fitted to plague each other. Each of
them had exactly the fault of which the other was most impatient;
and they were, in different ways, the most impatient of mankind.
Frederic was frugal, almost niggardly. When he had secured his
plaything he began to think that he had bought it too dear.
Voltaire, on the other hand, was greedy, even to the extent of
imprudence and knavery; and conceived that the favourite of a
monarch who had barrels full of gold and silver laid up in
cellars ought to make a fortune which a receiver-general might
envy. They soon discovered each other's feelings. Both were
angry; and a war began, in which Frederic stooped to the part of
Harpagon, and Voltaire to that of Scapin. It is humiliating to relate, that the great warrior and statesman gave orders that his guest's allowance of sugar and chocolate should be curtailed. It is, if possible, a still more humiliating fact, that Voltaire indemnified himself by pocketing the wax candles in the royal antechamber. Disputes about money, however, were not the most serious disputes of these extraordinary associates. The sarcasms of the King soon galled the sensitive temper of the poet. D'Arnaud and D'Argens, Guichard and La Metrie, might, for the sake of a morsel of bread, be willing to bear the insolence of a master; but Voltaire was of another order. He knew that he was a potentate as well as Frederic, that his European reputation, and his incomparable power of covering whatever he hated with ridicule, made him an object of dread even to the leaders of armies and the rulers of nations. In truth, of all the intellectual weapons which have ever been wielded by man, the most terrible was the mockery of Voltaire. Bigots and tyrants, who had never been moved by the wailing and cursing of millions, turned pale at his name. Principles unassailable by reason, principles which had withstood the fiercest attacks of power, the most valuable truths, the most generous sentiments, the noblest and most graceful images, the purest reputations, the most august institutions, began to look mean and loathsome as soon as that withering smile was turned upon them. To every opponent, however strong in his cause and his talents, in his station and his character, who ventured to encounter the great scoffer, might be addressed the caution which was given of old to the Archangel:
"I forewarn thee, shun
His deadly arrow: neither vainly hope
To be invulnerable in those bright arms,
Though temper'd heavenly; for that fatal dint,
Save Him who reigns above, none can resist."

We cannot pause to recount how often that rare talent was
exercised against rivals worthy of esteem; how often it was used
to crush and torture enemies worthy only of silent disdain; how
often it was perverted to the more noxious purpose of destroying
the last solace of earthly misery, and the last restraint on
earthly power. Neither can we pause to tell how often it was used
to vindicate justice, humanity, and toleration, the principles of
sound philosophy, the principles of free government. This is not
the place for a full character of Voltaire.

Causes of quarrel multiplied fast. Voltaire, who, partly from
love of money, and partly from love of excitement, was always
fond of stock-jobbing, became implicated in transactions of at
least a dubious character. The King was delighted at having such
an opportunity to humble his guest; and bitter reproaches and
complaints were exchanged. Voltaire, too, was soon at war with
the other men of letters who surrounded the King; and this
irritated Frederic, who, however, had himself chiefly to blame:
for, from that love of tormenting which was in him a ruling
passion, he perpetually lavished extravagant praises on small men
and bad books, merely in order that he might enjoy the
mortification and rage which on such occasions Voltaire took no
pains to conceal. His Majesty, however, soon had reason to regret
the pains which he had taken to kindle jealousy among the members
of his household. The whole palace was in a ferment with literary
intrigues and cabals. It was to no purpose that the imperial
voice, which kept a hundred and sixty thousand soldiers in order,
was raised to quiet the contention of the exasperated wits. It
was far easier to stir up such a storm than to lull it. Nor was
Frederic, in his capacity of wit, by any means without his own
share of vexations. He had sent a large quantity of verses to
Voltaire, and requested that they might be returned, with remarks
and corrections. "See," exclaimed Voltaire, "what a quantity of
his dirty linen the King has sent me to wash!" Talebearers were
not wanting to carry the sarcasm to the royal ear; and Frederic
was as much incensed as a Grub Street writer who had found his
name in the Dunciad.

This could not last. A circumstance which, when the mutual regard
of the friends was in its first glow, would merely have been
matter for laughter, produced a violent explosion. Maupertuis
enjoyed as much of Frederic's goodwill as any man of letters. He
was President of the Academy of Berlin; and he stood second to
Voltaire, though at an immense distance, in the literary society
which had been assembled at the Prussian Court. Frederic had, by
playing for his own amusement on the feelings of the two jealous
and vainglorious Frenchmen, succeeded in producing a bitter
enmity between them. Voltaire resolved to set his mark, a mark
never to be effaced, on the forehead of Maupertuis, and wrote the
exquisitely ludicrous Diatribe of Doctor Akakia. He showed this
little piece to Frederic, who had too much taste and too much
malice not to relish such delicious pleasantry. In truth, even at
this time of day, it is not easy for any person who has the least
perception of the ridiculous to read the jokes on the Latin city,
the Patagonians, and the hole to the centre of the earth, without
laughing till he cries. But though Frederic was diverted by this
charming pasquinade, he was unwilling that it should get abroad.
His self-love was interested. He had selected Maupertuis to fill
the chair of his Academy. If all Europe were taught to laugh at
Maupertuis, would not the reputation of the Academy, would not
even the dignity of its royal patron, be in some degree
compromised? The King, therefore, begged Voltaire to suppress
this performance. Voltaire promised to do so, and broke his word.
The Diatribe was published, and received with shouts of merriment
and applause by all who could read the French language. The King
stormed. Voltaire, with his usual disregard of truth, asserted
his innocence, and made up some lie about a printer or an
amantuensis. The King was not to be so imposed upon. He ordered
the pamphlet to be burned by the common hangman, and insisted
upon having an apology from Voltaire, couched in the most abject
terms. Voltaire sent back to the King his cross, his key, and the
patent of his pension. After this burst of rage, the strange pair
began to be ashamed of their violence, and went through the forms
of reconciliation. But the breach was irreparable; and Voltaire
took his leave of Frederic for ever. They parted with cold
civility; but their hearts were big with resentment. Voltaire had in his keeping a volume of the King's poetry, and forgot to return it. This was, we believe, merely one of the oversights which men setting out upon a journey often commit. That Voltaire could have meditated plagiarism is quite incredible. He would not, we are confident, for the half of Frederic's kingdom, have consented to father Frederic's verses. The King, however, who rated his own writings much above their value, and who was inclined to see all Voltaire's actions in the worst light, was enraged to think that his favourite compositions were in the hands of an enemy, as thievish as a daw and as mischievous as a monkey. In the anger excited by this thought, he lost sight of reason and decency, and determined on committing an outrage at once odious and ridiculous.

Voltaire had reached Frankfort. His niece, Madame Denis, came thither to meet him. He conceived himself secure from the power of his late master, when he was arrested by order of the Prussian resident. The precious volume was delivered up. But the Prussian agents had, no doubt, been instructed not to let Voltaire escape without some gross indignity. He was confined twelve days in a wretched hovel. Sentinels with fixed bayonets kept guard over him. His niece was dragged through the mire by the soldiers. Sixteen hundred dollars were extorted from him by his insolent gaolers. It is absurd to say that this outrage is not to be attributed to the King. Was anybody punished for it? Was anybody called in question for it? Was it not consistent with Frederic's
character? Was it not of a piece with his conduct on other similar occasions? Is it not notorious that he repeatedly gave private directions to his officers to pillage and demolish the houses of persons against whom he had a grudge, charging them at the same time to take their measures in such a way that his name might not be compromised? He acted thus towards Count Bruhl in the Seven Years' War. Why should we believe that he would have been more scrupulous with regard to Voltaire?

When at length the illustrious prisoner regained his liberty, the prospect before him was but dreary. He was an exile both from the country of his birth and from the country of his adoption. The French Government had taken offence at his journey to Prussia, and would not permit him to return to Paris; and in the vicinity of Prussia it was not safe for him to remain.

He took refuge on the beautiful shores of Lake Leman. There, loosed from every tie which had hitherto restrained him, and having little to hope, or to fear from courts and churches, he began his long war against all that, whether for good or evil, had authority over man; for what Burke said of the Constituent Assembly, was eminently true of this its great forerunner: Voltaire could not build: he could only pull down: he was the very Vitruvius of ruin. He has bequeathed to us not a single doctrine to be called by his name, not a single addition to the stock of our positive knowledge. But no human teacher ever left behind him so vast and terrible a wreck of truths and falsehoods,
of things noble and things base, of things useful and things pernicious. From the time when his sojourn beneath the Alps commenced, the dramatist, the wit, the historian, was merged in a more important character. He was now the patriarch, the founder of a sect, the chief of a conspiracy, the prince of a wide intellectual commonwealth. He often enjoyed a pleasure dear to the better part of his nature, the pleasure of vindicating innocence which had no other helper, of repairing cruel wrongs, of punishing tyranny in high places. He had also the satisfaction, not less acceptable to his ravenous vanity, of hearing terrified Capuchins call him the Antichrist. But whether employed in works of benevolence, or in works of mischief, he never forgot Potsdam and Frankfort; and he listened anxiously to every murmur which indicated that a tempest was gathering in Europe, and that his vengeance was at hand.

He soon had his wish. Maria Theresa had never for a moment forgotten the great wrong which she had received at the hand of Frederic. Young and delicate, just left an orphan, just about to be a mother, she had been compelled to fly from the ancient capital of her race; she had seen her fair inheritance dismembered by robbers, and of those robbers he had been the foremost. Without a pretext, without a provocation, in defiance of the most sacred engagements, he had attacked the helpless ally whom he was bound to defend. The Empress Queen had the faults as well as the virtues which are connected with quick sensibility and a high spirit. There was no peril which she was not ready to
brave, no calamity which she was not ready to bring on her
subjects, or on the whole human race, if only she might once
taste the sweetness of a complete revenge. Revenge, too,
presented itself, to her narrow and superstitious mind, in the
guise of duty. Silesia had been wrested not only from the House
of Austria, but from the Church of Rome. The conqueror had indeed
permitted his new subjects to worship God after their own
fashion; but this was not enough. To bigotry it seemed an
intolerable hardship that the Catholic Church, having long
enjoyed ascendancy, should be compelled to content itself with
equality. Nor was this the only circumstance which led Maria
Theresa to regard her enemy as the enemy of God. The profaneness
of Frederic's writings and conversation, and the frightful
rumours which were circulated respecting the immorality of his
private life, naturally shocked a woman who believed with the
firmest faith all that her confessor told her, and who, though
surrounded by temptations, though young and beautiful, though
ardent in all her passions, though possessed of absolute power,
had preserved her fame unsullied even by the breath of slander.

To recover Silesia, to humble the dynasty of Hohenzollern to the
dust, was the great object of her life. She toiled during many
years for this end, with zeal as indefatigable as that which the
poet ascribed to the stately goddess who tired out her immortal
horses in the work of raising the nations against Troy, and who
offered to give up to destruction her darling Sparta and Mycenae,
if only she might once see the smoke going up from the palace of
Priam. With even such a spirit did the proud Austrian Juno strive to array against her foe a coalition such as Europe had never seen. Nothing would content her but that the whole civilised world, from the White Sea to the Adriatic, from the Bay of Biscay to the pastures of the wild horses of the Tanais, should be combined in arms against one petty State.

She early succeeded by various arts in obtaining the adhesion of Russia. An ample share of spoil was promised to the King of Poland; and that prince, governed by his favourite, Count Bruhl, readily promised the assistance of the Saxon forces. The great difficulty was with France. That the Houses of Bourbon and of Hapsburg should ever cordially co-operate in any great scheme of European policy, had long been thought, to use the strong expression of Frederic, just as impossible as that fire and water should amalgamate. The whole history of the Continent, during two centuries and a half, had been the history of the mutual jealousies and enmities of France and Austria. Since the administration of Richelieu, above all, it had been considered as the plain policy of the Most Christian King to thwart on all occasions the Court of Vienna, and to protect every member of the Germanic body who stood up against the dictation of the Caesars. Common sentiments of religion had been unable to mitigate this strong antipathy. The rulers of France, even while clothed in the Roman purple, even persecuting the heretics of Rochelle and Auvergne, had still looked with favour on the Lutheran and Calvinistic princes who were struggling against the chief of the
empire. If the French ministers paid any respect to the traditional rules handed down to them through many generations, they would have acted towards Frederic as the greatest of their predecessors acted towards Gustavus Adolphus. That there was deadly enmity between Prussia and Austria was of itself a sufficient reason for close friendship between Prussia and France. With France Frederic could never have any serious controversy. His territories were so situated that his ambition, greedy and unscrupulous as it was, could never impel him to attack her of his own accord. He was more than half a Frenchman: he wrote, spoke, read nothing but French: he delighted in French society: the admiration of the French he proposed to himself as the best reward of all his exploits. It seemed incredible that any French Government, however notorious for levity or stupidity, could spurn away such an ally.

The Court of Vienna, however, did not despair. The Austrian diplomatists propounded a new scheme of politics, which, it must be owned, was not altogether without plausibility. The great powers, according to this theory, had long been under a delusion. They had looked on each other as natural enemies, while in truth they were natural allies. A succession of cruel wars had devastated Europe, had thinned the population, had exhausted the public resources, had loaded governments with an immense burden of debt; and when, after two hundred years of murderous hostility or of hollow truce, the illustrious Houses whose enmity had distracted the world sat down to count their gains, to what did
the real advantage on either side amount? Simply to this, that they had kept each other from thriving. It was not the King of France, it was not the Emperor, who had reaped the fruits of the Thirty Years' War, or of the War of the Pragmatic Sanction. Those fruits had been pilfered by states of the second and third rank, which, secured against jealousy by their insignificance, had dexterously aggrandised themselves while pretending to serve the animosity of the great chiefs of Christendom. While the lion and tiger were tearing each other, the jackal had run off into the jungle with the prey. The real gainer by the Thirty Years' War had been neither France nor Austria, but Sweden. The real gainer by the War of the Pragmatic Sanction had been neither France nor Austria, but the upstart of Brandenburg. France had made great efforts, had added largely to her military glory, and largely to her public burdens; and for what end? Merely that Frederic might rule Silesia. For this and this alone one French army, wasted by sword and famine, had perished in Bohemia; and another had purchased with flood of the noblest blood, the barren glory of Fontenoy. And this prince, for whom France had suffered so much, was he a grateful, was he even an honest ally? Had he not been as false to the Court of Versailles as to the Court of Vienna?

Had he not played, on a large scale, the same part which, in private life, is played by the vile agent of chicane who sets his neighbours quarrelling, involves them in costly and interminable litigation, and betrays them to each other all round, certain that, whoever may be ruined, he shall be enriched? Surely the
true wisdom of the great powers was to attack, not each other, but this common barrator, who, by inflaming the passions of both, by pretending to serve both, and by deserting both, had raised himself above the station to which he was born. The great object of Austria was to regain Silesia; the great object of France was to obtain an accession of territory on the side of Flanders. If they took opposite sides, the result would probably be that, after a war of many years, after the slaughter of many thousands of brave men, after the waste of many millions of crowns, they would lay down their arms without having achieved either object; but, if they came to an understanding, there would be no risk, and no difficulty. Austria would willingly make in Belgium such cessions as France could not expect to obtain by ten pitched battles. Silesia would easily be annexed to the monarchy of which it had long been a part. The union of two such powerful governments would at once overawe the King of Prussia. If he resisted, one short campaign would settle his fate. France and Austria, long accustomed to rise from the game of war both losers, would, for the first time, both be gainers. There could be no room for jealousy between them. The power of both would be increased at once; the equilibrium between them would be preserved; and the only sufferer would be a mischievous and unprincipled buccaneer, who deserved no tenderness from either.

These doctrines, attractive from their novelty and ingenuity, soon became fashionable at the supper-parties and in the coffee-houses of Paris, and were espoused by every gay marquis and every
facetious abbe who was admitted to see Madame de Pompadour's hair curled and powdered. It was not, however, to any political theory that the strange coalition between France and Austria owed its origin. The real motive which induced the great continental powers to forget their old animosities and their old state maxims was personal aversion to the King of Prussia. This feeling was strongest in Maria Theresa; but it was by no means confined to her. Frederic, in some respects a good master, was emphatically a bad neighbour. That he was hard in all dealings, and quick to take all advantages, was not his most odious fault. His bitter and scoffing speech had inflicted keener wounds than his ambition. In his character of wit he was under less restraint than even in his character of ruler. Satirical verses against all the princes and ministers of Europe were ascribed to his pen. In his letters and conversation he alluded to the greatest potentates of the age in terms which would have better suited Colle, in a war of repartee with young Crebillon at Pelletier's table, than a great sovereign speaking of great sovereigns. About women he was in the habit of expressing himself in a manner which it was impossible for the meekest of women to forgive; and, unfortunately for him, almost the whole Continent was then governed by women who were by no means conspicuous for meekness. Maria Theresa herself had not escaped his scurrilous jests. The Empress Elizabeth of Russia knew that her gallantries afforded him a favourite theme for ribaldry and invective. Madame de Pompadour, who was really the head of the French Government, had been even more keenly galled. She had attempted, by the most delicate flattery, to propitiate the King of Prussia; but her
messages had drawn from him only dry and sarcastic replies. The Empress Queen took a very different course. Though the haughtiest of princesses, though the most austere of matrons, she forgot in her thirst for revenge both the dignity of her race and the purity of her character, and condescended to flatter the lowborn and low-minded concubine, who, having acquired influence by prostituting herself, retained it by prostituting others. Maria Theresa actually wrote with her own hand a note, full of expressions of esteem and friendship to her dear cousin, the daughter of the butcher Poisson, the wife of the publican D'Etioles, the kidnapper of young girls for the haram of an old rake, a strange cousin for the descendant of so many Emperors of the West! The mistress was completely gained over, and easily carried her point with Lewis, who had, indeed, wrongs of his own to resent. His feelings were not quick, but contempt, says the Eastern proverb, pierces even through the shell of the tortoise; and neither prudence nor decorum had ever restrained Frederic from expressing his measureless contempt for the sloth, the imbecility, and the baseness of Lewis. France was thus induced to join the coalition; and the example of France determined the conduct of Sweden, then completely subject to French influence.

The enemies of Frederic were surely strong enough to attack him openly; but they were desirous to add to all their other advantages the advantage of a surprise. He was not, however, a man to be taken off his guard. He had tools in every Court; and he now received from Vienna, from Dresden, and from Paris,
accounts so circumstantial and so consistent, that he could not
doubt of his danger. He learnt, that he was to be assailed at
once by France, Austria, Russia, Saxony, Sweden, and the Germanic
body; that the greater part of his dominions was to be portioned
out among his enemies; that France, which from her geographical
position could not directly share in his spoils, was to receive
an equivalent in the Netherlands; that Austria was to have
Silesia, and the Czarina East Prussia; that Augustus of Saxony
expected Magdeburg; and that Sweden would be rewarded with part
of Pomerania. If these designs succeeded, the House of
Brandenburg would at once sink in the European system to a place
lower than that of the Duke of Wurtemberg or the Margrave of
Baden.

And what hope was there that these designs would fail? No such
union of the continental powers had been seen for ages. A less
formidable confederacy had in a week conquered, all the provinces
of Venice, when Venice was at the height, of power, wealth, and
glory. A less formidable confederacy had compelled Lewis the
Fourteenth to bow down his haughty head to the very earth. A less
formidable confederacy has, within our own memory, subjugated a
still mightier empire, and abused a still prouder name. Such odds
had never been heard of in war. The people whom Frederic ruled
were not five millions. The population of the countries which
were leagued against him amounted to a hundred millions, The
disproportion in wealth was at least equally great. Small
communities, actuated by strong sentiments of patriotism or
loyalty, have sometimes made head against great monarchies weakened by factions and discontents. But small as was Frederic's kingdom, it probably contained a greater number of disaffected subjects than were to be found in all the states of his enemies. Silesia formed a fourth part of his dominions; and from the Silesians, born under Austrian princes, the utmost that he could expect was apathy. From the Silesian Catholics he could hardly expect anything but resistance.

Some states have been enabled, by their geographical position, to defend themselves with advantage against immense force. The sea has repeatedly protected England against the fury of the whole Continent. The Venetian Government, driven from its possessions on the land, could still bid defiance to the confederates of Cambray from the arsenal amidst the lagoons. More than one great and well appointed army, which regarded the shepherds of Switzerland as an easy prey, has perished in the passes of the Alps. Frederic hid no such advantage. The form of his states, their situation, the nature of the ground, all were against him. His long, scattered, straggling territory seemed to have been shaped with an express view to the convenience of invaders, and was protected by no sea, by no chain of hills. Scarcely any corner of it was a week's march from the territory of the enemy. The capital itself, in the event of war, would be constantly exposed to insult. In truth there was hardly a politician or a soldier in Europe who doubted that the conflict would be terminated in a very few days by the prostration of the House of
Nor was Frederic's own opinion very different. He anticipated nothing short of his own ruin, and of the ruin of his family. Yet there was still a chance, a slender chance, of escape. His states had at least the advantage of a central position; his enemies were widely separated from each other, and could not conveniently unite their overwhelming forces on one point. They inhabited different climates, and it was probable that the season of the year which would be best suited to the military operations of one portion of the League, would be unfavourable to those of another portion. The Prussian monarchy, too, was free from some infirmities which were found in empires far more extensive and magnificent. Its effective strength for a desperate struggle was not to be measured merely by the number of square miles or the number of people. In that spare but well-knit and well-exercised body, there was nothing but sinew, and muscle and bone. No public creditors looked for dividends. No distant colonies required defence. No Court, filled with flatterers and mistresses, devoured the pay of fifty battalions. The Prussian army, though far inferior in number to the troops which were about to be opposed to it, was yet strong out of all proportion to the extent of the Prussian dominions. It was also admirably trained and admirably officered, accustomed to obey and accustomed to conquer. The revenue was not only unincumbered by debt, but exceeded the ordinary outlay in time of peace. Alone of all the European princes, Frederic had a treasure laid up for a day of
difficulty. Above all, he was one, and his enemies were many. In their camps would certainly be found the jealousy, the dissension, the slackness inseparable from coalitions; on his side was the energy, the unity, the secrecy of a strong dictatorship. To a certain extent the deficiency of military means might be supplied by the resources of military art. Small as the King's army was, when compared with the six hundred thousand men whom the confederates could bring into the field, celerity of movement might in some degree compensate for deficiency of bulk. It was thus just possible that genius, judgment, resolution, and good luck united, might protract the struggle during a campaign or two; and to gain even a month was of importance. It could not be long before the vices which are found in all extensive confederacies would begin to show themselves. Every member of the League would think his own share of the war too large, and his own share of the spoils too small. Complaints and recriminations would abound. The Turk might stir on the Danube; the statesmen of France might discover the error which they had committed in abandoning the fundamental principles of their national policy. Above all, death might rid Prussia of its most formidable enemies. The war was the effect of the personal aversion with which three or four sovereigns regarded Frederic; and the decease of any one of those sovereigns might produce a complete revolution in the state of Europe.

In the midst of a horizon generally dark and stormy, Frederic could discern one bright spot. The peace which had been concluded
between England and France in 1748, had been in Europe no more
than an armistice; and had not even been an armistice in the
other quarters of the globe. In India the sovereignty of the
Carnatic was disputed between two great Mussulman houses; Fort
Saint George had taken one side, Pondicherry the other; and in a
series of battles and sieges the troops of Lawrence and Clive had
been opposed to those of Dupleix. A struggle less important in
its consequences, but not less likely to produce irritation, was
carried on between those French and English adventurers, who
kidnapped negroes and collected gold dust on the coast of Guinea.
But it was in North America that the emulation and mutual
aversions of the two nations were most conspicuous. The French
attempted to hem in the English colonists by a chain of military
posts, extending from the Great Lakes to the mouth of the
Mississippi. The English took arms. The wild aboriginal tribes
appeared on each side mingled with the Pale-Faces. Battles were
fought; forts were stormed; and hideous stories about stakes,
scalpings, and death-songs reached Europe, and inflamed that
national animosity which the rivalry of ages had produced. The
disputes between France and England came to a crisis at the very
time when the tempest which had been gathering was about to burst
on Prussia. The tastes and interests of Frederic would have led
him, if he had been allowed an option, to side with the House of
Bourbon. But the folly of the Court of Versailles left him no
choice. France became the tool of Austria; and Frederic was
forced to become the ally of England. He could not, indeed,
expect that a power which covered the sea with its fleets, and
which had to make war at once on the Ohio and the Ganges, would
be able to spare a large number of troops for operations in
Germany. But England, though poor compared with the England of
our time, was far richer than any country on the Continent. The
amount of her revenue, and the resources which she found in her
credit, though they may be thought small by a generation which
has seen her raise a hundred and thirty millions in a single
year, appeared miraculous to the politicians of that age. A very
moderate portion of her wealth, expended by an able and
economical prince, in a country where prices were low, would be
sufficient to equip and maintain a formidable army.

Such was the situation in which Frederic found himself. He saw
the whole extent of his peril. He saw that there was still a
faint possibility of escape; and, with prudent temerity, he
determined to strike the first blow. It was in the month of
August 1756, that the great war of the Seven Years commenced. The
King demanded of the Empress Queen a distinct explanation of her
intentions, and plainly told her that he should consider a
refusal as a declaration of war. "I want," he said, "no answer
in the style of an oracle." He received an answer at once haughty
and evasive. In an instant the rich electorate of Saxony was
overflowed by sixty thousand Prussian troops. Augustus with his
army occupied a strong position at Pirna. The Queen of Poland was
at Dresden. In a few days Pirna was blockaded and Dresden was
taken. The first object of Frederic was to obtain possession of
the Saxon State papers; for those papers, he well knew, contained
ample proofs that, though apparently an aggressor, he was really
acting in self-defence. The Queen of Poland, as well acquainted
as Frederic with the importance of those documents, had packed
them up, had concealed them in her bed-chamber, and was about to
send them off to Warsaw, when a Prussian officer made his
appearance. In the hope that no soldier would venture to outrage
a lady, a queen, a daughter of an emperor, the mother-in-law of a
dauphin, she placed herself before the trunk, and at length sat
down on it. But all resistance was vain. The papers were carried
to Frederic, who found in them, as he expected, abundant evidence
of the designs of the coalition. The most important documents
were instantly published, and the effect of the publication was
great. It was clear that, of whatever sins the King of Prussia
might formerly have been guilty, he was now the injured party,
and had merely anticipated a blow intended to destroy him.

The Saxon camp at Pirna was in the meantime closely invested; but
the besieged were not without hopes of succour. A great Austrian
army under Marshal Brown was about to pour through the passes
which separate Bohemia from Saxony. Frederic left at Pirna a
force sufficient to deal with the Saxons, hastened into Bohemia,
encountered Brown at Lowositz, and defeated him. This battle
decided the fate of Saxony. Augustus and his favourite Bruhl fled
to Poland. The whole army of the Electorate capitulated. From
that time till the end of the war, Frederic treated Saxony as a
part of his dominions, or, rather, he acted towards the Saxons in
a manner which may serve to illustrate the whole meaning of that
tremendous sentence, "subjectos tanquam suos, viles tanquam
alienos." Saxony was as much in his power as Brandenburg; and he had no such interest in the welfare of Saxony as he had in the welfare of Brandenburg. He accordingly levied troops and exacted contributions throughout the enslaved province, with far more rigour than in any part of his own dominions. Seventeen thousand men who had been in the camp at Pirna were half compelled, half persuaded to enlist under their conqueror. Thus, within a few weeks from the commencement of hostilities, one of the confederates had been disarmed, and his weapons were now pointed against the rest.

The winter put a stop to military operations. All had hitherto gone well. But the real tug of war was still to come. It was easy to foresee that the year 1757 would be a memorable era in the history of Europe.

The King's scheme for the campaign was simple, bold, and judicious. The Duke of Cumberland with an English and Hanoverian array was in Western Germany, and might be able to prevent the French troops from attacking Prussia. The Russians, confined by their snows, would probably not stir till the spring was far advanced. Saxony was prostrated. Sweden could do nothing very important. During a few months Frederic would have to deal with Austria alone. Even thus the odds were against him. But ability and courage have often triumphed against odds still more formidable.
Early in 1757 the Prussian army in Saxony began to move. Through
four defiles in the mountains they came pouring into Bohemia.

Prague was the King’s first mark; but the ulterior object was
probably Vienna. At Prague lay Marshal Brown with one great army.

Daun, the most cautious and fortunate of the Austrian captains,
was advancing with another. Frederic determined to overwhelm
Brown before Daun should arrive. On the sixth of May was fought,
under those walls which, a hundred and thirty years before, had
witnessed the victory of the Catholic league and the flight of
the unhappy Palatine, a battle more bloody than any which Europe
saw during the long interval between Malplaquet and Eylau. The
King and Prince Ferdinand of Brunswick were distinguished on that
day by their valour and exertions. But the chief glory was with
Schwerin. When the Prussian infantry wavered, the stout old
marshal snatched the colours from an ensign, and, waving them in
the air, led back his regiment to the charge. Thus at seventy-two
years of age he fell in the thickest battle, still grasping the
standard which bears the black eagle on the field argent. The
victory remained with the King; but it had been dearly purchased.

Whole columns of his bravest warriors had fallen. He admitted
that he had lost eighteen thousand men. Of the enemy, twenty-four
thousand had been killed, wounded, or taken.

Part of the defeated army was shut up in Prague. Part fled to
join the troops which, under the command of Daun, were now close
at hand. Frederic determined to play over the same game which had
succeeded at Lowositz. He left a large force to besiege Prague, and at the head of thirty thousand men he marched against Daun. The cautious Marshal, though he had a great superiority in numbers, would risk nothing. He occupied at Kolin a position almost impregnable, and awaited the attack of the King.

It was the eighteenth of June, a day which, if the Greek superstition still retained its influence, would be held sacred to Nemesis, a day on which the two greatest princes of modern times were taught, by a terrible experience, that neither skill nor valour can fix the inconstancy of fortune. The battle began before noon; and part of the Prussian army maintained the contest till after the midsummer sun had gone down. But at length the King found that his troops, having been repeatedly driven back with frightful carnage, could no longer be led to the charge. He was with difficulty persuaded to quit the field. The officers of his personal staff were under the necessity of expostulating with him, and one of them took the liberty to say, "Does your Majesty mean to storm the batteries alone?" Thirteen thousand of his bravest followers had perished. Nothing remained for him but to retreat in good order, to raise the siege of Prague, and to hurry his army by different routes out of Bohemia.

This stroke seemed to be final. Frederic's situation had at best been such, that only an uninterrupted run of good luck could save him, as it seemed, from ruin. And now, almost in the outset of the contest he had met with a check which, even in a war between
equal powers, would have been felt as serious. He had owed much
to the opinion which all Europe entertained of his army. Since
his accession, his soldiers had in many successive battles been
victorious over the Austrians. But the glory had departed from
his arms. All whom his malevolent sarcasms had wounded, made
haste to avenge themselves by scoffing at the scoffer. His
soldiers had ceased to confide in his star. In every part of his
camp his dispositions were severely criticised. Even in his own
family he had detractors. His next brother, William, heir-
presumptive, or rather, in truth, heir-apparent to the throne,
and great-grandfather of the present King, could not refrain from
lamenting his own fate and that of the House of Hohenzollern,
once so great and so prosperous, but now, by the rash ambition of
its chief, made a by-word to all nations. These complaints, and
some blunders which William committed during the retreat from
Bohemia, called forth the bitter displeasure of the inexorable
King. The prince's heart was broken by the cutting reproaches of
his brother; he quitted the army, retired to a country seat, and
in a short time died of shame and vexation.

It seemed that the King's distress could hardly be increased. Yet
at this moment another blow not less terrible than that of Kolin
fell upon him. The French under Marshal D'Estrees had invaded
Germany. The Duke of Cumberland had given them battle at
Hastembeck, and had been defeated. In order to save the
Electorate of Hanover from entire subjugation, he had made, at
Closter Seven, an arrangement with the French Generals, which
left them at liberty to turn their arms against the Prussian dominions.

That nothing might be wanting to Frederic's distress, he lost his mother just at this time; and he appears to have felt the loss more than was to be expected from the hardness and severity of his character. In truth, his misfortunes had now cut to the quick. The mocker, the tyrant, the most rigorous, the most imperious, the most cynical of men, was very unhappy. His face was so haggard, and his form so thin, that when on his return from Bohemia he passed through Leipsic, the people hardly knew him again. His sleep was broken; the tears, in spite of himself, often started into his eyes; and the grave began to present itself to his agitated mind as the best refuge from misery and dishonour. His resolution was fixed never to be taken alive, and never to make peace on condition of descending from his place among the powers of Europe. He saw nothing left for him except to die; and he deliberately chose his mode of death. He always carried about with him a sure and speedy poison in a small glass case; and to the few in whom he placed confidence, he made no mystery of his resolution.

But we should very imperfectly describe the state of Frederic's mind, if we left out of view the laughable peculiarities which contrasted so singularly with the gravity, energy, and harshness of his character. It is difficult to say whether the tragic or the comic predominated in the strange scene which was then
acting. In the midst of all the great King's calamities, his passion for writing indifferent poetry grew stronger and stronger. Enemies all round him, despair in his heart, pills of corrosive sublimate hidden in his clothes, he poured forth hundreds upon hundreds of lines, hateful to gods and men, the insipid dregs of Voltaire's Hippocrene, the faint echo of the lyre of Chaulieu. It is amusing to compare what he did during the last months of 1757, with what he wrote during the same time. It may be doubted whether any equal portion of the life of Hannibal, of Caesar, or of Napoleon, will bear a comparison with that short period, the most brilliant in the history of Prussia and of Frederic. Yet at this very time the scanty leisure of the illustrious warrior was employed in producing odes and epistles, a little better than Cibber's, and a little worse than Hayley's. Here and there a manly sentiment which deserves to be in prose makes its appearance in company with Prometheus and Orpheus, Elysium and Acheron, the Plaintive Philomel, the poppies of Morpheus, and all the other frippery which, like a robe tossed by a proud beauty to her waiting woman, has long been contemptuously abandoned by genius to mediocrity. We hardly know any instance of the strength and weakness of human nature so striking, and so grotesque, as the character of this haughty, vigilant, resolute, sagacious blue-stocking, half Mithridates and half Trissotin, bearing up against a world in arms, with an ounce of poison in one pocket and a quire of bad verses in the other.

Frederic had some time before made advances towards a
reconciliation with Voltaire; and some civil letters had passed between them. After the battle of Kolin their epistolary intercourse became, at least in seeming, friendly and confidential. We do not know any collection of Letters which throws so much light on the darkest and most intricate parts of human nature, as the correspondence of these strange beings after they had exchanged forgiveness. Both felt that the quarrel had lowered them in the public estimation. They admired each other. They stood in need of each other. The great King wished to be handed down to posterity by the great Writer. The great Writer felt himself exalted by the homage or the great King. Yet the wounds which they had inflicted on each other were too deep to be effaced, or even perfectly healed. Not only did the scars remain; the sore places often festered and bled afresh. The letters consisted for the most part of compliments, thanks, offers of service, assurances of attachment. But if anything brought back to Frederic's recollection the cunning and mischievous pranks by which Voltaire had provoked him, some expression of contempt and displeasure broke forth in the midst of eulogy. It was much worse when anything recalled to the mind of Voltaire the outrages which he and his kinswoman had suffered at Frankfort. All at once his flowing panegyric was turned into invective. "Remember how you behaved to me. For your sake I have lost the favour of my native King. For your sake I am an exile from my country. I loved you. I trusted myself to you. I had no wish but to end my life in your service. And what was my reward? Stripped of all that you had bestowed on me, the key, the order, the pension, I was forced to fly from your territories. I was hunted as if I had been a
deserter from your grenadiers. I was arrested, insulted, plundered. My niece was dragged through the mud of Frankfort by your soldiers, as if she had been some wretched follower of your camp. You have great talents. You have good qualities. But you have one odious vice. You delight in the abasement of your fellow-creatures. You have brought disgrace on the name of philosopher. You have given some colour to the slanders of the bigots, who say that no confidence can be placed in the justice or humanity of those who reject the Christian faith." Then the King answers, with less heat but equal severity--"You know that you behaved shamefully in Prussia. It was well for you that you had to deal with a man so indulgent to the infirmities of genius as I am. You richly deserved to see the inside of a dungeon. Your talents are not more widely known than your faithlessness and your malevolence. The grave itself is no asylum from your spite. Maupertuis is dead; but you still go on calumniating and deriding him, as if you had not made him miserable enough while he was living. Let us have no more of this. And, above all, let me hear no more of your niece. I am sick to death of her name. I can bear with your faults for the sake of your merits; but she has not written Mahomet or Merope."

An explosion of this kind, it might be supposed, would necessarily put an end to all amicable communication. But it was not so. After every outbreak of ill humour this extraordinary pair became more loving than before, and exchanged compliments and assurances of mutual regard with a wonderful air of
It may well be supposed that men who wrote thus to each other, were not very guarded in what they said of each other. The English ambassador, Mitchell, who knew that the King of Prussia was constantly writing to Voltaire with the greatest freedom on the most important subjects, was amazed to hear his Majesty designate this highly favoured correspondent as a bad-hearted fellow, the greatest rascal on the face of the earth. And the language which the poet held about the King was not much more respectful.

It would probably have puzzled Voltaire himself to say what was his real feeling towards Frederic. It was compounded of all sentiments, from enmity to friendship, and from scorn to admiration; and the proportions in which these elements were mixed, changed every moment. The old patriarch resembled the spoiled child who screams, stamps, cuffs, laughs, kisses, and cuddles within one quarter of an hour. His resentment was not extinguished; yet he was not without sympathy for his old friend. As a Frenchman, he wished success to the arms of his country. As a philosopher, he was anxious for the stability of a throne on which a philosopher sat. He longed both to save and to humble Frederic. There was one way, and only one, in which all his conflicting feelings could at once be gratified. If Frederic were preserved by the interference of France, if it were known that for that interference he was indebted to the mediation of
Voltaire, this would indeed be delicious revenge; this would
indeed be to heap coals of fire on that haughty head. Nor did the
vain and restless poet think it impossible that he might, from
his hermitage near the Alps, dictate peace to Europe. D'Estrees
had quitted Hanover, and the command of the French army had been
intrusted to the Duke of Richelieu, a man whose chief distinction
was derived from his success in gallantry. Richelieu was in truth
the most eminent of that race of seducers by profession, who
furnished Crebillon the younger and La Clos with models for their
heroes. In his earlier days the royal house itself had not been
secure from his presumptuous love. He was believed to have
carried his conquests into the family of Orleans; and some
suspected that he was not unconcerned in the mysterious remorse
which embittered the last hours of the charming mother of Lewis
the Fifteenth. But the Duke was now sixty years old. With a heart
deeply corrupted by vice, a head long accustomed to think only on
trifles, an impaired constitution, an impaired fortune, and,
worst of all, a very red nose, he was entering on a dull,
frivolous, and unrespected old age. Without one qualification for
military command, except that personal courage which was common
between him and the whole nobility of France, he had been placed
at the head of the army of Hanover; and in that situation he did
his best to repair, by extortion and corruption, the injury which
he had done to his property by a life of dissolute profusion.

The Duke of Richelieu to the end of his life hated the
philosophers as a sect, not for those parts of their system which
a good and wise man would have condemned, but for their virtues, for their spirit of free inquiry, and for their hatred of those social abuses of which he was himself the personification. But he, like many of those who thought with him, excepted Voltaire from the list of proscribed writers. He frequently sent flattering letters to Ferney. He did the patriarch the honour to borrow money of him, and even carried this condescending friendship so far as to forget to pay the interest. Voltaire thought that it might be in his power to bring the Duke and the King of Prussia into communication with each other. He wrote earnestly to both; and he so far succeeded that a correspondence between them was commenced.

But it was to very different means that Frederic was to owe his deliverance. At the beginning of November, the net seemed to have closed completely round him. The Russians were in the field, and were spreading devastation through his eastern provinces. Silesia was overrun by the Austrians. A great French army was advancing from the west under the command of Marshal Soubise, a prince of the great Armorican house of Rohan. Berlin itself had been taken and plundered by the Croatians. Such was the situation from which Frederic extricated himself, with dazzling glory, in the short space of thirty days.

He marched first against Soubise. On the fifth of November the armies met at Rosbach. The French were two to one; but they were ill-disciplined, and their general was a dunce. The tactics of
Frederic, and the well-regulated valour of the Prussian troops obtained a complete victory. Seven thousand of the invaders were made prisoners. Their guns, their colours, their baggage, fell into the hands of the conquerors. Those who escaped fled as confusedly as a mob scattered by cavalry. Victorious in the West, the King turned his arms towards Silesia. In that quarter everything seemed to be lost. Breslau had fallen; and Charles of Lorraine, with a mighty power, held the whole province. On the fifth of December, exactly one month after the battle of Rosbach, Frederic, with forty thousand men, and Prince Charles, at the head of not less than sixty thousand, met at Leuthen, hard by Breslau. The King, who was, in general, perhaps too much inclined to consider the common soldier as a mere machine, resorted, on this great day, to means resembling those which Bonaparte afterwards employed with such signal success for the purpose of stimulating military enthusiasm. The principal officers were convoked. Frederic addressed them with great force and pathos; and directed them to speak to their men as he had spoken to them. When the armies were set in battle array, the Prussian troops were in a state of fierce excitement; but their excitement showed itself after the fashion of a grave people. The columns advanced to the attack chanting, to the sound of drums and fifes, the rude hymns of the old Saxon Sternholds. They had never fought so well; nor had the genius of their chief ever been so conspicuous. "That battle," said Napoleon, "was a masterpiece. Of itself it is sufficient to entitle Frederic to a place in the first rank among generals." The victory was complete.

Twenty-seven
thousand Austrians were killed, wounded, or taken; fifty stand of colours, a hundred guns, four thousand waggons, fell into the hands of the Prussians. Breslau opened its gates; Silesia was reconquered; Charles of Lorraine retired to hide his shame and sorrow at Brussels; and Frederic allowed his troops to take some repose in winter quarters, after a campaign, to the vicissitudes of which it will be difficult to find any parallel in ancient or modern history.

The King's fame filled all the world. He had during the last year, maintained a contest, on terms of advantage, against three powers, the weakest of which had more than three times his resources. He had fought four great pitched battles against superior forces. Three of these battles he had gained: and the defeat of Kolin, repaired as it had been, rather raised than lowered his military renown. The victory of Leuthen is, to this day, the proudest on the roll of Prussian fame. Leipsic indeed, and Waterloo, produced consequences more important to mankind. But the glory of Leipsic must be shared by the Prussians with the Austrians and Russians; and at Waterloo the British infantry bore the burden and heat of the day. The victory of Rosbach was, in a military point of view, less honourable than that of Leuthen; for it was gained over an incapable general, and a disorganised army; but the moral effect which it produced was immense. All the preceding triumphs of Frederic had been triumphs over Germans, and could excite no emotions of national pride among the German people. It was impossible that a Hessian or a Hanoverian could
feel any patriotic exultation at hearing that Pomeranians had
slaughtered Moravians, or that Saxon banners had been hung in the
churches of Berlin. Indeed, though the military character of the
Germans justly stood high throughout the world, they could boast
of no great day which belonged to them as a people; of no
Agincourt, of no Bannockburn. Most of their victories had been
gained over each other; and their most splendid exploits against
foreigners had been achieved under the command of Eugene, who was
himself a foreigner. The news of the battle of Rosbach stirred
the blood of the whole of the mighty population from the Alps to
the Baltic, and from the borders of Courland to those of
Lorraine. Westphalia and Lower Saxony had been deluged by a great
host of strangers, whose speech was unintelligible, and whose
petulant and licentious manners had excited the strongest
feelings of disgust and hatred. That great host had been put to
flight by a small band of German warriors, led by a prince of
German blood on the side of father and mother, and marked by the
fair hair and the clear blue eye of Germany. Never since the
dissolution of the empire of Charlemagne, had the Teutonic race
won such a field against the French. The tidings called forth a
general burst of delight and pride from the whole of the great
family which spoke the various dialects of the ancient language
of Arminius. The fame of Frederic began to supply, in some
degree, the place of a common government and of a common capital.
It became a rallying point for all true Germans, a subject of
mutual congratulation to the Bavarian and the Westphalian, to the
citizen of Frankfort, and to the citizen of Nuremberg. Then first
it was manifest that the Germans were truly a nation. Then first
was discernible that patriotic spirit which, in 1813, achieved
the great deliverance of central Europe, and which still guards,
and long will guard, against foreign ambition the old freedom of
the Rhine.

Nor were the effects produced by that celebrated day merely
political. The greatest masters of German poetry and eloquence
have admitted that, though the great King neither valued nor
understood his native language, though he looked on France as the
only seat of taste and philosophy, yet, in his own despite, he
did much to emancipate the genius of his countrymen from the
foreign yoke; and that, in the act of vanquishing Soubise, he
was, unintentionally, rousing the spirit which soon began to
question the literary precedence of Boileau and Voltaire. So
strangely do events confound all the plans of man. A prince who
read only French, who wrote only French, who aspired to rank as a
French classic, became, quite unconsciously, the means of
liberating half the Continent from the dominion of that French
criticism of which he was himself, to the end of his life, a
slave. Yet even the enthusiasm of Germany in favour of Frederic
hardly equalled the enthusiasm of England. The birthday of our
ally was celebrated with as much enthusiasm as that of our own
sovereign; and at night the streets of London were in a blaze
with illuminations. Portraits of the Hero of Rosbach, with his
cocked hat and long pigtail, were in every house. An attentive
observer will, at this day, find in the parlours of old-fashioned
inns, and in the portfolios of print-sellers, twenty portraits of
Frederic for one of George the Second. The sign-painters were everywhere employed in touching up Admiral Vernon into the King of Prussia. This enthusiasm was strong among religious people, and especially among the Methodists, who knew that the French and Austrians were Papists, and supposed Frederic to be the Joshua or Gideon of the Reformed Faith. One of Whitfield’s hearers, on the day

On which thanks for the battle of Leuthen were returned at the Tabernacle, made the following exquisitely ludicrous entry in a diary, part of which has come down to us: “The Lord stirred up the King of Prussia and his soldiers to pray. They kept three fast days, and spent about an hour praying and singing psalms before they engaged the enemy. O! how good it is to pray and fight!” Some young Englishmen of rank proposed to visit Germany as volunteers, for the purpose of learning the art of war under the greatest of commanders. This last proof of British attachment and admiration, Frederic politely but firmly declined. His camp was no place for amateur students of military science. The Prussian discipline was rigorous even to cruelty. The officers, while in the field, were expected to practise an abstemiousness and self-denial such as was hardly surpassed by the most rigid monastic orders. However noble their birth, however high their rank in the service, they were not permitted to eat from anything better than pewter. It was a high crime even in a count and field-marshal to have a single silver spoon among his baggage. Gay young Englishmen of twenty thousand a year, accustomed to liberty and luxury, would not easily submit to these Spartan restraints. The King could not venture to keep them in order as
he kept his own subjects in order. Situated as he was with respect to England, he could not well imprison or shoot refractory Howards and Cavendishes. On the other hand, the example of a few fine gentlemen, attended by chariots and livery servants, eating in plates, and drinking champagne and Tokay, was enough to corrupt his whole army. He thought it best to make a stand at first, and civilly refused to admit such dangerous companions among his troops.

The help of England was bestowed in a manner far more useful and more acceptable. An annual subsidy of near seven hundred thousand pounds enabled the King to add probably more than fifty thousand men to his army. Pitt, now at the height of power and popularity, undertook the task of defending Western Germany against France, and asked Frederic only for the loan of a general. The general selected was Prince Ferdinand of Brunswick, who had attained high distinction in the Prussian service. He was put at the head of an army, partly English, partly Hanoverian, partly composed of mercenaries hired from the petty princes of the empire. He soon vindicated the choice of the two allied Courts, and proved himself the second general of the age.

Frederic passed the winter at Breslau, in reading, writing, and preparing for the next campaign. The havoc which the war had made among his troops was rapidly repaired; and in the spring of 1758 he was again ready for the conflict. Prince Ferdinand kept the French in check. The King in the meantime, after attempting
against the Austrians some operations which led to no very important result, marched to encounter the Russians, who, slaying, burning, and wasting wherever they turned, had penetrated into the heart of his realm. He gave them battle at Zorndorf, near Frankfort on the Oder. The fight was long and bloody. Quarter was neither given nor taken; for the Germans and Scythians regarded each other with bitter aversion, and the sight of the ravages committed by the half savage invaders, had incensed the King and his army. The Russians were overthrown with great slaughter; and for a few months no further danger was to be apprehended from the east.

A day of thanksgiving was proclaimed by the King, and was celebrated with pride and delight by his people. The rejoicings in England were not less enthusiastic or less sincere. This may be selected as the point of time at which the military glory of Frederic reached the zenith. In the short space of three quarters of a year he had won three great battles over the armies of three mighty and warlike monarchies, France, Austria, and Russia.

But it was decreed that the temper of that strong mind should be tried by both extremes of fortune in rapid succession. Close upon this series of triumphs came a series of disasters, such as would have blighted the fame and broken the heart of almost any other commander. Yet Frederic, in the midst of his calamities, was still an object of admiration to his subjects, his allies, and his enemies. Overwhelmed by adversity, sick of life, he still
maintained the contest, greater in defeat, in, flight, and in what seemed hopeless ruin, than on the fields of his proudest victories.

Having vanquished the Russians, he hastened into Saxony to oppose the troops of the Empress Queen, commanded by Daun, the most cautious, and Laudohn, the most inventive and enterprising of her generals. These two celebrated commanders agreed on a scheme, in which the prudence of the one and the vigour of the other seem to have been happily combined. At dead of night they surprised the King in his, camp at Hochkirchen. His presence of mind saved his troops from destruction; but nothing could save them from defeat and severe loss. Marshal Keith was among the slain. The first roar of the guns roused the noble exile from his rest, and he was instantly in the front of the battle. He received a dangerous wound, but refused to quit the field, and was in the act of rallying his broken troops, when an Austrian bullet terminated his chequered and eventful life.

The misfortune was serious. But of all generals Frederic understood best how to repair defeat, and Daun understood least how to improve victory. In a few days the Prussian army was as formidable as before the battle. The prospect was, however, gloomy. An Austrian army under General Harsch had invaded Silesia, and invested the fortress of Neisse. Daun, after his success at Hochkirchen, had written to Harsch in very confident terms:--"Go on with your operations against Neisse. Be quite at
ease as to the King. I will give a good account of him." In truth, the position of the Prussians was full of difficulties. Between them and Silesia, lay the victorious army of Daun. It was not easy for them to reach Silesia at all. If they did reach it, they left Saxony exposed to the Austrians. But the vigour and activity of Frederic surmounted every obstacle. He made a circuitous march of extraordinary rapidity, passed Daun, hastened into Silesia, raised the siege of Niesse, and drove Harsch into Bohemia. Daun availed himself of the King's absence to attack Dresden. The Prussians defended it desperately. The inhabitants of that wealthy and polished capital begged in vain for mercy from the garrison within, and from the besiegers without. The beautiful suburbs were burned to the ground. It was clear that the town, if won at all, would be won street by street by the bayonet. At this conjuncture came news, that Frederic, having cleared Silesia of his enemies, was returning by forced marches into Saxony. Daun retired from before Dresden, and fell back into the Austrian territories. The King, over heaps of ruins, made his triumphant entry into the unhappy metropolis, which had so cruelly expiated the weak and perfidious policy of its sovereign. It was now the twentieth of November. The cold weather suspended military operations; and the King again took up his winter quarters at Breslau.

The third of the seven terrible years were over; and Frederic still stood his ground. He had been recently tried by domestic as well as by military disasters. On the fourteenth of October, the
day on which he was defeated at Hochkirchen, the day on the
anniversary of which, forty-eight years later, a defeat far more
tremendous laid the Prussian monarchy in the dust, died
Wilhelmina, Margravine of Bareuth. From the accounts which we
have of her, by her own hand, and by the hands of the most
discerning of her contemporaries, we should pronounce her to have
been coarse, indelicate, and a good hater, but not destitute of
kind and generous feelings. Her mind, naturally strong and
observant, had been highly cultivated; and she was, and deserved
to be, Frederic's favourite sister. He felt the loss as much as
it was in his iron nature to feel the loss of anything but a
province or a battle.

At Breslau, during the winter, he was indefatigable in his
poetical labours. The most spirited lines, perhaps, that he ever
wrote, are, to be found in a bitter lampoon on Lewis and Madame
de Pompadour, which he composed at this time, and sent to
Voltaire. The verses were, indeed, so good, that Voltaire was
afraid that he might himself be suspected of having written
them, or at least of having corrected them; and partly from
fright, partly, we fear, from love of mischief, sent them to the
Duke of Choiseul, then prime minister of France. Choiseul very
wisely determined to encounter Frederic at Frederic's own
weapons, and applied for assistance to Palissot, who had some
skill as a versifier, and some little talent for satire. Palissot
produced some very stinging lines on the moral and literary
character of Frederic, and these lines the Duke sent to Voltaire.
This war of couplets, following close on the carnage of Zorndorf
and the conflagration of Dresden, illustrates well the strangely
compounded character of the King of Prussia.

At this moment he was assailed by a new enemy. Benedict the
Fourteenth, the best and wisest of the two hundred and fifty
successors of St. Peter, was no more. During the short interval
between his reign and that of his disciple Ganganelli, the chief
seat in the Church of Rome was filled by Rezzonico, who took the
name of Clement the Thirteenth. This absurd priest determined to
try what the weight of his authority could effect in favour of
the orthodox Maria Theresa against a heretic king. At the high
mass on Christmas-day, a sword with a rich belt and scabbard, a
hat of crimson velvet lined with ermine, and a dove of pearls,
the mystic symbol of the Divine Comforter, were solemnly blessed
by the supreme pontiff, and were sent with great ceremony to
Marshal Daun, the conqueror of Kolin and Hochkirchen. This mark
of favour had more than once been bestowed by the Popes on the
great champions of the faith. Similar honours had been paid, more
than six centuries earlier, by Urban the Second to Godfrey of
Bouillon. Similar honours had been conferred on Alba for
destroying the liberties of the Low Countries, and on John
Sobiesky after the deliverance of Vienna. But the presents which
were received with profound reverence by the Baron of the Holy
Sepulchre in the eleventh century, and which had not wholly lost
their value even in the seventeenth century, appeared
inexpressibly ridiculous to a generation which read Montesquieu
and Voltaire. Frederic wrote sarcastic verses on the gifts, the
giver, and the receiver. But the public wanted no prompter; and
an universal roar of laughter from Petersburg to Lisbon reminded
the Vatican that the age of crusades was over.

The fourth campaign, the most disastrous of all the campaigns of
this fearful war, had now opened. The Austrians filled Saxony and
menaced Berlin. The Russians defeated the King's generals on the
Oder, threatened Silesia, effected a junction with Laudohn, and
intrenched themselves strongly at Kunersdorf. Frederic hastened
to attack them. A great battle was fought. During the earlier
part of the day everything yielded to the impetuosity of the
Prussians, and to the skill of their chief. The lines were
forced. Half the Russian guns were taken. The King sent off a
courier to Berlin with two lines, announcing a complete victory.
But, in the meantime, the stubborn Russians, defeated yet
unbroken, had taken up their stand in an almost impregnable
position, on an eminence where the Jews of Frankfort were wont to
bury their dead. Here the battle recommenced. The Prussian
infantry, exhausted by six hours of hard fighting under a sun
which equalled the tropical heat, were yet brought up repeatedly
to the attack, but in vain. The King led three charges in person.
Two horses were killed under him. The officers of his staff fell
all round him. His coat was pierced by several bullets. All was
in vain. His infantry was driven back with frightful slaughter.
Terror began to spread fast from man to man. At that moment, the
fiery cavalry of Laudohn, still fresh, rushed on the wavering
ranks. Then followed an universal rout. Frederic himself was on
the point of falling into the hands of the conquerors, and was
with difficulty saved by a gallant officer, who, at the head of a
handful of Hussars, made good a diversion of a few minutes.
Shattered in body, shattered in mind, the King reached that night
a village which the Cossacks had plundered; and there, in a
ruined and deserted farm-house, flung himself on a heap of straw.
He had sent to Berlin a second despatch very different from the
first:--"Let the royal family leave Berlin. Send the archives to
Potsdam. The town may make terms with the enemy."

The defeat was, in truth, overwhelming. Of fifty thousand men who
had that morning marched under the black eagles, not three
thousand remained together. The King bethought him again of his
corrosive sublimate, and wrote to bid adieu to his friends, and
to give directions as to the measures to be taken in the event of
his death:--"I have no resource left"--such is the language of one
of his letters--"all is lost. I will not survive the ruin of my
country.--Farewell for ever."

But the mutual jealousies of the confederates prevented them from
following up their victory. They lost a few days in loitering and
squabbling; and a few days, improved by Frederic, were worth more
than the years of other men. On the morning after the battle, he
had got together eighteen thousand of his troops. Very soon his
force amounted to thirty thousand. Guns were procured from the
neighbouring fortresses; and there was again an army. Berlin was
for the present safe; but calamities came pouring on the King in uninterrupted succession. One of his generals, with a large body of troops, was taken at Maxen; another was defeated at Meissen; and when at length the campaign of 1759 closed, in the midst of a rigorous winter, the situation of Prussia appeared desperate. The only consoling circumstance was, that, in the West, Ferdinand of Brunswick had been more fortunate than his master; and by a series of exploits, of which the battle of Minden was the most glorious, had removed all apprehension of danger on the side of France.

The fifth year was now about to commence. It seemed impossible that the Prussian territories, repeatedly devastated by hundreds of thousands of invaders, could longer support the contest. But the King carried on war as no European power has ever carried on war, except the Committee of Public Safety during the great agony of the French Revolution. He governed his kingdom as he would have governed a besieged town, not caring to what extent property was destroyed, or the pursuits of civil life suspended, so that he did but make head against the enemy. As long as there was a man left in Prussia, that man might carry a musket; as long as there was a horse left, that horse might draw artillery. The coin was debased, the civil functionaries were left unpaid; in some provinces civil government altogether ceased to exist. But there was still rye-bread and potatoes; there was still lead and gunpowder; and, while the means of sustaining and destroying life remained, Frederic was determined to fight it out to the very
The earlier part of the campaign of 1760 was unfavourable to him. Berlin was again occupied by the enemy. Great contributions were levied on the inhabitants, and the royal palace was plundered. But at length, after two years of calamity, victory came back to his arms. At Lignitz he gained a great battle over Laudohn; at Torgau, after a day of horrible carnage, he triumphed over Daun. The fifth year closed, and still the event was in suspense. In the countries where the war had raged, the misery and exhaustion were more appalling than ever; but still there were left men and beasts, arms and food, and still Frederic fought on. In truth he had now been baited into savageness. His heart was ulcerated with hatred. The implacable resentment with which his enemies persecuted him, though originally provoked by his own unprincipled ambition, excited in him a thirst for vengeance which he did not even attempt to conceal. "It is hard," he says in one of his letters, "for a man to bear what I bear. I begin to feel that, as the Italians say, revenge is a pleasure for the gods. My philosophy is worn out by suffering. I am no saint, like those of whom we read in the legends; and I will own that I should die content if only I could first inflict a portion of the misery which I endure."

Borne up by such feelings, he struggled with various success, but constant glory, through the campaign of 1761. On the whole the result of this campaign was disastrous to Prussia. No great
battle was gained by the enemy; but, in spite of the desperate bounds of the hunted tiger, the circle of pursuers was fast closing round him. Laudohn had surprised the important fortress of Schweidnitz. With that fortress half of Silesia, and the command of the most important defiles through the mountains had been transferred to the Austrians. The Russians had overpowered the King's generals in Pomerania. The country was so completely desolated that he began, by his own confession, to look round him with blank despair, unable to imagine where recruits, horses, or provisions were to be found.

Just at this time, two great events brought on a complete change in the relations of almost all the powers of Europe. One of those events was the retirement of Mr. Pitt from office; the other was the death of the Empress Elizabeth of Russia.

The retirement of Pitt seemed to be an omen of utter ruin to the House of Brandenburg. His proud and vehement nature was incapable of anything that looked like either fear or treachery. He had often declared that, while he was in power, England should never make a peace of Utrecht, should never, for any selfish object, abandon an ally even in the last extremity of distress. The Continental war was his own war. He had been bold enough, he who in former times had attacked, with irresistible powers of oratory, the Hanoverian policy of Carteret, and the German subsidies of Newcastle, to declare that Hanover ought to be as dear to us as Hampshire, and that he would conquer America in
Germany. He had fallen; and the power which he had exercised, not always with discretion, but always with vigour and genius, had devolved on a favourite who was the representative of the Tory party, of the party which had thwarted William, which had persecuted Marlborough, which had given tip the Catalans to the vengeance of Philip of Anjou. To make peace with France, to shake off, with all, or more than all, the speed compatible with decency, every Continental connection, these were among the chief objects of the new Minister. The policy then followed inspired Frederic with an unjust, but deep and bitter aversion to the English name, and produced effects which are still felt throughout the civilised world. To that policy it was owing that, some years later, England could not find on the whole Continent a single ally to stand by her, in her extreme need against the House of Bourbon. To that policy it was owing that Frederic, alienated from England, was compelled to connect himself closely, during his later years, with Russia, and was induced to assist in that great crime, the fruitful parent of other great crimes, the first partition of Poland.

Scarcelly had the retreat of Mr. Pitt deprived Prussia of her only friend, when the death of Elizabeth produced an entire revolution in the politics of the North. The Grand Duke Peter, her nephew, who now ascended the Russian throne, was not merely free from the prejudices which his aunt had entertained against Frederic, but was a worshipper, a servile imitator of the great King. The days of the new Czar's government were few and evil, but sufficient to
produce a change in the whole state of Christendom. He set the
Prussian prisoners at liberty, fitted them out decently, and sent
them back to their master; he withdrew his troops from the
provinces which Elizabeth had decided on incorporating with her
dominions; and he absolved all those Prussian subjects, who had
been compelled to swear fealty to Russia, from their engagements.

Not content with concluding peace on terms favourable to Prussia,
he solicited rank in the Prussian service, dressed himself in a
Prussian uniform, wore the Black Eagle of Prussia on his breast,
made preparations for visiting Prussia, in order to have an
interview with the object of his idolatry, and actually sent
fifteen thousand excellent troops to reinforce the shattered army
of Frederic. Thus strengthened, the King speedily repaired the
losses of the preceding year, reconquered Silesia, defeated Daun
at Buckersdorf, invested and retook Schweidnitz, and, at the
close of the year, presented to the forces of Maria Theresa a
front as formidable as before the great reverses of 1759. Before
the end of the campaign, his friend, the Emperor Peter, having,
by a series of absurd insults to the institutions, manners, and
feelings of his people, united them in hostility to his person
and government, was deposed and murdered. The Empress, who, under
the title of Catherine the Second, now assumed the supreme power,
was, at the commencement of her administration, by no means
partial to Frederic, and refused to permit her troops to remain
under his command. But she observed the peace made by her
husband; and Prussia was no longer threatened by danger from the
East.

England and France at the same time paired off together. They concluded a treaty, by which they bound themselves to observe neutrality with respect to the German war. Thus the coalitions on both sides were dissolved; and the original enemies, Austria and Prussia, remained alone confronting each other.

Austria had undoubtedly far greater means than Prussia, and was less exhausted by hostilities; yet it seemed hardly possible that Austria could effect alone what she had in vain attempted to effect when supported by France on the one side, and by Russia on the other. Danger also began to menace the Imperial house from another quarter. The Ottoman Porte held threatening language, and a hundred thousand Turks were mustered on the frontiers of Hungary. The proud and revengeful spirit of the Empress Queen at length gave way; and, in February 1763, the peace of Hubertsburg put an end to the conflict which had, during seven years, devastated Germany. The King ceded nothing. The whole Continent in arms had proved unable to tear Silesia from that iron grasp.

The war was over. Frederic was safe. His glory was beyond the reach of envy. If he had not made conquests as vast as those of Alexander, of Caesar, and of Napoleon, if he had not, on fields of battle, enjoyed the constant success of Marlborough and Wellington, he had yet given an example unrivalled in history of
what capacity and resolution can effect against the greatest
superiority of power, and the utmost spite of fortune. He entered
Berlin in triumph, after an absence of more than six years. The
streets were brilliantly lighted up; and, as he passed along in
an open carriage, with Ferdinand of Brunswick at his side, the
multitude saluted him with loud praises and blessings. He was
moved by those marks of attachment, and repeatedly exclaimed
"Long live my dear people! Long live my children!" Yet, even in
the midst of that gay spectacle, he could not but perceive
everywhere the traces of destruction and decay. The city had been
more than once plundered. The population had considerably
diminished. Berlin, however, had suffered little when compared
with most parts of the kingdom. The ruin of private fortunes, the
distress of all ranks, was such as might appal the firmest mind.
Almost every province had been the seat of war, and of war
conducted with merciless ferocity. Clouds of Croatians had
descended on Silesia. Tens of thousands of Cossacks had been let
loose on Pomerania and Brandenburg. The mere contributions levied
by the invaders amounted, it was said, to more than a hundred
millions of dollars; and the value of what they extorted was
probably much less than the value of what they destroyed. The
fields lay uncultivated. The very seed-corn had been devoured in
the madness of hunger. Famine, and contagious maladies produced
by famine, had swept away the herds and flocks; and there was
reason to fear that a great pestilence among the human race was
likely to follow in the train of that tremendous war. Near
fifteen thousand houses had been burned to the ground. The
population of the kingdom had in seven years decreased to the
frightful extent of ten per cent. A sixth of the males capable of bearing arms had actually perished on the field of battle. In some districts, no labourers, except women, were seen in the fields at harvest-time. In others, the traveller passed shuddering through a succession of silent villages, in which not a single inhabitant remained. The currency had been debased; the authority of laws and magistrates had been suspended; the whole social system was deranged. For, during that convulsive struggle, everything that was not military violence was anarchy. Even the army was disorganised. Some great generals, and a crowd of excellent officers, had fallen, and it had been impossible to supply their place. The difficulty of finding recruits had, towards the close of the war, been so great, that selection and rejection were impossible. Whole battalions were composed of deserters or of prisoners. It was hardly to be hoped that thirty years of repose and industry would repair the ruin produced by seven years of havoc. One consolatory circumstance, indeed, there was. No debt had been incurred. The burdens of the war had been terrible, almost insupportable; but no arrear was left to embarrass the finances in time of peace.

Here, for the present, we must pause. We have accompanied Frederic to the close of his career as a warrior. Possibly, when these Memoirs are completed, we may resume the consideration of his character, and give some account of his domestic and foreign policy, and of his private habits, during the many years of tranquillity which followed the Seven Years' War.
IT would be scarcely possible for a man of Mr. Southey's talents and acquirements to write two volumes so large as those before us, which should be wholly destitute of information and amusement. Yet we do not remember to have read with so little satisfaction any equal quantity of matter, written by any man of real abilities. We have, for some time past, observed with great regret the strange infatuation which leads the Poet Laureate to abandon those departments of literature in which he might excel, and to lecture the public on sciences of which he has still the very alphabet to learn. He has now, we think, done his worst. The subject which he has at last undertaken to treat, is one which demands all the highest intellectual and moral qualities of a philosophical statesman, an understanding at once comprehensive and acute, a heart at once upright and charitable. Mr. Southey brings to the task two faculties which were never, we believe, vouchsafed in measure so copious to any human being, the faculty of believing without a reason, and the faculty of hating without
It is, indeed, most extraordinary, that a mind like Mr. Southey's, a mind richly endowed in many respects by nature, and highly cultivated by study, a mind which has exercised considerable influence on the most enlightened generation of the most enlightened people that ever existed, should be utterly destitute of the power of discerning truth from falsehood. Yet such is the fact. Government is to Mr. Southey one of the fine arts. He judges of a theory, of a public measure, of a religion or a political party, of a peace or a war, as men judge of a picture or a statue, by the effect produced on his imagination. A chain of associations is to him what a chain of reasoning is to other men; and what he calls his opinions are in fact merely his tastes.

Part of this description might perhaps apply to a much greater man, Mr. Burke. But Mr. Burke assuredly possessed an understanding admirably fitted for the investigation of truth, an understanding stronger than that of any statesman, active or speculative, of the eighteenth century, stronger than everything, except his own fierce and ungovernable sensibility. Hence he generally chose his side like a fanatic, and defended it like a philosopher. His conduct on the most important occasions of his life, at the time of the impeachment of Hastings for example, and at the time of the French Revolution, seems to have been prompted by those feelings and motives which Mr. Coleridge has so happily
described,

"Stormy pity, and the cherish'd lure
Of pomp, and proud precipitance of soul."

Hindostan, with its vast cities, its gorgeous pagodas, its
infinite swarms of dusky population, its long-descended
dynasties, its stately etiquette, excited in a mind so capacious,
so imaginative, and so susceptible, the most intense interest.
The peculiarities of the costume, of the manners, and of the
laws, the very mystery which hung over the language and origin of
the people, seized his imagination. To plead under the ancient
arches of Westminster Hall, in the name of the English people, at
the bar of the English nobles for great nations and kings
separated from him by half the world, seemed to him the height of
human glory. Again, it is not difficult to perceive that his
hostility to the French Revolution principally arose from the
vexation which he felt at having all his old political
associations disturbed, at seeing the well-known landmarks of
states obliterated, and the names and distinctions with which the
history of Europe had been filled for ages at once swept away. He
felt like an antiquary whose shield had been scoured, or a
connoisseur who found his Titian retouched. But, however he came
by an opinion, he had no sooner got it than he did his best to
make out a legitimate title to it. His reason, like a spirit in
the service of an enchanter, though spell-bound, was still
mighty. It did whatever work his passions and his imagination
might impose. But it did that work, however arduous, with
marvellous dexterity and vigour. His course was not determined by
argument; but he could defend the wildest course by arguments
more plausible than those by which common men support opinions
which they have adopted after the fullest deliberation. Reason
has scarcely ever displayed, even in those well-constituted minds
of which she occupies the throne, so much power and energy as in
the lowest offices of that imperial servitude.

Now in the mind of Mr. Southey reason has no place at all, as
either leader or follower, as either sovereign or slave. He does
not seem to know what an argument is. He never uses arguments
himself. He never troubles himself to answer the arguments of his
opponents. It has never occurred to him, that a man ought to be
able to give some better account of the way in which he has
arrived at his opinions than merely that it is his will and
pleasure to hold them. It has never occurred to him that there is
a difference between assertion and demonstration, that a rumour
does not always prove a fact, that a single fact, when proved, is
hardly foundation enough for a theory, that two contradictory
propositions cannot be undeniable truths, that to beg the
question is not the way to settle it, or that when an objection
is raised, it ought to be met with something more convincing than
"scoundrel" and "blockhead."

It would be absurd to read the works of such a writer for
political instruction. The utmost that can be expected from any
system promulgated by him is that it may be splendid and affecting, that it may suggest sublime and pleasing images. His scheme of philosophy is a mere day-dream, a poetical creation, like the Doindaniel cavern, the Swerga, or Padalon; and indeed it bears no inconsiderable resemblance to those gorgeous visions. Like them, it has something, of invention, grandeur, and brilliancy. But, like them, it is grotesque and extravagant, and perpetually violates even that conventional probability which is essential to the effect of works of art.

The warmest admirers of Mr. Southey will scarcely, we think, deny that his success has almost always borne an inverse proportion to the degree in which his undertakings have required a logical head. His poems, taken in the mass, stand far higher than his prose works. His official Odes indeed, among which the Vision of Judgement must be classed, are, for the most part, worse than Pye's and as bad as Cibber's; nor do we think him generally happy in short pieces. But his longer poems, though full of faults, are nevertheless very extraordinary productions. We doubt greatly whether they will be read fifty years hence; but that, if they are read, they will be admired, we have no doubt whatever.

But, though in general we prefer Mr. Southey's poetry to his prose, we must make one exception. The Life of Nelson is, beyond all doubt, the most perfect and the most delightful of his works. The fact is, as his poems most abundantly prove, that he is by no means so skilful in designing as in filling up. It was therefore
an advantage to him to be furnished with an outline of characters
and events, and to have no other task to perform than that of
touching the cold sketch into life. No writer, perhaps, ever
lived, whose talents so precisely qualified him to write the
history of the great naval warrior. There were no fine riddles of
the human heart to read, no theories to propound, no hidden
causes to develop, no remote consequences to predict. The
character of the hero lay on the surface. The exploits were
brilliant and picturesque. The necessity of adhering to the real
course of events saved Mr. Southey from those faults which deform
the original plan of almost every one of his poems, and which
even his innumerable beauties of detail scarcely redeem. The
subject did not require the exercise of those reasoning powers
the want of which is the blemish of his prose. It would not be
easy to find, in all literary history, an instance of a more
exact hit between wind and water. John Wesley and the Peninsular
War were subjects of a very different kind, subjects which
required all the qualities of a philosophic historian. In Mr.
Southey's works on these subjects, he has, on the whole, failed.
Yet there are charming specimens of the art of narration in both
of them. The Life of Wesley will probably live. Defective as it
is, it contains the only popular account of a most remarkable
moral revolution, and of a man whose eloquence and logical
acuteness might have made him eminent in literature, whose genius
for government was not inferior to that of Richelieu, and who,
whatever his errors may have been, devoted all his powers, in
defiance of obloquy and derision, to what he sincerely considered
as the highest good of his species. The History of the Peninsular
War is already dead; indeed, the second volume was dead-born. The glory of producing an imperishable record of that great conflict seems to be reserved for Colonel Napier.

The Book of the Church contains some stories very prettily told. The rest is mere rubbish. The adventure was manifestly one which could be achieved only by a profound thinker, and one in which even a profound thinker might have failed, unless his passions had been kept under strict control. But in all those works in which Mr. Southey has completely abandoned narration, and has undertaken to argue moral and political questions, his failure has been complete and ignominious. On such occasions his writings are rescued from utter contempt and derision solely by the beauty and purity of the English. We find, we confess, so great a charm in Mr. Southey's style, that, even when he writes nonsense, we generally read it with pleasure except indeed when he tries to be droll. A more insufferable jester never existed. He very often attempts to be humorous, and yet we do not remember a single occasion on which he has succeeded further than to be quaintly and flippantly dull. In one of his works he tells us that Bishop Sprat was very properly so called, inasmuch as he was a very small poet. And in the book now before us he cannot quote Francis Bugg, the renegade Quaker, without a remark on his unsavoury name. A wise man might talk folly like this by his own fireside; but that any human being, after having made such a joke, should write it down, and copy it out, and transmit it to the printer, and correct the proof-sheets, and send it forth into the world,
is enough to make us ashamed of our species.

The extraordinary bitterness of spirit which Mr. Southey manifests towards his opponents is, no doubt, in a great measure to be attributed to the manner in which he forms his opinions. Differences of taste, it has often been remarked, produce greater exasperation than differences on points of science. But this is not all. A peculiar austerity marks almost all Mr. Southey's judgments of men and actions. We are far from blaming him for fixing on a high standard of morals, and for applying that standard to every case. But rigour ought to be accompanied by discernment; and of discernment Mr. Southey seems to be utterly destitute. His mode of judging is monkish. It is exactly what we should expect from a stern old Benedictine, who had been preserved from many ordinary frailties by the restraints of his situation. No man out of a cloister ever wrote about love, for example, so coldly and at the same time so grossly. His descriptions of it are just what we should hear from a recluse who knew the passion only from the details of the confessional. Almost all his heroes make love either like Seraphim or like cattle. He seems to have no notion of anything between the Platonic passion of the Glendoveer who gazes with rapture on his mistress's leprosy, and the brutal appetite of Arvalan and Roderick. In Roderick, indeed, the two characters are united. He is first all clay, and then all spirit. He goes forth a Tarquin, and comes back too ethereal to be married. The only love scene, as far as we can recollect, in Madoc, consists of the delicate
attentions which a savage, who has drunk too much of the Prince's excellent metheglin, offers to Goervyl. It would be the labour of a week to find, in all the vast mass of Mr. Southey's poetry, a single passage indicating any sympathy with those feelings which have consecrated the shades of Vaucluse and the rocks of Meillerie.

Indeed, if we except some very pleasing images of paternal tenderness and filial duty, there is scarcely anything soft or humane in Mr. Southey's poetry. What theologians call the spiritual sins are his cardinal virtues, hatred, pride, and the insatiable thirst of vengeance. These passions he disguises under the name of duties; he purifies them from the alloy of vulgar interests; he ennobles them by uniting them with energy, fortitude, and a severe sanctity of manners; and he then holds them up to the admiration of mankind. This is the spirit of Thalaba, of Ladurlad, of Adosinda, of Roderick after his conversion. It is the spirit which, in all his writings, Mr. Southey appears to affect. "I do well to be angry," seems to be the predominant feeling of his mind. Almost the only mark of charity which he vouchsafes to his opponents is to pray for their reformation; and this he does in terms not unlike those in which we can imagine a Portuguese priest interceding with Heaven for a Jew, delivered over to the secular arm after a relapse.

We have always heard, and fully believe, that Mr. Southey is a very amiable and humane man; nor do we intend to apply to him
personally any of the remarks which we have made on the spirit of
his writings. Such are the caprices of human nature. Even Uncle
Toby troubled himself very little about the French grenadiers who
fell on the glacis of Namur. And Mr. Southey, when he takes up
his pen, changes his nature as much as Captain Shandy when he
girt on his sword. The only opponents to whom the Laureate gives
quarter are those in whom he finds something of his own character
reflected. He seems to have an instinctive antipathy for calm,
moderate men, for men who shun extremes, and who render reasons.

He has treated Mr. Owen of Lanark, for example, with infinitely
more respect than he has shown to Mr. Hallam or to Dr. Lingard;
and this for no reason that we can discover, except that Mr. Owen
is more unreasonably and hopelessly in the wrong than any
speculator of our time.

Mr. Southey's political system is just what we might expect from
a man who regards politics, not as matter of science, but as
matter of taste and feeling. All his schemes of government have
been inconsistent with themselves. In his youth he was a
republican; yet, as he tells us in his preface to these
Colloquies, he was even then opposed to the Catholic Claims. He
is now a violent Ultra-Tory. Yet, while he maintains, with
vehementness approaching to ferocity, all the sterner and harsher
parts of the Ultra-Tory theory of government, the baser and
dirtier part of that theory disgusts him. Exclusion, persecution,
severe punishments for libellers and demagogues, proscriptions,
massacres, civil war, if necessary, rather than any concession to
a discontented people; these are the measures which he seems
inclined to recommend. A severe and gloomy tyranny, crushing
opposition, silencing remonstrance, drilling the minds of the
people into unreasoning obedience, has in it something of
grandeur which delights his imagination. But there is nothing
fine in the shabby tricks and jobs of office; and Mr. Southey,
accordingly, has no toleration for them. When a Jacobin, he did
not perceive that his system led logically, and would have led
practically, to the removal of religious distinctions. He now
commits a similar error. He renounces the abject and paltry part
of the creed of his party, without perceiving that it is also an
essential part of that creed. He would have tyranny and purity
together; though the most superficial observation might have
shown him that there can be no tyranny without corruption.

It is high time, however, that we should proceed to the
consideration of the work which is our more immediate subject,
and which, indeed, illustrates in almost every page our general
remarks on Mr. Southey's writings. In the preface, we are
informed that the author, notwithstanding some statements to the
contrary, was always opposed to the Catholic Claims. We fully
believe this; both because we are sure that Mr. Southey is
incapable of publishing a deliberate falsehood, and because his
assertion is in itself probable. We should have expected that,
even in his wildest paroxysms of democratic enthusiasm, Mr.
Southey would have felt no wish to see a simple remedy applied to
a great practical evil. We should have expected that the only
measure which all the great statesmen of two generations have agreed with each other in supporting would be the only measure which Mr. Southey would have agreed with himself in opposing. He has passed from one extreme of political opinion to another, as Satan in Milton went round the globe, contriving constantly to "ride with darkness." Wherever the thickest shadow of the night may at any moment chance to fall, there is Mr. Southey. It is not everybody who could have so dexterously avoided blundering on the daylight in the course of a journey to the antipodes.

Mr. Southey has not been fortunate in the plan of any of his fictitious narratives. But he has never failed so conspicuously as in the work before us; except, indeed, in the wretched Vision of Judgement. In November 1817, it seems the Laureate was sitting over his newspaper, and meditating about the death of the Princess Charlotte. An elderly person of very dignified aspect makes his appearance, announces himself as a stranger from a distant country, and apologises very politely for not having provided himself with letters of introduction. Mr. Southey supposes his visitor to be some American gentleman who has come to see the lakes and the lake-poets, and accordingly proceeds to perform, with that grace, which only long practice can give, all the duties which authors owe to starers. He assures his guest that some of the most agreeable visits which he has received have been from Americans, and that he knows men among them whose talents and virtues would do honour to any country. In passing we may observe, to the honour of Mr. Southey, that, though he
evidently has no liking for the American institutions, he never
speaks of the people of the United States with that pitiful
affectation of contempt by which some members of his party have
done more than wars or tariffs can do to excite mutual enmity
between two communities formed for mutual fellowship. Great as
the faults of his mind are, paltry spite like this has no place
in it. Indeed it is scarcely conceivable that a man of his
sensibility and his imagination should look without pleasure and
national pride on the vigorous and splendid youth of a great
people, whose veins are filled with our blood, whose minds are
nourished with our literature, and on whom is entailed the rich
inheritance of our civilisation, our freedom, and our glory.

But we must return to Mr. Southey's study at Keswick. The visitor
informs the hospitable poet that he is not an American but a
spirit. Mr. Southey, with more frankness than civility, tells him
that he is a very queer one. The stranger holds out his hand. It
has neither weight nor substance. Mr. Southey upon this becomes
more serious; his hair stands on end; and he adjures the spectre
to tell him what he is, and why he comes. The ghost turns out to
be Sir Thomas More. The traces of martyrdom, it seems, are worn
in the other world, as stars and ribands are worn in this. Sir
Thomas shows the poet a red streak round his neck, brighter than
a ruby, and informs him that Cranmer wears a suit of flames in
Paradise, the right hand glove, we suppose, of peculiar
brilliancy.
Sir Thomas pays but a short visit on this occasion, but promises to cultivate the new acquaintance which he has formed, and, after begging that his visit may be kept secret from Mrs. Southey, vanishes into air.

The rest of the book consists of conversations between Mr. Southey and the spirit about trade, currency, Catholic emancipation, periodical literature, female nunneries, butchers, snuff, bookstalls, and a hundred other subjects. Mr. Southey very hospitably takes an opportunity to escort the ghost round the lakes, and directs his attention to the most beautiful points of view. Why a spirit was to be evoked for the purpose of talking over such matters and seeing such sights, why the vicar of the parish, a blue-stocking from London, or an American, such as Mr. Southey at first supposed the aerial visitor to be, might not have done as well, we are unable to conceive. Sir Thomas tells Mr. Southey nothing about future events, and indeed absolutely disclaims the gifts of prescience. He has learned to talk modern English. He has read all the new publications, and loves a jest as well as when he jested with the executioner, though we cannot say that the quality of his wit has materially improved in Paradise. His powers of reasoning, too, are by no means in as great vigour as when he sate on the woolsack; and though he boasts that he is "divested of all those passions which cloud the intellects and warp the understandings of men," we think him, we must confess, far less stoical than formerly. As to revelations, he tells Mr. Southey at the outset to expect none from him. The
Laureate expresses some doubts, which assuredly will not raise him in the opinion of our modern millennarians, as to the divine authority of the Apocalypse. But the ghost preserves an impenetrable silence. As far as we remember, only one hint about the employment of disembodied spirits escapes him. He encourages Mr. Southey to hope that there is a Paradise Press, at which all the valuable publications of Mr. Murray and Mr. Colburn are reprinted as regularly as at Philadelphia; and delicately insinuates that Thalaba and the Curse of Kehama are among the number. What a contrast does this absurd fiction present to those charming narratives which Plato and Cicero prefixed to their dialogues! What cost in machinery, yet what poverty of effect! A ghost brought in to say what any man might have said! The glorified spirit of a great statesman and philosopher dawdling, like a bilious old nabob at a watering-place, over quarterly reviews and novels, dropping in to pay long calls, making excursions in search of the picturesque! The scene of St. George and St. Dennis in the Pucelle is hardly more ridiculous. We know what Voltaire meant. Nobody, however, can suppose that Mr. Southey means to make game of the mysteries of a higher state of existence. The fact is that, in the work before us, in the Vision of Judgement, and in some of his other pieces, his mode of treating the most solemn subjects differs from that of open scoffers only as the extravagant representations of sacred persons and things in some grotesque Italian paintings differ from the caricatures which Carlile exposes in the front of his shop. We interpret the particular act by the general character. What in
the window of a convicted blasphemer we call blasphemous, we call only absurd and ill-judged in an altar-piece.

We now come to the conversations which pass between Mr. Southey and Sir Thomas More, or rather between two Southeys, equally eloquent, equally angry, equally unreasonable, and equally given to talking about what they do not understand. [A passage in which some expressions used by Mr. Southey were misrepresented, certainly without any unfair intention, has been here omitted.]

Perhaps we could not select a better instance of the spirit which pervades the whole book than the passages in which Mr. Southey gives his opinion of the manufacturing system. There is nothing which he hates so bitterly. It is, according to him, a system more tyrannical than that of the feudal ages, a system of actual servitude, a system which destroys the bodies and degrades the minds of those who are engaged in it. He expresses a hope that the competition of other nations may drive us out of the field; that our foreign trade may decline; and that we may thus enjoy a restoration of national sanity and strength. But he seems to think that the extermination of the whole manufacturing population would be a blessing, if the evil could be removed in no other way.

Mr. Southey does not bring forward a single fact in support of these views; and, as it seems to us, there are facts which lead to a very different conclusion. In the first place, the poor-rate is very decidedly lower in the manufacturing than in the
agricultural districts. If Mr. Southey will look over the
Parliamentary returns on this subject, he will find that the
amount of parochial relief required by the labourers in the
different counties of England is almost exactly in inverse
proportion to the degree in which the manufacturing system has
been introduced into those counties. The returns for the years
ending in March 1825, and in March 1828, are now before us. In
the former year we find the poor-rate highest in Sussex, about
twenty shillings to every inhabitant. Then come Buckinghamshire,
Essex, Suffolk, Bedfordshire, Huntingdonshire, Kent, and Norfolk.
In all these the rate is above fifteen shillings a head. We will
not go through the whole. Even in Westmoreland and the North
Riding of Yorkshire, the rate is at more than eight shillings. In
Cumberland and Monmouthshire, the most fortunate of all the
agricultural districts, it is at six shillings. But in the West
Riding of Yorkshire, it is as low as five shillings. and when we
come to Lancashire, we find it at four shillings, one-fifth of
what it is in Sussex. The returns of the year ending in March
1828 are a little, and but a little, more unfavourable to the
manufacturing districts. Lancashire, even in that season of
distress, required a smaller poor-rate than any other district,
and little more than one-fourth of the poor-rate raised in
Sussex. Cumberland alone, of the agricultural districts, was as
well off as the West Riding of Yorkshire. These facts seem to
indicate that the manufacturer is both in a more comfortable and
in a less dependent situation than the agricultural labourer.
As to the effect of the manufacturing system on the bodily health, we must beg leave to estimate it by a standard far too low and vulgar for a mind so imaginative as that of Mr. Southey, the proportion of births and deaths. We know that, during the growth of this atrocious system, this new misery, to use the phrases of Mr. Southey, this new enormity, this birth of a portentous age, this pest which no man can approve whose heart is not scared or whose understanding has not been darkened, there has been a great diminution of mortality, and that this diminution has been greater in the manufacturing towns than anywhere else. The mortality still is, as it always was, greater in towns than in the country. But the difference has diminished in an extraordinary degree. There is the best reason to believe that the annual mortality of Manchester, about the middle of the last century, was one in twenty-eight. It is now reckoned at one in forty-five. In Glasgow and Leeds a similar improvement has taken place. Nay, the rate of mortality in those three great capitals of the manufacturing districts is now considerably less than it was, fifty years ago, over England and Wales, taken together, open country and all. We might with some plausibility maintain that the people live longer because they are better fed, better lodged, better clothed, and better attended in sickness, and that these improvements are owing to that increase of national wealth which the manufacturing system has produced.

Much more might be said on this subject. But to what end? It is not from bills of mortality and statistical tables that Mr.
Southey has learned his political creed. He cannot stoop to study the history of the system which he abuses, to strike the balance between the good and evil which it has produced, to compare district with district, or generation with generation. We will give his own reason for his opinion, the only reason which he gives for it, in his own words:--

"We remained a while in silence looking upon the assemblage of dwellings below. Here, and in the adjoining hamlet of Millbeck, the effects of manufactures and of agriculture may be seen and compared. The old cottages are such as the poet and the painter equally delight in beholding. Substantially built of the native stone without mortar, dirtied with no white lime, and their long low roofs covered with slate, if they had been raised by the magic of some indigenous Amphion's music, the materials could not have adjusted themselves more beautifully in accord with the surrounding scene; and time has still further harmonized them with weather stains, lichens, and moss, short grasses, and short fern, and stone-plants of various kinds. The ornamented chimneys, round or square, less adorned than those which, like little turrets, crest the houses of the Portuguese peasantry; and yet not less happily suited to their place, the hedge of clipt box beneath the windows, the rose-bushes beside the door, the little patch of flower-ground, with its tall hollyhocks in front; the garden beside, the bee-hives, and the orchard with its bank of daffodils and snow-drops, the earliest and the profusest in these parts, indicate in the owners some portion of ease and leisure,
some regard to neatness and comfort, some sense of natural, and
innocent, and healthful enjoyment. The new cottages of the
manufacturers are upon the manufacturing pattern--naked, and in a
row.

"'How is it,' said I, 'that everything which is connected with
manufactures presents such features of unqualified deformity?
From the largest of Mammon's temples down to the poorest hovel in
which his helotry are stalled, these edifices have all one
character. Time will not mellow them; nature will neither clothe
nor conceal them; and they will remain always as offensive to the
eye as to the mind.'"

Here is wisdom. Here are the principles on which nations are to
be governed. Rose-bushes and poor-rates, rather than steam-
engines and independence. Mortality and cottages with weather-
stains, rather than health and long life with edifices which time
cannot mellow. We are told, that our age has invented atrocities
beyond the imagination of our fathers; that society has been
brought into a state compared with which extermination would be a
blessing; and all because the dwellings of cotton-spinners are
naked and rectangular. Mr. Southey has found out a way, he tells
us, in which the effects of manufactures and agriculture may be
compared. And what is this way? To stand on a hill, to look at a
cottage and a factory, and to see which is the prettier. Does Mr.
Southey think that the body of the English peasantry live, or
ever lived, in substantial or ornamented cottages, with box-
hedges, flower-gardens, beehives, and orchards? If not, what is his parallel worth? We despise those mock philosophers, who think that they serve the cause of science by depreciating literature and the fine arts. But if anything could excuse their narrowness of mind, it would be such a book as this. It is not strange that, when one enthusiast makes the picturesque the test of political good, another should feel inclined to proscribe altogether the pleasures of taste and imagination.

Thus it is that Mr. Southey reasons about matters with which he thinks himself perfectly conversant. We cannot, therefore, be surprised to find that he commits extraordinary blunders when he writes on points of which he acknowledges himself to be ignorant. He confesses that he is not versed in political economy, and that he has neither liking nor aptitude for it; and he then proceeds to read the public a lecture concerning it which fully bears out his confession.

"All wealth," says Sir Thomas More, "in former times was tangible. It consisted in land, money, or chattels, which were either of real or conventional value."

Montesinos, as Mr. Southey somewhat affectedly calls himself, answers thus:

"Jewels, for example, and pictures, as in Holland, where indeed
at one time tulip bulbs answered the same purpose."

"That bubble," says Sir Thomas, "was one of those contagious insanities to which communities are subject. All wealth was real, till the extent of commerce rendered a paper currency necessary; which differed from precious stones and pictures in this important point, that there was no limit to its production."

"We regard it," says Montesinos, "as the representative of real wealth; and, therefore, limited always to the amount of what it represents."

"Pursue that notion," answers the ghost, "and you will be in the dark presently. Your provincial banknotes, which constitute almost wholly the circulating medium of certain districts, pass current to-day. Tomorrow tidings may come that the house which issued them has stopt payment, and what do they represent then? You will find them the shadow of a shade."

We scarcely know at which end to begin to disentangle this knot of absurdities. We might ask, why it should be a greater proof of insanity in men to set a high value on rare tulips than on rare stones, which are neither more useful nor more beautiful? We might ask how it can be said that there is no limit to the production of paper money, when a man is hanged if he issues any in the name of another, and is forced to cash what he issues in
his own? But Mr. Southey's error lies deeper still. "All wealth," says he, "was tangible and real till paper currency was introduced." Now, was there ever, since men emerged from a state of utter barbarism, an age in which there were no debts? Is not a debt, while the solvency of the debtor is undoubted, always reckoned as part of the wealth of the creditor? Yet is it tangible and real wealth? Does it cease to be wealth, because there is the security of a written acknowledgment for it? And what else is paper currency? Did Mr. Southey ever read a banknote? If he did, he would see that it is a written acknowledgment of a debt, and a promise to pay that debt. The promise may be violated, the debt may remain unpaid: those to whom it was due may suffer: but this is a risk not confined to cases of paper currency: it is a risk inseparable from the relation of debtor and creditor. Every man who sells goods for anything but ready money runs the risk of finding that what he considered as part of his wealth one day is nothing at all the next day. Mr. Southey refers to the picture-galleries of Holland. The pictures were undoubtedly real and tangible possessions. But surely it might happen that a burgomaster might owe a picture-dealer a thousand guilders for a Teniers. What in this case corresponds to our paper money is not the picture, which is tangible, but the claim of the picture-dealer on his customer for the price of the picture; and this claim is not tangible. Now, would not the picture-dealer consider this claim as part of his wealth? Would not a tradesman who knew of the claim give credit to the picture-dealer the more readily on account of the claim? The burgomaster might be ruined. If so, would not those
consequences follow which, as Mr. Southey tells us, were never heard of till paper money came into use? Yesterday this claim was worth a thousand guilders. To-day what is it? The shadow of a shade.

It is true that, the more readily claims of this sort are transferred from hand to hand, the more extensive will be the injury produced by a single failure. The laws of all nations sanction, in certain cases, the transfer of rights not yet reduced into possession. Mr. Southey would scarcely wish, we should think, that all indorsements of bills and notes should be declared invalid. Yet even if this were done, the transfer of claims would imperceptibly take place, to a very great extent. When the baker trusts the butcher, for example, he is in fact, though not in form, trusting the butcher's customers. A man who owes large bills to tradesmen, and fails to pay them, almost always produces distress through a very wide circle of people with whom he never dealt.

In short, what Mr. Southey takes for a difference in kind is only a difference of form and degree. In every society men have claims on the property of others. In every society there is a possibility that some debtors may not be able to fulfil their obligations. In every society, therefore, there is wealth which is not tangible, and which may become the shadow of a shade.
Mr. Southey then proceeds to a dissertation on the national debt, which he considers in a new and most consolatory light, as a clear addition to the income of the country.

"You can understand," says Sir Thomas, "that it constitutes a great part of the national wealth."

"So large a part," answers Montesinos, "that the interest amounted, during the prosperous times of agriculture, to as much as the rental of all the land in Great Britain; and at present to the rental of all lands, all houses, and all other fixed property put together."

The Ghost and Laureate agree that it is very desirable that there should be so secure and advantageous a deposit for wealth as the funds afford. Sir Thomas then proceeds:

"Another and far more momentous benefit must not be overlooked; the expenditure of an annual interest, equalling, as you have stated, the present rental of all fixed property."

"That expenditure," quoth Montesinos, "gives employment to half the industry in the kingdom, and feeds half the mouths. Take, indeed, the weight of the national debt from this great and complicated social machine, and the wheels must stop."
From this passage we should have been inclined to think that Mr. Southey supposes the dividends to be a free gift periodically sent down from heaven to the fundholders, as quails and manna were sent to the Israelites; were it not that he has vouchsafed, in the following question and answer, to give the public some information which, we believe, was very little needed.

"Whence comes the interest?" says Sir Thomas.

"It is raised," answers Montesinos, "by taxation."

Now, has Mr. Southey ever considered what would be done with this sum if it were not paid as interest to the national creditor? If he would think over this matter for a short time, we suspect that the "momentous benefit" of which he talks would appear to him to shrink strangely in amount. A fundholder, we will suppose, spends dividends amounting to five hundred pounds a year; and his ten nearest neighbours pay fifty pounds each to the tax-gatherer, for the purpose of discharging the interest of the national debt. If the debt were wiped out, a measure, be it understood, which we by no means recommend, the fundholder would cease to spend his five hundred pounds a year. He would no longer give employment to industry, or put food into the mouths of labourers. This Mr. Southey thinks a fearful evil. But is there no mitigating circumstance? Each of the ten neighbours of our fundholder has
fifty pounds a year more than formerly. Each of them will, as it seems to our feeble understandings, employ more industry and feed more mouths than formerly. The sum is exactly the same. It is in different hands. But on what grounds does Mr. Southey call upon us to believe that it is in the hands of men who will spend it less liberally or less judiciously? He seems to think that nobody but a fundholder can employ the poor; that, if a tax is remitted, those who formerly used to pay it proceed immediately to dig holes in the earth, and to bury the sum which the Government had been accustomed to take; that no money can set industry in motion till such money has been taken by the tax-gatherer out of one man's pocket and put into another man's pocket. We really wish that Mr. Southey would try to prove this principle, which is indeed the foundation of his whole theory of finance: for we think it right to hint to him that our hard-hearted and unimaginative generation will expect some more satisfactory reason than the only one with which he has yet favoured it, namely, a similitude touching evaporation and dew.

Both the theory and the illustration, indeed, are old friends of ours. In every season of distress which we can remember, Mr. Southey has been proclaiming that it is not from economy, but from increased taxation, that the country must expect relief; and he still, we find, places the undoubting faith of a political Diafoirus, in his

"Resaignare, repurgare, et reclysterizare."
"A people," he tells us, "may be too rich, but a government cannot be so."

"A state," says he, "cannot have more wealth at its command than may be employed for the general good, a liberal expenditure in national works being one of the surest means of promoting national prosperity; and the benefit being still more obvious, of an expenditure directed to the purposes of national improvement. But a people may be too rich."

We fully admit that a state cannot have at its command more wealth than may be employed for the general good. But neither can individuals, or bodies of individuals, have at their command more wealth than may be employed for the general good. If there be no limit to the sum which may be usefully laid out in public works and national improvement, then wealth, whether in the hands of private men or of the Government, may always, if the possessors choose to spend it usefully, be usefully spent. The only ground, therefore, on which Mr. Southey can possibly maintain that a government cannot be too rich, but that a people may be too rich, must be this, that governments are more likely to spend their money on good objects than private individuals.

But what is useful expenditure? "A liberal expenditure in national works," says Mr. Southey, "is one of the surest means
for promoting national prosperity." What does he mean by national prosperity? Does he mean the wealth of the State? If so, his reasoning runs thus: The more wealth a state has the better; for the more wealth a state has the more wealth it will have. This is surely something like that fallacy, which is ungallantly termed a lady’s reason. If by national prosperity he means the wealth of the people, of how gross a contradiction is Mr. Southey guilty. A people, he tells us, may be too rich: a government cannot: for a government can employ its riches in making the people richer. The wealth of the people is to be taken from them, because they have too much, and laid out in works, which will yield them more.

We are really at a loss to determine whether Mr. Southey’s reason for recommending large taxation is that it will make the people rich, or that it will make them poor. But we are sure that, if his object is to make them rich, he takes the wrong course. There are two or three principles respecting public works, which, as an experience of vast extent proves, may be trusted in almost every case.

It scarcely ever happens that any private man or body of men will invest property in a canal, a tunnel, or a bridge, but from an expectation that the outlay will be profitable to them. No work of this sort can be profitable to private speculators, unless the public be willing to pay for the use of it. The public will not pay of their own accord for what yields no profit or convenience to them. There is thus a direct and obvious connection between
the motive which induces individuals to undertake such a work, 
and the utility of the work.

Can we find any such connection in the case of a public work 
executed by a government? If it is useful, are the individuals 
who rule the country richer? If it is useless, are they poorer? A 
public man may be solicitous for his credit. But is not he likely 
to gain more credit by an useless display of ostentatious 
arquitecture in a great town than by the best road or the best 
canal in some remote province? The fame of public works is a 
much less certain test of their utility than the amount of toll 
collected at them. In a corrupt age, there will be direct 
embezzlement. In the purest age, there will be abundance of 
jobbing. Never were the statesmen of any country more sensitive 
to public opinion, and more spotless in pecuniary transactions, 
than those who have of late governed England. Yet we have only to 
look at the buildings recently erected in London for a proof of 
our rule. In a bad age, the fate of the public is to be robbed 
outright. In a good age, it is merely to have the dearest and the 
worst of everything.

Buildings for State purposes the State must erect. And here we 
think that, in general, the State ought to stop. We firmly 
believe that five hundred thousand pounds subscribed by 
individuals for rail-roads or canals would produce more advantage 
to the public than five millions voted by Parliament for the same 
purpose. There are certain old saws about the master's eye and
about everybody's business, in which we place very great faith.

There is, we have said, no consistency in Mr. Southey's political system. But if there be in his political system any leading principle, any one error which diverges more widely and variously than any other, it is that of which his theory about national works is a ramification. He conceives that the business of the magistrate is, not merely to see that the persons and property of the people are secure from attack, but that he ought to be a jack-of-all-trades, architect, engineer, schoolmaster, merchant, theologian, a Lady Bountiful in every parish, a Paul Pry in every house, spying, eaves-dropping, relieving, admonishing, spending our money for us, and choosing our opinions for us. His principle is, if we understand it rightly, that no man can do anything so well for himself as his rulers, be they who they may, can do it for him, and that a government approaches nearer and nearer to perfection, in proportion as it interferes more and more with the habits and notions of individuals.

He seems to be fully convinced that it is in the power of government to relieve all the distresses under which the lower orders labour. Nay, he considers doubt on this subject as impious. We cannot refrain from quoting his argument on this subject. It is a perfect jewel of logic:

"'Many thousands in your metropolis,' says Sir Thomas More, 'rise
every morning without knowing how they are to subsist during the
day; as many of them, where they are to lay their heads at night.
All men, even the vicious themselves, know that wickedness leads
to misery: but many, even among the good and the wise, have yet
to learn that misery is almost as often the cause of wickedness.'

"'There are many,' says Montesinos, 'who know this, but believe
that it is not in the power of human institutions to prevent this
misery. They see the effect, but regard the causes as inseparable
from the condition of human nature.'

"'As surely as God is good,' replies Sir Thomas, 'so surely there
is no such thing as necessary evil. For, by the religious mind,
sickness, and pain, and death, are not to be accounted evils.'"

Now if sickness, pain, and death, are not evils, we cannot
understand why it should be an evil that thousands should rise
without knowing how they are to subsist. The only evil of hunger
is that it produces first pain, then sickness, and finally death.
If it did not produce these, it would be no calamity. If these
are not evils, it is no calamity. We will propose a very plain
dilemma: either physical pain is an evil, or it is not an evil.
If it is an evil, then there is necessary evil in the universe:
if it is not, why should the poor be delivered from it?

Mr. Southey entertains as exaggerated a notion of the wisdom of
governments as of their power. He speaks with the greatest
disgust of the respect now paid to public opinion. That opinion
is, according to him, to be distrusted and dreaded; its
usurpation ought to be vigorously resisted; and the practice of
yielding to it is likely to ruin the country. To maintain police
is, according to him, only one of the ends of government. The
duties of a ruler are patriarchal and paternal. He ought to
consider the moral discipline of the people as his first object,
to establish a religion, to train the whole community in that
religion, and to consider all dissenters as his own enemies.

"Nothing," says Sir Thomas, 'is more certain, than that religion
is the basis upon which civil government rests; that from
religion power derives its authority, laws their efficacy, and
both their zeal and sanction; and it is necessary that this
religion be established as for the security of the state, and for
the welfare of the people, who would otherwise be moved to and
fro with every wind of doctrine. A state is secure in proportion
as the people are attached to its institutions; it is, therefore,
the first and plainest rule of sound policy, that the people be
trained up in the way they should go. The state that neglects
this prepares its own destruction; and they who train them in any
other way are undermining it. Nothing in abstract science can be
more certain than these positions are.'

"All of which," answers Montesinos, 'are nevertheless denied by
our professors of the arts Babblative and Scribblative: some in
the audacity of evil designs, and others in the glorious
assurance of impenetrable ignorance.'

The greater part of the two volumes before us is merely an
amplification of these paragraphs. What does Mr. Southey mean by
saying that religion is demonstrably the basis of civil
government? He cannot surely mean that men have no motives except
those derived from religion for establishing and supporting civil
government, that no temporal advantage is derived from civil
government, that men would experience no temporal inconvenience
from living in a state of anarchy? If he allows, as we think he
must allow, that it is for the good of mankind in this world to
have civil government, and that the great majority of mankind
have always thought it for their good in this world to have civil
government, we then have a basis for government quite distinct
from religion. It is true that the Christian religion sanctions
government, as it sanctions everything which promotes the
happiness and virtue of our species. But we are at a loss to
conceive in what sense religion can be said to be the basis of
government, in which religion is not also the basis of the
practices of eating, drinking, and lighting fires in cold
weather. Nothing in history is more certain than that government
has existed, has received some obedience, and has given some
protection, in times in which it derived no support from
religion, in times in which there was no religion that influenced
the hearts and lives of men. It was not from dread of Tartarus,
or from belief in the Elysian fields, that an Athenian wished to
have some institutions which might keep Orestes from filching his
cloak, or Midias from breaking his head. "It is from religion,"
says Mr. Southey, "that power derives its authority, and laws
their efficacy." From what religion does our power over the
Hindoos derive its authority, or the law in virtue of which we
hang Brahmins its efficacy? For thousands of years civil
government has existed in almost every corner of the world, in
ages of priestcraft, in ages of fanaticism, in ages of Epicurean
indifference, in ages of enlightened piety. However pure or
impure the faith of the people might be, whether they adored a
beneficent or a malignant power, whether they thought the soul
mortal or immortal, they have, as soon as they ceased to be
absolute savages, found out their need of civil government, and
instituted it accordingly. It is as universal as the practice of
cookery. Yet, it is as certain, says Mr. Southey, as anything in
abstract science, that government is founded on religion. We
should like to know what notion Mr. Southey has of the
demonstrations of abstract science. A very vague one, we suspect.

The proof proceeds. As religion is the basis of government, and
as the State is secure in proportion as the people are attached
to public institutions, it is therefore, says Mr. Southey, the
first rule of policy, that the government should train the people
in the way in which they should go; and it is plain that those
who train them in any other way are undermining the State.

Now it does not appear to us to be the first object that people
should always believe in the established religion and be attached to the established government. A religion may be false. A government may be oppressive. And whatever support government gives to false religions, or religion to oppressive governments, we consider as a clear evil.

The maxim, that governments ought to train the people in the way in which they should go, sounds well. But is there any reason for believing that a government is more likely to lead the people in the right way than the people to fall into the right way of themselves? Have there not been governments which were blind leaders of the blind? Are there not still such governments? Can it be laid down as a general rule that the movement of political and religious truth is rather downwards from the government to the people than upwards from the people to the government? These are questions which it is of importance to have clearly resolved.

Mr. Southey declaims against public opinion, which is now, he tells us, usurping supreme power. Formerly, according to him, the laws governed; now public opinion governs. What are laws but expressions of the opinion of some class which has power over the rest of the community? By what was the world ever governed but by the opinion of some person or persons? By what else can it ever be governed? What are all systems, religious, political, or scientific, but opinions resting on evidence more or less satisfactory? The question is not between human opinion and some higher and more certain mode of arriving at truth, but between opinion and opinion, between the opinions of one man and another,
or of one class and another, or of one generation and another.

Public opinion is not infallible; but can Mr. Southey construct
any institutions which shall secure to us the guidance of an
infallible opinion? Can Mr. Southey select any family, any
profession, any class, in short, distinguished by any plain
badge from the rest of the community, whose opinion is more
likely to be just than this much abused public opinion? Would
he choose the peers, for example? Or the two hundred tallest
men in the country? Or the poor Knights of Windsor? Or children
who are born with caul? Or the seventh sons of seventh sons?

We cannot suppose that he would recommend popular election; for
that is merely an appeal to public opinion. And to say that
society ought to be governed by the opinion of the wisest and
best, though true, is useless. Whose opinion is to decide who are
the wisest and best?

Mr. Southey and many other respectable people seem to think that,
when they have once proved the moral and religious training of
the people to be a most important object, it follows, of course,
that it is an object which the government ought to pursue. They
forget that we have to consider, not merely the goodness of the
end, but also the fitness of the means. Neither in the natural
nor in the political body have all members the same office. There
is surely no contradiction in saying that a certain section of
the community may be quite competent to protect the persons and
property of the rest, yet quite unfit to direct our opinions, or
to superintend our private habits.
So strong is the interest of a ruler to protect his subjects against all depredations and outrages except his own, so clear and simple are the means by which this end is to be effected, that men are probably better off under the worst governments in the world than they would be in a state of anarchy. Even when the appointment of magistrates has been left to chance, as in the Italian Republics, things have gone on far better than if there had been no magistrates at all, and if every man had done what seemed right in his own eyes. But we see no reason for thinking that the opinions of the magistrate on speculative questions are more likely to be right than those of any other man. None of the modes by which a magistrate is appointed, popular election, the accident of the lot, or the accident of birth, affords, as far as we can perceive, much security for his being wiser than any of his neighbours. The chance of his being wiser than all his neighbours together is still smaller. Now we cannot understand how it can be laid down that it is the duty and the right of one class to direct the opinions of another, unless it can be proved that the former class is more likely to form just opinions than the latter.

The duties of government would be, as Mr. Southey says that they are, paternal, if a government were necessarily as much superior in wisdom to a people as the most foolish father, for a time, is to the most intelligent child, and if a government loved a people as fathers generally love their children. But there is no reason
to believe that a government will have either the paternal warmth
of affection or the paternal superiority of intellect. Mr.
Southey might as well say that the duties of the shoemaker are
paternal, and that it is an usurpation in any man not of the
craft to say that his shoes are bad and to insist on having
better. The division of labour would be no blessing, if those by
whom a thing is done were to pay no attention to the opinion of
those for whom it is done. The shoemaker, in the Relapse, tells
Lord Foppington that his Lordship is mistaken in supposing that
his shoe pinches. "It does not pinch; it cannot pinch; I know my
business; and I never made a better shoe." This is the way in
which Mr. Southey would have a government treat a people who
usurp the privilege of thinking. Nay, the shoemaker of Vanbrugh
has the advantage in the comparison. He contented himself with
regulating his customer's shoes, about which he had peculiar
means of information, and did not presume to dictate about the
clothing and hat. But Mr. Southey would have the rulers of a country
prescribe opinions to the people, not only about politics, but
about matters concerning which a government has no peculiar
sources of information, and concerning which any man in the
streets may know as much and think as justly as the King, namely
religion and morals.

Men are never so likely to settle a question rightly as when they
discuss it freely. A government can interfere in discussion only
by making it less free than it would otherwise be. Men are most
likely to form just opinions when they have no other wish than to
know the truth, and are exempt from all influence, either of hope or fear. Government, as government, can bring nothing but the influence of hopes and fears to support its doctrines. It carries on controversy, not with reasons, but with threats and bribes. If it employs reasons, it does so, not in virtue of any powers which belong to it as a government. Thus, instead of a contest between argument and argument, we have a contest between argument and force. Instead of a contest in which truth, from the natural constitution of the human mind, has a decided advantage over falsehood, we have a contest in which truth can be victorious only by accident.

And what, after all, is the security which this training gives to governments? Mr. Southey would scarcely propose that discussion should be more effectually shackled, that public opinion should be more strictly disciplined into conformity with established institutions, than in Spain and Italy. Yet we know that the restraints which exist in Spain and Italy have not prevented atheism from spreading among the educated classes, and especially among those whose office it is to minister at the altars of God. All our readers know how, at the time of the French Revolution, priest after priest came forward to declare that his doctrine, his ministry, his whole life, had been a lie, a mummery during which he could scarcely compose his countenance sufficiently to carry on the imposture. This was the case of a false, or at least of a grossly corrupted religion. Let us take then the case of all others most favourable to Mr. Southey's argument. Let us take
that form of religion which he holds to be the purest, the system of the Arminian part of the Church of England. Let us take the form of government which he most admires and regrets, the government of England in the time of Charles the First. Would he wish to see a closer connection between Church and State than then existed? Would he wish for more powerful ecclesiastical tribunals? for a more zealous King? for a more active primate? Would he wish to see a more complete monopoly of public instruction given to the Established Church? Could any government do more to train the people in the way in which he would have them go? And in what did all this training end? The Report of the state of the Province of Canterbury, delivered by Laud to his master at the close of 1639, represents the Church of England as in the highest and most palmy state. So effectually had the Government pursued that policy which Mr. Southey wishes to see revived that there was scarcely the least appearance of dissent. Most of the bishops stated that all was well among their flocks. Seven or eight persons in the diocese of Peterborough had seemed refractory to the Church, but had made ample submission. In Norfolk and Suffolk all whom there had been reason to suspect had made profession of conformity, and appeared to observe it strictly. It is confessed that there was a little difficulty in bringing some of the vulgar in Suffolk to take the sacrament at the rails in the chancel. This was the only open instance of nonconformity which the vigilant eye of Laud could detect in all the dioceses of his twenty-one suffragans, on the very eve of a revolution in which primate, and Church, and monarch, and monarchy were to perish together.
At which time would Mr. Southey pronounce the constitution more secure: in 1639, when Laud presented this Report to Charles; or now, when thousands of meetings openly collect millions of dissenters, when designs against the tithes are openly avowed, when books attacking not only the Establishment, but the first principles of Christianity, are openly sold in the streets? The signs of discontent, he tells us, are stronger in England now than in France when the States-General met: and hence he would have us infer that a revolution like that of France may be at hand. Does he not know that the danger of states is to be estimated, not by what breaks out of the public mind, but by what stays in it? Can he conceive anything more terrible than the situation of a government which rules without apprehension over a people of hypocrites, which is flattered by the press and cursed in the inner chambers, which exults in the attachment and obedience of its subjects, and knows not that those subjects are leagued against it in a free-masonry of hatred, the sign of which is every day conveyed in the glance of ten thousand eyes, the pressure of ten thousand hands, and the tone of ten thousand voices? Profound and ingenious policy! Instead of curing the disease, to remove those symptoms by which alone its nature can be known! To leave the serpent his deadly sting, and deprive him only of his warning rattle!

When the people whom Charles had so assiduously trained in the good way had rewarded his paternal care by cutting off his head,
a new kind of training came into fashion. Another government arose which, like the former, considered religion as its surest basis, and the religious discipline of the people as its first duty. Sanguinary laws were enacted against libertinism; profane pictures were burned; drapery was put on indecorous statues; the theatres were shut up; fast-days were numerous; and the Parliament resolved that no person should be admitted into any public employment, unless the House should be first satisfied of his vital godliness. We know what was the end of this training. We know that it ended in impiety in filthy and heartless sensuality, in the dissolution of all ties of honour and morality. We know that at this very day scriptural phrases, scriptural names, perhaps some scriptural doctrines excite disgust and ridicule, solely because they are associated with the austerity of that period.

Thus has the experiment of training the people in established forms of religion been twice tried in England on a large scale, once by Charles and Laud, and once by the Puritans. The High Tories of our time still entertain many of the feelings and opinions of Charles and Laud, though in a mitigated form; nor is it difficult to see that the heirs of the Puritans are still amongst us. It would be desirable that each of these parties should remember how little advantage or honour it formerly derived from the closest alliance with power, that it fall by the support of rulers and rose by their opposition, that of the two systems that in which the people were at any time drilled was
always at that time the unpopular system, that the training of
the High Church ended in the reign of the Puritans, and that the
training of the Puritans ended in the reign of the harlots.

This was quite natural. Nothing is so galling to a people not
broken in from the birth as a paternal, or, in other words, a
meddling government, a government which tells them what to read,
and say, and eat, and drink, and wear. Our fathers could not bear
it two hundred year ago; and we are not more patient than they.
Mr. Southey thinks that the yoke of the Church is dropping off
because it is loose. We feel convinced that it is borne only
because it is easy, and that, in the instant in which an attempt
is made to tighten it, it will be flung away. It will be neither
the first nor the strongest yoke that has been broken asunder and
trampled under foot in the day of the vengeance of England.

How far Mr. Southey would have the Government carry its measures
for training the people in the doctrines of the Church, we are
unable to discover. In one passage Sir Thomas More asks with
great vehemence,

"Is it possible that your laws should suffer the unbelievers to
exist as a party? Vetitum est adeo sceleris nihil?"

Montesinos answers: "They avow themselves in defiance of the
laws. The fashionable doctrine which the press at this time
maintains is, that this is a matter in which the laws ought not to interfere, every man having a right, both to form what opinion he pleases upon religious subjects, and to promulgate that opinion."

It is clear, therefore, that Mr. Southey would not give full and perfect toleration to infidelity. In another passage, however, he observes with some truth, though too sweepingly, that "any degree of intolerance short of that full extent which the Papal Church exercises where it has the power, acts upon the opinions which it is intended to suppress, like pruning upon vigorous plants; they grow the stronger for it." These two passages, put together, would lead us to the conclusion that, in Mr. Southey's opinion, the utmost severity ever employed by the Roman Catholic Church in the days of its greatest power ought to be employed against unbelievers in England; in plain words, that Carlile and his shopmen ought to be burned in Smithfield, and that every person who, when called upon, should decline to make a solemn profession of Christianity ought to suffer the same fate. We do not, however, believe that Mr. Southey wouldrecommend such a course, though his language would, according to all the rules of logic, justify us in supposing this to be his meaning. His opinions form no system at all. He never sees, at one glance, more of a question than will furnish matter for one flowing and well-turned sentence; so that it would be the height of unfairness to charge him personally with holding a doctrine merely because that doctrine is deducible, though by the closest and most accurate
reasoning, from the premises which he has laid down. We are, therefore, left completely in the dark as to Mr. Southey's opinions about toleration. Immediately after censuring the Government for not punishing infidels, he proceeds to discuss the question of the Catholic disabilities, now, thank God, removed, and defends them on the ground that the Catholic doctrines tend to persecution, and that the Catholics persecuted when they had power.

"They must persecute," says he, "if they believe their own creed, for conscience-sake; and if they do not believe it, they must persecute for policy; because it is only by intolerance that so corrupt and injurious a system can be upheld."

That unbelievers should not be persecuted is an instance of national depravity at which the glorified spirits stand aghast. Yet a sect of Christians is to be excluded from power, because those who formerly held the same opinions were guilty of persecution. We have said that we do not very well know what Mr. Southey's opinion about toleration is. But, on the whole, we take it to be this, that everybody is to tolerate him, and that he is to tolerate nobody.

We will not be deterred by any fear of misrepresentation from expressing our hearty approbation of the mild, wise, and eminently Christian manner in which the Church and the Government
have lately acted with respect to blasphemous publications. We praise them for not having thought it necessary to encircle a religion pure, merciful, and philosophical, a religion to the evidence of which the highest intellects have yielded, with the defences of a false and bloody superstition. The ark of God was never taken till it was surrounded by the arms of earthly defenders. In captivity, its sanctity was sufficient to vindicate it from insult, and to lay the hostile fiend prostrate on the threshold of his own temple. The real security of Christianity is to be found in its benevolent morality, in its exquisite adaptation to the human heart, in the facility with which its scheme accommodates itself to the capacity of every human intellect, in the consolation which it bears to the house of mourning, in the light with which it brightens the great mystery of the grave. To such a system it can bring no addition of dignity or of strength, that it is part and parcel of the common law. It is not now for the first time left to rely on the force of its own evidences and the attractions of its own beauty. Its sublime theology confounded the Grecian schools in the fair conflict of reason with reason. The bravest and wisest of the Caesars found their arms and their policy unavailing, when opposed to the weapons that were not carnal and the kingdom that was not of this world. The victory which Porphyry and Diocletian failed to gain is not, to all appearance, reserved for any of those who have in this age, directed their attacks against the last restraint of the powerful and the last hope of the wretched. The whole history of Christianity shows, that she is in far greater danger of being corrupted by the alliance of power, than
of being crushed by its opposition. Those who thrust temporal sovereignty upon her treat her as their prototypes treated her author. They bow the knee, and spit upon her; they cry "Hail!" and smite her on the cheek; they put a sceptre in her hand, but it is a fragile reed; they crown her, but it is with thorns; they cover with purple the wounds which their own hands have inflicted on her; and inscribe magnificent titles over the cross on which they have fixed her to perish in ignominy and pain.

The general view which Mr. Southey takes of the prospects of society is very gloomy; but we comfort ourselves with the consideration that Mr. Southey is no prophet. He foretold, we remember, on the very eve of the abolition of the Test and Corporation Acts, that these hateful laws were immortal, and that pious minds would long be gratified by seeing the most solemn religious rite of the Church profaned for the purpose of upholding her political supremacy. In the book before us, he says that Catholics cannot possibly be admitted into Parliament until those whom Johnson called "the bottomless Whigs" come into power. While the book was in the press, the prophecy was falsified; and a Tory of the Tories, Mr. Southey's own favourite hero, won and wore that noblest wreath, "Ob cives servatos."

The signs of the times, Mr. Southey tells us, are very threatening. His fears for the country would decidedly preponderate over his hopes, but for a firm reliance on the mercy of God. Now, as we know that God has once suffered the civilised
world to be overrun by savages, and the Christian religion to be
corrupted by doctrines which made it, for some ages, almost as
bad as Paganism, we cannot think it inconsistent with his
attributes that similar calamities should again befal mankind.

We look, however, on the state of the world, and of this kingdom
in particular, with much greater satisfaction and with better
hopes. Mr. Southey speaks with contempt of those who think the
savage state happier than the social. On this subject, he says,
Rousseau never imposed on him even in his youth. But he conceives
that a community which has advanced a little way in civilisation
is happier than one which has made greater progress. The Britons
in the time of Caesar were happier, he suspects, than the English
of the nineteenth century. On the whole, he selects the
generation which preceded the Reformation as that in which the
people of this country were better off than at any time before or
since.

This opinion rests on nothing, as far as we can see, except his
own individual associations. He is a man of letters; and a life
destitute of literary pleasures seems insipid to him. He abhors
the spirit of the present generation, the severity of its
studies, the boldness of its inquiries, and the disdain with
which it regards some old prejudices by which his own mind is
held in bondage. He dislikes an utterly unenlightened age; he
dislikes an investigating and reforming age. The first twenty
years of the sixteenth century would have exactly suited him.
They furnished just the quantity of intellectual excitement which he requires. The learned few read and wrote largely. A scholar was held in high estimation. But the rabble did not presume to think; and even the most inquiring and independent of the educated classes paid more reverence to authority, and less to reason, than is usual in our time. This is a state of things in which Mr. Southey would have found himself quite comfortable; and, accordingly, he pronounces it the happiest state of things ever known in the world.

The savages were wretched, says Mr. Southey; but the people in the time of Sir Thomas More were happier than either they or we. Now we think it quite certain that we have the advantage over the contemporaries of Sir Thomas More, in every point in which they had any advantage over savages.

Mr. Southey does not even pretend to maintain that the people in the sixteenth century were better lodged or clothed than at present. He seems to admit that in these respects there has been some little improvement. It is indeed a matter about which scarcely any doubt can exist in the most perverse mind that the improvements of machinery have lowered the price of manufactured articles, and have brought within the reach of the poorest some conveniences which Sir Thomas More or his master could not have obtained at any price.
The labouring classes, however, were, according to Mr. Southey, better fed three hundred years ago than at present. We believe that he is completely in error on this point. The condition of servants in noble and wealthy families, and of scholars at the Universities, must surely have been better in those times than that of day-labourers; and we are sure that it was not better than that of our workhouse paupers. From the household book of the Northumberland family, we find that in one of the greatest establishments of the kingdom the servants lived very much as common sailors live now. In the reign of Edward the Sixth the state of the students at Cambridge is described to us, on the very best authority, as most wretched. Many of them dined on pottage made of a farthing's worth of beef with a little salt and oatmeal, and literally nothing else. This account we have from a contemporary master of St. John's. Our parish poor now eat wheaten bread. In the sixteenth century the labourer was glad to get barley, and was often forced to content himself with poorer fare. In Harrison's introduction to Holinshed we have an account of the state of our working population in the "golden days," as Mr. Southey calls them, "of good Queen Bess." "The gentilitie, says he, "commonly provide themselves sufficiently of wheat for their own tables, whylest their household and poore neighbours in some shires are inforced to content themselves with rye or barleie; yea, and in time of dearth, many with bread made eyther of beanes, peason, or otes, or of altogether, and some accrues among. I will not say that this extremity is oft so well to be seen in time of plentie as of dearth; but if I should I could easily bring my trial: for albeit there be much more grounde
cared nowe almost in everye place then bathe bee of late yeares, yet such a price of corne continueth in eache towne and markete, without any just cause, that the artificer and poore labouring man is not able to reach unto it, but is driven to content him self with horse-corne." We should like to see what the effect would be of putting any parish in England now on allowance of "horse-corne." The helotry of Mammon are not, in our day, so easily enforced to content themselves as the peasantry of that happy period, as Mr. Southey considers it, which elapsed between the fall of the feudal and the rise of the commercial tyranny.

"The people," says Mr. Southey, "are worse fed than when they were fishers." And yet in another place he complains that they will not eat fish. "They have contracted," says he, "I know not how, some obstinate prejudice against a kind of food at once wholesome and delicate, and everywhere to be obtained cheaply and in abundance, were the demand for it as general as it ought to be." It is true that the lower orders have an obstinate prejudice against fish. But hunger has no such obstinate prejudices. If what was formerly a common diet is now eaten only in times of severe pressure, the inference is plain. The people must be fed with what they at least think better food than that of their ancestors.

The advice and medicine which the poorest labourer can now obtain, in disease, or after an accident, is far superior to what
Henry the Eighth could have commanded. Scarcely any part of the country is out of the reach of practitioners, who are probably not so far inferior to Sir Henry Halford as they are superior to Dr. Butts. That there has been a great improvement in this respect, Mr. Southey allows. Indeed he could not well have denied it. "But," says he, "the evils for which these sciences are the palliative, have increased since the time of the Druids, in a proportion that heavily overweighs the benefit of improved therapeutics." We know nothing either of the diseases or the remedies of the Druids. But we are quite sure that the improvement of medicine has far more than kept pace with the increase of disease during the last three centuries. This is proved by the best possible evidence. The term of human life is decidedly longer in England than in any former age, respecting which we possess any information on which we can rely. All the rants in the world about picturesque cottages and temples of Mammon will not shake this argument. No test of the physical well-being of society can be named so decisive as that which is furnished by bills of mortality. That the lives of the people of this country have been gradually lengthening during the course of several generations, is as certain as any fact in statistics; and that the lives of men should become longer and longer, while their bodily condition during life is becoming worse and worse, is utterly incredible.

Let our readers think over these circumstances. Let them take into the account the sweating sickness and the plague. Let them
take into the account that fearful disease which first made its appearance in the generation to which Mr. Southey assigns the palm of felicity, and raged through Europe with a fury at which the physician stood aghast, and before which the people were swept away by myriads. Let them consider the state of the northern counties, constantly the scene of robberies, rapes, massacres, and conflagrations. Let them add to all this the fact that seventy-two thousand persons suffered death by the hands of the executioner during the reign of Henry the Eighth, and judge between the nineteenth and the sixteenth century.

We do not say that the lower orders in England do not suffer severe hardships. But, in spite of Mr. Southey's assertions, and in spite of the assertions of a class of politicians, who, differing from Mr. Southey in every other point, agree with him in this, we are inclined to doubt whether the labouring classes here really suffer greater physical distress than the labouring classes of the most flourishing countries of the Continent.

It will scarcely be maintained that the lazzaroni who sleep under the porticoes of Naples, or the beggars who besiege the convents of Spain, are in a happier situation than the English commonalty. The distress which has lately been experienced in the northern part of Germany, one of the best governed and most prosperous regions of Europe, surpasses, if we have been correctly informed, anything which has of late years been known among us. In Norway and Sweden the peasantry are constantly compelled to mix bark.
with their bread; and even this expedient has not always
preserved whole families and neighbourhoods from perishing
together of famine. An experiment has lately been tried in the
kingdom of the Netherlands, which has been cited to prove the
possibility of establishing agricultural colonies on the waste
lands of England, but which proves to our minds nothing so
clearly as this, that the rate of subsistence to which the
labouring classes are reduced in the Netherlands is miserably
low, and very far inferior to that of the English paupers. No
distress which the people here have endured for centuries
approaches to that which has been felt by the French in our own
time. The beginning of the year 1817 was a time of great distress
in this island. But the state of the lowest classes here was
luxury compared with that of the people of France. We find in
Magendie's Journal de Physiologie Experimentale a paper on a
point of physiology connected with the distress of that season.
It appears that the inhabitants of six departments, Aix, Jura,
Doubs, Haute Saone, Vosges, and Saone-et-Loire, were reduced
first to oatmeal and potatoes, and at last to nettles,
beanstalks, and other kinds of herbage fit only for cattle; that
when the next harvest enabled them to eat barley-bread, many of
them died from intemperate indulgence in what they thought an
exquisite repast; and that a dropsy of a peculiar description was
produced by the hard fare of the year. Dead bodies were found on
the roads and in the fields. A single surgeon dissected six of
these, and found the stomach shrunk, and filled with the
unwholesome aliments which hunger had driven men to share with
beasts. Such extremity of distress as this is never heard of in
England, or even in Ireland. We are, on the whole, inclined to think, though we would speak with diffidence on a point on which it would be rash to pronounce a positive judgment without a much longer and closer investigation than we have bestowed upon it, that the labouring classes of this island, though they have their grievances and distresses, some produced by their own improvidence, some by the errors of their rulers, are on the whole better off as to physical comforts than the inhabitants of an equally extensive district of the old world. For this very reason, suffering is more acutely felt and more loudly bewailed here than elsewhere. We must take into the account the liberty of discussion, and the strong interest which the opponents of a ministry always have, to exaggerate the extent of the public disasters. There are countries in which the people quietly endure distress that here would shake the foundations of the State, countries in which the inhabitants of a whole province turn out to eat grass with less clamour than one Spitalfields weaver would make here, if the overseers were to put him on barley-bread. In those new commonwealths in which a civilised population has at its command a boundless extent of the richest soil, the condition of the labourer is probably happier than in any society which has lasted for many centuries. But in the old world we must confess ourselves unable to find any satisfactory record of any great nation, past or present, in which the working classes have been in a more comfortable situation than in England during the last thirty years. When this island was thinly peopled, it was barbarous: there was little capital; and that little was insecure. It is now the richest and most highly civilised spot in
the world; but the population is dense. Thus we have never known that golden age which the lower orders in the United States are now enjoying. We have never known an age of liberty, of order, and of education, an age in which the mechanical sciences were carried to a great height, yet in which the people were not sufficiently numerous to cultivate even the most fertile valleys. But, when we compare our own condition with that of our ancestors, we think it clear that the advantages arising from the progress of civilisation have far more than counterbalanced the disadvantages arising from the progress of population. While our numbers have increased tenfold, our wealth has increased a hundredfold. Though there are so many more people to share the wealth now existing in the country than there were in the sixteenth century, it seems certain that a greater share falls to almost every individual than fell to the share of any of the corresponding class in the sixteenth century. The King keeps a more splendid court. The establishments of the nobles are more magnificent. The esquires are richer; the merchants are richer; the shopkeepers are richer. The serving-man, the artisan, and the husbandman, have a more copious and palatable supply of food, better clothing, and better furniture. This is no reason for tolerating abuses, or for neglecting any means of ameliorating the condition of our poorer countrymen. But it is a reason against telling them, as some of our philosophers are constantly telling them, that they are the most wretched people who ever existed on the face of the earth.
We have already adverted to Mr. Southey's amusing doctrine about national wealth. A state, says he, cannot be too rich; but a people may be too rich. His reason for thinking this is extremely curious.

"A people may be too rich, because it is the tendency of the commercial, and more especially of the manufacturing system, to collect wealth rather than to diffuse it. Where wealth is necessarily employed in any of the speculations of trade, its increase is in proportion to its amount. Great capitalists become like pikes in a fish-pond who devour the weaker fish; and it is but too certain, that the poverty of one part of the people seems to increase in the same ratio as the riches of another. There are examples of this in history. In Portugal, when the high tide of wealth flowed in from the conquests in Africa and the East, the effect of that great influx was not more visible in the augmented splendour of the court, and the luxury of the higher ranks, than in the distress of the people."

Mr. Southey's instance is not a very fortunate one. The wealth which did so little for the Portuguese was not the fruit either of manufactures or of commerce carried on by private individuals. It was the wealth, not of the people, but of the Government and its creatures, of those who, as Mr. Southey thinks, can never be too rich. The fact is, that Mr. Southey's proposition is opposed to all history, and to the phaenomena which surround us on every side. England is the richest country in Europe, the most
commercial country, and the country in which manufactures
flourish most. Russia and Poland are the poorest countries in
Europe. They have scarcely any trade, and none but the rudest
manufactures. Is wealth more diffused in Russia and Poland than
in England? There are individuals in Russia and Poland whose
incomes are probably equal to those of our richest countrymen. It
may be doubted whether there are not, in those countries, as many
fortunes of eighty thousand a year as here. But are there as many
fortunes of two thousand a year, or of one thousand a year? There
are parishes in England which contain more people of between
three hundred and three thousand pounds a year than could be
found in all the dominions of the Emperor Nicholas. The neat and
commodious houses which have been built in London and its
vicinity, for people of this class, within the last thirty years,
would of themselves form a city larger than the capitals of some
European kingdoms. And this is the state of society in which the
great proprietors have devoured a smaller!

The cure which Mr. Southey thinks that he has discovered is
worthy of the sagacity which he has shown in detecting the evil.
The calamities arising from the collection of wealth in the hands
of a few capitalists are to be remedied by collecting it in the
hands of one great capitalist, who has no conceivable motive to
use it better than other capitalists, the all-devouring State.

It is not strange that, differing so widely from Mr. Southey as
to the past progress of society, we should differ from him also
as to its probable destiny. He thinks, that to all outward
appearance, the country is hastening to destruction; but he
relies firmly on the goodness of God. We do not see either the
piety or the rationality of thus confidently expecting that the
Supreme Being will interfere to disturb the common succession of
causes and effects. We, too, rely on his goodness, on his
goodness as manifested, not in extraordinary interpositions, but
in those general laws which it has pleased him to establish in
the physical and in the moral world. We rely on the natural
tendency of the human intellect to truth, and on the natural
tendency of society to improvement. We know no well-authenticated
instance of a people which has decidedly retrograded in
civilisation and prosperity, except from the influence of violent
and terrible calamities, such as those which laid the Roman
Empire in ruins, or those which, about the beginning of the
sixteenth century, desolated Italy. We know of no country which,
at the end of fifty years of peace and tolerably good government,
has been less prosperous than at the beginning of that period.
The political importance of a state may decline, as the balance
of power is disturbed by the introduction of new forces. Thus the
influence of Holland and of Spain is much diminished. But are
Holland and Spain poorer than formerly? We doubt it. Other
countries have outrun them. But we suspect that they have been
positively, though not relatively, advancing. We suspect that
Holland is richer than when she sent her navies up the Thames,
that Spain is richer than when a French king was brought captive
to the footstool of Charles the Fifth.
History is full of the signs of this natural progress of society.

We see in almost every part of the annals of mankind how the industry of individuals, struggling up against wars, taxes, famines, conflagrations, mischievous prohibitions, and more mischievous protections, creates faster than governments can squander, and repairs whatever invaders can destroy. We see the wealth of nations increasing, and all the arts of life approaching nearer and nearer to perfection, in spite of the grossest corruption and the wildest profusion on the part of rulers.

The present moment is one of great distress. But how small will that distress appear when we think over the history of the last forty years; a war, compared with which all other wars sink into insignificance; taxation, such as the most heavily taxed people of former times could not have conceived; a debt larger than all the public debts that ever existed in the world added together; the food of the people studiously rendered dear; the currency imprudently debased, and imprudently restored. Yet is the country poorer than in 1790? We firmly believe that, in spite of all the misgovernment of her rulers, she has been almost constantly becoming richer and richer. Now and then there has been a stoppage, now and then a short retrogression; but as to the general tendency there can be no doubt. A single breaker may recede; but the tide is evidently coming in.
If we were to prophesy that in the year 1930 a population of fifty millions, better fed, clad, and lodged than the English of our time, will cover these islands, that Sussex and Huntingdonshire will be wealthier than the wealthiest parts of the West Riding of Yorkshire now are, that cultivation, rich as that of a flower-garden, will be carried up to the very tops of Ben Nevis and Helvellyn, that machines constructed on principles yet undiscovered will be in every house, that there will be no highways but railroads, no travelling but by steam, that our debt, vast as it seems to us, will appear to our great-grandchildren a trifling encumbrance, which might easily be paid off in a year or two, many people would think us insane. We prophesy nothing; but this we say: If any person had told the Parliament which met in perplexity and terror after the crash in 1720 that in 1830 the wealth of England would surpass all their wildest dreams, that the annual revenue would equal the principal of that debt which they considered as an intolerable burden, that for one man of ten thousand pounds then living there would be five men of fifty thousand pounds, that London would be twice as large and twice as populous, and that nevertheless the rate of mortality would have diminished to one-half of what it then was, that the post-office would bring more into the exchequer than the excise and customs had brought in together under Charles the Second, that stage coaches would run from London to York in twenty-four hours, that men would be in the habit of sailing without wind, and would be beginning to ride without horses, our ancestors would have given as much credit to the prediction as
they gave to Gulliver's Travels. Yet the prediction would have been true; and they would have perceived that it was not altogether absurd, if they had considered that the country was then raising every year a sum which would have purchased the fee-simple of the revenue of the Plantagenets, ten times what supported the Government of Elizabeth, three times what, in the time of Cromwell, had been thought intolerably oppressive. To almost all men the state of things under which they have been used to live seems to be the necessary state of things. We have heard it said that five per cent. is the natural interest of money, that twelve is the natural number of a jury, that forty shillings is the natural qualification of a county voter. Hence it is that, though in every age everybody knows that up to his own time progressive improvement has been taking place, nobody seems to reckon on any improvement during the next generation. We cannot absolutely prove that those are in error who tell us that society has reached a turning point, that we have seen our best days. But so said all who came before us, and with just as much apparent reason.

"A million a year will beggar us," said the patriots of 1640. "Two millions a year will grind the country to powder," was the cry in 1660. "Six millions a year, and a debt of fifty millions!" exclaimed Swift, "the high allies have been the ruin of us." "A hundred and forty millions of debt!" said Junius; "well may we say that we owe Lord Chatham more than we shall ever pay, if we owe him such a load as this." "Two hundred and forty millions of
debt!” cried all the statesmen of 1783 in chorus; “what abilities, or what economy on the part of a minister, can save a country so burdened?” We know that if, since 1783, no fresh debt had been incurred, the increased resources of the country would have enabled us to defray that debt at which Pitt, Fox, and Burke stood aghast, nay, to defray it over and over again, and that with much lighter taxation than what we have actually borne. On what principle is it that, when we see nothing but improvement behind us, we are to expect nothing but deterioration before us?

It is not by the intermeddling of Mr. Southey’s idol, the omniscient and omnipotent State, but by the prudence and energy of the people, that England has hitherto been carried forward in civilisation; and it is to the same prudence and the same energy that we now look with comfort and good hope. Our rulers will best promote the improvement of the nation by strictly confining themselves to their own legitimate duties, by leaving capital to find its most lucrative course, commodities their fair price, industry and intelligence their natural reward, idleness and folly their natural punishment, by maintaining peace, by defending property, by diminishing the price of law, and by observing strict economy in every department of the State. Let the Government do this: the People will assuredly do the rest.

CIVIL DISABILITIES OF THE JEWS

(January 1831)
THE distinguished member of the House of Commons, who, towards the close of the late Parliament, brought forward a proposition for the relief of the Jews, has given notice of his intention to renew it. The force of reason, in the last session, carried the measure through one stage in spite of the opposition of power. Reason and power are now on the same side; and we have little doubt that they will conjointly achieve a decisive victory. In order to contribute our share to the success of just principles, we propose to pass in review, as rapidly as possible, some of the arguments, or phrases claiming to be arguments, which have been employed to vindicate a system full of absurdity and injustice.

The constitution, it is said, is essentially Christian; and therefore to admit Jews to office is to destroy the constitution.

Nor is the Jew injured by being excluded from political power.

For no man has any right to power. A man has a right to his property; a man has a right to be protected from personal injury. These rights the law allows to the Jew; and with these rights it would be atrocious to interfere. But it is a mere matter of favour to admit any man to political power; and no man can justly complain that he is shut out from it.
We cannot but admire the ingenuity of this contrivance for shifting the burden of the proof from those to whom it properly belongs, and who would, we suspect, find it rather cumbersome. Surely no Christian can deny that every human being has a right to be allowed every gratification which produces no harm to others, and to be spared every mortification which produces no good to others. Is it not a source of mortification to a class of men that they are excluded from political power? If it be, they have, on Christian principles, a right to be freed from that mortification, unless it can be shown that their exclusion is necessary for the averting of some greater evil. The presumption is evidently in favour of toleration. It is for the prosecutor to make out his case.

The strange argument which we are considering would prove too much even for those who advance it. If no man has a right to political power, then neither Jew nor Gentile has such a right. The whole foundation of government is taken away. But if government be taken away, the property and the persons of men are insecure; and it is acknowledged that men have a right to their property and to personal security. If it be right that the property of men should be protected, and if this can only be done by means of government, then it must be right that government should exist. Now there cannot be government unless some person or persons possess political power. Therefore it is right that some person or persons should possess political power. That is to say, some person or persons must have a right to political power.
It is because men are not in the habit of considering what the end of government is, that Catholic disabilities and Jewish disabilities have been suffered to exist so long. We hear of essentially Protestant governments and essentially Christian governments, words which mean just as much as essentially Protestant cookery, or essentially Christian horsemanship. Government exists for the purpose of keeping the peace, for the purpose of compelling us to settle our disputes by arbitration instead of settling them by blows, for the purpose of compelling us to supply our wants by industry instead of supplying them by rapine. This is the only operation for which the machinery of government is peculiarly adapted, the only operation which wise governments ever propose to themselves as their chief object. If there is any class of people who are not interested, or who do not think themselves interested, in the security of property and the maintenance of order, that class ought to have no share of the powers which exist for the purpose of securing property and maintaining order. But why a man should be less fit to exercise those powers because he wears a beard, because he does not eat ham, because he goes to the synagogue on Saturdays instead of going to the church on Sundays, we cannot conceive.

The points of difference between Christianity and Judaism have very much to do with a man's fitness to be a bishop or a rabbi. But they have no more to do with his fitness to be a magistrate, a legislator, or a minister of finance, than with his fitness to
be a cobbler. Nobody has ever thought of compelling cobblers to make any declaration on the true faith of a Christian. Any man would rather have his shoes mended by a heretical cobbler than by a person who had subscribed all the thirty-nine articles, but had never handled an awl. Men act thus, not because they are indifferent to religion, but because they do not see what religion has to do with the mending of their shoes. Yet religion has as much to do with the mending of shoes as with the budget and the army estimates. We have surely had several signal proofs within the last twenty years that a very good Christian may be a very bad Chancellor of the Exchequer.

But it would be monstrous, says the persecutors, that Jews should legislate for a Christian community. This is a palpable misrepresentation. What is proposed is, not that the Jews should legislate for a Christian community, but that a legislature composed of Christians and Jews should legislate for a community composed of Christians and Jews. On nine hundred and ninety-nine questions out of a thousand, on all questions of police, of finance, of civil and criminal law, of foreign policy, the Jew, as a Jew, has no interest hostile to that of the Christian, or even to that of the Churchman. On questions relating to the ecclesiastical establishment, the Jew and the Churchman may differ. But they cannot differ more widely than the Catholic and the Churchman, or the Independent and the Churchman. The principle that Churchmen ought to monopolise the whole power of the State would at least have an intelligible meaning. The
principle that Christians ought to monopolise it has no meaning at all. For no question connected with the ecclesiastical institutions of the country can possibly come before Parliament, with respect to which there will not be as wide a difference between Christians as there can be between any Christian and any Jew.

In fact the Jews are not now excluded from political power. They possess it; and as long as they are allowed to accumulate large fortunes, they must possess it. The distinction which is sometimes made between civil privileges and political power is a distinction without a difference. Privileges are power. Civil and political are synonymous words, the one derived from the Latin, the other from the Greek. Nor is this mere verbal quibbling. If we look for a moment at the facts of the case, we shall see that the things are inseparable, or rather identical.

That a Jew should be a judge in a Christian country would be most shocking. But he may be a juryman. He may try issues of fact; and no harm is done. But if he should be suffered to try issues of law, there is an end of the constitution. He may sit in a box plainly dressed, and return verdicts. But that he should sit on the bench in a black gown and white wig, and grant new trials, would be an abomination not to be thought of among baptized people. The distinction is certainly most philosophical.
What power in civilised society is so great as that of the creditor over the debtor? If we take this away from the Jew, we take away from him the security of his property. If we leave it to him, we leave to him a power more despotic by far than that of the King and all his Cabinet.

It would be impious to let a Jew sit in Parliament. But a Jew may make money; and money may make members of Parliament. Gatton and Old Sarum may be the property of a Hebrew. An elector of Penryn will take ten pounds from Shylock rather than nine pounds nineteen shillings and eleven-pence three farthings from Antonio. To this no objection is made. That a Jew should possess the substance of legislative power, that he should command eight votes on every division as if he were the great Duke of Newcastle himself, is exactly as it should be. But that he should pass the bar and sit down on those mysterious, cushions of green leather, that he should cry "hear" and "order," and talk about being on his legs, and being, for one, free to say this and to say that, would be a profanation sufficient to bring ruin on the country.

That a Jew should be privy-councillor to a Christian king would be an eternal disgrace to the nation. But the Jew may govern the money-market, and the money-market may govern the world. The Minister may be in doubt as to his scheme of finance till he has been closeted with the Jew. A congress of sovereigns may be forced to summon the Jew to their assistance. The scrawl of the Jew on the back of a piece of paper may be worth more than the
royal word of three kings, or the national faith of three new
American republics. But that he should put Right Honourable
before his name would be the most frightful of national
calamities.

It was in this way that some of our politicians reasoned about
the Irish Catholics. The Catholics ought to have no political
power. The sun of England is set for ever if the Catholics
exercise political power. Give the Catholics everything else; but
keep political power from them. These wise men did not see that,
when everything else had been given, political power had been
given. They continued to repeat their cuckoo song, when it was no
longer a question whether Catholics should have political power
or not, when a Catholic association bearded the Parliament, when
a Catholic agitator exercised infinitely more authority than the
Lord Lieutenant.

If it is our duty as Christians to exclude the Jews from
political power, it must be our duty to treat them as our
ancestors treated them, to murder them, and banish them, and rob
them. For in that way, and in that way alone, can we really
deprive them of political power. If we do not adopt this course,
we may take away the shadow, but we must leave them the
substance. We may do enough to pain and irritate them; but we
shall not do enough to secure ourselves from danger, if danger
really exists. Where wealth is, there power must inevitably be.
The English Jews, we are told, are not Englishmen. They are a separate people, living locally in this island, but living morally and politically in communion with their brethren who are scattered over all the world. An English Jew looks on a Dutch or a Portuguese Jew as his countryman, and on an English Christian as a stranger. This want of patriotic feeling, it is said, renders a Jew unfit to exercise political functions.

The argument has in it something plausible; but a close examination shows it to be quite unsound. Even if the alleged facts are admitted, still the Jews are not the only people who have preferred their sect to their country. The feeling of patriotism, when society is in a healthful state springs up, by a natural and inevitable association, in the minds of citizens who know that they owe all their comforts and pleasures to the bond which unites them in one community. But, under a partial and oppressive Government, these associations cannot acquire that strength which they have in a better state of things. Men are compelled to seek from their party that protection which they ought to receive from their country, and they, by a natural consequence, transfer to their party that affection which they would otherwise have felt for their country. The Huguenots of France called in the help of England against their Catholic kings. The Catholics of France called in the help of Spain against a Huguenot king. Would it be fair to infer, that at present the French Protestants would wish to see their religion
made dominant by the help of a Prussian or an English army? Surely not, and why is it that they are not willing, as they formerly were willing, to sacrifice the interests of their country to the interests of their religious persuasion? The reason is obvious: they were persecuted then, and are not persecuted now. The English Puritans, under Charles the First, prevailed on the Scotch to invade England. Do the Protestant Dissenters of our time wish to see the Church put down by an invasion of foreign Calvinists? If not, to what cause are we to attribute the change? Surely to this, that the Protestant Dissenters are far better treated now than in the seventeenth century. Some of the most illustrious public men that England ever produced were inclined to take refuge from the tyranny of Laud in North America. Was this because Presbyterians and Independents are incapable of loving their country? But it is idle to multiply instances. Nothing is so offensive to a man who knows anything of history or of human nature as to hear those who exercise the powers of government accuse any sect of foreign attachments. If there be any proposition universally true in politics it is this, that foreign attachments are the fruit of domestic misrule. It has always been the trick of bigots to make their subjects miserable at home, and then to complain that they look for relief abroad; to divide society, and to wonder that it is not united; to govern as if a section of the State were the whole, and to censure the other sections of the State for their want of patriotic spirit. If the Jews have not felt towards England like children, it is because she has treated them like a step-mother. There is no feeling which more certainly develops
itself in the minds of men living under tolerably good government
than the feeling of patriotism. Since the beginning of the world,
there never was any nation, or any large portion of any nation,
not cruelly oppressed, which was wholly destitute of that
feeling. To make it therefore ground of accusation against a
class of men, that they are not patriotic, is the most vulgar
legerdemain of sophistry. It is the logic which the wolf employs
against the lamb. It is to accuse the mouth of the stream of
poisoning the source.

If the English Jews really felt a deadly hatred to England, if
the weekly prayer of their synagogues were that all the curses
denounced by Ezekiel on Tyre and Egypt might fall on London, if,
in their solemn feasts, they called down blessings on those who
should dash their children to pieces on the stones, still, we
say, their hatred to their countrymen would not be more intense
than that which sects of Christians have often borne to each
other. But in fact the feeling of the Jews is not such. It is
precisely what, in the situation in which they are placed, we
should expect it to be. They are treated far better than the
French Protestants were treated in the sixteenth and seventeenth
centuries, or than our Puritans were treated in the time of Laud.
They, therefore, have no rancour against the Government or
against their countrymen. It will not be denied that they are far
better affected to the State than the followers of Coligni or
Vane. But they are not so well treated as the dissecting sects of
Christians are now treated in England; and on this account, and,
we firmly believe, on this account alone, they have a more
exclusive spirit. Till we have carried the experiment further, we
are not entitled to conclude that they cannot be made Englishmen
altogether. The statesman who treats them as aliens, and then
abuses them for not entertaining all the feelings of natives, is
as unreasonable as the tyrant who punished their fathers for not
making bricks without straw.

Rulers must not be suffered thus to absolve themselves of their
solemn responsibility. It does not lie in their mouths to say
that a sect is not patriotic. It is their business to make it
patriotic. History and reason clearly indicate the means. The
English Jews are, as far as we can see, precisely what our
Government has made them. They are precisely what any sect, what
any class of men, treated as they have been treated, would have
been. If all the red-haired people in Europe had, during
centuries, been outraged and oppressed, banished from this place,
imprisoned in that, deprived of their money, deprived of their
teeth, convicted of the most improbable crimes on the feeblest
evidence, dragged at horses’ tails, hanged, tortured, burned
alive, if, when manners became milder, they had still been
subject to debasing restrictions and exposed to vulgar insults,
locked up in particular streets in some countries, pelted and
ducked by the rabble in others, excluded everywhere from
magistracies and honours, what would be the patriotism of
gentlemen with red hair? And if, under such circumstances, a
proposition were made for admitting red-haired men to office, how
striking a speech might an eloquent admirer of our old
institutions deliver against so revolutionary a measure! “These
men,” he might say, “scarcely consider themselves as Englishmen.
They think a red-haired Frenchman or a red-haired German more
closely connected with them than a man with brown hair born in
their own parish. If a foreign sovereign patronises red hair,
they love him better than their own native king. They are not
Englishmen: they cannot be Englishmen: nature has forbidden it:
experience proves it to be impossible. Right to political power
they have none; for no man has a right to political power. Let
them enjoy personal security; let their property be under the
protection of the law. But if they ask for leave to exercise
power over a community of which they are only half members, a
community the constitution of which is essentially dark-haired,
let us answer them in the words of our wise ancestors, Nolumus
leges Angliae mutari."

But, it is said, the Scriptures declare that the Jews are to be
restored to their own country; and the whole nation looks forward
to that restoration. They are, therefore, not so deeply
interested as others in the prosperity of England. It is not
their home, but merely the place of their sojourn, the house of
their bondage. This argument, which first appeared in the Times
newspaper, and which has attracted a degree of attention
proportioned not so much to its own intrinsic force as to the
general talent with which that journal is conducted, belongs to a
class of sophisms by which the most hateful persecutions may
easily be justified. To charge men with practical consequences
which they themselves deny is disingenuous in controversy; it is
atrocious in government. The doctrine of predestination, in the
opinion of many people, tends to make those who hold it utterly
immoral. And certainly it would seem that a man who believes his
eternal destiny to be already irrevocably fixed is likely to
indulge his passions without restraint and to neglect his
religious duties. If he is an heir of wrath, his exertions must
be unavailing. If he is preordained to life, they must be
superfluous. But would it be wise to punish every man who holds
the higher doctrines of Calvinism, as if he had actually
committed all those crimes which we know some Antinomians to have
committed? Assuredly not. The fact notoriously is that there are
many Calvinists as moral in their conduct as any Arminian, and
many Arminians as loose as any Calvinist.

It is altogether impossible to reason from the opinions which a
man professes to his feelings and his actions; and in fact no
person is ever such a fool as to reason thus, except when he
wants a pretext for persecuting his neighbours. A Christian is
commanded, under the strongest sanctions, to be just in all his
dealings. Yet to how many of the twenty-four millions of
professing Christians in these islands would any man in his
senses lend a thousand pounds without security? A man who should
act, for one day, on the supposition that all the people about
him were influenced by the religion which they professed, would
find himself ruined before night; and no man ever does act on
that supposition in any of the ordinary concerns of life, in borrowing, in lending, in buying, or in selling. But when any of our fellow-creatures are to be oppressed, the case is different. Then we represent those motives which we know to be so feeble for good as omnipotent for evil. Then we lay to the charge of our victims all the vices and follies to which their doctrines, however remotely, seem to tend. We forget that the same weakness, the same laxity, the same disposition to prefer the present to the future, which make men worse than a good religion, make them better than a bad one.

It was in this way that our ancestors reasoned, and that some people in our time still reason, about the Catholics. A Papist believes himself bound to obey the Pope. The Pope has issued a bull deposing Queen Elizabeth. Therefore every Papist will treat her grace as an usurper. Therefore every Papist is a traitor. Therefore every Papist ought to be hanged, drawn, and quartered. To this logic we owe some of the most hateful laws that ever disgraced our history. Surely the answer lies on the surface. The Church of Rome may have commanded these men to treat the queen as an usurper. But she has commanded them to do many other things which they have never done. She enjoins her priests to observe strict purity. You are always taunting them with their licentiousness. She commands all her followers to fast often, to be charitable to the poor, to take no interest for money, to fight no duels, to see no plays. Do they obey these injunctions? If it be the fact that very few of them strictly observe her
precepts, when her precepts are opposed to their passions and interests, may not loyalty, may not humanity, may not the love of ease, may not the fear of death, be sufficient to prevent them from executing those wicked orders which the Church of Rome has issued against the sovereign of England? When we know that many of these people do not care enough for their religion to go without beef on a Friday for it, why should we think that they will run the risk of being racked and hanged for it?

People are now reasoning about the Jews as our fathers reasoned about the Papists. The law which is inscribed on the walls of the synagogues prohibits covetousness. But if we were to say that a Jew mortgagee would not foreclose because God had commanded him not to covet his neighbour’s house, everybody would think us out of our wits. Yet it passes for an argument to say that a Jew will take no interest in the prosperity of the country in which he lives, that he will not care how bad its laws and police may be, how heavily it may be taxed, how often it may be conquered and given up to spoil, because God has promised that, by some unknown means, and at some undetermined time, perhaps ten thousand years hence, the Jews shall migrate to Palestine. Is not this the most profound ignorance of human nature? Do we not know that what is remote and indefinite affects men far less than what is near and certain? The argument too applies to Christians as strongly as to Jews. The Christian believes as well as the Jew, that at some future period the present order of things will come to an end. Nay, many Christians believe that the Messiah will shortly
establish a kingdom on the earth, and reign visibly over all its inhabitants. Whether this doctrine be orthodox or not we shall not here inquire. The number of people who hold it is very much greater than the number of Jews residing in England. Many of those who hold it are distinguished by rank, wealth, and ability. It is preached from pulpits, both of the Scottish and of the English Church. Noblemen and members of Parliament have written in defence of it. Now wherein does this doctrine differ, as far as its political tendency is concerned, from the doctrine of the Jews? If a Jew is unfit to legislate for us because he believes that he or his remote descendants will be removed to Palestine, can we safely open the House of Commons to a fifth-monarchy man, who expects that before this generation shall pass away, all the kingdoms of the earth will be swallowed up in one divine empire?

Does a Jew engage less eagerly than a Christian in any competition which the law leaves open to him? Is he less active and regular in his business than his neighbours? Does he furnish his house meanly, because he is a pilgrim and sojourner in the land? Does the expectation of being restored to the country of his fathers make him insensible to the fluctuations of the stock-exchange? Does he, in arranging his private affairs, ever take into the account the chance of his migrating to Palestine? If not, why are we to suppose that feelings which never influence his dealings as a merchant, or his dispositions as a testator, will acquire a boundless influence over him as soon as he becomes a magistrate or a legislator? There is another argument which we
would not willingly treat with levity, and which yet we scarcely know how to treat seriously. Scripture, it is said, is full of terrible denunciations against the Jews. It is foretold that they are to be wanderers. Is it then right to give them a home? It is foretold they are to be oppressed. Can we with propriety suffer them to be rulers? To admit them to the rights of citizens is manifestly to insult the Divine oracles.

We allow that to falsify a prophecy inspired by Divine Wisdom would be a most atrocious crime. It is, therefore, a happy circumstance for our frail species, that it is a crime which no man can possibly commit. If we admit the Jews to seats in Parliament, we shall, by so doing, prove that the prophecies in question, whatever they may mean, do not mean that the Jews shall be excluded from Parliament.

In fact it is already clear that the prophecies do not bear the meaning put upon them by the respectable persons whom we are now answering. In France and in the United States the Jews are already admitted to all the rights of citizens. A prophecy, therefore, which should mean that the Jews would never, during the course of their wanderings, be admitted to all the rights of citizens in the places of their sojourn, would be a false prophecy. This, therefore, is not the meaning of the prophecies of Scripture.
But we protest altogether against the practice of confounding prophecy with precept, of setting up predictions which are often obscure against a morality which is always clear. If actions are to be considered as just and good merely because they have been predicted, what action was ever more laudable than that crime which our bigots are now, at the end of eighteen centuries, urging us to avenge on the Jews, that crime which made the earth shake and blotted out the sun from heaven? The same reasoning which is now employed to vindicate the disabilities imposed on our Hebrew countrymen will equally vindicate the kiss of Judas and the judgment of Pilate. "The Son of man goeth, as it is written of him; but woe to that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed." And woe to those who, in any age, or in any country, disobey His benevolent commands under pretence of accomplishing His predictions. If this argument justifies the laws now existing against the Jews, it justifies equally all the cruelties which have ever been committed against them, the sweeping edicts of banishment and confiscation, the dungeon, the rack, and the slow fire. How can we excuse ourselves for leaving property to people who are to "serve their enemies in hunger, and in thirst, and in nakedness, and in want of all things"; for giving protection to the persons of those who are to "fear day and night, and to have none assurance of their life"; for not seizing on the children of a race whose "sons and daughters are to be given unto another people"?

We have not so learned the doctrines of Him who commanded us to
love our neighbour as ourselves, and who, when He was called upon
to explain what He meant by a neighbour, selected as an example a
heretic and an alien. Last year, we remember, it was represented
by a pious writer in the John Bull newspaper, and by some other
equally fervid Christians, as a monstrous indecency, that the
measure for the relief of the Jews should be brought forward in
Passion week. One of these humorists ironically recommended that
it should be read a second time on Good Friday. We should have
had no objection; nor do we believe that the day could be
commemorated in a more worthy manner. We know of no day fitter
for terminating long hostilities, and repairing cruel wrongs,
than the day on which the religion of mercy was founded. We know
of no day fitter for blotting out from the statute-book the last
traces of intolerance than the day on which the spirit of
intolerance produced the foulest of all judicial murders, the day
on which the list of the victims of intolerance, that noble list
wherein Socrates and More are enrolled, was glorified by a yet
greater and holier name.

GLADSTONE ON CHURCH AND STATE

(April 1839)

The state in its Relations with the church. By W. E. GLADSTONE,
Esq. Student of Christ Church, and M.P. for Newark. 8vo. Second
THE author of this volume is a young man of unblemished character, and of distinguished parliamentary talents, the rising hope of those stern and unbending Tories who follow, reluctantly and mutinously, a leader whose experience and eloquence are indispensable to them, but whose cautious temper and moderate opinions they abhor. It would not be at all strange if Mr. Gladstone were one of the most unpopular men in England. But we believe that we do him no more than justice when we say that his abilities and his demeanour have obtained for him the respect and goodwill of all parties. His first appearance in the character of an author is therefore an interesting event; and it is natural that the gentle wishes of the public should go with him to his trial.

We are much pleased, without any reference to the soundness or unsoundness of Mr. Gladstone's theories, to see a grave and elaborate treatise on an important part of the Philosophy of Government proceed from the pen of a young man who is rising to eminence in the House of Commons. There is little danger that people engaged in the conflicts of active life will be too much addicted to general speculation. The opposite vice is that which most easily besets them. The times and tides of business and debate tarry for no man. A politician must often talk and act before he has thought and read. He may be very ill informed respecting a question; all his notions about it may be vague and inaccurate; but speak he must; and if he is a man of ability, of tact, and of intrepidity, he soon finds that, even under such
circumstances, it is possible to speak successfully. He finds that there is a great difference between the effect of written words, which are perused and reperused in the stillness of the closet, and the effect of spoken words which, set off by the graces of utterance and gesture, vibrate for a single moment on the ear. He finds that he may blunder without much chance of being detected, that he may reason sophistically, and escape unrefuted. He finds that, even on knotty questions of trade and legislation, he can, without reading ten pages, or thinking ten minutes, draw forth loud plaudits, and sit down with the credit of having made an excellent speech. Lysias, says Plutarch, wrote a defence for a man who was to be tried before one of the Athenian tribunals. Long before the defendant had learned the speech by heart, he became so much dissatisfied with it that he went in great distress to the author. "I was delighted with your speech the first time I read it; but I liked it less the second time, and still less the third time; and now it seems to me to be no defence at all." "My good friend," says Lysias, "you quite forget that the judges are to hear it only once." The case is the same in the English Parliament. It would be as idle in an orator to waste deep meditation and long research on his speeches, as it would be in the manager of a theatre to adorn all the crowd of courtiers and ladies who cross over the stage in a procession with real pearls and diamonds. It is not by accuracy or profundity that men become the masters of great assemblies. And why be at the charge of providing logic of the best quality, when a very inferior article will be equally acceptable? Why go as deep into a question as Burke, only in order to be, like Burke,
coughed down, or left speaking to green benches and red boxes?
This has long appeared to us to be the most serious of the evils
which are to be set off against the many blessings of popular
government. It is a fine and true saying of Bacon, that reading
makes a full man, talking a ready man, and writing an exact man.
The tendency of institutions like those of England is to
encourage readiness in public men, at the expense both of fulness
and of exactness. The keenest and most vigorous minds of every
generation, minds often admirably fitted for the investigation of
truth, are habitually employed in producing arguments such as no
man of sense would ever put into a treatise intended for
publication, arguments which are just good enough to be used
once, when aided by fluent delivery and pointed language. The
habit of discussing questions in this way necessarily reacts on
the intellects of our ablest men, particularly of those who are
introduced into Parliament at a very early age, before their
minds have expanded to full maturity. The talent for debate is
developed in such men to a degree which, to the multitude, seems
as marvellous as the performance of an Italian Improvisatore. But
they are fortunate indeed if they retain unimpaired the faculties
which are required for close reasoning or for enlarged
speculation. Indeed we should sooner expect a great original work
on political science, such a work, for example, as the Wealth of
Nations, from an apothecary in a country town, or from a minister
in the Hebrides, than from a statesman who, ever since he was
one-and-twenty, had been a distinguished debater in the House of
Commons.
We therefore hail with pleasure, though assuredly not with
unmixed pleasure, the appearance of this work. That a young
politician should, in the intervals afforded by his parliamentary
avocations, have constructed and propounded, with much study and
mental toil, an original theory on a great problem in politics,
is a circumstance which, abstracted from all consideration of the
soundness or unsoundness of his opinions, must be considered as
highly creditable to him. We certainly cannot wish that Mr.
Gladstone's doctrines may become fashionable among public men.
But we heartily wish that his laudable desire to penetrate
beneath the surface of questions, and to arrive, by long and
intent meditation, at the knowledge of great general laws, were
much more fashionable than we at all expect it to become.

Mr. Gladstone seems to us to be, in many respects, exceedingly
well qualified for philosophical investigation. His mind is of
large grasp; nor is he deficient in dialectical skill. But he
does not give his intellect fair play. There is no want of light,
but a great want of what Bacon would have called dry light.
Whatever Mr. Gladstone sees is refracted and distorted by a false
medium of passions and prejudices. His style bears a remarkable
analogy to his mode of thinking, and indeed exercises great
influence on his mode of thinking. His rhetoric, though often
good of its kind, darkens and perplexes the logic which it should
illustrate. Half his acuteness and diligence, with a barren
imagination and a scanty vocabulary, would have saved him from
almost all his mistakes. He has one gift most dangerous to a
speculator, a vast command of a kind of language, grave and
majestic, but of vague and uncertain import; of a kind of
language which affects us much in the same way in which the lofty
diction of the Chorus of Clouds affected the simple-hearted
Athenian:

O ge ton phthegmatos os ieron, kai semnon, kai teratodes.

When propositions have been established, and nothing remains but
to amplify and decorate them, this dim magnificence may be in
place. But if it is admitted into a demonstration, it is very
much worse than absolute nonsense; just as that transparent haze,
through which the sailor sees capes and mountains of false sizes
and in false bearings, is more dangerous than utter darkness.
Now, Mr. Gladstone is fond of employing the phraseology of which
we speak in those parts of his works which require the utmost
perspicuity and precision of which human language is capable; and
in this way he deludes first himself, and then his readers. The
foundations of his theory, which ought to be buttresses of
adamant, are made out of the flimsy materials which are fit only
for perorations. This fault is one which no subsequent care or
industry can correct. The more strictly Mr. Gladstone reasons on
his premises, the more absurd are the conclusions which he brings
out; and, when at last his good sense and good nature recoil from
the horrible practical inferences to which this theory leads, he
is reduced sometimes to take refuge in arguments inconsistent
with his fundamental doctrines, and sometimes to escape from the legitimate consequences of his false principles, under cover of equally false history.

It would be unjust not to say that this book, though not a good book, shows more talent than many good books. It abounds with eloquent and ingenious passages. It bears the signs of much patient thought. It is written throughout with excellent taste and excellent temper; nor does it, so far as we have observed, contain one expression unworthy of a gentleman, a scholar, or a Christian. But the doctrines which are put forth in it appear to us, after full and calm consideration, to be false, to be in the highest degree pernicious, and to be such as, if followed out in practice to their legitimate consequences, would inevitably produce the dissolution of society; and for this opinion we shall proceed to give our reasons with that freedom which the importance of the subject requires, and which Mr. Gladstone, both by precept and by example, invites us to use, but, we hope, without rudeness, and, we are sure, without malevolence.

Before we enter on an examination of this theory, we wish to guard ourselves against one misconception. It is possible that some persons who have read Mr. Gladstone's book carelessly, and others who have merely heard in conversation, or seen in a newspaper, that the member for Newark has written in defence of the Church of England against the supporters of the voluntary system, may imagine that we are writing in defence of the
voluntary system, and that we desire the abolition of the
Established Church. This is not the case. It would be as unjust
to accuse us of attacking the Church, because we attack Mr.
Gladstone's doctrines, as it would be to accuse Locke of wishing
for anarchy, because he refuted Filmer's patriarchal theory of
government, or to accuse Blackstone of recommending the
confiscation of ecclesiastical property, because he denied that
the right of the rector to tithe was derived from the Levitical
law. It is to be observed, that Mr. Gladstone rests his case on
entirely new grounds, and does not differ more widely from us
than from some of those who have hitherto been considered as the
most illustrious champions of the Church. He is not content with
the Ecclesiastical Polity, and rejoices that the latter part of
that celebrated work "does not carry with it the weight of
Hooker's plenary authority." He is not content with Bishop
Warburton's Alliance of Church and State. "The propositions of
that work generally," he says, "are to be received with
qualification"; and he agrees with Bolingbroke in thinking that
Warburton's whole theory rests on a fiction. He is still less
satisfied with Paley's defence of the Church, which he pronounces
to be "tainted by the original vice of false ethical principles,
and full of the seeds of evil." He conceives that Dr. Chalmers
has taken a partial view of the subject, and "put forth much
questionable matter." In truth, on almost every point on which we
are opposed to Mr. Gladstone, we have on our side the authority
of some divine, eminent as a defender of existing establishments.
Mr. Gladstone's whole theory rests on this great fundamental proposition, that the propagation of religious truth is one of the principal ends of government, as government. If Mr. Gladstone has not proved this proposition, his system vanishes at once.

We are desirous, before we enter on the discussion of this important question, to point out clearly a distinction which, though very obvious, seems to be overlooked by many excellent people. In their opinion, to say that the ends of government are temporal and not spiritual is tantamount to saying that the temporal welfare of man is of more importance than his spiritual welfare. But this is an entire mistake. The question is not whether spiritual interests be or be not superior in importance to temporal interests; but whether the machinery which happens at any moment to be employed for the purpose of protecting certain temporal interests of a society be necessarily such a machinery as is fitted to promote the spiritual interests of that society.

Without a division of labour the world could not go on. It is of very much more importance that men should have food than that they should have pianofortes. Yet it by no means follows that every pianoforte maker ought to add the business of a baker to his own; for, if he did so, we should have both much worse music and much worse bread. It is of much more importance that the knowledge of religious truth should be wisely diffused than that the art of sculpture should flourish among us. Yet it by no means follows that the Royal Academy ought to unite with its present functions those of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge,
to distribute theological tracts, to send forth missionaries, to
turn out Nollekens for being a Catholic, Bacon for being a
Methodist, and Flaxman for being a Swedenborgian. For the effect
of such folly would be that we should have the worst possible
Academy of Arts, and the worst possible Society for the Promotion
of Christian Knowledge. The community, it is plain, would be
thrown into universal confusion, if it were supposed to be the
duty of every association which is formed for one good object to
promote every other good object.

As to some of the ends of civil government, all people are
agreed. That it is designed to protect our persons and our
property; that it is designed to compel us to satisfy our wants,
not by rapine, but by industry; that it is designed to compel us
to decide our differences, not by the strong hand, but by
arbitration; that it is designed to direct our whole force, as
that of one man, against any other society which may offer us
injury; these are propositions which will hardly be disputed.

Now these are matters in which man, without any reference to any
higher being, or to any future state, is very deeply interested.
Every human being, be he idolater, Mahometan, Jew, Papist,
Socinian, Deist, or Atheist, naturally loves life, shrinks from
pain, desires comforts which can be enjoyed only in communities
where property is secure. To be murdered, to be tortured, to be
robbed, to be sold into slavery, these are evidently evils from
which men of every religion, and men of no religion, wish to be
protected; and therefore it will hardly be disputed that men of
every religion, and of no religion, have thus far a common
interest in being well governed.

But the hopes and fears of man are not limited to this short life
and to this visible world. He finds himself surrounded by the
signs of a power and wisdom higher than his own; and, in all ages
and nations, men of all orders of intellect, from Bacon and
Newton, down to the rudest tribes of cannibals, have believed in
the existence of some superior mind. Thus far the voice of
mankind is almost unanimous. But whether there be one God, or
many, what may be God's natural and what His moral attributes, in
what relation His creatures stand to Him, whether He have ever
disclosed Himself to us by any other revelation than that which
is written in all the parts of the glorious and well-ordered
world which He has made, whether His revelation be contained in
any permanent record, how that record should be interpreted, and
whether it have pleased Him to appoint any unerring interpreter
on earth, these are questions respecting which there exists the
widest diversity of opinion, and respecting some of which a large
part of our race has, ever since the dawn of regular history,
been deplorably in error.

Now here are two great objects: one is the protection of the
persons and estates of citizens from injury; the other is the
propagation of religious truth. No two objects more entirely
distinct can well be imagined.
The former belongs wholly to the visible and tangible world in which we live; the latter belongs to that higher world which is beyond the reach of our senses. The former belongs to this life; the latter to that which is to come. Men who are perfectly agreed as to the importance of the former object, and as to the way of obtaining it, differ as widely as possible respecting the latter object. We must, therefore, pause before we admit that the persons, be they who they may, who are intrusted with power for the promotion of the former object, ought always to use that power for the promotion of the latter object.

Mr. Gladstone conceives that the duties of governments are paternal; a doctrine which we shall not believe till he can show us some government which loves its subjects as a father loves a child, and which is as superior in intelligence to its subjects as a father is to a child. He tells us in lofty though somewhat indistinct language, that "Government occupies in moral the place of to pan in physical science." If government be indeed to pan in moral science, we do not understand why rulers should not assume all the functions which Plato assigned to them. Why should they not take away the child from the mother, select the nurse, regulate the school, overlook the playground, fix the hours of labour and of recreation, prescribe what ballads shall be sung, what tunes shall be played, what books shall be read, what physic shall be swallowed? Why should not they choose our wives, limit our expenses, and stint us to a certain number of dishes of meat,
of glasses of wine, and of cups of tea? Plato, whose hardihood in speculation was perhaps more wonderful than any other peculiarity of his extraordinary mind, and who shrank from nothing to which his principles led, went this whole length. Mr. Gladstone is not so intrepid. He contents himself with laying down this proposition, that whatever be the body which in any community is employed to protect the persons and property of men, that body ought also, in its corporate capacity, to profess a religion, to employ its power for the propagation of that religion, and to require conformity to that religion, as an indispensable qualification for all civil office. He distinctly declares that he does not in this proposition confine his view to orthodox governments or even to Christian governments. The circumstance that a religion is false does not, he tells us, diminish the obligation of governors, as such, to uphold it. If they neglect to do so, "we cannot," he says, "but regard the fact as aggravating the case of the holders of such creed." "I do not scruple to affirm," he adds, "that if a Mahometan conscientiously believes his religion to come from God, and to teach divine truth, he must believe that truth to be beneficial, and beneficial beyond all other things to the soul of man; and he must therefore, and ought to desire its extension, and to use for its extension all proper and legitimate means; and that, if such Mahometan be a prince, he ought to count among those means the application of whatever influence or funds he may lawfully have at his disposal for such purposes."
Surely this is a hard saying. Before we admit that the Emperor Julian, in employing the influence and the funds at his disposal for the extinction of Christianity, was doing no more than his duty, before we admit that the Arian Theodoric would have committed a crime if he had suffered a single believer in the divinity of Christ to hold any civil employment in Italy, before we admit that the Dutch Government is bound to exclude from office all members of the Church of England, the King of Bavaria to exclude from office all Protestants, the Great Turk to exclude from office all Christians, the King of Ava to exclude from office all who hold the unity of God, we think ourselves entitled to demand very full and accurate demonstration. When the consequences of a doctrine are so startling, we may well require that its foundations shall be very solid.

The following paragraph is a specimen of the arguments by which Mr. Gladstone has, as he conceives, established his great fundamental proposition:

We may state the same proposition in a more general form, in which it surely must command universal assent. Wherever there is power in the universe, that power is the property of God, the King of that universe--his property of right, however for a time withholden or abused. Now this property is, as it were, realised, is used according to the will of the owner, when it is used for the purposes he has ordained, and in the temper of mercy, justice, truth, and faith which he has taught us. But those
principles never can be truly, never can be permanently
entertained in the human breast, except by a continual reference
to their source, and the supply of the Divine grace. The powers,
therefore, that dwell in individuals acting as a government as
well as those that dwell in individuals acting for themselves,
can only he secured for right uses by applying to them a
religion."

Here are propositions of vast and indefinite extent, conveyed in
language which has a certain obscure dignity and sagacity,
attractive, we doubt not, to many minds. But the moment that we
examine these propositions closely, the moment that we bring them
to the test by running over but a very few of the particulars
which are included in them, we find them to be false and
extravagant. The doctrine which "must surely command universal
assent" is this, that every association of human beings which
exercises any power whatever, that is to say, every association
of human beings, is bound, as such association, to profess a
religion. Imagine the effect which would follow if this principle
were really in force during four-and-twenty hours. Take one
instance out of a million. A stage-coach company has power over
its horses. This power is the property of God. It is used
according to the will of God when it is used with mercy. But the
principle of mercy can never be truly or permanently entertained
in the human breast without continual reference to God. The
powers, therefore, that dwell in individuals, acting as a stage-
coach company, can only be secured for right uses by applying to
them a religion. Every stage coach company ought, therefore, in
its collective capacity, to profess some one faith, to have its
articles, and its public worship, and its tests. That this
conclusion, and an infinite number of other conclusions equally
strange, follow of necessity from Mr. Gladstone’s principle, is
as certain as it is that two and two make four. And, if the
legitimate conclusions be so absurd, there must be something
unsound in the principle.

We will quote another passage of the same sort:

"Why, then, we now come to ask, should the governing body in a
state profess a religion? First, because it is composed of
individual men; and they, being appointed to act in a definite
moral capacity, must sanctify their acts done in that capacity by
the offices of religion; inasmuch as the acts cannot otherwise be
acceptable to God, or anything but sinful and punishable in
themselves. And whenever we turn our face away from God in our
conduct, we are living atheistically. . . . In fulfilment, then,
of his obligations as an individual, the statesman must be a
worshipping man. But his acts are public--the powers and
instruments with which he works are public--acting under and by
the authority of the law, he moves at his word ten thousand
subject arms; and because such energies are thus essentially
public, and wholly out of the range of mere individual agency,
they must be sanctified not only by the private personal prayers
and piety of those who fill public situations, but also by public
acts of the men composing the public body. They must offer prayer and praise in their public and collective character—in that character wherein they constitute the organ of the nation, and wield its collective force. Wherever there is a reasoning agency there is a moral duty and responsibility involved in it. The governors are reasoning agents for the nation, in their conjoint acts as such. And therefore there must be attached to this agency, as that without which none of our responsibilities can be met, a religion. And this religion must be that of the conscience of the governor, or none."

Here again we find propositions of vast sweep, and of sound so orthodox and solemn that many good people, we doubt not, have been greatly edified by it. But let us examine the words closely; and it will immediately become plain that, if these principles be once admitted, there is an end of all society. No combination can be formed for any purpose of mutual help, for trade, for public works, for the relief of the sick or the poor, for the promotion of art or science, unless the members of the combination agree in their theological opinions. Take any such combination at random, the London and Birmingham Railway Company for example, and observe to what consequences Mr. Gladstone's arguments inevitably lead. Why should the Directors of the Railway Company, in their collective capacity, profess a religion? First, because the direction is composed of individual men appointed to act in a definite moral capacity, bound to look carefully to the property, the limbs, and the lives of their fellow-creatures, bound to act
diligently for their constituents, bound to govern their servants
with humanity and justice, bound to fulfil with fidelity many
important contracts. They must, therefore, sanctify their acts by
the offices of religion, or these acts will be sinful and
punishable in themselves. In fulfilment, then, of his obligations
as an individual, the Director of the London and Birmingham
Railway Company must be a worshipping man, But his acts are
public. He acts for a body. He moves at his word ten thousand
subject arms. And because these energies are out of the range of
his mere individual agency, they must be sanctified by public
acts of devotion. The Railway Directors must offer prayer and
praise in their public and collective character, in that
caracter wherewith they constitute the organ of the Company, and
wield its collective power. Wherever there is reasoning agency,
there is moral responsibility. The Directors are reasoning agents
for the Company, and therefore there must be attached to this
agency,
as that without which none of our responsibilities can be met, a
religion. And this religion must be that of the conscience of the
Director himself, or none. There must be public worship and a
test. No Jew, no Socinian, no Presbyterian, no Catholic, no
Quaker, must, be permitted to be the organ of the Company, and to
wield its collected force.” Would Mr. Gladstone really defend
this proposition? We are sure that he would not; but we are sure
that to this proposition, and to innumerable similar
propositions, his reasoning inevitably leads.
Again

"National will and agency are indisputably one, binding either a
dissentient minority or the subject body, in a manner that
nothing but the recognition of the doctrine of national
personality can justify. National honour and good faith are words
in every one's mouth. How do they less imply a personality in
nations than the duty towards God, for which we now contend? They
are strictly and essentially distinct from the honour and good
faith of the individuals composing the nation. France is a person
to us, and we to her. A wilful injury done to her is a moral act,
and a moral act quite distinct from the acts of all the
individuals composing the nation. Upon broad facts like these we
may rest, without resorting to the more technical proof which the
laws afford in their manner of dealing with corporations. If,
then, a nation have unity of will, have pervading sympathies,
have capability of reward and suffering contingent upon its acts,
shall we deny its responsibility; its need of a religion to meet
that responsibility? . . A nation, then, having a personality,
lies under the obligation, like the individuals composing its
governing body, of sanctifying the acts of that personality by
the offices of religion, and thus we have a new and imperative
ground for the existence of a state religion."

A new ground we have here, certainly, but whether very imperative
may be doubted. Is it not perfectly clear, that this argument
applies with exactly as much force to every combination of human
beings for a common purpose, as to governments? Is there any such combination in the world, whether technically a corporation or not, which has not this collective personality, from which Mr. Gladstone deduces such extraordinary consequences? Look at banks, insurance offices, dock companies, canal companies, gas companies, hospitals, dispensaries, associations for the relief of the poor, associations for apprehending malefactors, associations of medical pupils for procuring subjects, associations of country gentlemen for keeping fox-hounds, book societies, benefit societies, clubs of all ranks, from those which have lined Pall-Mall and St. James's Street with their palaces, down to the Free-and-easy which meets in the shabby parlour of a village inn. Is there a single one of these combinations to which Mr. Gladstone's argument will not apply as well as to the State? In all these combinations, in the Bank of England, for example, or in the Athenaeum club, the will and agency of the society are one, and bind the dissentient minority. The Bank and the Athenaeum have a good faith and a justice different from the good faith and justice of the individual members. The Bank is a person to those who deposit bullion with it. The Athenaeum is a person to the butcher and the wine-merchant. If the Athenaeum keeps money at the Bank, the two societies are as much persons to each other as England and France. Either society may pay its debts honestly; either may try to defraud its creditors; either may increase in prosperity; either may fall into difficulties. If, then, they have this unity of will; if they are capable of doing and suffering good and evil, can we to use Mr. Gladstone's words, "deny their
responsibility, or their need of a religion to meet that
responsibility?" Joint-stock banks, therefore, and clubs,
"having
a personality, lie under the necessity of sanctifying that
personality by the offices of religion;" and thus we have "a new
and imperative ground" for requiring all the directors and clerks
of joint-stock banks, and all the members of clubs, to qualify by
taking the sacrament.

The truth is, that Mr. Gladstone has fallen into an error very
common among men of less talents than his own. It is not unusual
for a person who is eager to prove a particular proposition to
assume a major of huge extent, which includes that particular
proposition, without ever reflecting that it includes a great
deal more. The fatal facility with which Mr. Gladstone multiplies
expressions stately and sonorous, but of indeterminate meaning,
eminently qualifies him to practise this sleight on himself and
on his readers. He lays down broad general doctrines about power,
when the only power of which he is thinking is the power of
governments, and about conjoint action when the only conjoint
action of which he is thinking is the conjoint action of citizens
in a state. He first resolves on his conclusion. He then makes a
major of most comprehensive dimensions, and having satisfied
himself that it contains his conclusion, never troubles himself
about what else it may contain: and as soon as we examine it we
find that it contains an infinite number of conclusions, every
one of which is a monstrous absurdity.
It is perfectly true that it would be a very good thing if all
the members of all the associations in the world were men of
sound religious views. We have no doubt that a good Christian
will be under the guidance of Christian principles, in his
conduct as director of a canal company or steward of a charity
dinner. If he were, to recur to a case which we have before put,
a member of a stage-coach company, he would, in that capacity,
remember that "a righteous man regardeth the life of his beast."
But it does not follow that every association of men must,
therefore, as such association, profess a religion. It is evident
that many great and useful objects can be attained in this world
only by co-operation. It is equally evident that there cannot be
efficient co-operation, if men proceed on the principle that they
must not co-operate for one object unless they agree about other
objects. Nothing seems to us more beautiful or admirable in our
social system than the facility with which thousands of people,
who perhaps agree only on a single point, can combine their
energies for the purpose of carrying that single point. We see
daily instances of this. Two men, one of them obstinately
prejudiced against missions, the other president of a missionary
society, sit together at the board of a hospital, and heartily
concur in measures for the health and comfort of the patients.
Two men, one of whom is a zealous supporter and the other a
zealous opponent of the system pursued in Lancaster's schools,
meet at the Mendicity Society, and act together with the utmost
cordiality. The general rule we take to be undoubtedly this, that
it is lawful and expedient for men to unite in an association for
the promotion of a good object, though they may differ with
respect to other objects of still higher importance.

It will hardly be denied that the security of the persons and
property of men is a good object, and that the best way, indeed
the only way, of promoting that object, is to combine men
together in certain great corporations which are called States.
These corporations are very variously, and, for the most part
very imperfectly organised. Many of them abound with frightful
abuses. But it seems reasonable to believe that the worst that
ever existed was, on the whole, preferable to complete anarchy.

Now, reasoning from analogy, we should say that these great
corporations would, like all other associations, be likely to
attain their end most perfectly if that end were kept singly in
view: and that to refuse the services of those who are admirably
qualified to promote that end, because they are not also
qualified to promote some other end, however excellent, seems at
first sight as unreasonable as it would be to provide that nobody
who was not a fellow of the Society of Antiquaries should be a
governor of the Eye Infirmary; or that nobody who was not a
member of the Society for Promoting Christianity among the Jews
should be a trustee of the Literary Fund.

It is impossible to name any collection of human beings to which
Mr. Gladstone's reasonings would apply more strongly than to an army. Where shall we find more complete unity of action than in an army? Where else do so many human beings implicitly obey one ruling mind? What other mass is there which moves so much like one man? Where is such tremendous power intrusted to those who command? Where is so awful a responsibility laid upon them? If Mr. Gladstone has made out, as he conceives, an imperative necessity for a State Religion, much more has he made it out to be imperatively necessary that every army should, in its collective capacity, profess a religion. Is he prepared to adopt this consequence?

On the morning of the thirteenth of August, in the year 1704, two great captains, equal in authority, united by close private and public ties, but of different creeds, prepared for a battle, on the event of which were staked the liberties of Europe. Marlborough had passed a part of the night in prayer, and before daybreak received the sacrament according to the rites of the Church of England. He then hastened to join Eugene, who had probably just confessed himself to a Popish priest. The generals consulted together, formed their plan in concert, and repaired each to his own post. Marlborough gave orders for public prayers. The English chaplains read the service at the head of the English regiments. The Calvinistic chaplains of the Dutch army, with heads on which hand of Bishop had never been laid, poured forth their supplications in front of their countrymen. In the meantime, the Danes might listen to their Lutheran ministers and
Capuchins might encourage the Austrian squadrons, and pray to the Virgin for a blessing on the arms of the Holy Roman Empire. The battle commences. These men of various religions all act like members of one body. The Catholic and the Protestant general exert themselves to assist and to surpass each other. Before sunset the Empire is saved: France has lost in a day the fruits of eighty years of intrigue and of victory: and the allies, after conquering together, return thanks to God separately, each after his own form of worship. Now, is this practical atheism? Would any man in his senses say that, because the allied army had unity of action and a common interest, and because a heavy responsibility lay on its Chiefs, it was therefore imperatively necessary that the Army should, as an Army, have one established religion, that Eugene should be deprived of his command for being a Catholic, that all the Dutch and Austrian colonels should be broken for not subscribing the Thirty-nine Articles? Certainly not. The most ignorant grenadier on the field of battle would have seen the absurdity of such a proposition. "I know," he would have said, "that the Prince of Savoy goes to mass, and that our Corporal John cannot abide it; but what has the mass to do with the taking of the village of Blenheim? The Prince wants to beat the French, and so does Corporal John. If we stand by each other we shall most likely beat them. If we send all the Papists and Dutch away, Tallard will have every man of us." Mr. Gladstone himself, we imagine, would admit that our honest grenadier would have the best of the argument; and if so, what follows? Even this; that all Mr. Gladstone's general principles about power, and responsibility, and personality, and conjoint action, must be
given up, and that, if his theory is to stand at all, it must
stand on some other foundation.

We have now, we conceive, shown that it may be proper to form men
into combinations for important purposes, which combinations
shall have unity and common interests, and shall be under the
direction of rulers intrusted with great power and lying under
solemn responsibility, and yet that it may be highly improper
that these combinations should, as such, profess any one system
of religious belief, or perform any joint act of religious
worship. How, then, is it proved that this may not be the case
with some of those great combinations which we call States? We
firmly believe that it is the case with some States. We firmly
believe that there are communities in which it would be as absurd
to mix up theology with government, as it would have been in the
right wing of the allied army at Blenheim to commence a
controversy with the left wing, in the middle of the battle,
about purgatory and the worship of images.

It is the duty, Mr. Gladstone tells us, of the persons, be they
who they may, who hold supreme power in the State, to employ that
power in order to promote whatever they may deem to be
theological truth. Now, surely, before he can call on us to admit
this proposition, he is bound to prove that those persons are
likely to do more good than harm by so employing their power. The
first question is, whether a government, proposing to itself the
propagation of religious truth as one of its principal ends, is
more likely to lead the people right than to lead them wrong? Mr. Gladstone evades this question; and perhaps it was his wisest course to do so.

"If," says he, "the government be good, let it have its natural duties and powers at its command; but, if not good, let it be made so. . . . We follow, therefore, the true course in looking first for the true idea, or abstract conception of a government, of course with allowance for the evil and frailty that are in man, and then in examining whether there be comprised in that idea a capacity and consequent duty on the part of a government to lay down any laws or devote any means for the purposes of religion,—in short, to exercise a choice upon religion."

Of course, Mr. Gladstone has a perfect right to argue any abstract question, provided that he will constantly bear in mind that it is only an abstract question that he is arguing. Whether a perfect government would or would not be a good machinery for the propagation of religious truth is certainly a harmless, and may, for aught we know, be an edifying subject of inquiry. But it is very important that we should remember that there is not, and never has been, any such government in the world. There is no harm at all in inquiring what course a stone thrown into the air would take, if the law of gravitation did not operate. But the consequences would be unpleasant, if the inquirer, as soon as he had finished his calculation, were to begin to throw stones about in all directions, without considering that his conclusion rests
on a false hypothesis, and that his projectiles, instead of
flying away through infinite space, will speedily return in
parabolas, and break the windows and heads of his neighbours.

It is very easy to say that governments are good, or if not good,
ought to be made so. But what is meant by good government? And
how are all the bad governments in the world to be made good? And
of what value is a theory which is true only on a supposition in
the highest degree extravagant?

We do not, however, admit that, if a government were, for all its
temporal ends, as perfect as human frailty allows, such a
government would, therefore, be necessarily qualified to
propagate true religion. For we see that the fitness of
governments to propagate true religion is by no means
proportioned to their fitness for the temporal end of their
institution. Looking at individuals, we see that the princes
under whose rule nations have been most ably protected from
foreign and domestic disturbance, and have made the most rapid
advances in civilisation, have been by no means good teachers of
divinity. Take for example, the best French sovereign, Henry the
Fourth, a king who restored order, terminated a terrible civil
war, brought the finances into an excellent condition, made his
country respected throughout Europe, and endeared himself to the
great body of the people whom he ruled. Yet this man was twice a
Huguenot and twice a Papist. He was, as Davila hints, strongly
suspected of having no religion at all in theory, and was
certainly not much under religious restraints in his practice.

Take the Czar Peter, the Empress Catharine, Frederick the Great.

It will surely not be disputed that these sovereigns, with all
their faults, were, if we consider them with reference merely to
the temporal ends of government, above the average of merit.

Considered as theological guides, Mr. Gladstone would probably
put them below the most abject drivellers of the Spanish branch
of the House of Bourbon. Again, when we pass from individuals to
systems, we by no means find that the aptitude of governments for
propagating religious truth is proportioned to their aptitude for
secular functions. Without being blind admirers either of the
French or of the American institutions, we think it clear that
the persons and property of citizens are better protected in
France and in New England than in almost any society that now
exists, or that has ever existed; very much better, certainly,
than in the Roman Empire under the orthodox rule of Constantine
and Theodosius. But neither the Government of France, nor that of
New England, is so organised as to be fit for the propagation of
theological doctrines. Nor do we think it improbable that the
most serious religious errors might prevail in a state which,
considered merely with reference to temporal objects, might
approach far nearer than any that has ever been known to the idea
of what a state should be.

But we shall leave this abstract question, and look at the world
as we find it. Does, then, the way in which governments generally
obtain their power make it at all probable that they will be more
favourable to orthodoxy than to heterodoxy? A nation of
barbarians pours down on a rich and unwarlike empire, enslaves
the people, portions out the land, and blends the institutions
which it finds in the cities with those which it has brought from
the woods. A handful of daring adventurers from a civilised
nation wander to some savage country, and reduce the aboriginal
race to bondage. A successful general turns his arms against the
State which he serves. A society made brutal by oppression, rises
madly on its masters, sweeps away all old laws and usages, and
when its first paroxysm of rage is over, sinks down passively
under any form of polity which may spring out of the chaos. A
chief of a party, as at Florence, becomes imperceptibly a
sovereign, and the founder of a dynasty. A captain of
mercenaries, as at Milan, seizes on a city, and by the sword
makes himself its ruler. An elective senate, as at Venice, usurps
permanent and hereditary power. It is in events such as these
that governments have generally originated; and we can see
nothing in such events to warrant us in believing that the
governments thus called into existence will be peculiarly well
fitted to distinguish between religious truth and heresy.

When, again, we look at the constitutions of governments which
have become settled, we find no great security for the orthodoxy
of rulers. One magistrate holds power because his name was drawn
out of a purse; another, because his father held it before him.
There are representative systems of all sorts, large constituent
bodies, small constituent bodies, universal suffrage, high
pecuniary qualifications. We see that, for the temporal ends of
government, some of these constitutions are very skilfully
constructed, and that the very worst of them is preferable to
anarchy. We see some sort of connection between the very worst of
them and the temporal well-being of society. But it passes our
understanding to comprehend what connection any one of them has
with theological truth.

And how stands the fact? Have not almost all the governments in
the world always been in the wrong on religious subjects? Mr.
Gladstone, we imagine, would say that, except in the time of
Constantine, of Jovian, and of a very few of their successors,
and occasionally in England since the Reformation, no government
has ever been sincerely friendly to the pure and apostolical
Church of Christ. If, therefore, it be true that every ruler is
bound in conscience to use his power for the propagation of his
own religion, it will follow that, for one ruler who has been
bound in conscience to use his power for the propagation of
truth, a thousand have been bound in conscience to use their
power for the propagation of falsehood. Surely this is a
conclusion from which common sense recoils. Surely, if experience
shows that a certain machine, when used to produce a certain
effect, does not produce that effect once in a thousand times,
but produces, in the vast majority of cases, an effect directly
contrary, we cannot be wrong in saying that it is not a machine
of which the principal end is to be so used.
If, indeed, the magistrate would content himself with laying his opinions and reasons before the people, and would leave the people, uncorrupted by hope or fear, to judge for themselves, we should see little reason to apprehend that his interference in favour of error would be seriously prejudicial to the interests of truth. Nor do we, as will hereafter be seen, object to his taking this course, when it is compatible with the efficient discharge of his more especial duties. But this will not satisfy Mr. Gladstone. He would have the magistrate resort to means which have a great tendency to make malcontents, to make hypocrites, to make careless nominal conformists, but no tendency whatever to produce honest and rational conviction. It seems to us quite clear that an inquirer who has no wish except to know the truth is more likely to arrive at the truth than an inquirer who knows that, if he decides one way, he shall be rewarded, and that, if he decides the other way, he shall be punished. Now, Mr. Gladstone would have governments propagate their opinions by excluding all Dissenters from all civil offices. That is to say, he would have governments propagate their opinions by a process which has no reference whatever to the truth or falsehood of those opinions, by arbitrarily uniting certain worldly advantages with one set of doctrines, and certain worldly inconveniences with another set. It is of the very nature of argument to serve the interests of truth; but if rewards and punishments serve the interests of truth, it is by mere accident. It is very much easier to find arguments for the divine authority of the Gospel than for the divine authority of the Koran. But it is just as
easy to bribe or rack a Jew into Mahometanism as into Christianity.

From racks, indeed, and from all penalties directed against the persons, the property, and the liberty of heretics, the humane spirit of Mr. Gladstone shrinks with horror. He only maintains that conformity to the religion of the State ought to be an indispensable qualification for office; and he would, unless we have greatly misunderstood him, think it his duty, if he had the power, to revive the Test Act, to enforce it rigorously, and to extend it to important classes who were formerly exempt from its operation.

This is indeed a legitimate consequence of his principles. But why stop here? Why not roast Dissenters at slow fires? All the general reasonings on which this theory rests evidently lead to sanguinary persecution. If the propagation of religious truth be a principal end of government, as government; if it be the duty of a government to employ for that end its constitutional Power; if the constitutional power of governments extends, as it most unquestionably does, to the making of laws for the burning of heretics; if burning be, as it most assuredly is, in many cases, a most effectual mode of suppressing opinions; why should we not burn? If the relation in which government ought to stand to the people be, as Mr. Gladstone tells us, a paternal relation, we are irresistibly led to the conclusion that persecution is justifiable. For the right of propagating opinions
by punishment is one which belongs to parents as clearly as the
right to give instruction. A boy is compelled to attend family
worship: he is forbidden to read irreligious books: if he will
not learn his catechism, he is sent to bed without his supper: if
he plays truant at church-time a task is set him. If he should
display the precocity of his talents by expressing impious
opinions before his brothers and sisters, we should not much
blame his father for cutting short the controversy with a horse-
whip. All the reasons which lead us to think that parents are
peculiarly fitted to conduct the education of their children, and
that education is the principal end of a parental relation, lead
us also to think that parents ought to be allowed to use
punishment, if necessary, for the purpose of forcing children,
who are incapable of judging for themselves, to receive religious
instruction and to attend religious worship. Why, then, is this
prerogative of punishment, so eminently paternal, to be withheld
from a paternal government? It seems to us, also, to be the
height of absurdity to employ civil disabilities for the
propagation of an opinion, and then to shrink from employing
other punishments for the same purpose. For nothing can be
clearer than that, if you punish at all, you ought to punish
enough. The pain caused by punishment is pure unmixed evil, and
never ought to be inflicted, except for the sake of some good. It
is mere foolish cruelty to provide penalties which torment the
criminal without preventing the crime. Now it is possible, by
sanguinary persecution unrelentingly inflicted, to suppress
opinions. In this way the Albigenses were put down. In this way
the Lollards were put down. In this way the fair promise of the
Reformation was blighted in Italy and Spain. But we may safely
defy Mr. Gladstone to point out a single instance in which the
system which he recommends has succeeded.

And why should he be so tender-hearted? What reason can he give
for hanging a murderer, and suffering a heresiarch to escape
without even a pecuniary mulct? Is the heresiarch a less
pernicious member of society than the murderer? Is not the loss
of one soul a greater evil than the extinction of many lives? And
the number of murders committed by the most profligate bravo that
ever let out his poniard to hire in Italy, or by the most savage
buccaneer that ever prowled on the Windward Station, is small
indeed, when compared with the number of souls which have been
caught in the snares of one dexterous heresiarch. If, then, the
heresiarch causes infinitely greater evils than the murderer, why
is he not as proper an object of penal legislation as the
murderer? We can give a reason, a reason, short, simple,
decisive, and consistent. We do not extenuate the evil which the
heresiarch produces; but we say that it is not evil of that sort
the sort against which it is the end of government to guard. But
how Mr. Gladstone, who considers the evil which the heresiarch
produces as evil of the sort against which it is the end of
government to guard, can escape from the obvious consequence of
his doctrine, we do not understand. The world is full of parallel
cases. An orange-woman stops up the pavement with her
wheelbarrow; and a policeman takes her into custody. A miser who
has amassed a million suffers an old friend and benefactor to die
in a workhouse, and cannot be questioned before any tribunal for
his baseness and ingratitude. Is this because legislators think
the orange-woman's conduct worse than the miser's? Not at all. It
is because the stopping up of the pathway is one of the evils
against which it is the business of the public authorities to
protect society, and heartlessness is not one of those evils. It
would be the height of folly to say that the miser ought, indeed,
to be punished, but that he ought to be punished less severely
than the orange-woman.

The heretical Constantius persecutes Athanasius; and why not?
Shall Caesar punish the robber who has taken one purse, and spare
the wretch who has taught millions to rob the Creator of His
honour, and to bestow it on the creature? The orthodox Theodosius
persecutes the Arians, and with equal reason. Shall an insult
offered to the Caesarean majesty be expiated by death; and shall
there be no penalty for him who degrades to the rank of a
creature the almighty, the infinite Creator? We have a short
answer for both: "To Caesar the things which are Caesar's. Caesar
is appointed for the punishment of robbers and rebels. He is not
appointed for the purpose of either propagating or exterminating
the doctrine of the consubstantiality of the Father and the Son."
"Not so," says Mr. Gladstone, "Caesar is bound in conscience to
propagate whatever he thinks to be the truth as to this question.
Constantius is bound to establish the Arian worship throughout
the empire, and to displace the bravest captains of his legions,
and the ablest ministers of his treasury, if they hold the Nicene
faith. Theodosius is equally bound to turn out every public
servant whom his Arian predecessors have put in. But if
Constantius lays on Athanasius a fine of a single aureus, if
Theodosius imprisons an Arian presbyter for a week, this is most
unjustifiable oppression." Our readers will be curious to know
how this distinction is made out.

The reasons which Mr. Gladstone gives against persecution
affecting life, limb, and property, may be divided into two
classes; first, reasons which can be called reasons only by
extreme courtesy, and which nothing but the most deplorable
necessity would ever have induced a man of his abilities to use;
and, secondly, reasons which are really reasons, and which have
so much force that they not only completely prove his exception,
but completely upset his general rule. His artillery on this
occasion is composed of two sorts of pieces, pieces which will
not go off at all, and pieces which go off with a vengeance, and
recoil with most crushing effect upon himself.

"We, as fallible creatures," says Mr. Gladstone, "have no right,
from any bare speculations of our own to administer pains and
penalties to our fellow-creatures, whether on social or religious
grounds. We have the right to enforce the laws of the land by
such pains and penalties, because it is expressly given by Him
who has declared that the civil rulers are to bear the sword for
the punishment of evil-doers, and for the encouragement of them
that do well. And so, in things spiritual, had it pleased God to
give to the Church or the State this power, to be permanently
exercised over their members, or mankind at large, we should have
the right to use it; but it does not appear to have been so
received, and consequently, it should not be exercised."

We should be sorry to think that the security of our lives and
property from persecution rested on no better ground than this.
Is not a teacher of heresy an evil-doer? Has not heresy been
condemned in many countries, and in our own among them, by the
laws of the land, which, as Mr. Gladstone says, it is justifiable
to enforce by penal sanctions? If a heretic is not specially
mentioned in the text to which Mr. Gladstone refers, neither is
an assassin, a kidnapper, or a highwayman: and if the silence of
the New Testament as to all interference of governments to stop
the progress of heresy be a reason for not fining or imprisoning
heretics, it is surely just as good a reason for not excluding
them from office.

"God," says Mr. Gladstone, "has seen fit to authorize the
employment of force in the one case and not in the other; for it
was with regard to chastisement inflicted by the sword for an
insult offered to himself that the Redeemer declared his kingdom
not to be of this world:-- meaning, apparently in an especial
manner, that it should be otherwise than after this world's
fashion, in respect to the sanctions by which its laws should be
maintained."
Now here Mr. Gladstone, quoting from memory, has fallen into an error. The very remarkable words which he cites do not appear to have had any reference to the wound inflicted by Peter on Malchus. They were addressed to Pilate, in answer to the question, "Art thou the King of the Jews?" We can not help saying that we are surprised that Mr. Gladstone should not have more accurately verified a quotation on which, according to him, principally depends the right of a hundred millions of his fellow-subjects, idolaters, Mussulmans, Catholics, and dissenters, to their property, their liberty, and their lives.

Mr. Gladstone's humane interpretations of Scripture are lamentably destitute of one recommendation, which he considers as of the highest value: they are by no means in accordance with the general precepts or practice of the Church, from the time when the Christians became strong enough to persecute down to a very recent period. A dogma favourable to toleration is certainly not a dogma quod semper, quod ubique, quod omnibus. Bossuet was able to say, we fear with too much truth, that on one point all Christians had long been unanimous, the right of the civil magistrate to propagate truth by the sword; that even heretics had been orthodox as to this right, and that the Anabaptists and Socinians were the first who called it in question. We will not pretend to say what is the best explanation of the text under consideration; but we are sure that Mr. Gladstone's is the worst. According to him, Government ought to exclude Dissenters from
office, but not to fine them, because Christ's kingdom is not of this world. We do not see why the line may not be drawn at a hundred other places as well as that which he has chosen. We do not see why Lord Clarendon, in recommending the act of 1664 against conventicles, might not have said, "It hath been thought by some that this classis of men might with advantage be not only imprisoned but pilloried. But methinks, my Lords, we are inhibited from the punishment of the pillory by that Scripture, 'My kingdom is not of this world.'" Archbishop Laud, when he sate on Burton in the Star-Chamber, might have said, "I pronounce for the pillory; and, indeed, I could wish that all such wretches were delivered to the fire, but that our Lord hath said that His kingdom is not of this world." And Gardiner might have written to the Sheriff of Oxfordshire "See that execution be done without fall on Master Ridley and Master Latimer, as you will answer the same to the Queen's grace at your peril. But if they shall desire to have some gunpowder for the shortening of their torment, I see not but you may grant it, as it is written, Regnum meum non est de hoc mundo; that is to say, My kingdom is not of this world."

But Mr. Gladstone has other arguments against persecution, arguments which are of so much weight, that they are decisive not only against persecution but against his whole theory. "The Government," he says, "is incompetent to exercise minute and constant supervision over religious opinion." And hence he infers, that "a Government exceeds its province when it comes to adapt a scale of punishments to variations in religious
opinion, according to their respective degrees of variation from
the established creed. To decline affording countenance to sects
is a single and simple rule. To punish their professors,
according to their several errors, even were there no other
objection, is one for which the State must assume functions
wholly ecclesiastical, and for which it is not intrinsically
fitted."

This is, in our opinion, quite true. But how does it agree with
Mr. Gladstone's theory? What! the Government incompetent to
exercise even such a degree of supervision over religious opinion
as is implied by the punishment of the most deadly heresy! The
Government incompetent to measure even the grossest deviations
from the standard of truth! The Government not intrinsically
qualified to judge of the comparative enormity of any theological
errors! The Government so ignorant on these subjects that it is
compelled to leave, not merely subtle heresies, discernible only
by the eye of a Cyril or a Bucer, but Socinianism, Deism,
Mahometanism, Idolatry, Atheism, unpunished! To whom does Mr.
Gladstone assign the office of selecting a religion for the
State, from among hundreds of religions, every one of which lays
claim to truth? Even to this same Government, which is now
pronounced to be so unfit for theological investigations that it
cannot venture to punish a man for worshipping a lump of stone
with a score of heads and hands. We do not remember ever to have
fallen in with a more extraordinary instance of inconsistency.
When Mr. Gladstone wishes to prove that the Government ought to
establish and endow a religion, and to fence it with a Test Act,
Government is to panic in the moral world. Those who would
confine
it to secular ends take a low view of its nature. A religion must
be attached to its agency; and this religion must be that of the
conscience of the governor, or none. It is for the Governor to
decide between Papists and Protestants, Jansenists and Molinists,
Arminians and Calvinists, Episcopalians and Presbyterians,
Sabellians and Tritheists, Homoousians and Homoiousians,
Nestorians and Eutychians, Monothelites and Monophysites,
Paedobaptists and Anabaptists. It is for him to rejudge the Acts
of Nice and Rimini, of Ephesus and Chalcedon, of Constantinople
and St. John Lateran, of Trent and Dort. It is for him to
arbitrate between the Greek and the Latin procession, and to
determine whether that mysterious filioque shall or shall not
have a place in the national creed. When he has made up his mind,
he is to tax the whole community in order to pay people to teach
his opinion, what ever it may be. He is to rely on his own
judgment, though it may be opposed to that of nine-tenths of the
society. He is to act on his own judgment, at the risk of
exciting the most formidable discontents. He is to inflict,
perhaps on a great majority of the population, what, whether we
choose to call it persecution or not, will always be felt as
persecution by those who suffer it. He is, on account of
differences often too slight for vulgar comprehension, to deprive
the State of the services of the ablest men. He is to debase and
enfeeble the community which he governs, from a nation into a
sect. In our own country, for example, millions of Catholics,
millions of Protestant Dissenters, are to be excluded from all power and honours. A great hostile fleet is on the sea; but Nelson is not to command in the Channel if in the mystery of the Trinity he confounds the persons. An invading army has landed in Kent; but the Duke of Wellington is not to be at the head of our forces if he divides the substance. And after all this, Mr. Gladstone tells us, that it would be wrong to imprison a Jew, a Mussulman, or a Buddhist, for a day; because really a Government cannot understand these matters, and ought not to meddle with questions which belong to the Church. A singular theologian, indeed, this Government! So learned, that it is competent to exclude Grotius from office for being a Semi-Pelagian, so unlearned that it is incompetent to fine a Hindoo peasant a rupee for going on a pilgrimage to Juggernaut.

"To solicit and persuade one another," says Mr. Gladstone, "are privileges which belong to us all; and the wiser and better man is bound to advise the less wise and good; but he is not only not bound, he is not allowed, speaking generally, to coerce him. It is untrue, then, that the same considerations which bind a Government to submit a religion to the free choice of the people would therefore justify their enforcing its adoption."

Granted. But it is true that all the same considerations which would justify a Government in propagating a religion by means of civil disabilities would justify the propagating of that religion by penal laws. To solicit! Is it solicitation to tell a Catholic
Duke, that he must abjure his religion or walk out of the House of Lords? To persuade! Is it persuasion to tell a barrister of distinguished eloquence and learning that he shall grow old in his stuff gown, while his pupils are seated above him in ermine, because he cannot digest the damnatory clauses of the Athanasian Creed? Would Mr. Gladstone think that a religious system which he considers as false, Socinianism for example, was submitted to his free choice, if it were submitted in these terms?—"If you obstinately adhere to the faith of the Nicene fathers, you shall not be burned in Smithfield; you shall not be sent to Dorchester gaol; you shall not even pay double land-tax. But you shall be shut out from all situations in which you might exercise your talents with honour to yourself and advantage to the country. The House of Commons, the bench of magistracy, are not for such as you. You shall see younger men, your inferiors in station and talents, rise to the highest dignities and attract the gaze of nations, while you are doomed to neglect and obscurity. If you have a son of the highest promise, a son such as other fathers would contemplate with delight, the development of his fine talents and of his generous ambition shall be a torture to you. You shall look on him as a being doomed to lead, as you have led, the abject life of a Roman or a Neapolitan in the midst of a great English people. All those high honours, so much more precious than the most costly gifts of despots, with which a free country decorates its illustrious citizens, shall be to him, as they have been to you, objects not of hope and virtuous emulation, but of hopeless, envious pining. Educate him, if you wish him to feel his degradation. Educate him, if you wish to
stimulate his craving for what he never must enjoy. Educate him, if you would imitate the barbarity of that Celtic tyrant who fed his prisoners on salted food till they called eagerly for drink, and then let down an empty cup into the dungeon and left them to die of thirst." Is this to solicit, to persuade, to submit religion to the free choice of man? Would a fine of a thousand pounds, would imprisonment in Newgate for six months, under circumstances not disgraceful, give Mr Gladstone the pain which he would feel, if he were to be told that he was to be dealt with in the way in which he would himself deal with more than one half of his countrymen?

We are not at all surprised to find such inconsistency even in a man of Mr. Gladstone's talents. The truth is, that every man is, to a great extent, the creature of the age. It is to no purpose that he resists the influence which the vast mass, in which he is but an atom, must exercise on him. He may try to be a man of the tenth century: but he cannot. Whether he will or not, he must be a man of the nineteenth century. He shares in the motion of the moral as well as in that of the physical world. He can no more be as intolerant as he would have been in the days of the Tudors than he can stand in the evening exactly where he stood in the morning. The globe goes round from west to east; and he must go round with it. When he says that he is where he was, he means only that he has moved at the same rate with all around him. When he says that he has gone a good way to the westward, he means only that he has not gone to the eastward quite so rapidly as his
neighbours. Mr. Gladstone's book is, in this respect, a very
gratifying performance. It is the measure of what a man can do to
be left behind by the world. It is the strenuous effort of a very
vigorous mind to keep as far in the rear of the general progress
as possible. And yet, with the most intense exertion Mr.
Gladstone cannot help being, on some important points, greatly in
advance of Locke himself; and, with whatever admiration he may
regard Laud, it is well for him, we can tell him, that he did not
write in the days of that zealous primate, who would certainly
have refuted the expositions of Scripture which we have quoted,
by one of the keenest arguments that can be addressed to human
ears.

This is not the only instance in which Mr. Gladstone has shrunk
in a very remarkable manner from the consequences of his own
theory. If there be in the whole world a state to which this
theory is applicable, that state is the British Empire in India.
Even we, who detest paternal governments in general, shall admit
that the duties of the Government of India are, to a considerable
extent, paternal. There, the superiority of the governors to the
governed in moral science is unquestionable. The conversion of
the whole people to the worst form that Christianity ever wore in
the darkest ages would be a most happy event. It is not necessary
that a man should be a Christian to wish for the propagation of
Christianity in India. It is sufficient that he should be an
European not much below the ordinary European level of good sense
and humanity. Compared with the importance of the interests at
stake, all those Scotch and Irish questions which occupy so large a portion of Mr. Gladstone's book, sink into insignificance. In no part of the world since the days of Theodosius has so large a heathen population been subject to a Christian government. In no part of the world is heathenism more cruel, more licentious, more fruitful of absurd rites and pernicious laws. Surely, if it be the duty of Government to use its power and its revenue in order to bring seven millions of Irish Catholics over to the Protestant Church, it is a fortiori the duty of the Government to use its power and its revenue in order to make seventy millions of idolaters Christians. If it be a sin to suffer John Howard or William Penn to hold any office in England because they are not in communion with the Established Church, it must be a crying sin indeed to admit to high situations men who bow down, in temples covered with emblems of vice, to the hideous images of sensual or malevolent gods.

But no. Orthodoxy, it seems, is more shocked by the priests of Rome than by the priests of Kalee. The plain red brick building, the Cave of Adullam, or Ebenezer Chapel, where uneducated men hear a half-educated man talk of the Christian law of love and the Christian hope of glory, is unworthy of the indulgence which is reserved for the shrine where the Thug suspends a portion of the spoils of murdered travellers, and for the car which grinds its way through the bones of self-immolated pilgrims. "It would be," says Mr. Gladstone, "an absurd exaggeration to maintain it as the part of such a Government as that of the British in India
to bring home to the door of every subject at once the
ministrations of a new and totally unknown religion." The
Government ought indeed to desire to propagate Christianity. But
the extent to which they must do so must be "limited by the
degree in which the people are found willing to receive it." He
proposes no such limitation in the case of Ireland. He would give
the Irish a Protestant Church whether they like it or not. "We
believe," says he, "that that which we place before them is,
whether they know it or not, calculated to be beneficial to them;
and that, if they know it not now, they will know it when it is
presented to them fairly. Shall we, then, purchase their applause
at the expense of their substantial, nay, their spiritual
interests?"

And why does Mr. Gladstone allow to the Hindoo a privilege which
he denies to the Irishman? Why does he reserve his greatest
liberality for the most monstrous errors? Why does he pay most
respect to the opinion of the least enlightened people? Why does
he withhold the right to exercise paternal authority from that
one Government which is fitter to exercise paternal authority
than any Government that ever existed in the world? We will give
the reason in his own words.

"In British India," he says, "a small number of persons advanced
to a higher grade of civilisation, exercise the powers of
government over an immensely greater number of less cultivated
persons, not by coercion, but under free stipulation with the
governed. Now, the rights of a Government, in circumstances thus peculiar, obviously depend neither upon the unrestricted theory of paternal principles, nor upon any primordial or fictitious contract of indefinite powers, but upon an express and known treaty, matter of positive agreement, not of natural ordinance."

Where Mr. Gladstone has seen this treaty we cannot guess for, though he calls it a "known treaty," we will stake our credit that it is quite unknown both at Calcutta and Madras, both in Leadenhall Street and Cannon Row, that it is not to be found in any of the enormous folios of papers relating to India which fill the bookcases of members of Parliament, that it has utterly escaped the researches of all the historians of our Eastern empire, that, in the long and interesting debates of 1813 on the admission of missionaries to India, debates of which the most valuable part has been excellently preserved by the care of the speakers, no allusion to this important instrument is to be found. The truth is that this treaty is a nonentity. It is by coercion, it is by the sword, and not by free stipulation with the governed, that England rule India; nor is England bound by any contract whatever not to deal with Bengal as she deals with Ireland. She may set up a Bishop of Patna, and a Dean of Hoogley; she may grant away the public revenue for the maintenance of prebendaries of Benares and canons of Moorshedabad; she may divide the country into parishes, and place, a rector with a stipend in every one of them; and all this without infringing any positive agreement. If there be such a treaty, Mr. Gladstone can
have no difficulty in making known its date, its terms, and, above all the precise extent of the territory within which we have sinfully bound ourselves to be guilty of practical atheism. The last point is of great importance. For, as the provinces of our Indian empire were acquired at different times, and in very different ways, no single treaty, indeed no ten treaties, will justify the system pursued by our Government there.

The plain state of the case is this. No man in his senses would dream of applying Mr. Gladstone's theory to India; because, if so applied, it would inevitably destroy our empire, and, with our empire, the best chance of spreading Christianity among the natives. This Mr. Gladstone felt. In some way or other his theory was to be saved, and the monstrous consequences avoided. Of intentional misrepresentation we are quite sure that he is incapable. But we cannot acquit him of that unconscious disingenuousness from which the most upright man, when strongly attached to an opinion, is seldom wholly free. We believe that he recoiled from the ruinous consequences which his system would produce, if tried in India; but that he did not like to say so, lest he should lay himself open to the charge of sacrificing principle to expediency, a word which is held in the utmost abhorrence by all his school. Accordingly, he caught at the notion of a treaty, a notion which must, we think, have originated in some rhetorical expression which he has imperfectly understood. There is one excellent way of avoiding the drawing of a false conclusion from a false major; and that is by having a
false minor. Inaccurate history is an admirable corrective of unreasonable theory. And thus it is in the present case. A bad general rule is laid down, and obstinately maintained, wherever the consequences are not too monstrous for human bigotry. But when they become so horrible that even Christ Church shrinks, that even Oriel stands aghast, the rule is evaded by means of a fictitious contract. One imaginary obligation is set up against another. Mr. Gladstone first preaches to Governments the duty of undertaking an enterprise just as rational as the Crusades, and then dispenses them from it on the ground of a treaty which is just as authentic as the donation of Constantine to Pope Sylvester. His system resembles nothing so much as a forged bond with a forged release indorsed on the back of it.

With more show of reason he rests the claims of the Scotch Church on a contract. He considers that contract, however, as most unjustifiable, and speaks of the setting up of the Kirk as a disgraceful blot on the reign of William the Third. Surely it would be amusing, if it were not melancholy, to see a man of virtue and abilities unsatisfied with the calamities which one Church, constituted on false principles, has brought upon the empire, and repining that Scotland is not in the same state with Ireland, that no Scottish agitator is raising rent and putting county members in and out, that no Presbyterian association is dividing supreme power with the Government, that no meetings of procursors and repealers are covering the side of the Calton Hill, that twenty-five thousand troops are not required to
maintain order on the north of the Tweed, that the anniversary of
the Battle of Bothwell Bridge is not regularly celebrated by
insult, riot, and murder. We could hardly find a stronger
argument against Mr. Gladstone's system than that which Scotland
furnishes. The policy which has been followed in that country has
been directly opposed to the policy which he recommends. And the
consequence is that Scotland, having been one of the rudest, one
of the poorest, one of the most turbulent countries in Europe,
has become one of the most highly civilised, one of the most
flourishing, one of the most tranquil. The atrocities which were
of common occurrence: while an unpopular Church was dominant are
unknown, In spite of a mutual aversion as bitter as ever
separated one people from another, the two kingdoms which compose
our island have been indissolubly joined together. Of the ancient
national feeling there remains just enough to be ornamental and
useful; just enough to inspire the poet, and to kindle a generous
and friendly emulation in the bosom of the soldier. But for all
the ends of government the nations are one. And why are they so?
The answer is simple. The nations are one for all the ends of
government, because in their union the true ends of government
alone were kept in sight. The nations are one because the
Churches are two.

Such is the union of England with Scotland, an union which
resembles the union of the limbs of one healthful and vigorous
body, all moved by one will, all co-operating for common ends.
The system of Mr. Gladstone would have produced an union which
can be compared only to that which is the subject of a wild Persian fable. King Zohak—we tell the story as Mr. Southey tells it to us—gave the devil leave to kiss his shoulders. Instantly two serpents sprang out, who, in the fury of hunger, attacked his head, and attempted to get at his brain. Zohak pulled them away, and tore them with his nails. But he found that they were inseparable parts of himself, and that what he was lacerating was his own flesh. Perhaps we might be able to find, if we looked round the world, some political union like this, some hideous monster of a state, cursed with one principle of sensation and two principles of volition, self-loathing and self-torturing, made up of parts which are driven by a frantic impulse to inflict mutual pain, yet are doomed to feel whatever they inflict, which are divided by an irreconcileable hatred, Yet are blended in an indissoluble identity. Mr. Gladstone, from his tender concern for Zohak, is unsatisfied because the devil has as yet kissed only one shoulder, because there is not a snake mangling and mangled on the left to keep in countenance his brother on the right.

But we must proceed in our examination of his theory. Having, as he conceives, proved that is the duty of every Government to profess some religion or other, right or wrong, and to establish that religion, he then comes to the question what religion a Government ought to prefer; and he decides this question in favour of the form of Christianity established in England. The Church of England is, according to him, the pure Catholic Church of Christ, which possesses the apostolical succession of
ministers, and within whose pale is to be found that unity which is essential to truth. For her decisions he claims a degree of reverence far beyond what she has ever, in any of her formularies, claimed for herself; far beyond what the moderate school of Bossuet demands for the Pope; and scarcely short of what that school would ascribe to Pope and General Council together. To separate from her communion is schism. To reject her traditions or interpretations of Scripture is sinful presumption.

Mr. Gladstone pronounces the right of private judgment, as it is generally understood throughout Protestant Europe, to be a monstrous abuse. He declares himself favourable, indeed, to the exercise of private judgment, after a fashion of his own. We have, according to him, a right to judge all the doctrines of the Church of England to be sound, but not to judge any of them to be unsound. He has no objection, he assures us, to active inquiry into religious questions. On the contrary, he thinks such inquiry highly desirable, as long as it does not lead to diversity of opinion; which is much the same thing as if he were to recommend the use of fire that will not burn down houses, or of brandy that will not make men drunk. He conceives it to be perfectly possible for mankind to exercise their intellects vigorously and freely on theological subjects, and yet to come to exactly the same conclusions with each other and with the Church of England. And for this opinion he gives, as far as we have been able to discover, no reason whatever, except that everybody who vigorously and freely exercises his understanding on Euclid's
Theorems assents to them. "The activity of private judgment," he truly observes, "and the unity and strength of conviction in mathematics vary directly as each other." On this unquestionable fact he constructs a somewhat questionable argument. Everybody who freely inquires agrees, he says, with Euclid. But the Church is as much in the right as Euclid. Why, then, should not every free inquirer agree with the Church? We could put many similar questions. Either the affirmative or the negative of the proposition that King Charles wrote the Icon Basilike is as true as that two sides of a triangle are greater than the third side. Why, then, do Dr. Wordsworth and Mr. Hallam agree in thinking two sides of a triangle greater than the third side, and yet differ about the genuineness of the Icon Basilike? The state of the exact sciences proves, says Mr. Gladstone, that, as respects religion, "the association of these two ideas, activity of inquiry, and variety of conclusion, is a fallacious one." We might just as well turn the argument the other way, and infer from the variety of religious opinions that there must necessarily be hostile mathematical sects, some affirming, and some denying, that the square of the hypothenuse is equal to the squares of the sides. But we do not think either the one analogy or the other of the smallest value. Our way of ascertaining the tendency of free inquiry is simply to open our eyes and look at the world in which we live; and there we see that free inquiry on mathematical subjects produces unity, and that free inquiry on moral subjects produces discrepancy. There would undoubtedly be less discrepancy if inquiries were more diligent and candid. But discrepancy there will be among the most diligent and candid, as
long as the constitution of the human mind, and the nature of
moral evidence, continue unchanged. That we have not freedom and
unity together is a very sad thing; and so it is that we have not
wings. But we are just as likely to see the one defect removed as
the other. It is not only in religion that this discrepancy is
found. It is the same with all matters which depend on moral
evidence, with judicial questions, for example, and with
political questions. All the judges will work a sum in the rule
of three on the same principle, and bring out the same
conclusion. But it does not follow that, however honest and
laborious they may be, they will all be of one mind on the
Douglas case. So it is vain to hope that there may be a free
constitution under which every representative will be unanimously
elected, and every law unanimously passed; and it would be
ridiculous for a statesman to stand wondering and bemoaning
himself because people who agree in thinking that two and two
make four cannot agree about the new poor law, or the
administration of Canada.

There are two intelligible and consistent courses which may be
followed with respect to the exercise of private judgment; the
course of the Romanist, who interdicts private judgment because
of its inevitable inconveniences; and the course of the
Protestant, who permits private judgment in spite of its
inevitable inconveniences. Both are more reasonable than Mr.
Gladstone, who would have private judgment without its inevitable
inconveniences. The Romanist produces repose by means of
stupefaction. The Protestant encourages activity, though he knows that where there is much activity there will be some aberration.

Mr. Gladstone wishes for the unity of the fifteenth century with the active and searching spirit of the sixteenth. He might as well wish to be in two places at once.

When Mr. Gladstone says that we “actually require discrepancy of opinion--require and demand error, falsehood, blindness, and plume ourselves on such discrepancy as attesting a freedom which is only valuable when used for unity in the truth,” he expresses himself with more energy than precision. Nobody loves discrepancy for the sake of discrepancy. But a person who conscientiously believes that free inquiry is, on the whole, beneficial to the interests of truth, and that, from the imperfection of the human faculties, wherever there is much free inquiry there will be some discrepancy, may, without impropriety, consider such discrepancy, though in itself an evil, as a sign of good. That there are ten thousand thieves in London is a very melancholy fact. But, looked at in one point of view, it is a reason for exultation. For what other city could maintain ten thousand thieves? What must be the mass of wealth, where the fragments gleaned by lawless pilfering rise to so large an amount? St. Kilda would not support a single pickpocket. The quantity of theft is, to a certain extent, an index of the quantity of useful industry and judicious speculation. And just as we may, from the great number of rogues in a town, infer that much honest gain is made there; so may we
often, from the quantity of error in a community, draw a cheering
inference as to the degree in which the public mind is turned to
those inquiries which alone can lead to rational convictions of
truth.

Mr. Gladstone seems to imagine that most Protestants think it
possible for the same doctrine to be at once true and false; or
that they think it immaterial whether, on a religious question, a
man comes to a true or a false conclusion. If there be any
Protestants who hold notions so absurd, we abandon them to his
censure.

The Protestant doctrine touching the right of private judgment,
that doctrine which is the common foundation of the Anglican, the
Lutheran, and the Calvinistic Churches, that doctrine by which
every sect of Dissenters vindicates its separation, we conceive
not to be this, that opposite opinions rue; nor this, that truth
and falsehood are both may both be true; equally good; nor yet
this, that all speculative error is necessarily innocent; but
this, that there is on the face of the earth no visible body to
whose decrees men are bound to submit their private judgment on
points of faith.

Is there always such a visible body? Was there such a visible
body in the year 1500? If not, why are we to believe that there
is such a body in the year 1839? If there was such a body in the
year 1500, what was it? Was it the Church of Rome? And how can the Church of England be orthodox now, if the Church of Rome was orthodox then?

"In England," says Mr. Gladstone, "the case was widely different from that of the Continent. Her reformation did not destroy, but successfully maintained, the unity and succession of the Church in her apostolical ministry. We have, therefore, still among us the ordained hereditary witnesses of the truth, conveying it to us through an unbroken series from our Lord Jesus Christ and His Apostles. This is to us the ordinary voice of authority; of authority equally reasonable and equally true, whether we will hear, or whether we will forbear."

Mr. Gladstone's reasoning is not so clear as might be desired. We have among us, he says, ordained hereditary witnesses of the truth, and their voice is to us the voice of authority. Undoubtedly, if they are witness of the truth, their voice is the voice of authority. But this is little more than saying that the truth is the truth. Nor is truth more true because it comes in an unbroken series from the Apostles. The Nicene faith is not more true in the mouth of the Archbishop of Canterbury, than in that of a Moderator of the General Assembly. If our respect for the authority of the Church is to be only consequent upon our conviction of the truth of her doctrines, we come at once to that monstrous abuse, the Protestant exercise of private judgment. But if Mr. Gladstone means that we ought to believe that the Church
of England speaks the truth because she has the apostolical succession, we greatly doubt whether such a doctrine can be maintained. In the first place, what proof have we of the fact? We have, indeed, heard it said that Providence would certainly have interfered to preserve the apostolical succession in the true Church. But this is an argument fitted for understandings of a different kind from Mr. Gladstone's. He will hardly tell us that the Church of England is the true Church because she has the succession; and that she has the succession because she is the true Church.

What evidence, then, have we for the fact of the apostolical succession? And here we may easily defend the truth against Oxford with the same arguments with which, in old times, the truth was defended by Oxford against Rome. In this stage of our combat with Mr. Gladstone, we need few weapons except those which we find in the well-furnished and well-ordered armoury of Chillingworth.

The transmission of orders from the Apostles to an English clergyman of the present day must have been through a very great number of intermediate persons. Now, it is probable that no clergyman in the Church of England can trace up his spiritual genealogy from bishop to bishop so far back as the time of the Conquest. There remain many centuries during which the history of the transmission of his orders is buried in utter darkness. And whether he be a priest by succession from the Apostles depends on
the question, whether during that long period, some thousands of events took place, any one of which may, without any gross improbability, be supposed not to have taken place. We have not a tittle of evidence for any one of these events. We do not even know the names or countries of the men to whom it is taken for granted that these events happened. We do not know whether the spiritual ancestors of any one of our contemporaries were Spanish or Armenian, Arian or Orthodox. In the utter absence of all particular evidence, we are surely entitled to require that there should be very strong evidence indeed that the strictest regularity was observed in every generation, and that episcopal functions were exercised by none who were not bishops by succession from the Apostles. But we have no such evidence. In the first place, we have not full and accurate information touching the polity of the Church during the century which followed the persecution of Nero. That, during this period, the overseers of all the little Christian societies scattered through the Roman empire held their spiritual authority by virtue of holy orders derived from the Apostles, cannot be proved by contemporary testimony, or by any testimony which can be regarded as decisive. The question, whether the primitive ecclesiastical constitution bore a greater resemblance to the Anglican or to the Calvinistic model, has been fiercely disputed. It is a question on which men of eminent parts, learning, and piety have differed, and do to this day differ very widely. It is a question on which at least a full half of the ability and erudition of Protestant Europe has ever since the Reformation, been opposed to the Anglican pretensions. Mr. Gladstone himself, we are persuaded,
would have the candour to allow that, if no evidence were
admitted but that which is furnished by the genuine Christian
literature of the first two centuries, judgment would not go in
favour of prelacy. And if he looked at the subject as calmly as
he would look at a controversy respecting the Roman Comitia or
the Anglo-Saxon Witenagemote, he would probably think that the
absence of contemporary evidence during so long a period was a
defect which later attestations, however numerous, could but very
imperfectly supply. It is surely impolitic to rest the doctrines
of the English Church on a historical theory which, to ninety-nine Protestants out of a hundred, would seem much more
questionable than any of those doctrines. Nor is this all.
Extreme obscurity overhangs the history of the middle ages; and
the facts which are discernible through that obscurity prove that
the Church was exceedingly ill regulated. We read of sees of the
highest dignity openly sold, transferred backwards and forwards
by popular tumult, bestowed sometimes by a profligate woman on
her paramour, sometimes by a warlike baron on a kinsman still a
stripling. We read of bishops of ten years old, of bishops of
five years old, of many popes who were mere boys, and who
rivalled the frantic dissoluteness of Caligula, nay, of a female
pope. And though this last story, once believed throughout all
Europe, has been disproved by the strict researches of modern
criticism, the most discerning of those who reject it have
admitted that it is not intrinsically improbable. In our own
island, it was the complaint of Alfred that not a single priest
south of the Thames, and very few on the north, could read either
Latin or English. And this illiterate clergy exercised their
ministry amidst a rude and half-heathen population, in which
Danish pirates, unchristened, or christened by the hundred on a
field of battle, were mingled with a Saxon peasantry scarcely
better instructed in religion. The state of Ireland was still
worse. "Tota illa per universam Hiberniam dissolutio,
ecclesiasticae disciplinae, illa ubique pro consuetudine
Christiana saeva subintroducta barbaries," are the expressions of
St. Bernard. We are, therefore, at a loss to conceive how any
clergyman can feel confident that his orders have come down
correctly. Whether he be really a successor of the Apostles
depends on an immense number of such contingencies as these;
whether, under King Ethelwolf, a stupid priest might not, while
baptizing several scores of Danish prisoners who had just made
their option between the font and the gallows, inadvertently omit
to perform the rite on one of these graceless proselytes;
whether, in the seventh century, an impostor, who had never
received consecration, might not have passed himself off as a
bishop on a rude tribe of Scots; whether a lad of twelve did
really, by a ceremony huddled over when he was too drunk to know
what he was about, convey the episcopal character to a lad of
ten.

Since the first century, not less, in all probability, than a
hundred thousand persons have exercised the functions of bishops.
That many of these have not been bishops by apostolical
succession is quite certain. Hooker admits that deviations from
the general rule have been frequent, and with a boldness worthy
of his high and statesmanlike intellect, pronounces them to have been often justifiable. "There may be," says he, "sometimes very just and sufficient reason to allow ordination made without a bishop. Where the Church must needs have some ordained, and neither hath nor can have possibly a bishop to ordain, in case of such necessity the ordinary institution of God hath given oftentimes, and may give place. And therefore we are not simply without exception to urge a lineal descent of power from the Apostles by continued succession of bishops in every effectual ordination." There can be little doubt, we think, that the succession, if it ever existed, has often been interrupted in ways much less respectable. For example, let us suppose, and we are sure that no well-informed person will think the supposition by any means improbable, that, in the third century, a man of no principle and some parts, who has, in the course of a roving and discreditable life, been a catechumen at Antioch, and has there become familiar with Christian usages and doctrines afterwards rambles to Marseilles, where he finds a Christian society, rich, liberal, and simple-hearted. He pretends to be a Christian, attracts notice by his abilities and affected zeal, and is raised to the episcopal dignity without having ever been baptized. That such an event might happen, nay, was very likely to happen, cannot well be disputed by any one who has read the Life of Peregrinus. The very virtues, indeed, which distinguished the early Christians, seem to have laid them open to those arts which deceived
"Uriel, though Regent of the Sun, and held
The sharpest-sighted spirit of all in Heaven."

Now this unbaptized impostor is evidently no successor of the Apostles. He is not even a Christian; and all orders derived through such a pretended bishop are altogether invalid. Do we know enough of the state of the world and of the Church in the third century to be able to say with confidence that there were not at that time twenty such pretended bishops? Every such case makes a break in the apostolical succession.

Now, suppose that a break, such as Hooker admits to have been both common and justifiable, or such as we have supposed to be produced by hypocrisy and cupidity, were found in the chain which connected the Apostles with any of the missionaries who first spread Christianity in the wilder parts of Europe, who can say how extensive the effect of this single break may be? Suppose that St. Patrick, for example, if ever there was such a man, or Theodore of Tarsus, who is said to have consecrated in the seventh century the first bishops of many English sees, had not the true apostolical orders, is it not conceivable that such a circumstance may affect the orders of many clergymen now living? Even if it were possible, which it assuredly is not, to prove that the Church had the apostolical orders in the third century, it would be impossible to prove that those orders were not in the twelfth century so far lost that no ecclesiastic could be certain of the legitimate descent of his own spiritual character. And if
this were so, no subsequent precautions could repair the evil.

Chillingworth states the conclusion at which he had arrived on this subject in these very remarkable words: "That of ten thousand probables no one should be false; that of ten thousand requisites, whereof any one may fail, not one should be wanting, this to me is extremely improbable, and even cousin-german to impossible. So that the assurance hereof is like a machine composed of an innumerable multitude of pieces, of which it is strangely unlikely but some will be out of order; and yet, if any one be so, the whole fabric falls of necessity to the ground: and he that shall put them together, and maturely consider all the possible ways of lapsing and nullifying a priesthood in the Church of Rome, will be very inclined to think that it is a hundred to one, that among a hundred seeming priests, there is not one true one; nay, that it is not a thing very improbable that, amongst those many millions which make up the Romish hierarchy, there are not twenty true." We do not pretend to know to what precise extent the canonists of Oxford agree with those of Rome as to the circumstances which nullify orders. We will not, therefore, go so far as Chillingworth. We only say that we see no satisfactory proof of the fact, that the Church of England possesses the apostolical succession. And, after all, if Mr. Gladstone could prove the apostolical succession, what would the apostolical succession prove? He says that "we have among us the ordained hereditary witnesses of the truth, conveying it to us through an unbroken series from our Lord Jesus Christ and his
Apostles." Is this the fact? Is there any doubt that the orders of the Church of England are generally derived from the Church of Rome? Does not the Church of England declare, does not Mr. Gladstone himself admit, that the Church of Rome teaches much error and condemns much truth? And is it not quite clear, that as far as the doctrines of the Church of England differ from those of the Church of Rome, so far the Church of England conveys the truth through a broken series?

That the founders, lay and clerical, of the Church of England, corrected all that required correction in the doctrines of the Church of Rome, and nothing more, may be quite true. But we never can admit the circumstance that the Church of England possesses the apostolical succession as a proof that she is thus perfect. No stream can rise higher than its fountain. The succession of ministers in the Church of England, derived as it is through the Church of Rome, can never prove more for the Church of England than it proves for the Church of Rome. But this is not all. The Arian Churches which once predominated in the kingdoms of the Ostrogoths, the Visigoths, the Burgundians, the Vandals, and the Lombards, were all episcopal Churches, and all had a fairer claim than that of England to the apostolical succession, as being much nearer to the apostolical times. In the East, the Greek Church, which is at variance on points of faith with all the Western Churches, has an equal claim to this succession. The Nestorian, the Eutychian, the Jacobite Churches, all heretical, all condemned by councils, of which even Protestant divines have
generally spoken with respect, had an equal claim to the
apostolical succession. Now if, of teachers having apostolical
orders, a vast majority have taught much error, if a large
proportion have taught deadly heresy, if on the other hand, as
Mr. Gladstone himself admits, Churches not having apostolical
orders, that of Scotland for example, have been nearer to the
standard of orthodoxy than the majority of teachers who have had
apostolical orders, how can he possibly call upon us to submit
our private judgment to the authority of a Church on the ground
that she has these orders?

Mr. Gladstone dwells much on the importance of unity in doctrine.
Unity he tells us, is essential to truth. And this is most
unquestionable. But when he goes on to tell us that this unity is
the characteristic of the Church of England, that she is one in
body and in spirit, we are compelled to differ from him widely.
The apostolical succession she may or may not have. But unity she
most certainly has not, and never has had. It is a matter of
perfect notoriety, that her formularies are framed in such a
manner as to admit to her highest offices men who differ from
each other more widely than a very high Churchman differs from a
Catholic, or a very low Churchman from a Presbyterian; and that
the general leaning of the Church, with respect to some important
questions, has been sometimes one way and sometimes another.
Take, for example, the questions agitated between the Calvinists
and the Arminians. Do we find in the Church of England, with
respect to those questions, that unity which is essential to
truth? Was it ever found in the Church? Is it not certain that,
at the end of the sixteenth century, the rulers of the Church
held doctrines as Calvinistic as ever were held by any
Cameronian, and not only held them, but persecuted every body who
did not hold them? And is it not equally certain, that the rulers
of the Church have, in very recent times, considered Calvinism as
a disqualification for high preferment, if not for holy orders?
Look at the questions which Archbishop Whitgift propounded to
Barret, questions framed in the very spirit of William
Huntington, S. S. [One question was, whether God had from
eternity reprobated certain persons; and why? The answer which
contented the Archbishop was "Affirmative, et quia voluit." And
then look at the eighty-seven questions which Bishop Marsh,
within our own memory, propounded to candidates for ordination.
We should be loth to say that either of these celebrated prelates
had intruded himself into a Church whose doctrines he abhorred,
and that he deserved to be stripped of his gown. Yet it is quite
certain that one or other of them must have been very greatly in
error. John Wesley again, and Cowper's friend, John Newton, were
both Presbyters of this Church. Both were men of ability. Both we
believe to have been men of rigid integrity, men who would not
have subscribed a Confession of Faith which they disbelieved for
the richest bishopric in the empire. Yet, on the subject of
predestination, Newton was strongly attached to doctrines which
Wesley designated as "blasphemy, which might make the ears of a
Christian to tingle." Indeed it will not be disputed that the
clergy of the Established Church are divided as to these
questions, and that her formularies are not found practically to
exclude even scrupulously honest men of both sides from her altars. It is notorious that some of her most distinguished rulers think this latitude a good thing, and would be sorry to see it restricted in favour of either opinion. And herein we most cordially agree with them. But what becomes of the unity of the Church, and of that truth to which unity is essential? Mr. Gladstone tells us that the Regium Donum was given originally to orthodox Presbyterian ministers, but that part of it is now received by their heterodox successors. "This," he says, "serves to illustrate the difficulty in which governments entangle themselves, when they covenant with arbitrary systems of opinions, and not with the Church alone. The opinion passes away, but the gift remains." But is it not clear, that if a strong Supralapsarian had, under Whitgift's primacy, left a large estate at the disposal of the bishops for ecclesiastical purposes, in the hope that the rulers of the Church would abide by Whitgift's theology, he would really have been giving his substance for the support of doctrines which he detested? The opinion would have passed away, and the gift would have remained.

This is only a single instance. What wide differences of opinion respecting the operation of the sacraments are held by bishops, doctors, presbyters of the Church of England, all men who have conscientiously declared their assent to her articles, all men who are, according to Mr. Gladstone, ordained hereditary witnesses of the truth, all men whose voices make up what, he tells us, is the voice of true and reasonable authority! Here,
again, the Church has not unity; and as unity is the essential condition of truth, the Church has not the truth.

Nay, take the very question which we are discussing with Mr. Gladstone. To what extent does the Church of England allow of the right of private judgment? What degree of authority does she claim for herself in virtue of the apostolical succession of her ministers? Mr. Gladstone, a very able and a very honest man, takes a view of this matter widely differing from the view taken by others whom he will admit to be as able and as honest as himself. People who altogether dissent from him on this subject eat the bread of the Church, preach in her pulpits, dispense her sacraments, confer her orders, and carry on that apostolical succession, the nature and importance of which, according to him, they do not comprehend. Is this unity? Is this truth?

It will be observed that we are not putting cases of dishonest men who, for the sake of lucre, falsely pretend to believe in the doctrines of an establishment. We are putting cases of men as upright as ever lived, differing on theological questions of the highest importance and avowing that difference, are yet priests and prelates of the same church. We therefore say, that on some points which Mr. Gladstone himself thinks of vital importance, the Church has either not spoken at all, or, what is for all practical purposes the same thing, has not spoken in language to be understood even by honest and sagacious divines. The religion of the Church of England is so far from exhibiting that unity of
doctrine which Mr. Gladstone represents as her distinguishing
glory, that it is, in fact, a bundle of religious systems without
number. It comprises the religious system of Bishop Tomline, and
the religious system of John Newton, and all the religious
systems which lie between them. It comprises the religious system
of Mr. Newman, and the religious system of the Archbishop of
Dublin, and all the religious systems which lie between them. All
these different opinions are held, avowed, preached, printed,
within the pale of the Church, by men of unquestioned integrity
and understanding.

Do we make this diversity a topic of reproach to the Church of
England? Far from it. We would oppose with all our power every
attempt to narrow her basis? Would to God that, a hundred and
fifty years ago, a good king and a good primate had possessed the
power as well as the will to widen it! It was a noble
enterprise, worthy of William and of Tillotson. But what becomes
of all Mr. Gladstone's eloquent exhortations to unity? Is it not
mere mockery to attach so much importance to unity in form and
name, where there is so little in substance, to shudder at the
thought of two Churches in alliance with one State, and to endure
with patience the spectacle of a hundred sects battling within
one Church? And is it not clear that Mr. Gladstone is bound, on
all his own principles, to abandon the defence of a Church in
which unity is not found? Is it not clear that he is bound to
divide the House of Commons against every grant of money which
may be proposed for the clergy of the Established Church in the
colonies? He objects to the vote for Maynooth, because it is monstrous to pay one man to teach truth, and another to denounce that truth as falsehood. But it is a mere chance whether any sum which he votes for the English Church in any colony will go to the maintenance of an Arminian or a Calvinist, of a man like Mr. Froude, or of a man like Dr. Arnold. It is a mere chance, therefore, whether it will go to support a teacher of truth, or one who will denounce that truth as falsehood.

This argument seems to us at once to dispose of all that part of Mr. Gladstone's book which respects grants of public money to dissenting bodies. All such grants he condemns. But surely, if it be wrong to give the money of the public for the support of those who teach any false doctrine, it is wrong to give that money for the support of the ministers of the Established Church. For it is quite certain that, whether Calvin or Arminius be in the right, whether Laud or Burnet be in the right, a great deal of false doctrine is taught by the ministers of the Established Church. If it be said that the points on which the clergy of the Church of England differ ought to be passed over, for the sake of the many important points on which they agree, why may not the same argument be maintained with respect to the other sects which hold, in common with the Church of England, the fundamental doctrines of Christianity? The principle that a ruler is bound in conscience to propagate religious truth, and to propagate no religious doctrine which is untrue, is abandoned as soon as it is admitted that a gentleman of Mr. Gladstone's opinions may
lawfully vote the public money to a chaplain whose opinions are
those of Paley or of Simeon. The whole question then becomes one
degree. Of course no individual and no government can
justifiably propagate error for the sake of propagating error.
But both individuals and governments must work with such
machinery as they have; and no human machinery is to be found
which will impart truth without some alloy of error. We have
shown irrefragably, as we think, that the Church of England does
not afford such a machinery. The question then is this; with what
degree of imperfection in our machinery must we put up? And to
this question we do not see how any general answer can be given.
We must be guided by circumstances. It would, for example, be
very criminal in a Protestant to contribute to the sending of
Jesuit missionaries among a Protestant population. But we do not
conceive that a Protestant would be to blame for giving
assistance to Jesuit missionaries who might be engaged in
converting the Siamese to Christianity. That tares are mixed with
the wheat is matter of regret; but it is better that wheat and
tares should grow together than that the promise of the year
should be blighted.

Mr. Gladstone, we see with deep regret, censures the British
Government in India for distributing a small sum among the
Catholic priests who minister to the spiritual wants of our Irish
soldiers. Now, let us put a case to him. A Protestant gentleman
is attended by a Catholic servant, in a part of the country where
there is no Catholic congregation within many miles. The servant
is taken ill, and is given over. He desires, in great trouble of mind, to receive the last sacraments of his Church. His master sends off a messenger in a chaise and four, with orders to bring a confessor from a town at a considerable distance. Here a Protestant lays out money for the purpose of causing religious instruction and consolation to be given by a Catholic priest. Has he committed a sin? Has he not acted like a good master and a good Christian? Would Mr. Gladstone accuse him of "laxity of religious principle," of "confounding truth with falsehood," of "considering the support of religion as a boon to an individual, not as a homage to truth?" But how if this servant had, for the sake of his master, undertaken a journey which removed him from the place where he might easily have obtained religious attendance? How if his death were occasioned by a wound received in defending his master? Should we not then say that the master had only fulfilled a sacred obligation of duty? Now, Mr. Gladstone himself owns that "nobody can think that the personality of the State is more stringent, or entails stronger obligations, than that of the individual." How then stands the case of the Indian Government? Here is a poor fellow enlisted in Clare or Kerry, sent over fifteen thousand miles of sea, quartered in a depressing and pestilential climate. He fights for the Government; he conquers for it; he is wounded; he is laid on his pallet, withering away with fever, under that terrible sun, without a friend near him. He pines for the consolations of that religion which, neglected perhaps in the season of health and vigour, now comes back to his mind, associated with all the overpowering recollections of his earlier days, and of the home
which he is never to see again. And because the State for which he dies sends a priest of his own faith to stand at his bedside, and to tell him, in language which at once commands his love and confidence, of the common Father, of the common Redeemer, of the common hope of immortality, because the State for which he dies does not abandon him in his last moments to the care of heathen attendants, or employ a chaplain of a different creed to vex his departing spirit with a controversy about the Council of Trent, Mr. Gladstone finds that India presents "a melancholy picture," and that there is "a large allowance of false principle" in the system pursued there. Most earnestly do we hope that our remarks may induce Mr. Gladstone to reconsider this part of his work, and may prevent him from expressing in that high assembly, in which he must always be heard with attention, opinions so unworthy of his character.

We have now said almost all that we think it necessary to say respecting Mr. Gladstone's theory. And perhaps it would be safest for us to stop here. It is much easier to pull down than to build up. Yet, that we may give Mr. Gladstone his revenge, we will state concisely our own views respecting the alliance of Church and State.

We set out in company with Warburton, and remain with him pretty sociably till we come to his contract; a contract which Mr. Gladstone very properly designates as a fiction. We consider the primary end of Government as a purely temporal end, the
protection of the persons and property of men.

We think that Government, like every other contrivance of human wisdom, from the highest to the lowest, is likely to answer its main end best when it is constructed with a single view to that end. Mr. Gladstone, who loves Plato, will not quarrel with us for illustrating our proposition, after Plato's fashion, from the most familiar objects. Take cutlery, for example. A blade which is designed both to shave and to carve, will certainly not shave so well as a razor, or carve so well as a carving-knife. An academy of painting, which should also be a bank, would, in all probability, exhibit very bad pictures and discount very bad bills. A gas company, which should also be an infant school society, would, we apprehend, light the streets ill, and teach the children ill. On this principle, we think that Government should be organised solely with a view to its main end; and that no part of its efficiency for that end should be sacrificed in order to promote any other end however excellent.

But does it follow from hence that Governments ought never to pursue any end other than their main end? In no wise. Though it is desirable that every institution should have a main end, and should be so formed as to be in the highest degree efficient for that main end; yet if, without any sacrifice of its efficiency for that end, it can pursue any other good end, it ought to do so. Thus, the end for which a hospital is built is the relief of the sick, not the beautifying of the street. To sacrifice the
health of the sick to splendour of architectural effect, to place
the building in a bad air only that it may present a more
commanding front to a great public place, to make the wards
hotter or cooler than they ought to be, in order that the columns
and windows of the exterior may please the passers-by would be
monstrous. But if, without any sacrifice of the chief object, the
hospital can be made an ornament to the metropolis, it would be
absurd not to make it so.

In the same manner, if a Government can, without any sacrifice of
its main end, promote any other good work, it ought to do so. The
encouragement of the fine arts, for example, is by no means the
main end of Government; and it would be absurd, in constituting a
Government, to bestow a thought on the question, whether it would
be a Government likely to train Raphaels or Domenichinos. But it
by no means follows that it is improper for a Government to form
a national gallery of pictures. The same may be said of patronage
bestowed on learned men, of the publication of archives, of the
collecting of libraries, menageries, plants, fossils, antiques,
of journeys and voyages for purposes of geographical discovery or
astronomical observation. It is not for these ends that
Government is constituted. But it may well happen that a
Government may have at its command resources which will enable
it, without any injury to its main end, to pursue these
collateral ends far more effectually than any individual or any
voluntary association could do. If so, Government ought to pursue
these collateral ends.
It is still more evidently the duty of Government to promote,
always in subordination to its main end, everything which is
useful as a means for the attaining of that main end. The
improvement of steam navigation, for example, is by no means a
primary object of Government. But as steam vessels are useful for
the purpose of national defence, and for the purpose of
facilitating intercourse between distant provinces, and of
thereby consolidating the force of the empire, it may be the
bounden duty of Government to encourage ingenious men to perfect
an invention which so directly tends to make the State more
efficient for its great primary end.

Now on both these grounds, the instruction of the people may with
propriety engage the care of the Government. That the people
should be well educated, is in itself a good thing; and the State
ought therefore to promote this object, if it can do so without
any sacrifice of its primary object. The education of the people,
conducted on those principles of morality which are common to all
the forms of Christianity, is highly valuable as a means of
promoting the main object for which Government exists, and is on
this ground well deserving the attention of rulers. We will not
at present go into the general question of education; but will
confine our remarks to the subject which is more immediately
before us, namely, the religious instruction of the people.
We may illustrate our view of the policy which Governments ought
to pursue with respect to religious instruction, by recurring to
the analogy of a hospital. Religious instruction is not the main
end for which a hospital is built; and to introduce into a
hospital any regulations prejudicial to the health of the
patients, on the plea of promoting their spiritual improvement,
to send a ranting preacher to a man who has just been ordered by
the physician to lie quiet and try to get a little sleep, to
impose a strict observance of Lent on a convalescent who has been
advised to eat heartily of nourishing food, to direct, as the
bigoted Pius the Fifth actually did, that no medical assistance
should be given to any person who declined spiritual attendance,
would be the most extravagant folly. Yet it by no means follows
that it would not be right to have a chaplain to attend the sick,
and to pay such a chaplain out of the hospital funds. Whether it
will be proper to have such a chaplain at all, and of what
religious persuasion such a chaplain ought to be, must depend on
circumstances. There may be a town in which it would be
impossible to set up a good hospital without the help of people
of different opinions: and religious parties may run so high
that, though people of different opinions are willing to
contribute for the relief of the sick, they will not concur in
the choice of any one chaplain. The High Churchmen insist that,
if there is a paid chaplain, he shall be a High Churchman. The
Evangelicals stickle for an Evangelical. Here it would evidently
be absurd and cruel to let an useful and humane design, about
which we are all agreed, fall to the ground, because all cannot
agree about something else. The governors must either appoint two
chaplains and pay them both; or they must appoint none; and every
one of them must, in his individual capacity, do what he can for
the purpose of providing the sick with such religious instruction
and consolation as will, in his opinion, be most useful to them.

We should say the same of Government. Government is not an
institution for the propagation of religion, any more than St.
George's Hospital is an institution for the propagation of
religion: and the most absurd and pernicious consequences would
follow, if Government should pursue, as its primary end, that
which can never be more than its secondary end, though
intrinsically more important than its primary end. But a
Government which considers the religious instruction of the
people as a secondary end, and follows out that principle
faithfully, will, we think, be likely to do much good and little
harm.

We will rapidly run over some of the consequences to which this
principle leads, and point out how it solves some problems which,
on Mr. Gladstone's hypothesis, admit of no satisfactory solution.

All persecution directed against the persons or property of men
is, on our principle, obviously indefensible. For, the protection
of the persons and property of men being the primary end of
Government and religious instruction only a secondary end, to
secure the people from heresy by making their lives, their limbs,
or their estates insecure, would be to sacrifice the primary end to the secondary end. It would be as absurd as it would be in the governors of a hospital to direct that the wounds of all Arian and Socinian patients should be dressed in such a way as to make them fester.

Again, on our principles, all civil disabilities on account of religious opinions are indefensible. For all such disabilities make Government less efficient for its main end: they limit its choice of able men for the administration and defence of the State; they alienate from it the hearts of the sufferers; they deprive it of a part of its effective strength in all contests with foreign nations. Such a course is as absurd as it would be in the governors of a hospital to reject an able surgeon because he is an Universal Restitutionist, and to send a bungler to operate because he is perfectly orthodox.

Again, on our principles, no Government ought to press on the people religious instruction, however sound, in such a manner as to excite among them discontents dangerous to public order. For here again Government would sacrifice its primary end to an end intrinsically indeed of the highest importance, but still only a secondary end of Government, as Government. This rule at once disposes of the difficulty about India, a difficulty of which Mr. Gladstone can get rid only by putting in an imaginary discharge in order to set aside an imaginary obligation. There is assuredly no country where it is more desirable that Christianity should be
propagated. But there is no country in which the Government is so completely disqualified for the task. By using our power in order to make proselytes, we should produce the dissolution of society, and bring utter ruin on all those interests for the protection of which Government exists. Here the secondary end is, at present, inconsistent with the primary end, and must therefore be abandoned. Christian instruction given by individuals and voluntary societies may do much good. Given by the Government it would do unmixed harm. At the same time, we quite agree with Mr. Gladstone in thinking that the English authorities in India ought not to participate in any idolatrous rite; and indeed we are fully satisfied that all such participation is not only unchristian, but also unwise and most undignified.

Supposing the circumstances of a country to be such, that the Government may with propriety, on our principles, give religious instruction to a people; we have next to inquire, what religion shall be taught. Bishop Warburton answers, the religion of the majority. And we so far agree with him, that we can scarcely conceive any circumstances in which it would be proper to establish, as the one exclusive religion of the State, the religion of the minority. Such a preference could hardly be given without exciting most serious discontent, and endangering those interests, the protection of which is the first object of Government. But we never can admit that a ruler can be justified in helping to spread a system of opinions solely because that system is pleasing to the majority. On the other hand, we cannot
agree with Mr. Gladstone, who would of course answer that the only religion which a ruler ought to propagate is the religion of his own conscience. In truth, this is an impossibility. And as we have shown, Mr. Gladstone himself, whenever he supports a grant of money to the Church of England, is really assisting to propagate not the precise religion of his own conscience, but some one or more, he knows not how many or which, of the innumerable religions which lie between the confines of Pelagianism and those of Antinomianism, and between the confines of Popery and those of Presbyterianism. In our opinion, that religious instruction which the ruler ought, in his public capacity, to patronise, is the instruction from which he, in his conscience, believes that the people will learn most good with the smallest mixture of evil. And thus it is not necessarily his own religion that he will select. He will, of course, believe that his own religion is unmixedly good. But the question which he has to consider is, not how much good his religion contains, but how much good the people will learn, if instruction is given them in that religion. He may prefer the doctrines and government of the Church of England to those of the Church of Scotland. But if he knows that a Scotch congregation will listen with deep attention and respect while an Erskine or a Chalmers sets before them the fundamental doctrines of Christianity, and that a glimpse of a surplice or a single line of a liturgy would be the signal for hooting and riot and would probably bring stools and brickbats about the ears of the minister, he acts wisely if he conveys religious knowledge to the Scotch rather by means of that imperfect Church, as he may think it, from which they will learn
much, than by means of that perfect Church from which they will learn nothing. The only end of teaching is, that men may learn; and it is idle to talk of the duty of teaching truth in ways which only cause men to cling more firmly to falsehood.

On these principles we conceive that a statesman, who might be far indeed from regarding the Church of England with the reverence which Mr. Gladstone feels for her, might yet firmly oppose all attempts to destroy her. Such a statesman may be too well acquainted with her origin to look upon her with superstitious awe. He may know that she sprang from a compromise huddled up between the eager zeal of reformers and the selfishness of greedy, ambitious, and time-serving politicians. He may find in every page of her annals ample cause for censure. He may feel that he could not, with ease to his conscience, subscribe all her articles. He may regret that all the attempts which have been made to open her gates to large classes of nonconformists should have failed. Her episcopal polity he may consider as of purely human institution. He cannot defend her on the ground that she possesses the apostolical succession; for he does not know whether that succession may not be altogether a fable. He cannot defend her on the ground of her unity; for he knows that her frontier sects are much more remote from each other, than one frontier is from the Church of Rome, or the other from the Church of Geneva. But he may think that she teaches more truth with less alloy of error than would be taught by those who, if she were swept away, would occupy the vacant space. He may
think that the effect produced by her beautiful services and by her pulpits on the national mind, is, on the whole, highly beneficial. He may think that her civilising influence is usefully felt in remote districts. He may think that, if she were destroyed, a large portion of those who now compose her congregations would neglect all religious duties, and that a still larger portion would fall under the influence of spiritual mountebanks, hungry for gain, or drunk with fanaticism. While he would with pleasure admit that all the qualities of Christian pastors are to be found in large measure within the existing body of Dissenting ministers, he would perhaps be inclined to think that the standard of intellectual and moral character among that exemplary class of men may have been raised to its present high point and maintained there by the indirect influence of the Establishment. And he may be by no means satisfied that, if the Church were at once swept away, the place of our Sumners and Whatelys would be supplied by Doddridges and Halls. He may think that the advantages which we have described are obtained, or might, if the existing system were slightly modified, be obtained, without any sacrifice of the paramount objects which all Governments ought to have chiefly in view. Nay, he may be of opinion that an institution, so deeply fixed in the hearts and minds of millions, could not be subverted without loosening and shaking all the foundations of civil society. With at least equal ease he would find reasons for supporting the Church of Scotland. Nor would he be under the necessity of resorting to any contract to justify the connection of two religious establishments with one Government. He would think scruples on that head frivolous in
any person who is zealous for a Church, of which both Dr. Herbert Marsh and Dr. Daniel Wilson have been bishops. Indeed he would gladly follow out his principles much further. He would have been willing to vote in 1825 for Lord Francis Egerton's resolution, that it is expedient to give a public maintenance to the Catholic clergy of Ireland: and he would deeply regret that no such measure was adopted in 1829.

In this way, we conceive, a statesman might on our principles satisfy himself that it would be in the highest degree inexpedient to abolish the Church, either of England or of Scotland.

But if there were, in any part of the world, a national Church regarded as heretical by four-fifths of the nation committed to its care, a Church established and maintained by the sword, a Church producing twice as many riots as conversions, a Church which, though possessing great wealth and power, and though long backed by persecuting laws, had, in the course of many generations, been found unable to propagate its doctrines, and barely able to maintain its ground, a Church so odious, that fraud and violence, when used against its clear rights of property, were generally regarded as fair play, a Church, whose ministers were preaching to desolate walls, and with difficulty obtaining their lawful subsistence by the help of bayonets, such a Church, on our principles, could not, we must own, be defended. We should say that the State which allied itself with such a
Church postponed the primary end of Government to the secondary: and that the consequences had been such as any sagacious observer would have predicted. Neither the primary nor the secondary end is attained. The temporal and spiritual interests of the people suffer alike. The minds of men, instead of being drawn to the Church, are alienated from the State. The magistrate, after sacrificing order, peace, union, all the interests which it is his first duty to protect, for the purpose of promoting pure religion, is forced, after the experience of centuries, to admit that he has really been promoting error. The sounder the doctrines of such a Church, the more absurd and noxious the superstition by which those doctrines are opposed, the stronger are the arguments against the policy which has deprived a good cause of its natural advantages. Those who preach to rulers the duty of employing power to propagate truth would do well to remember that falsehood, though no match for truth alone, has often been found more than a match for truth and power together.

A statesman, judging on our principles, would pronounce without hesitation that a Church, such as we have last described, never ought to have been set up. Further than this we will not venture to speak for him. He would doubtless remember that the world is full of institutions which, though they never ought to have been set up, yet, having been set up, ought not to be rudely pulled down; and that it is often wise in practice to be content with the mitigation of an abuse which, looking at it in the abstract, we might feel impatient to destroy.
We have done; and nothing remains but that we part from Mr. Gladstone with the courtesy of antagonists who bear no malice. We dissent from his opinions, but we admire his talents; we respect his integrity and benevolence; and we hope that he will not suffer political avocations so entirely to engross him, as to leave him no leisure for literature and philosophy.

FRANCIS BACON

(July 1837)


WE return our hearty thanks to Mr. Montagu. for this truly valuable work. From the opinions which he expresses as a biographer we often dissent. But about his merit as a collector of the materials out of which opinions are formed, there can be no dispute; and we readily acknowledge that we are in a great measure indebted to his minute and accurate researches for the means of refuting what we cannot but consider as his errors.

The labour which has been bestowed on this volume has been a labour of love. The writer is evidently enamoured of the subject.
It fills his heart. It constantly overflows from his lips and his pen. Those who are acquainted with the Courts in which Mr. Montagu practises with so much ability and success well know how often he enlivens the discussion of a point of law by citing some weighty aphorism, or some brilliant illustration, from the De Augmentis or the Novum Organum. The Life before us doubtless owes much of its value to the honest and generous enthusiasm of the writer. This feeling has stimulated his activity, has sustained his perseverance, has called forth all his ingenuity and eloquence; but, on the other hand, we must frankly say that it has, to a great extent, perverted his judgment.

We are by no means without sympathy for Mr. Montagu even in what we consider as his weakness. There is scarcely any delusion which has a better claim to be indulgently treated than that under the influence of which a man ascribes every moral excellence to those who have left imperishable monuments of their genius. The causes of this error lie deep in the inmost recesses of human nature. We are all inclined to judge of others as we find them. Our estimate of a character always depends much on the manner in which that character affects our own interests and passions. We find it difficult to think well of those by whom we are thwarted or depressed; and we are ready to admit every excuse for the vices of those who are useful or agreeable to us. This is, we believe, one of those illusions to which the whole human race is subject, and which experience and reflection can only partially remove. It is, in the phraseology of Bacon, one of the idola tribus. Hence
it is that the moral character of a man eminent in letters or in
the fine arts is treated, often by contemporaries, almost always
by posterity, with extraordinary tenderness. The world derives
pleasure and advantage from the performances of such a man. The
number of those who suffer by his personal vices is small, even
in his own time, when compared with the number of those to whom
his talents are a source of gratification. In a few years all
those whom he has injured disappear. But his works remain, and
are a source of delight to millions. The genius of Sallust is
still with us. But the Numidians whom he plundered, and the
unfortunate husbands who caught him in their houses at
unseasonable hours, are forgotten. We suffer ourselves to be
delighted by the keenness of Clarendon's observation, and by the
sober majesty of his style, till we forget the oppressor and the
bigot in the historian. Falstaff and Tom Jones have survived the
gamekeepers whom Shakspeare cudgelled and the landladies whom
Fielding bilked. A great writer is the friend and benefactor of
his readers; and they cannot but judge of him under the deluding
influence of friendship and gratitude. We all know how unwilling
we are to admit the truth of any disgraceful story about a person
whose society we like, and from whom we have received favours;
how long we struggle against evidence, how fondly, when the facts
cannot be disputed, we cling to the hope that there may be some
explanation or some extenuating circumstance with which we are
unacquainted. Just such is the feeling which a man of liberal
education naturally entertains towards the great minds of former
ages. The debt which he owes to them is incalculable. They have
guided him to truth. They have filled his mind with noble and
graceful images. They have stood by him in all vicissitudes, comforters in sorrow, nurses in sickness, companions in solitude. These friendships are exposed to no danger from the occurrences by which other attachments are weakened or dissolved. Time glides on; fortune is inconstant; tempers are soured; bonds which seemed indissoluble are daily sundered by interest, by emulation, or by caprice. But no such cause can affect the silent converse which we hold with the highest of human intellects. That placid intercourse is disturbed by no jealousies or resentments. These are the old friends who are never seen with new faces, who are the same in wealth and in poverty, in glory and in obscurity. With the dead there is no rivalry. In the dead there is no change. Plato is never sullen. Cervantes is never petulant. Demosthenes never comes unseasonably. Dante never stays too long. No difference of political opinion can alienate Cicero. No heresy can excite the horror of Bossuet.

Nothing, then, can be more natural than that a person endowed with sensibility and imagination should entertain a respectful and affectionate feeling towards those great men with whose minds he holds daily communion. Yet nothing can be more certain than that such men have not always deserved to be regarded with respect or affection. Some writers, whose works will continue to instruct and delight mankind to the remotest ages, have been placed in such situations that their actions and motives are as well known to us as the actions and motives of one human being can be known to another; and unhappily their conduct has not
always been such as an impartial judge can contemplate with approbation. But the fanaticism of the devout worshipper of genius is proof against all evidence and all argument. The character of his idol is matter of faith; and the province of faith is not to be invaded by reason. He maintains his superstition with a credulity as boundless, and a zeal as unscrupulous, as can be found in the most ardent partisans of religious or political factions. The most decisive proofs are rejected; the plainest rules of morality are explained away; extensive and important portions of history are completely distorted. The enthusiast misrepresents facts with all the effrontery of an advocate, and confounds right and wrong with all the dexterity of a Jesuit; and all this only in order that some man who has been in his grave during many ages may have a fairer character than he deserves.

Middleton's Life of Cicero is a striking instance of the influence of this sort of partiality. Never was there a character which it was easier to read than that of Cicero. Never was there a mind keener or more critical than that of Middleton. Had the biographer brought to the examination of his favourite statesman's conduct but a very small part of the acuteness and severity which he displayed when he was engaged in investigating the high pretensions of Epiphanius and Justin Martyr, he could not have failed to produce a most valuable history of a most interesting portion of time. But this most ingenious and learned man, though
"So wary held and wise
That, as 'twas said, he scarce received
For gospel what the church believed,"

had a superstition of his own. The great Iconoclast was himself an idolater. The great Avvocato del Diavolo, while he disputed, with no small ability, the claims of Cyprian and Athanasius to a place in the Calendar, was himself composing a lying legend in honour of St. Tully. He was holding up as a model of every virtue a man whose talents and acquirements, indeed, can never be too highly extolled, and who was by no means destitute of amiable qualities, but whose whole soul was under the dominion of a girlish vanity and a craven fear. Actions for which Cicero himself, the most eloquent and skilful of advocates, could contrive no excuse, actions which in his confidential correspondence he mentioned with remorse and shame, are represented by his biographer as wise, virtuous, heroic. The whole history of that great revolution which overthrew the Roman aristocracy, the whole state of parties, the character of every public man, is elaborately misrepresented, in order to make out something which may look like a defence of one most eloquent and accomplished trimmer.

The volume before us reminds us now and then of the Life of Cicero. But there is this marked difference. Dr. Middleton
evidently had an uneasy consciousness of the weakness of his cause, and therefore resorted to the most disingenuous shifts, to unpardonable distortions and suppressions of facts. Mr. Montagu's faith is sincere and implicit. He practises no trickery. He conceals nothing. He puts the facts before us in the full confidence that they will produce on our minds the effect which they have produced on his own. It is not till he comes to reason from facts to motives that his partiality shows itself; and then he leaves Middleton himself far behind. His work proceeds on the assumption that Bacon was an eminently virtuous man. From the tree Mr. Montagu judges of the fruit. He is forced to relate many actions which, if any man but Bacon had committed them, nobody would have dreamed of defending, actions which are readily and completely explained by supposing Bacon to have been a man whose principles were not strict, and whose spirit was not high, actions which can be explained in no other way without resorting to some grotesque hypothesis for which there is not a tittle of evidence. But any hypothesis is, in Mr. Montagu's opinion, more probable than that his hero should ever have done anything very wrong.

This mode of defending Bacon seems to us by no means Baconian. To take a man's character for granted, and then from his character to infer the moral quality of all his actions, is surely a process the very reverse of that which is recommended in the Novum Organum. Nothing, we are sure, could have led Mr. Montagu to depart so far from his master's precepts, except zeal for his
master's honour. We shall follow a different course. We shall attempt, with the valuable assistance which Mr. Montagu has afforded us, to frame such an account of Bacon's life as may enable our readers correctly to estimate his character.

It is hardly necessary to say that Francis Bacon was the son of Sir Nicholas Bacon, who held the great seal of England during the first twenty years of the reign of Elizabeth. The fame of the father has been thrown into shade by that of the son. But Sir Nicholas was no ordinary man. He belonged to a set of men whom it is easier to describe collectively than separately, whose minds were formed by one system of discipline, who belonged to one rank in society, to one university, to one party, to one sect, to one administration, and who resembled each other so much in talents, in opinions, in habits, in fortunes, that one character, we had almost said one life, may, to a considerable extent, serve for them all.

They were the first generation of statesmen by profession that England produced. Before their time the division of labour had, in this respect, been very imperfect. Those who had directed public affairs had been, with few exceptions, warriors or priests; warriors whose rude courage was neither guided by science nor softened by humanity, priests whose learning and abilities were habitually devoted to the defence of tyranny and imposture. The Hotspurs, the Nevilles, the Cliffords, rough, illiterate, and unreflecting, brought to the council-board the
fierce and imperious disposition which they had acquired amidst
the tumult of predatory war, or in the gloomy repose of the
garrisoned and moated castle. On the other side was the calm and
subtle prelate, versed in all that was then considered as
learning, trained in the Schools to manage words, and in the
confessional to manage hearts, seldom superstitious, but skilful
in practising on the superstition of others; false, as it was
natural that a man should be whose profession imposed on all who
were not saints the necessity of being hypocrites; selfish, as it
was natural that a man should be who could form no domestic ties
and cherish no hope of legitimate posterity, more attached to his
order than to his country, and guiding the politics of England
with a constant side-glance at Rome.

But the increase of wealth, the progress of knowledge, and the
reformation of religion produced a great change. The nobles
ceased to be military chieftains; the priests ceased to possess a
monopoly of learning; and a new and remarkable species of
politicians appeared.

These men came from neither of the classes which had, till then,
almost exclusively furnished ministers of state. They were all
laymen; yet they were all men of learning; and they were all men
of peace. They were not members of the aristocracy. They
inherited no titles, no large domains, no armies of retainers, no
fortified castles. Yet they were not low men, such as those whom
princes, jealous of the power of a nobility, have sometimes
raised from forges and cobblers' stalls to the highest
situations. They were all gentlemen by birth. They had all
received a liberal education. It is a remarkable fact that they
were all members of the same university. The two great national
seats of learning had even then acquired the characters which
they still retain. In intellectual activity, and in readiness to
admit improvements, the superiority was then, as it has ever
since been, on the side of the less ancient and splendid
institution. Cambridge had the honour of educating those
celebrated Protestant Bishops whom Oxford had the honour of
burning; and at Cambridge were formed the minds of all those
statesmen to whom chiefly is to be attributed the secure
establishment of the reformed religion in the north of Europe.

The statesmen of whom we speak passed their youth surrounded by
the incessant din of theological controversy. Opinions were still
in a state of chaotic anarchy, intermingling, separating,
advancing, receding. Sometimes the stubborn bigotry of the
Conservatives seemed likely to prevail. Then the impetuous onset
of the Reformers for a moment carried all before it. Then again
the resisting mass made a desperate stand, arrested the movement,
and forced it slowly back. The vacillation which at that time
appeared in English legislation, and which it has been the
fashion to attribute to the caprice and to the power of one or
two individuals, was truly a national vacillation. It was not
only in the mind of Henry that the new theology obtained the
ascendant one day, and that the lessons of the nurse and of the
priest regained their influence on the morrow. It was not only in the House of Tudor that the husband was exasperated by the opposition of the wife, that the son dissented from the opinions of the father, that the brother persecuted the sister, that one sister persecuted another. The principles of Conservation and Reform carried on their warfare in every part of society, in every congregation, in every school of learning, round the hearth of every private family, in the recesses of every reflecting mind.

It was in the midst of this ferment that the minds of the persons whom we are describing were developed. They were born Reformers. They belonged by nature to that order of men who always form the front ranks in the great intellectual progress. They were therefore, one and all, Protestants. In religious matters, however, though there is no reason to doubt that they were sincere, they were by no means zealous. None of them chose to run the smallest personal risk during the reign of Mary. None of them favoured the unhappy attempt of Northumberland in favour of his daughter-in-law. None of them shared in the desperate councils of Wyatt. They contrived to have business on the Continent; or, if they staid in England, they heard mass and kept Lent with great decorum. When those dark and perilous years had gone by, and when the Crown had descended to a new sovereign, they took the lead in the reformation of the Church. But they proceeded, not with the impetuosity of theologians, but with the calm determination of statesmen. They acted, not like men who considered the Romish
worship as a system too offensive to God, and too destructive of souls, to be tolerated for an hour, but like men who regarded the points in dispute among Christians as in themselves unimportant, and who were not restrained by any scruple of conscience from professing, as they had before professed, the Catholic faith of Mary, the Protestant faith of Edward, or any of the numerous intermediate combinations which the caprice of Henry and the servile policy of Cranmer had formed out of the doctrines of both the hostile parties. They took a deliberate view of the state of their own country and of the Continent: they satisfied themselves as to the leaning of the public mind; and they chose their side. They placed themselves at the head of the Protestants of Europe, and staked all their fame and fortunes on the success of their party.

It is needless to relate how dexterously, how resolutely, how gloriously they directed the politics of England during the eventful years which followed, how they succeeded in uniting their friends and separating their enemies, how they humbled the pride of Philip, how they backed the unconquerable spirit of Coligny, how they rescued Holland from tyranny, how they founded the maritime greatness of their country, how they outwitted the artful politicians of Italy, and tamed the ferocious chieftains of Scotland. It is impossible to deny that they committed many acts which would justly bring on a statesman of our time censures of the most serious kind. But, when we consider the state of morality in their age, and the unscrupulous character of the
adversaries against whom they had to contend, we are forced to admit that it is not without reason that their names are still held in veneration by their countrymen.

There were, doubtless, many diversities in their intellectual and moral character. But there was a strong family likeness. The constitution of their minds was remarkably sound. No particular faculty was pre-eminently developed; but manly health and vigour were equally diffused through the whole. They were men of letters. Their minds were by nature and by exercise well fashioned for speculative pursuits. It was by circumstances, rather than by any strong bias of inclination, that they were led to take a prominent part in active life. In active life, however, no men could be more perfectly free from the faults of mere theorists and pedants. No men observed more accurately the signs of the times. No men had a greater practical acquaintance with human nature. Their policy was generally characterised rather by vigilance, by moderation, and by firmness, than by invention, or by the spirit of enterprise.

They spoke and wrote in a manner worthy of their excellent sense. Their eloquence was less copious and less ingenious, but far purer and more manly than that of the succeeding generation. It was the eloquence of men who had lived with the first translators of the Bible, and with the authors of the Book of Common Prayer. It was luminous, dignified, solid, and very slightly tainted with that affectation which deformed the style of the ablest men of
the next age. If, as sometimes chanced, these politicians were
under the necessity of taking a part in the theological
controversies on which the dearest interests of kingdoms were
then staked, they acquitted themselves as if their whole lives
had been passed in the Schools and the Convocation.

There was something in the temper of these celebrated men which
secured them against the proverbial inconstancy both of the Court
and of the multitude. No intrigue, no combination of rivals,
could deprive them of the confidence of their Sovereign. No
parliament attacked their influence. No mob coupled their names
with any odious grievance. Their power ended only with their
lives. In this respect, their fate presents a most remarkable
contrast to that of the enterprising and brilliant politicians of
the preceding and of the succeeding generation. Burleigh was
Minister during forty years. Sir Nicholas Bacon held the great
seal more than twenty years. Sir Walter Mildmay was Chancellor
of the Exchequer twenty-three years. Sir Thomas Smith was
Secretary of State eighteen years; Sir Francis Walsingham about
as long. They all died in office, and in the enjoyment of public
respect and royal favour. Far different had been the fate of
Wolsey, Cromwell, Norfolk, Somerset, and Northumberland. Far
different also was the fate of Essex, of Raleigh, and of the
still more illustrious man whose life we propose to consider.

The explanation of this circumstance is perhaps contained in the
motto which Sir Nicholas Bacon inscribed over the entrance of his
hall at Gorhambury, Mediocra firma. This maxim was constantly borne in mind by himself and his colleagues. They were more solicitous to lay the foundations of their power deep than to raise the structure to a conspicuous but insecure height. None of them aspired to be sole Minister. None of them provoked envy by an ostentatious display of wealth and influence. None of them affected to outshine the ancient aristocracy of the kingdom. They were free from that childish love of titles which characterised the successful courtiers of the generation which preceded them and of that which followed them. Only one of those whom we have named was made a peer; and he was content with the lowest degree of the peerage. As to money, none of them could, in that age, justly be considered as rapacious. Some of them would, even in our time, deserve the praise of eminent disinterestedness. Their fidelity to the State was incorruptible. Their private morals were without stain. Their households were sober and well governed.

Among these statesmen Sir Nicholas Bacon was generally considered as ranking next to Burleigh. He was called by Camden "Sacris concilliis alterum columen"; and by George Buchanan,

"diu Britannici Regni secundum column."
Anne, one of the daughters of Sir Anthony Cooke, a man of distinguished learning who had been tutor to Edward the Sixth. Sir Anthony had paid considerable attention to the education of his daughters, and lived to see them all splendidly and happily married. Their classical acquirements made them conspicuous even among the women of fashion of that age. Katherine, who became Lady Killigrew, wrote Latin Hexameters and Pentameters which would appear with credit in the Musae Etonenses. Mildred, the wife of Lord Burleigh, was described by Roger Ascham as the best Greek scholar among the young women of England, Lady Jane Grey always excepted. Anne, the mother of Francis Bacon, was distinguished both as a linguist and as a theologian. She corresponded in Greek with Bishop Jewel, and translated his Apologia from the Latin, so correctly that neither he nor Archbishop Parker could suggest a single alteration. She also translated a series of sermons on fate and free-will from the Tuscan of Bernardo Ochino. This fact is the more curious, because Ochino was one of that small and audacious band of Italian reformers, anathematised alike by Wittenberg, by Geneva, by Zurich, and by Rome, from which the Socinian sect deduces its origin.

Lady Bacon was doubtless a lady of highly cultivated mind after the fashion of her age. But we must not suffer ourselves to be deluded into the belief that she and her sisters were more accomplished women than many who are now living. On this subject there is, we think, much misapprehension. We have often heard men
who wish, as almost all men of sense wish, that women should be highly educated, speak with rapture of the English ladies of the sixteenth century, and lament that they can find no modern damsel resembling those fair pupils of Ascham and Aylmer who compared, over their embroidery, the styles of Isocrates and Lysias, and who, while the horns were sounding, and the dogs in full cry, sat in the lonely oriel, with eyes riveted to that immortal page which tells how meekly and bravely the first great martyr of intellectual liberty took the cup from his weeping gaoler. But surely these complaints have very little foundation. We would by no means disparage the ladies of the sixteenth century or their pursuits. But we conceive that those who extol them at the expense of the women of our time forget one very obvious and very important circumstance. In the time of Henry the Eighth and Edward the Sixth, a person who did not read Greek and Latin could read nothing, or next to nothing. The Italian was the only modern language which possessed anything that could be called a literature. All the valuable books then extant in all the vernacular dialects of Europe would hardly have filled a single shelf, England did not yet possess Shakspeare's plays and the Fairy Queen, nor France Montaigne's Essays, nor Spain Don Quixote. In looking round a well-furnished library, how many English or French books can we find which were extant when Lady Jane Grey and Queen Elizabeth received their education? Chaucer, Gower, Froissart, Commines, Rabelais, nearly complete the list. It was therefore absolutely necessary that a woman should be uneducated or classically educated. Indeed, without a knowledge of one of the ancient languages no person could then have any
clear notion of what was passing in the political, the literary, or the religious world. The Latin was in the sixteenth century all and more than all that the French was in the eighteenth. It was the language of courts as well as of the schools. It was the language of diplomacy; it was the language of theological and political controversy. Being a fixed language, while the living languages were in a state of fluctuation, and being universally known to the learned and the polite, it was employed by almost every writer who aspired to a wide and durable reputation. A person who was ignorant of it was shut out from all acquaintance, not merely with Cicero and Virgil, not merely with heavy treatises on canon-law and school divinity, but with the most interesting memoirs, state papers, and pamphlets of his own time, nay even with the most admired poetry and the most popular squibs which appeared on the fleeting topics of the day, with Buchanan's complimentary verses, with Erasmus's dialogues, with Hutten's epistles.

This is no longer the case. All political and religious controversy is now conducted in the modern languages. The ancient tongues are used only in comments on the ancient writers. The great productions of Athenian and Roman genius are indeed still what they were. But though their positive value is unchanged, their relative value, when compared with the whole mass of mental wealth possessed by mankind, has been constantly falling. They were the intellectual all of our ancestors. They are but a part of our treasures. Over what tragedy could Lady Jane Grey have
wept, over what comedy could she have smiled, if the ancient
dramatists had not been in her library? A modern reader can make
shift without Oedipus and Medea, while he possesses Othello and
Hamlet. If he knows nothing of Pyrgopolynices and Thraso, he is
familiar with Bobadil, and Bessus, and Pistol, and Parolles. If
he cannot enjoy the delicious irony of Plato, he may find some
compensation in that of Pascal. If he is shut out from
Nephelococcygia, he may take refuge in Lilliput. We are guilty,
we hope, of no irreverence towards those great nations to which
the human race owes art, science, taste, civil and intellectual
freedom, when we say, that the stock bequeathed by them to us has
been so carefully improved that the accumulated interest now
exceeds the principal. We believe that the books which have been
written in the languages of western Europe, during the last two
hundred and fifty years,—translations from the ancient languages
of course included,—are of greater value than all the books
which at the beginning of that period were extant in the world.
With the modern languages of Europe English women are at least as
well acquainted as English men. When, therefore, we compare the
acquirements of Lady Jane Grey. with those of an accomplished
young woman of our own time, we have no hesitation in awarding
the superiority to the latter. We hope that our readers will
pardon up this digression. It is long; but it can hardly be
called unseasonable, if it tends to convince them that they are
mistaken in thinking that the great-great-grandmothers of their
great-great-grandmothers were superior women to their sisters and
their wives.
Francis Bacon, the youngest son of Sir Nicholas, was born at York House, his father's residence in the Strand, on the twenty-second of January 1561. The health of Francis was very delicate; and to this circumstance may be partly attributed that gravity of carriage, and that love of sedentary pursuits which distinguished him from other boys. Everybody knows how much sobriety of deportment and his premature readiness of wit amused the Queen, and how she used to call him her young Lord Keeper. We are told that, while still a mere child, he stole away from his playfellows to a vault in St. James's Fields, for the purpose of investigating the cause of a singular echo which he had observed there. It is certain that, at only twelve, he busied himself with very ingenious speculations on the art of legerdemain; a subject which, as Professor Dugald Stewart has most justly observed, merits much more attention from philosophers than it has ever received. These are trifles. But the eminence which Bacon afterwards attained makes them interesting.

In the thirteenth year of his age he was entered at Trinity College, Cambridge. That celebrated school of learning enjoyed the peculiar favour of the Lord Treasurer and the Lord Keeper, and acknowledged the advantages which it derived from their patronage in a public letter which bears date just a month after the admission of Francis Bacon. The master was Whitgift, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury, a narrow minded, mean, and tyrannical priest, who gained power by servility and adulation,
and employed it in persecuting both those who agreed with Calvin about church-government, and those who differed from Calvin touching the doctrine of Reprobation. He was now in a chrysalis state, putting off the worm, and putting on the dragon-fly, a kind of intermediate grub between sycophant and oppressor. He was indemnifying himself for the court which he found it expedient to pay to the Ministers by exercising much petty tyranny within his own college. It would be unjust, however, to deny him the praise of having rendered about this time one important service to letters. He stood up manfully against those who wished to make Trinity College a mere appendage to Westminster school; and by this act, the only good act, as far as we remember, of his long public life, he saved the noblest place of education in England from the degrading fate of King's College and New College.

It has often been said that Bacon, while still at college, planned that great intellectual revolution with which his name is inseparably connected. The evidence on this subject, however, is hardly sufficient to prove what is in itself so improbable as that any definite scheme of that kind should have been so early formed, even by so powerful and active a mind. But it is certain that, after a residence of three years at Cambridge, Bacon departed, carrying with him a profound contempt for the course of study pursued there, a fixed conviction that the system of academic education in England was radically vicious, a just scorn for the trifles on which the followers of Aristotle had wasted their powers, and no great reverence for Aristotle himself.
In his sixteenth year he visited Paris, and resided there for some time, under the care of Sir Amias Paulet, Elizabeth's Minister at the French Court, and one of the ablest and most upright of the many valuable servants whom she employed. France was at that time in a deplorable state of agitation. The Huguenots and the Catholics were mustering all their force for the fiercest and most protracted of their many struggles; while the prince, whose duty it was to protect and to restrain both, had by his vices and follies degraded himself so deeply that he had no authority over either. Bacon, however, made a tour through several provinces, and appears to have passed some time at Poitiers. We have abundant proof that during his stay on the Continent he did not neglect literary and scientific pursuits.

But his attention seems to have been chiefly directed to statistics and diplomacy. It was at this time that he wrote those Notes on the State of Europe which are printed in his works. He studied the principles of the art of deciphering with great interest, and invented one cipher so ingenious, that, many years later, he thought it deserving of a place in the De Augmentis. In February 1580, while engaged in these pursuits, he received intelligence of the almost sudden death of his father, and instantly returned to England.

His prospects were greatly overcast by this event. He was most desirous to obtain a provision which might enable him to devote himself to literature and politics. He applied to the
Government; and it seems strange that he should have applied in vain. His wishes were moderate. His hereditary claims on the administration were great. He had himself been favourably noticed by the Queen. His uncle was Prime Minister. His own talents were such as any Minister might have been eager to enlist in the public service. But his solicitations were unsuccessful. The truth is that the Cecils disliked him, and did all that they could decently do to keep him down. It has never been alleged that Bacon had done anything to merit this dislike; nor is it at all probable that a man whose temper was naturally mild, whose manners were courteous, who, through life, nursed his fortunes with the utmost care, and who was fearful even to a fault of offending the powerful, would have given any just cause of displeasure to a kinsman who had the means of rendering him essential service and of doing him irreparable injury. The real explanation, we believe, is this. Robert Cecil, the Treasurer's second son, was younger by a few months than Bacon. He had been educated with the utmost care, had been initiated, while still a boy, in the mysteries of diplomacy and court-intrigue, and was just at this time about to be produced on the stage of public life. The wish nearest to Burleigh's heart was that his own greatness might descend to this favourite child. But even Burleigh's fatherly partiality could hardly prevent him from perceiving that Robert, with all his abilities and acquirements, was no match for his cousin Francis. This seems to us the only rational explanation of the Treasurer's conduct. Mr. Montagu is more charitable. He supposes that Burleigh was influenced merely by affection for his nephew, and was "little disposed to
encourage him to rely on others rather than on himself, and to venture on the quicksands of politics, instead of the certain profession of the law." If such were Burleigh's feelings, it seems strange that he should have suffered his son to venture on those quicksands from which he so carefully preserved his nephew. But the truth is that, if Burleigh had been so disposed, he might easily have secured to Bacon a comfortable provision which should have been exposed to no risk. And it is certain that he showed as little disposition to enable his nephew to live by a profession as to enable him to live without a profession.

That Bacon himself attributed the conduct of his relatives to jealousy of his superior talents, we have not the smallest doubt. In a letter written many years later to Villiers, he expresses himself thus: "Countenance, encourage, and advance able men in all kinds, degrees, and professions. For in the time of the Cecils, the father and the son, able men were by design and of purpose suppressed."

Whatever Burleigh's motives might be, his purpose was unalterable. The supplications which Francis addressed to his uncle and aunt were earnest, humble, and almost servile. He was the most promising and accomplished young man of his time. His father had been the brother-in-law, the most useful colleague, the nearest friend of the Minister. But all this availed poor Francis nothing. He was forced, much against his will, to betake
himself to the study of the law. He was admitted at Gray’s Inn; and during some years, he laboured there in obscurity.

What the extent of his legal attainments may have been it is difficult to say. It was not hard for a man of his powers to acquire that very moderate portion of technical knowledge which, when joined to quickness, tact, wit, ingenuity, eloquence, and knowledge of the world, is sufficient to raise an advocate to the highest professional eminence. The general opinion appears to have been that which was on one occasion expressed by Elizabeth. “Bacon,” said she, “hath a great wit and much learning; but in law showeth to the utmost of his knowledge, and is not deep.” The Cecils, we suspect, did their best to spread this opinion by whispers and insinuations. Coke openly proclaimed it with that rancorous insolence which was habitual to him. No reports are more readily believed than those which disparage genius, and soothe the envy of conscious mediocrity. It must have been inexpressibly consoling to a stupid sergeant, the forerunner of him who, a hundred and fifty years later, “shook his head at Murray as a wit,” to know that the most profound thinker and the most accomplished orator of the age was very imperfectly acquainted with the law touching bastard eigne and mulier puisne, and confounded the right of free fishery with that of common piscary.

It is certain that no man in that age, or indeed during the century and a half which followed, was better acquainted than
Bacon with the philosophy of law. His technical knowledge was quite sufficient, with the help of his admirable talents and of his insinuating address, to procure clients. He rose very rapidly into business, and soon entertained hopes of being called within the bar. He applied to Lord Burleigh for that purpose, but received a testy refusal. Of the grounds of that refusal we can, in some measure, judge by Bacon's answer, which is still extant. It seems that the old Lord, whose temper, age and gout had by no means altered for the better, and who loved to mark his dislike of the showy, quick-witted young men of the rising generation, took this opportunity to read Francis a very sharp lecture on his vanity and want of respect for his betters. Francis returned a most submissive reply, thanked the Treasurer for the admonition, and promised to profit by it. Strangers meanwhile were less unjust to the young barrister than his nearest kinsman had been. In his twenty-sixth year he became a bencher of his Inn; and two years later he was appointed Lent reader. At length, in 1590, he obtained for the first time some show of favour from the Court. He was sworn in Queen's Counsel extraordinary. But this mark of honour was not accompanied by any pecuniary emolument.

He continued, therefore, to solicit his powerful relatives for some provision which might enable him to live without drudging at his profession. He bore, with a patience and serenity which, we fear, bordered on meanness, the morose humours of his uncle, and the sneering reflections which his cousin cast on speculative
men, lost in philosophical dreams, and too wise to be capable of transacting public business. At length the Cecils were generous enough to procure for him the reversion of the Registrarship of the Star-Chamber. This was a lucrative place; but, as many years elapsed before it fell in, he was still under the necessity of labouring for his daily bread.

In the Parliament which was called in 1593 he sat as member for the county of Middlesex, and soon attained eminence as a debater. It is easy to perceive from the scanty remains of his oratory that the same compactness of expression and richness of fancy which appear in his writings characterised his speeches; and that his extensive acquaintance with literature and history enabled him to entertain his audience with a vast variety of illustrations and allusions which were generally happy and apposite, but which were probably not least pleasing to the taste of that age when they were such as would now be thought childish or pedantic. It is evident also that he was, as indeed might have been expected, perfectly free from those faults which are generally found in an advocate who, after having risen to eminence at the bar, enters the House of Commons; that it was his habit to deal with every great question, not in small detached portions, but as a whole; that he refined little, and that his reasonings were those of a capacious rather than a subtle mind. Ben Jonson, a most unexceptionable judge, has described Bacon's eloquence in words, which, though often quoted, will bear to be quoted again. "There happened in my time one noble speaker who
was full of gravity in his speaking. His language, where he could spare or pass by a jest, was nobly censorious. No man ever spoke more neatly, more pressly, more weightily, or suffered less emptiness, less idleness, in what he uttered. No member of his speech but consisted of his own graces. His hearers could not cough or look aside from him without loss. He commanded where he spoke, and had his judges angry and pleased at his devotion. No man had their affections more in his power. The fear of every man that heard him was lest he should make an end." From the mention which is made of judges, it would seem that Jonson had heard Bacon only at the Bar. Indeed we imagine that the House of Commons was then almost inaccessible to strangers. It is not probable that a man of Bacon's nice observation would speak in Parliament exactly as he spoke in the Court of Queen's Bench. But the graces of manner and language must, to a great extent, have been common between the Queen's Counsel and the Knight of the Shire.

Bacon tried to play a very difficult game in politics. He wished to be at once a favourite at Court and popular with the multitude. If any man could have succeeded in this attempt, a man of talents so rare, of judgment so prematurely ripe, of temper so calm, and of manners so plausible, might have been expected to succeed. Nor indeed did he wholly fail. Once, however, he indulged in a burst of patriotism which cost him a long and bitter remorse, and which he never ventured to repeat. The Court asked for large subsidies and for speedy payment. The remains of
Bacon’s speech breathe all the spirit of the Long Parliament.

"The gentlemen," said he, "must sell their plate, and the farmers
their brass pots, ere this will be paid; and for us, we are here
to search the wounds of the realm, and not to skim them over. The
dangers are these. First, we shall breed discontent and endanger
her Majesty's safety, which must consist more in the love of the
people than their wealth. Secondly, this being granted in this
sort, other princes hereafter will look for the like; so that we
shall put an evil precedent on ourselves and our posterity; and
in histories, it is to be observed, of all nations the English
are not to be subject, base, or taxable." The Queen and her
Ministers resented this outbreak of public spirit in the highest
manner. Indeed, many an honest member of the House of Commons
had, for a much smaller matter, been sent to the Tower by the
proud and hot-blooded Tudors. The young patriot condescended to
make the most abject apologies. He adjured the Lord Treasurer to
show some favour to his poor servant and ally. He bemoaned
himself to the Lord Keeper, in a letter which may keep in
countenance the most unmanly of the epistles which Cicero wrote
during his banishment. The lesson was not thrown away. Bacon
never offended in the same manner again.

He was now satisfied that he had little to hope from the
patronage of those powerful kinsmen whom he had solicited during
twelve years with such meek pertinacity; and he began to look
towards a different quarter. Among the courtiers of Elizabeth had
lately appeared a new favourite, young, noble, wealthy,
accomplished, eloquent brave, generous, aspiring; a favourite who
had obtained from the grey-headed Queen such marks of regard as
she had scarce vouchsafed to Leicester in the season of the
passions; who was at once the ornament of the palace and the idol
of the city. who was the common patron of men of letters and of
men of the sword; who was the common refuge of the persecuted
Catholic and of the persecuted Puritan. The calm prudence which
had enabled Burleigh to shape his course through so many dangers,
and the vast experience which he had acquired in dealing with two
generations of colleagues and rivals, seemed scarcely sufficient
to support him in this new competition; and Robert Cecil sickened
with fear and envy as he contemplated the rising fame and
influence of Essex.

The history of the factions which, towards the close of the reign
of Elizabeth, divided her court and her council, though pregnant
with instruction, is by no means interesting or pleasing. Both
parties employed the means which are familiar to unscrupulous
statesmen; and neither had, or even pretended to have, any
important end in view. The public mind was then reposing from one
great effort, and collecting strength for another. That impetuous
and appalling rush with which the human intellect had moved
forward in the career of truth and liberty, during the fifty
years which followed the separation of Luther from the communion
of the Church of Rome, was now over. The boundary between
Protestantism and Popery had been fixed very nearly where it
still remains. England, Scotland, the Northern kingdoms were on
one side; Ireland, Spain, Portugal, Italy, on the other. The line
of demarcation ran, as it still runs, through the midst of the
Netherlands, of Germany, and of Switzerland, dividing province
from province, electorate from electorate, and canton from
canton. France might be considered as a debatable land, in which
the contest was still undecided. Since that time, the two
religions have done little more than maintain their ground. A few
occasional incursions have been made. But the general frontier
remains the same. During two hundred and fifty years no great
society has risen up like one man, and emancipated itself by one
mighty effort from the superstition of ages. This spectacle was
common in the sixteenth century. Why has it ceased to be so? Why
has so violent a movement been followed by so long a repose? The
doctrines of the Reformers are not less agreeable to reason or to
revelation now than formerly. The public mind is assuredly not
less enlightened now than formerly. Why is it that Protestantism,
after carrying everything before it in a time of comparatively
little knowledge and little freedom, should make no perceptible
progress in a reasoning and tolerant age; that the Luthers, the
Calvins, the Knoxes, the Zwingles, should have left no
successors; that during two centuries and a half fewer converts
should have been brought over from the Church of Rome than at the
time of the Reformation were sometimes gained in a year? This has
always appeared to us one of the most curious and interesting
problems in history. On some future occasion we may perhaps
attempt to solve it. At present it is enough to say that, at the
close of Elizabeth's reign, the Protestant party, to borrow the
language of the Apocalypse, had left its first love and had
ceased to do its first works.

The great struggle of the sixteenth century was over. The great struggle of the seventeenth century had not commenced. The confessors of Mary's reign were dead. The members of the Long Parliament were still in their cradles. The Papists had been deprived of all power in the State. The Puritans had not yet attained any formidable extent of power. True it is that a student, well acquainted with the history of the next generation, can easily discern in the proceedings of the last Parliaments of Elizabeth the germ of great and ever memorable events. But to the eye of a contemporary nothing of this appeared. The two sections of ambitious men who were struggling for power differed from each other on no important public question. Both belonged to the Established Church. Both professed boundless loyalty to the Queen. Both approved the war with Spain. There is not, as far as we are aware, any reason to believe that they entertained different views concerning the succession to the Crown. Certainly neither faction had any great measure of reform in view. Neither attempted to redress any public grievance. The most odious and pernicious grievance under which the nation then suffered was a source of profit to both, and was defended by both with equal zeal. Raleigh held a monopoly of cards, Essex a monopoly of sweet wines. In fact, the only ground of quarrel between the parties was that they could not agree as to their respective shares of power and patronage.
Nothing in the political conduct of Essex entitles him to esteem; and the pity with which we regard his early and terrible end is diminished by the consideration, that he put to hazard the lives and fortunes of his most attached friends, and endeavoured to throw the whole country into confusion, for objects purely personal. Still, it is impossible not to be deeply interested for a man so brave, high-spirited, and generous; for a man who, while he conducted himself towards his sovereign with a boldness such as was then found in no other subject, conducted himself towards his dependants with a delicacy such as has rarely been found in any other patron. Unlike the vulgar herd of benefactors, he desired to inspire, not gratitude, but affection. He tried to make those whom he befriended feel towards him as towards an equal. His mind, ardent, susceptible, naturally disposed to admiration of all that is great and beautiful, was fascinated by the genius and the accomplishments of Bacon. A close friendship was soon formed between them, a friendship destined to have a dark, a mournful, a shameful end.

In 1594 the office of Attorney-General became vacant, and Bacon hoped to obtain it. Essex made his friend's cause his own, sued, expostulated, promised, threatened, but all in vain. It is probable that the dislike felt by the Cecils for Bacon had been increased by the connection which he had lately formed with the Earl. Robert was then on the point of being made Secretary of State. He happened one day to be in the same coach with Essex, and a remarkable conversation took place between them. "My Lord,"
said Sir Robert, "the Queen has determined to appoint an
Attorney-General without more delay. I pray your Lordship to let
me know whom you will favour." "I wonder at your question,"
replied the Earl. "You cannot but know that resolutely, against
all the world, I stand for your cousin, Francis Bacon."
"Good Lord!" cried Cecil, unable to bridle his temper,
"I wonder your Lordship should spend your strength on so
unlikely a matter. Can you name one precedent of so raw a
youth promoted to so great a place?" This objection came with
a singularly bad grace from a man who, though younger than Bacon,
was in daily expectation of being made Secretary of State. The
blot
was too obvious to be missed by Essex, who seldom forbore to
speak his mind. "I have made no search," said he, "for precedents
of young men who have filled the office of Attorney-General.
But I could name to you, Sir Robert, a man younger than Francis,
less learned, and equally inexperienced, who is suing and
striving with all his might for an office of far greater
weight." Sir Robert had nothing to say but that he thought his
own abilities equal to the place which he hoped to obtain, and
that his father's long services deserved such a mark of gratitude
from the Queen; as if his abilities were comparable to his
cousin's, or as if Sir Nicholas Bacon had done no service to the
State. Cecil then hinted that, if Bacon would be satisfied with
the Solicitorship, that might be of easier digestion to the
Queen. "Digest me no digestions," said the generous and ardent
Earl. "The Attorneyship for Francis is that I must have; and in
that I will spend all my power, might, authority, and amity; and
with tooth and nail procure the same for him against whomsoever;
and whosoever getteth this office out of my hands for any other,
before he have it, it shall cost him the coming by. And this be
you assured of, Sir Robert, for now I fully declare myself; and
for my own part, Sir Robert, I think strange both of my Lord
Treasurer and you, that can have the mind to seek the preference
of a stranger before so near a kinsman; for if you weigh in a
balance the parts every way of his competitor and him, only
excepting five poor years of admitting to a house of court before
Francis, you shall find in all other respects whatsoever no
comparison between them."

When the office of Attorney-General was filled up, the Earl
pressed the Queen to make Bacon Solicitor-General, and, on this
occasion, the old Lord Treasurer professed himself not
unfavourable to his nephew's pretensions. But after a contest
which lasted more than a year and a half, and in which Essex, to
use his own words, "spent all his power, might, authority, and
amity," the place was given to another. Essex felt this
disappointment keenly, but found consolation in the most
munificent and delicate liberality. He presented Bacon with an
estate worth near two thousand pounds, situated at Twickenham;
and this, as Bacon owned many years after, "with so kind and
noble circumstances as the manner was worth more than the
matter."

It was soon after these events that Bacon first appeared before
the public as a writer. Early in 1597 he published a small volume
of Essays, which was afterwards enlarged by successive additions
to many times its original bulk. This little work was, as it well
deserved to be, exceedingly popular. It was reprinted in a few
months; it was translated into Latin, French, and Italian; and it
seems to have at once established the literary reputation of its
author. But, though Bacon's reputation rose, his fortunes were
still depressed. He was in great pecuniary difficulties; and, on
one occasion, was arrested in the street at the suit of a
goldsmith for a debt of three hundred pounds, and was carried to
a spunging-house in Coleman Street.

The kindness of Essex was in the meantime indefatigable. In 1596
he sailed on his memorable expedition to the coast of Spain. At
the very moment of his embarkation, he wrote to several of his
friends, commending, to them, during his own absence, the
interests of Bacon. He returned, after performing the most
brilliant military exploit that was achieved on the Continent by
English arms during the long interval which elapsed between the
battle of Agincourt and that of Blenheim. His valour, his
talents, his humane and generous disposition, had made him the
idol of his countrymen, and had extorted praise from the enemies
whom he had conquered. [See Cervantes's Novela de la Espanola
Inglesa.] He had always been proud and headstrong; and his
splendid success seems to have rendered his faults more offensive
than ever. But to his friend Francis he was still the same. Bacon
had some thoughts of making his fortune by marriage, and had
begun to pay court to a widow of the name of Hatton. The eccentric manners and violent temper of this woman made her a disgrace and a torment to her connections. But Bacon was not aware of her faults, or was disposed to overlook them for the sake of her ample fortune. Essex pleaded his friend's cause with his usual ardour. The letters which the Earl addressed to Lady Hatton and to her mother are still extant, and are highly honourable to him. "If," he wrote, "she were my sister or my daughter, I protest I would as confidently resolve to further it as I now persuade you"; and again, "If my faith be anything, I protest, if I had one as near me as she is to you, I had rather match her with him, than with men of far greater titles." The suit, happily for Bacon, was unsuccessful. The lady indeed was kind to him in more ways than one. She rejected him; and she accepted his enemy. She married that narrow-minded, bad-hearted pedant, Sir Edward Coke, and did her best to make him as miserable as he deserved to be.

The fortunes of Essex had now reached their height, and began to decline. He possessed indeed all the qualities which raise men to greatness rapidly. But he had neither the virtues nor the vices which enable men to retain greatness long. His frankness, his keen sensibility to insult and injustice, were by no means agreeable to a sovereign naturally impatient of opposition, and accustomed, during forty years, to the most extravagant flattery and the most abject submission. The daring and contemptuous manner in which he bade defiance to his enemies excited their
deadly hatred. His administration in Ireland was unfortunate, and in many respects highly blamable. Though his brilliant courage and his impetuous activity fitted him admirably for such enterprises as that of Cadiz, he did not possess the caution, patience, and resolution necessary for the conduct of a protracted war, in which difficulties were to be gradually surmounted, in which much discomfort was to be endured, and in which few splendid exploits could be achieved. For the civil duties of his high place he was still less qualified. Though eloquent and accomplished, he was in no sense a statesman. The multitude indeed still continued to regard even his faults with fondness. But the Court had ceased to give him credit, even for the merit which he really possessed. The person on whom, during the decline of his influence, he chiefly depended, to whom he confided his perplexities, whose advice he solicited, whose intercession he employed, was his friend Bacon. The lamentable truth must be told. This friend, so loved, so trusted, bore a principal part in ruining the Earl's fortunes, in shedding his blood, and in blackening his memory.

But let us be just to Bacon. We believe that, to the last, he had no wish to injure Essex. Nay, we believe that he sincerely exerted himself to serve Essex, as long as he thought that he could serve Essex without injuring himself. The advice which he gave to his noble benefactor was generally most judicious. He did all in his power to dissuade the Earl from accepting the Government of Ireland. "For," says he, "I did as plainly see, his
overthrow chained as it were by destiny to that journey, as it is possible for a man to ground a judgment upon future contingents."

The prediction was accomplished. Essex returned in disgrace.

Bacon attempted to mediate between his friend and the Queen; and, we believe, honestly employed all his address for that purpose. But the task which he had undertaken was too difficult, delicate, and perilous, even for so wary and dexterous an agent. He had to manage two spirits equally proud, resentful) and ungovernable. At Essex House, he had to calm the rage of a young hero incensed by multiplied wrongs and humiliations) and then to pass to Whitehall for the purpose of soothing the peevishness of a sovereign, whose temper, never very gentle, had been rendered morbidly irritable by age, by declining health, and by the long habit of listening to flattery and exacting implicit obedience. It is hard to serve two masters. Situated as Bacon was, it was scarcely possible for him to shape his course so as not to give one or both of his employers reason to complain. For a time he acted as fairly as, in circumstances so embarrassing, could reasonably be expected. At length he found that, while he was trying to prop the fortunes of another, he was in danger of shaking his own. He had disoblged both the parties whom he wished to reconcile. Essex thought him wanting in zeal as a friend: Elizabeth thought him wanting in duty as a subject. The Earl looked on him as a spy of the Queen; the Queen as a creature of the Earl. The reconciliation which he had laboured to effect appeared utterly hopeless. A thousand signs, legible to eyes far less keen than his, announced that the fall of his patron was at hand. He shaped his course accordingly. When Essex was brought before the council...
to answer for his conduct in Ireland, Bacon, after a faint attempt to excuse himself from taking part against his friend, submitted himself to the Queen's pleasure, and appeared at the bar in support of the charges. But a darker scene was behind. The unhappy young nobleman, made reckless by despair ventured on a rash and criminal enterprise, which rendered him liable to the highest penalties of the law. What course was Bacon to take? This was one of those conjunctures which show what men are. To a high-minded man, wealth, power, court-favour, even personal safety, would have appeared of no account, when opposed to friendship, gratitude, and honour. Such a man would have stood by the side of Essex at the trial, would have "spent all his power, might, authority, and amity" in soliciting a mitigation of the sentence, would have been a daily visitor at the cell, would have received the last injunctions and the last embrace on the scaffold, would have employed all the powers of his intellect to guard from insult the fame of his generous though erring friend. An ordinary man would neither have incurred the danger of succouring Essex, nor the disgrace of assailing him. Bacon did not even preserve neutrality. He appeared as counsel for the prosecution. In that situation, he did not confine himself to what would have been amply sufficient to procure a verdict. He employed all his wit, his rhetoric, and his learning, not to ensure a conviction,—for the circumstances were such that a conviction was inevitable,—but to deprive the unhappy prisoner of all those excuses which, though legally of no value, yet tended to diminish the moral guilt of the crime, and which, therefore, though they could not justify the peers in pronouncing an acquittal, might incline the
Queen to grant a pardon. The Earl urged as a palliation of his frantic acts that he was surrounded by powerful and inveterate enemies, that they had ruined his fortunes, that they sought his life, and that their persecutions had driven him to despair. This was true; and Bacon well knew it to be true. But he affected to treat it as an idle pretence. He compared Essex to Pisistratus, who, by pretending to be in imminent danger of assassination, and by exhibiting self-inflicted wounds, succeeded in establishing tyranny at Athens. This was too much for the prisoner to bear. He interrupted his ungrateful friend by calling on him to quit the part of an advocate, to come forward as a witness, and to tell the Lords whether, in old times, he, Francis Bacon, had not, under his own hand, repeatedly asserted the truth of what he now represented as idle pretexts. It is painful to go on with this lamentable story. Bacon returned a shuffling answer to the Earl's question, and, as if the allusion to Pisistratus were not sufficiently offensive, made another allusion still more unjustifiable. He compared Essex to Henry Duke of Guise, and the rash attempt in the city to the day of the barricades at Paris. Why Bacon had recourse to such a topic it is difficult to say. It was quite unnecessary for the purpose of obtaining a verdict. It was certain to produce a strong impression on the mind of the haughty and jealous princess on whose pleasure the Earl's fate depended. The faintest allusion to the degrading tutelage in which the last Valois had been held by the House of Lorraine was sufficient to harden her heart against a man who in rank, in military reputation, in popularity among the citizens of the capital, bore some resemblance to the Captain of the League.
Essex was convicted. Bacon made no effort to save him, though the Queen's feelings were such that he might have pleaded his benefactor's cause, possibly with success, certainly without any serious danger to himself. The unhappy nobleman was executed. His fate excited strong, perhaps unreasonable feelings of compassion and indignation. The Queen was received by the citizens of London with gloomy looks and faint acclamations. She thought it expedient to publish a vindication of her late proceedings. The faithless friend who had assisted in taking the Earl's life was now employed to murder the Earl's fame. The Queen had seen some of Bacon's writings, and had been pleased with them. He was accordingly selected to write A Declaration of the Practices and Treasons attempted and committed by Robert Earl of Essex, which was printed by authority. In the succeeding reign, Bacon had not a word to say in defence of this performance, a performance abounding in expressions which no generous enemy would have employed respecting a man who had so dearly expiated his offences. His only excuse was, that he wrote it by command, that he considered himself as a mere secretary, that he had particular instructions as to the way in which he was to treat every part of the subject, and that, in fact, he had furnished only the arrangement and the style.

We regret to say that the whole conduct of Bacon through the course of these transactions appears to Mr. Montagu not merely excusable, but deserving of high admiration. The integrity and
benevolence of this gentleman are so well known that our readers will probably be at a loss to conceive by what steps he can have arrived at so extraordinary a conclusion: and we are half afraid that they will suspect us of practising some artifice upon them when we report the principal arguments which he employs.

In order to get rid of the charge of ingratitude, Mr. Montagu attempts to show that Bacon lay under greater obligations to the Queen than to Essex. What these obligations were it is not easy to discover. The situation of Queen's Counsel, and a remote reversion, were surely favours very far below Bacon's personal and hereditary claims. They were favours which had not cost the Queen a groat, nor had they put a groat into Bacon's purse. It was necessary to rest Elizabeth's claims to gratitude on some other ground; and this Mr. Montagu felt. "What perhaps was her greatest kindness," says he, "instead of having hastily advanced Bacon, she had, with a continuance of her friendship, made him bear the yoke in his youth. Such were his obligations to Elizabeth." Such indeed they were.

Being the son of one of her oldest and most faithful Ministers, being himself the ablest and most accomplished young man of his time, he had been condemned by her to drudgery, to obscurity, to poverty. She had depreciated his acquirements. She had checked him in the most imperious manner, when in Parliament he ventured to act an independent part. She had refused to him the
professional advancement to which he had a just claim. To her it was owing that, while younger men, not superior to him in extraction, and far inferior to him in every kind of personal merit, were filling the highest offices of the State, adding manor to manor, rearing palace after palace, he was lying at a spunging-house for a debt of three hundred pounds. Assuredly if Bacon owed gratitude to Elizabeth, he owed none to Essex. If the Queen really was his best friend, the Earl was his worst enemy. We wonder that Mr. Montagu did not press this argument a little further. He might have maintained that Bacon was excusable in revenging himself on a man who had attempted to rescue his youth from the salutary yoke imposed on it by the Queen, who had wished to advance him hastily, who, not content with attempting to inflict the Attorney-Generalship upon him, had been so cruel as to present him with a landed estate.

Again, we can hardly think Mr. Montagu serious when he tells us that Bacon was bound for the sake of the public not to destroy his own hopes of advancement, and that he took part against Essex from a wish to obtain power which might enable him to be useful to his country. We really do not know how to refute such arguments except by stating them. Nothing is impossible which does not involve a contradiction. It is barely possible that Bacon's motives for acting as he did on this occasion may have been gratitude to the Queen for keeping him poor, and a desire to benefit his fellow-creatures in some high situation. And there is a possibility that Bonner may have been a good Protestant who,
being convinced that the blood of martyrs is the seed of the
Church, heroically went through all the drudgery and infamy of
persecution, in order that he might inspire the English people
with an intense and lasting hatred of Popery. There is a
possibility that Jeffreys may have been an ardent lover of
liberty, and that he may have beheaded Algernon Sydney, and
burned Elizabeth Gaunt, only in order to produce a reaction which
might lead to the limitation of the prerogative. There is a
possibility that Thurtell may have killed Weare only in order to
give the youth of England an impressive warning against gaming
and bad company. There is a possibility that Fauntleroy may have
forged powers of attorney, only in order that his fate might turn
the attention of the public to the defects of the penal law.
These things, we say, are possible. But they are so extravagantly
improbable that a man who should act on such suppositions would
be fit only for Saint Luke's. And we do not see why suppositions
on which no rational man would act in ordinary life should be
admitted into history.

Mr. Montagu's notion that Bacon desired power only in order to do
good to mankind appears somewhat strange to us, when we consider
how Bacon afterwards used power, and how he lost it. Surely the
service which he rendered to mankind by taking Lady Wharton's
broad pieces and Sir John Kennedy's cabinet was not of such vast
importance as to sanctify all the means which might conduce to
that end. If the case were fairly stated, it would, we much fear,
stand thus: Bacon was a servile advocate, that he might be a
Mr. Montagu maintains that none but the ignorant and unreflecting can think Bacon censurable for anything that he did as counsel for the Crown, and that no advocate can justifiably use any discretion as to the party for whom he appears. We will not at present inquire whether the doctrine which is held on this subject by English lawyers be or be not agreeable to reason and morality; whether it be right that a man should, with a wig on his head, and a band round his neck, do for a guinea what, without those appendages, he would think it wicked and infamous to do for an empire; whether it be right that, not merely believing but knowing a statement to be true, he should do all that can be done by sophistry, by rhetoric, by solemn asseveration, by indignant exclamation, by gesture, by play of features, by terrifying one honest witness, by perplexing another, to cause a jury to think that statement false. It is not necessary on the present occasion to decide these questions. The professional rules, be they good or bad, are rules to which many wise and virtuous men have conformed, and are daily conforming. If, therefore, Bacon did no more than these rules required of him, we shall readily admit that he was blameless, or, at least, excusable. But we conceive that his conduct was not justifiable according to any professional rules that now exist, or that ever existed in England. It has always been held that, in criminal cases in which the prisoner was denied the help of counsel, and above all, in capital cases, advocates were both entitled and
bound to exercise a discretion. It is true that after the
Revolution, when the Parliament began to make inquisition for the
innocent blood which had been shed by the last Stuarts, a feeble
attempt was made to defend the lawyers who had been accomplices
in the murder of Sir Thomas Armstrong, on the ground that they
had only acted professionally. The wretched sophism was silenced
by the execrations of the House of Commons. "Things will never be
well done," said Mr. Foley, "till some of that profession be made
examples." "We have a new sort of monsters in the world," said
the younger Hampden, "haranguing a man to death. These I call
bloodhounds. Sawyer is very criminal and guilty of this murder."
"I speak to discharge my conscience," said Mr. Garroway. "I will
not have the blood of this man at my door. Sawyer demanded
judgment against him and execution. I believe him guilty of the
death of this man. Do what you will with him." "If the profession
of the law," said the elder Hampden, "gives a man authority to
murder at this rate, it is the interest of all men to rise and
exterminate that profession." Nor was this language held only by
unlearned country gentlemen. Sir William Williams, one of the
ablest and most unscrupulous lawyers of the age, took the same
view of the case. He had not hesitated, he said, to take part in
the prosecution of the Bishops, because they were allowed
counsel. But he maintained that, where the prisoner was not
allowed counsel the Counsel for the Crown was bound to exercise a
discretion, and that every lawyer who neglected this distinction
was a betrayer of the law. But it is unnecessary to cite
authority. It is known to everybody who has ever looked into a
court of quarter-sessions that lawyers do exercise a discretion
in criminal cases; and it is plain to every man of common sense
that, if they did not exercise such a discretion, they would be a
more hateful body of men than those bravoes who used to hire out
their stilettoes in Italy.

Bacon appeared against a man who was indeed guilty of a great
offence, but who had been his benefactor and friend. He did more
than this. Nay, he did more than a person who had never seen
Essex would have been justified in doing. He employed all the art
of an advocate in order to make the prisoner's conduct appear
more inexcusable and more dangerous to the State than it really
had been. All that professional duty could, in any case, have
required of him would have been to conduct the cause so as to
ensure a conviction. But from the nature of the circumstances
there could not be the smallest doubt that the Earl would be
found guilty. The character of the crime was unequivocal. It had
been committed recently, in broad daylight, in the streets of the
capital, in the presence of thousands. If ever there was an
occasion on which an advocate had no temptation to resort to
extraneous topics, for the purpose of blinding the judgment and
inflaming the passions of a tribunal, this was that occasion.

Why then resort to arguments which, while they could add nothing
to the strength of the case, considered in a legal point of view,
tended to aggravate the moral guilt of the fatal enterprise, and
to excite fear and resentment in that quarter from which alone
the Earl could now expect mercy? Why remind the audience of the
arts of the ancient tyrants? Why deny what everybody knew to be the truth, that: a powerful faction at Court had long sought to effect the ruin of the prisoner? Why above all, institute a parallel between the unhappy culprit and the most wicked and most successful rebel of the age? Was it absolutely impossible to do all that professional duty required without reminding a jealous sovereign of the League, of the barricades, and of all the humiliations which a too powerful subject had heaped on Henry the Third?

But if we admit the plea which Mr. Montagu urges in defence of what Bacon did as an advocate, what shall we say of the Declaration of the Treasons of Robert, Earl of Essex? Here at least there was no pretence of professional obligation. Even those who may think it the duty of a lawyer to hang, draw, and quarter his benefactors, for a proper consideration, will hardly say that it is his duty to write abusive pamphlets against them, after they are in their graves. Bacon excused himself by saying that he was not answerable for the matter of the book, and that he furnished only the language. But why did he endow such purposes with words? Could no hack writer, without virtue or shame, be found to exaggerate the errors, already so dearly expiated, of a gentle and noble spirit? Every age produces those links between the man and the baboon. Every age is fertile of Oldmixons, of Kenricks, and of Antony Pasquins. But was it for Bacon so to prostitute his intellect? Could he not feel that, while he rounded and pointed some period dictated by the envy of
Cecil, or gave a plausible form to some slander invented by the dastardly malignity of Cobham; he was not sinning merely against his friend's honour and his own? Could he not feel that letters, eloquence, philosophy, were all degraded in his degradation?

The real explanation of all this is perfectly obvious; and nothing but a partiality amounting to a ruling passion could cause anybody to miss it. The moral qualities of Bacon were not of a high order. We do not say that he was a bad man. He was not inhuman or tyrannical. He bore with meekness his high civil honours, and the far higher honours gained by his intellect. He was very seldom, if ever, provoked into treating any person with malignity and insolence. No man more readily held up the left cheek to those who had smitten the right. No man was more expert at the soft answer which turneth away wrath. He was never charged, by any accuser entitled to the smallest credit, with licentious habits. His even temper, his flowing courtesy, the general respectability of his demeanour, made a favourable impression on those who saw him in situations which do not severely try the principles. His faults were--we write it with pain--coldness of heart, and meanness of spirit. He seems to have been incapable of feeling strong affection, of facing great dangers, of making great sacrifices. His desires were set on things below wealth, precedence, titles, patronage, the mace, the seals, the coronet, large houses, fair gardens, rich manors, massy services of plate, gay hangings, curious cabinets, had as great attractions for him as for any of the courtiers who dropped
on their knees in the dirt when Elizabeth passed by, and then
hastened home to write to the King of Scots that her Grace seemed
to be breaking fast. For these objects he had stooped to
everything and endured everything. For these he had sued in the
humblest manner, and, when unjustly and ungraciously repulsed,
had thanked those who had repulsed him, and had begun to sue
again. For these objects, as soon as he found that the smallest
show of independence in Parliament was offensive to the Queen, he
had abased himself to the dust before her, and implored
forgiveness in terms better suited to a convicted thief than to a
knight of the shire. For these he joined, and for these he
forsook, Lord Essex. He continued to plead his patron's cause
with the Queen as long as he thought that by pleading that cause
he might serve himself. Nay, he went further; for his feelings,
though not warm, were kind; he pleaded that cause as long as he
thought that he could plead it without injury to himself. But
when it became evident that Essex was going headlong to his ruin,
Bacon began to tremble for his own fortunes. What he had to fear
would not indeed have been very alarming to a man of lofty
character. It was not death. It was not imprisonment. It was the
loss of Court favour. It was the being left behind by others in
the career of ambition. It was the having leisure to finish the
Instauratio Magna. The Queen looked coldly on him. The courtiers
began to consider him as a marked man. He determined to change
his line of conduct, and to proceed in a new course with so much
vigour as to make up for lost time. When once he had determined
to act against his friend, knowing himself to be suspected, he
acted with more zeal than would have been necessary or
justifiable if he had been employed against a stranger. He exerted his professional talents to shed the Earl's blood, and his literary talents to blacken the Earl's memory.

It is certain that his conduct excited at the time great and general disapprobation. While Elizabeth lived, indeed, this disapprobation, though deeply felt, was not loudly expressed. But a great change was at hand. The health of the Queen had long been decaying; and the operation of age and disease was now assisted by acute mental suffering. The pitiable melancholy of her last days has generally been ascribed to her fond regret for Essex. But we are disposed to attribute her dejection partly to physical causes, and partly to the conduct of her courtiers and ministers. They did all in their power to conceal from her the intrigues which they were carrying on at the Court of Scotland. But her keen sagacity was not to be so deceived. She did not know the whole. But she knew that she was surrounded by men who were impatient for that new world which was to begin at her death, who had never been attached to her by affection, and who were now but very slightly attached to her by interest. Prostration and flattery could not conceal from her the cruel truth, that those whom she had trusted, and promoted had never loved her, and were fast ceasing to fear her. Unable to avenge herself, and too proud to complain, she suffered sorrow and resentment to prey on her heart till, after a long career of power, prosperity, and glory, she died sick and weary of the world.
James mounted the throne: and Bacon employed all his address to obtain for himself a share of the favour of his new master. This was no difficult task. The faults of James, both as a man and as a prince, were numerous; but insensibility to the claims of genius and learning was not among them. He was indeed made up of two men, a witty, well-read scholar, who wrote, disputed, and harangued, and a nervous, drivelling idiot, who acted. If he had been a Canon of Christ Church or a Prebendary of Westminster, it is not improbable that he would have left a highly respectable name to posterity; that he would have distinguished himself among the translators of the Bible, and among the Divines who attended the Synod of Dort; and that he would have been regarded by the literary world as no contemptible rival of Vossius and Casaubon. But fortune placed him in a situation in which his weakness covered him with disgrace, and in which his accomplishments brought him no honour. In a college, much eccentricity and childishness would have been readily pardoned in so learned a man. But all that learning could do for him on the throne was to make people think him a pedant as well as a fool.

Bacon was favourably received at Court; and soon found that his chance of promotion was not diminished by the death of the Queen. He was solicitous to be knighted, for two reasons which are somewhat amusing. The King had already dubbed half London, and Bacon found himself the only untitled person in his mess at Gray's Inn. This was not very agreeable to him. He had also, to quote his own words, "found an Alderman's daughter, a handsome
maiden, to his liking." On both these grounds, he begged his cousin Robert Cecil, "if it might please his good Lordship," to use his interest in his behalf. The application was successful. Bacon was one of three hundred gentlemen who, on the coronation-day, received the honour, if it is to be so called, of knighthood. The handsome maiden, a daughter of Alderman Barnham, soon after consented to become Sir Francis's lady.

The death of Elizabeth, though on the whole it improved Bacon's prospects, was in one respect an unfortunate event for him. The new King had always felt kindly towards Lord Essex, and, as soon as he came to the throne, began to show favour to the House of Devereux, and to those who had stood by that house in its adversity. Everybody was now at liberty to speak out respecting those lamentable events in which Bacon had borne so large a share. Elizabeth was scarcely cold when the public feeling began to manifest itself by marks of respect towards Lord Southampton. That accomplished nobleman, who will be remembered to the latest ages as the generous and discerning patron of Shakspeare, was held in honour by his contemporaries chiefly on account of the devoted affection which he had borne to Essex. He had been tried and convicted together with his friend; but the Queen had spared his life, and, at the time of her death, he was still a prisoner.

A crowd of visitors hastened to the Tower to congratulate him on his approaching deliverance. With that crowd Bacon could not venture to mingle. The multitude loudly condemned him; and his conscience told him that the multitude had but too much reason.
He excused himself to Southampton by letter, in terms which, if he had, as Mr. Montagu conceives, done only what as a subject and an advocate he was bound to do, must be considered as shamefully servile. He owns his fear that his attendance would give offence, and that his professions of regard would obtain no credit. "Yet," says he, "it is as true as a thing that God knoweth, that this great change hath wrought in me no other change towards your Lordship than this, that I may safely be that to you now which I was truly before."

How Southampton received these apologies we are not informed. But it is certain that the general opinion was pronounced against Bacon in a manner not to be misunderstood. Soon after his marriage he put forth a defence of his conduct, in the form of a Letter to the Earl of Devon. This tract seems to us to prove only the exceeding badness of a cause for which such talents could do so little.

It is not probable that Bacon's Defence had much effect on his contemporaries. But the unfavourable impression which his conduct had made appears to have been gradually effaced. Indeed it must be some very peculiar cause that can make a man like him long unpopular. His talents secured him from contempt, his temper and his manners from hatred. There is scarcely any story so black that it may not be got over by a man of great abilities, whose abilities are united with caution, good humour, patience, and affability, who pays daily sacrifice to Nemesis, who is a
delightful companion, a serviceable though not an ardent friend, and a dangerous yet a placable enemy. Waller in the next generation was an eminent instance of this. Indeed Waller had much more than may at first sight appear in common with Bacon. To the higher intellectual qualities of the great English philosopher, to the genius which has made an immortal epoch in the history of science, Waller had indeed no pretensions. But the mind of Waller, as far as it extended, coincided with that of Bacon, and might, so to speak, have been cut out of that of Bacon. In the qualities which make a man an object of interest and veneration to posterity, they cannot be compared together. But in the qualities by which chiefly a man is known to his contemporaries there was a striking similarity between them. Considered as men of the world, as courtiers, as politicians, as associates, as allies, as enemies, they had nearly the same merits, and the same defects. They were not malignant. They were not tyrannical. But they wanted warmth of affection and elevation of sentiment. There were many things which they loved better than virtue, and which they feared more than guilt. Yet, even after they had stooped to acts of which it is impossible to read the account in the most partial narratives without strong disapprobation and contempt, the public still continued to regard them with a feeling not easily to be distinguished from esteem. The hyperbole of Juliet seemed to be verified with respect to them. "Upon their brows shame was ashamed to sit."

Everybody seemed as desirous to throw a veil over their misconduct as if it had been his own. Clarendon, who felt, and who had reason to feel, strong personal dislike towards
Waller, speaks of him thus: "There needs no more to be said to extol the excellence and power of his wit and pleasantness of his conversation, than that it was of magnitude enough to cover a world of very great faults, that is, so to cover them that they were not taken notice of to his reproach, viz., a narrowness in his nature to the lowest degree, an abjectness and want of courage to support him in any virtuous undertaking, an insinuation and servile flattery to the height the vainest and most imperious nature could be contented with. . . . It had power to reconcile him to those whom he had most offended and provoked, and continued to his age with that rare felicity, that his company was acceptable where his spirit was odious, and he was at least pitied where he was most detested." Much of this, with some softening, might, we fear, be applied to Bacon. The influence of Waller's talents, manners, and accomplishments, died with him; and the world has pronounced an unbiassed sentence on his character. A few flowing lines are not bribe sufficient to pervert the judgment of posterity. But the influence of Bacon is felt and will long be felt over the whole civilised world. Leniently as he was treated by his contemporaries, posterity has treated him more leniently still. Turn where we may, the trophies of that mighty intellect are full in few. We are judging Manlius in sight of the Capitol.

Under the reign of James, Bacon grew rapidly in fortune and favour. In 1604 he was appointed King's Counsel, with a fee of forty pounds a year; and a pension of sixty pounds a year was
settled upon him. In 1607 he became Solicitor-General, in 1612 Attorney-General. He continued to distinguish himself in Parliament, particularly by his exertions in favour of one excellent measure on which the King's heart was set, the union of England and Scotland. It was not difficult for such an intellect to discover many irresistible arguments in favour of such a scheme. He conducted the great case of the Post Nati in the Exchequer Chamber; and the decision of the judges, a decision the legality of which may be questioned, but the beneficial effect of which must be acknowledged, was in a great measure attributed to his dexterous management. While actively engaged in the House of Commons and in the courts of law, he still found leisure for letters and philosophy. The noble treatise on the Advancement of Learning, which at a later period was expanded into the De Augmentis, appeared in 1605. The Wisdom of the Ancients, a work which, if it had proceeded from any other writer, would have been considered as a masterpiece of wit and learning, but which adds little to the fame of Bacon, was printed in 1609. In the meantime the Novum Organum was slowly proceeding. Several distinguished men of learning had been permitted to see sketches or detached portions of that extraordinary book; and, though they were not generally disposed to admit the soundness of the author's views, they spoke with the greatest admiration of his genius. Sir Thomas Bodley, the founder of one of the most magnificent of English libraries, was among those stubborn Conservatives who considered the hopes with which Bacon looked forward, to the future destinies of the human race as utterly chimerical, and who regarded with distrust and aversion the innovating spirit of the
new schismatics in philosophy. Yet even Bodley, after perusing the Cogitata et Visa, one of the most precious of those scattered leaves out of which the great oracular volume was afterwards made up, acknowledged that in "those very points, and in all proposals and plots in that book, Bacon showed himself a master-workman"; and that "it could not be gainsaid but all the treatise over did abound with choice conceits of the present state of learning, and with worthy contemplations of the means to procure it." In 1612 a new edition of the Essays appeared, with additions surpassing the original collection both in bulk and quality. Nor did these pursuits distract Bacon's attention from a work the most arduous, the most glorious, and the most useful that even his mighty powers could have achieved, "the reducing and recompiling," to use his own phrase, "of the laws of England."

Unhappily he was at that very time employed in perverting those laws to the vilest purposes of tyranny. When Oliver St. John was brought before the Star Chamber for maintaining that the King had no right to levy Benevolences, and was for his manly and constitutional conduct sentenced to imprisonment during the royal pleasure and to a fine of five thousand pounds, Bacon appeared as counsel for the prosecution. About the same time he was deeply engaged in a still more disgraceful transaction. An aged clergyman, of the name of Peacham, was accused of treason on account of some passages of a sermon which was found in his study. The sermon, whether written by him or not, had never been preached. It did not appear that he had any intention of
preaching it. The most servile lawyers of those servile times were forced to admit that there were great difficulties both as to the facts and as to the law. Bacon was employed to remove those difficulties. He was employed to settle the question of law by tampering with the judges, and the question of fact by torturing the prisoner.

Three judges of the Court of King's Bench were tractable. But Coke was made of different stuff. Pedant, bigot, and brute as he was, he had qualities which bore a strong, though a very disagreeable resemblance to some of the highest virtues which a public man can possess. He was an exception to a maxim which we believe to be generally true, that those who trample on the helpless are disposed to cringe to the powerful. He behaved with gross rudeness to his juniors at the bar, and with execrable cruelty to prisoners on trial for their lives. But he stood up manfully against the King and the King's favourites. No man of that age appeared to so little advantage when he was opposed to an inferior, and was in the wrong. But, on the other hand, it is but fair to admit that no man of that age made so creditable a figure when he was opposed to a superior, and happened to be in the right. On such occasions, his half-suppressed insolence and his impracticable obstinacy had a respectable and interesting appearance, when compared with the abject servility of the bar and of the bench. On the present occasion he was stubborn and surly. He declared that it was a new and highly improper practice in the judges to confer with a law-officer of the Crown about
capital cases which they were afterwards to try; and for some
time he resolutely kept aloof. But Bacon was equally artful and
persevering. "I am not wholly out of hope," said he in a letter
to the King, "that my Lord Coke himself, when I have in some dark
manner put him in doubt that he shall be left alone, will not be
singular." After some time Bacon's dexterity was successful; and
Coke, sullenly and reluctantly, followed the example of his
brethren. But in order to convict Peacham it was necessary to
find facts as well as law. Accordingly, this wretched old man was
put to the rack, and, while undergoing the horrible infliction,
was examined by Bacon, but in vain. No confession could be wrung
out of him; and Bacon wrote to the King, complaining that Peacham
had a dumb devil. At length the trial came on. A conviction was
obtained; but the charges were so obviously futile, that the
Government could not, for very shame, carry the sentence into
execution; and Peacham, was suffered to languish away the short
remainder of his life in a prison.

All this frightful story Mr. Montagu relates fairly. He neither
conceals nor distorts any material fact. But he can see nothing
deserving of condemnation in Bacon's conduct. He tells us most
truly that we ought not to try the men of one age by the standard
of another; that Sir Matthew Hale is not to be pronounced a bad
man because he left a woman to be executed for witchcraft; that
posterity will not be justified in censuring judges of our time,
for selling offices in their courts, according to the established
practice, bad as that practice was; and that Bacon is entitled to
similar indulgence. "To persecute the lover of truth," says Mr. Montagu, "for opposing established customs, and to censure him in after ages for not having been more strenuous in opposition, are errors which will never cease until the pleasure of self-elevation from the depression of superiority is no more."

We have no dispute with Mr. Montagu about the general proposition. We assent to every word of it. But does it apply to the present case? Is it true that in the time of James the First it was the established practice for the law-officers of the Crown to hold private consultations with the judges, touching capital cases which those judges were afterwards to try? Certainly not. In the very page in which Mr. Montagu asserts that "the influencing a judge out of court seems at that period scarcely to have been considered as improper," he gives the very words of Sir Edward Coke on the subject. "I will not thus declare what may be my judgment by these auricular confessions of new and pernicious tendency, and not according to the customs of the realm." Is it possible to imagine that Coke, who had himself been Attorney-General during thirteen years, who had conducted a far greater number of important State prosecutions than any other lawyer named in English history, and who had passed with scarcely any interval from the Attorney-Generalship to the first seat in the first criminal court in the realm, could have been startled at an invitation to confer with the Crown-lawyers, and could have pronounced the practice new, if it had really been an established usage? We well know that, where property only was at
stake, it was then a common, though a most culpable practice, in
the judges, to listen to private solicitation. But the practice
of tampering with judges in order to procure capita; convictions
we believe to have been new, first, because Coke, who understood
those matters better than any man of his time, asserted it to be
new; and secondly, because neither Bacon nor Mr. Montagu has
shown a single precedent.

How then stands the case? Even thus: Bacon was not conforming to
an usage then generally admitted to be proper. He was not even
the last lingering adherent of an old abuse. It would have been
sufficiently disgraceful to such a man to be in this last
situation. Yet this last situation would have been honourable
compared with that in which he stood. He was guilty of attempting
to introduce into the courts of law an odious abuse for which no
precedent could be found. Intellectually, he was better fitted
than any man that England has ever produced for the work of
improving her institutions. But, unhappily, we see that he did
not scruple to exert his great powers for the purpose of
introducing into those institutions new corruptions of the
foulest kind.

The same, or nearly the same, may be said of the torturing of
Peacham. If it be true that in the time of James the First the
propriety of torturing prisoners was generally allowed, we should
admit this as an excuse, though we should admit it less readily
in the case of such a man as Bacon than in the case of an
ordinary lawyer or politician. But the fact is, that the practice
of torturing prisoners was then generally acknowledged by lawyers
to be illegal, and was execrated by the public as barbarous. More
than thirty years before Peacham's trial, that practice was so
loudly condemned by the voice of the nation that Lord Burleigh
found it necessary to publish an apology for having occasionally
resorted to it. But, though the dangers which then threatened the
Government were of a very different kind from those which were to
be apprehended from anything that Peacham could write, though the
life of the Queen and the dearest interests of the State were in
jeopardy, though the circumstances were such that all ordinary
laws might seem to be superseded by that highest law, the public
safety, the apology did not satisfy the country; and the Queen
found it expedient to issue an order positively forbidding the
torturing of State-prisoners on any pretence whatever. From that
time, the practice of torturing, which had always been unpopular,
which had always been illegal, had also been unusual. It is well
known that in 1628, only fourteen years after the time when Bacon
went to the Tower to listen to the yells of Peacham, the judges
decided that Felton, a criminal who neither deserved nor was
likely to obtain any extraordinary indulgence, could not lawfully
be put to the question. We therefore say that Bacon stands in a
very different situation from that in which Mr. Montagu tries to
place him. Bacon was here distinctly behind his age. He was one
of the last of the tools of power who persisted in a practice the
most barbarous and the most absurd that has ever disgraced
jurisprudence, in a practice of which, in the preceding
generation, Elizabeth and her Ministers had been ashamed, in a
practice which, a few years later, no sycophant in all the Inns of Court had the heart or the forehead to defend. [Since this Review was written, Mr. Jardine has published a very learned and ingenious Reading on the use of torture in England. It has not, however, been thought necessary to make any change in the observations on Peacham's case.

It is impossible to discuss within the limits of a note, the extensive question raised by Mr. Jardine. It is sufficient here to say that every argument by which he attempts to show that the use of the rack was anciently a lawful exertion of royal prerogative may be urged with equal force, nay, with far greater force, to prove the lawfulness of benevolences, of ship-money, of Mompesson's patent, of Eliot's imprisonment, of every abuse, without exception, which is condemned by the Petition of Right and the Declaration of Right.]

Bacon far behind his age! Bacon far behind Sir Edward Coke! Bacon clinging to exploded abuses! Bacon withstanding the progress of improvement! Bacon struggling to push back the human mind! The words seem strange. They sound like a contradiction in terms. Yet the fact is even so: and the explanation may be readily found by any person who is not blinded by prejudice. Mr. Montagu cannot believe that so extraordinary a man as Bacon could be guilty of a bad action; as if history were not made up of the bad actions of extraordinary men, as if all the most noted destroyers and deceivers of our species, all the founders of arbitrary
governments and false religions, had not been extraordinary men, as if nine-tenths of the calamities which have befallen the human race had any other origin than the union of high intelligence with low desires.

Bacon knew this well. He has told us that there are persons "scientia tanquam angeli alati, cupiditatibus vero tanquam serpentes qui humili reptant"; [De Augmentis, Lib. v. Cap. I.] and it did not require his admirable sagacity and his extensive converse with mankind to make the discovery. Indeed, he had only to look within. The difference between the soaring angel and the creeping snake was but a type of the difference between Bacon the philosopher and Bacon the Attorney-General, Bacon seeking for truth, and Bacon seeking for the Seals. Those who survey only one-half of his character may speak of him with unmixed admiration or with unmixed contempt. But those only judge of him correctly who take in at one view Bacon in speculation and Bacon in action. They will have no difficulty in comprehending how one and the same man should have been far above his age and far behind it, in one line the boldest and most useful of innovators, in another one the most obstinate champion of the foulest abuses.

In his library, all his rare powers were under the guidance of an honest ambition, of all enlarged philanthropy, of a sincere love of truth. There, no temptation drew him away from the right course. Thomas Aquinas could pay no fees. Duns Scotus could
confer no peerages. The Master of the Sentences had no rich reversions in his gift. Far different was the situation of the great philosopher when he came forth from his study and his laboratory to mingle with the crowd which filled the galleries of Whitehall. In all that crowd there was no man equally qualified to render great and lasting services to mankind. But in all that crowd there was not a heart more set on things which no man ought to suffer to be necessary to his happiness, on things which can often be obtained only by the sacrifice of integrity and honour. To be the leader of the human race in the career of improvement, to found on the ruins of ancient intellectual dynasties a more prosperous and a more enduring empire, to be revered by the latest generations as the most illustrious among the benefactors of mankind, all this was within his reach, But all this availed him nothing, while some quibbling special pleader was promoted before him to the bench, while some heavy country gentleman took precedence of him by virtue of a purchased coronet, while some pandar, happy in a fair wife, could obtain a more cordial salute from Buckingham, while some buffoon, versed in all the latest scandal of the Court, could draw a louder laugh from James.

During a long course of years, Bacon's unworthy ambition was crowned with success. His sagacity early enabled him to perceive who was likely to become the most powerful man in the kingdom. He probably knew the King's mind before it was known to the King himself, and attached himself to Villiers, while the less discerning crowd of courtiers still continued to fawn on
Somerset, The influence of the younger favourite became greater daily. The contest between the rivals might, however, have lasted long, but for that frightful crime which, in spite of all that could be effected by the research and ingenuity of historians, is still covered with so mysterious an obscurity. The descent of Somerset had been a gradual and almost imperceptible lapse. It now became a headlong fall; and Villiers, left without a competitor, rapidly rose to a height of power such as no subject since Wolsey had attained.

There were many points of resemblance between the two celebrated courtiers who, at different times, extended their patronage to Bacon. It is difficult to say whether Essex or Villiers was more eminently distinguished by those graces of person and manner which have always been rated in courts at much more than their real value. Both were constitutionally brave; and both, like most men who are constitutionally brave, were open and unreserved. Both were rash and head-strong. Both were destitute of the abilities and of the information which are necessary to statesmen. Yet both, trusting to the accomplishments which had made them conspicuous in tilt-yards and ball-rooms, aspired to rule the State. Both owed their elevation to the personal attachment of the sovereign; and in both cases this attachment was of so eccentric a kind, that it perplexed observers, that it still continues to perplex historians, and that it gave rise to much scandal which we are inclined to think unfounded. Each of them treated the sovereign whose favour he enjoyed with a
rudeness which approached to insolence. This petulance ruined
Essex, who had to deal with a spirit naturally as proud as his
own, and accustomed, during near half a century, to the most
respectful observance. But there was a wide difference between
the haughty daughter of Henry and her successor. James was timid
from the cradle. His nerves, naturally weak, had not been
fortified by reflection or by habit. His life, till he came to
England, had been a series of mortifications and humiliations.
With all his high notions of the origin and extent of his
prerogatives, he was never his own master for a day. In spite of
his kingly title, in spite of his despotic theories, he was to
the last a slave at heart. Villiers treated him like one; and
this course, though adopted, we believe, merely from temper,
succeeded as well as if it had been a system of policy formed
after mature deliberation.

In generosity, in sensibility, in capacity for friendship, Essex
far surpassed Buckingham. Indeed, Buckingham can scarcely be said
to have had any friend, with the exception of the two princes
over whom successively he exercised so wonderful an influence.
Essex was to the last adored by the people. Buckingham was always
a most unpopular man, except perhaps for a very short time after
his return from the childish visit to Spain. Essex fell a victim
to the rigour of the Government amidst the lamentations of the
people. Buckingham, execrated by the people, and solemnly
declared a public enemy by the representatives of the people,
fell by the hand of one of the people, and was lamented by none
but his master.

The way in which the two favourites acted towards Bacon was highly characteristic, and may serve to illustrate the old and true saying, that a man is generally more inclined to feel kindly towards one on whom he has conferred favours than towards one from whom he has received them. Essex loaded Bacon with benefits, and never thought that he had done enough. It seems never to have crossed the mind of the powerful and wealthy noble that the poor barrister whom he treated with such munificent kindness was not his equal. It was, we have no doubt, with perfect sincerity that the Earl declared that he would willingly give his sister or daughter in marriage to his friend. He was in general more than sufficiently sensible of his own merits; but he did not seem to know that he had ever deserved well of Bacon. On that cruel day when they saw each other for the last time at the bar of the Lords, Essex taxed his perfidious friend with unkindness and insincerity, but never with ingratitude. Even in such a moment, more bitter than the bitterness of death, that noble heart was too great to vent itself in such a reproach.

Villiers, on the other hand, owed much to Bacon. When their acquaintance began, Sir Francis was a man of mature age, of high station, and of established fame as a politician, an advocate, and a writer. Villiers was little more than a boy, a younger son of a house then of no great note. He was but just entering on the career of court favour; and none but the most discerning
observers could as yet perceive that he was likely to distance all his competitors. The countenance and advice of a man so highly distinguished as the Attorney-General, must have been an object of the highest importance to the young adventurer. But though Villiers was the obliged party, he was far less warmly attached to Bacon, and far less delicate in his conduct towards Bacon, than Essex had been.

To do the new favourite justice, he early exerted his influence in behalf of his illustrious friend. In 1616 Sir Francis was sworn of the Privy Council, and in March 1617, on the retirement of Lord Brackley, was appointed Keeper of the Great Seal.

On the seventh of May, the first day of term, he rode in state to Westminster Hall, with the Lord Treasurer on his right hand, the Lord Privy Seal on his left, a long procession of students and ushers before him, and a crowd of peers, privy-councillors, and judges following in his train. Having entered his court, he addressed the splendid auditory in a grave and dignified speech, which proves how well he understood those judicial duties which he afterwards performed so ill. Even at that moment, the proudest moment of his life in the estimation of the vulgar, and, it may be, even in his own, he cast back a look of lingering affection towards those noble pursuits from which, as it seemed, he was about to be estranged. "The depth of the three long vacations," said he, "I would reserve in some measure free from business of
estate, and for studies, arts, and sciences, to which of my own
nature I am most inclined."

The years during which Bacon held the Great Seal were among the
darkest and most shameful in English history. Everything at home
and abroad was mismanaged. First came the execution of Raleigh,
an act which, if done in a proper manner, might have been
defensible, but which, under all the circumstances, must be
considered as a dastardly murder. Worse was behind: the war of
Bohemia, the successes of Tilly and Spinola, the Palatinate
conquered, the King's son-in-law an exile, the House of Austria
dominant on the Continent, the Protestant religion and the
liberties of the Germanic body trodden under foot. Meanwhile, the
wavering and cowardly policy of England furnished matter of
ridicule to all the nations of Europe. The love of peace which
James professed would, even when indulged to an impolitic excess,
have been respectable, if it had proceeded from tenderness for
his people. But the truth is, that, while he had nothing to spare
for the defence of the natural allies of England, he resorted
without scruple to the most illegal and oppressive devices, for
the purpose of enabling Buckingham and Buckingham's relations to
outshine the ancient aristocracy of the realm. Benevolences were
exactled. Patents of monopoly were multiplied. All the resources
which could have been employed to replenish a beggared exchequer,
at the close of a ruinous war, were put in motion during this
season of ignominious peace.
The vices of the administration must be chiefly ascribed to the
weakness of the King and to the levity and violence of the
favourite. But it is impossible to acquit the Lord Keeper of all
share in the guilt. For those odious patents, in particular,
which passed the Great Seal while it was in his charge, he must
be held answerable. In the speech which he made on first taking
his seat in his court, he had pledged himself to discharge this
important part of his functions with the greatest caution and
impartiality. He had declared that he "would walk in the light,"
"that men should see that no particular turn or end led him, but
a general rule." Mr. Montagu would have us believe that Bacon
acted up to these professions, and says that "the power of the
favourite did not deter the Lord Keeper from staying grants and
patents when his public duty demanded this interposition." Does
Mr. Montagu consider patents of monopoly as good things? or does
he mean to say that Bacon staid every patent of monopoly that
came before him? Of all patents in our history, the most
disgraceful was that which was granted to Sir Giles Mompesson,
supposed to be the original of Massinger's Overreach, and to Sir
Francis Michell, from whom justice Greedy is supposed to have
been drawn, for the exclusive manufacturing of gold and silver
lace. The effect of this monopoly was of course that the metal
employed in the manufacture was adulterated, to the great loss of
the public. But this was a trifle. The patentees were armed with
powers as great as have ever been given to farmers of the revenue
in the worst governed countries. They were authorised to search
houses and to arrest interlopers; and these formidable powers
were used for purposes viler than even those for which they were given, for the wreaking of old grudges, and for the corrupting of female chastity. Was not this a case in which public duty demanded the interposition of the Lord Keeper? And did the Lord Keeper interpose? He did. He wrote to inform the King, that he "had considered of the fitness and conveniency of the gold and silver thread business," "that it was convenient that it should be settled," that he "did conceive apparent likelihood that it would redound much to his Majesty's profit," that, therefore, "it were good it were settled with all convenient speed." The meaning of all this was, that certain of the House of Villiers were to go shares with Overreach and Greedy in the plunder of the public. This was the way in which, when the favourite pressed for patents, lucrative to his relations and to his creatures, ruinous and vexatious to the body of the people, the chief guardian of the laws interposed. Having assisted the patentees to obtain this monopoly, Bacon assisted them also in the steps which they took for the purpose of guarding it. He committed several people to close confinement for disobeying his tyrannical edict. It is needless to say more. Our readers are now able to judge whether, in the matter of patents, Bacon acted conformably to his professions, or deserved the praise which his biographer has bestowed on him.

In his judicial capacity his conduct was not less reprehensible. He suffered Buckingham to dictate many of his decisions. Bacon knew as well as any man that a judge who listens to private
solicitations is a disgrace to his post. He himself, before he
was raised to the woolsack, represented this strongly to
Villiers, then just entering on his career. “By no means,” said
Sir Francis, in a letter of advice addressed to the young
courtier, “by no means be you persuaded to interpose yourself,
either by word or letter, in any cause depending in any court of
justice, nor suffer any great man to do it where you can hinder
it. If it should prevail, it perverts justice; but if the judge
be so just, and of such courage as he ought to be, as not to be
inclined thereby, yet it always leaves a taint of suspicion
behind it.” Yet he had not been Lord Keeper a month when
Buckingham began to interfere in Chancery suits; and Buckingham’s
interference was, as might have been expected, successful.

Mr. Montagu’s reflections on the excellent passage which we have
quoted above are exceedingly amusing. “No man,” says he, “more
deeply felt the evils which then existed of the interference of
the Crown and of statesmen to influence judges. How beautifully
did he admonish Buckingham, regardless as he proved of all
admonition!” We should be glad to know how it can be expected
that admonition will be regarded by him who receives it, when it
is altogether neglected by him who gives it. We do not defend
Buckingham; but what was his guilt to Bacon’s? Buckingham was
young, ignorant, thoughtless, dizzy with the rapidity of his
ascent and the height of his position. That he should be eager to
serve his relations, his flatterers, his mistresses, that he
should not fully apprehend the immense importance of a pure
administration of justice, that he should think more about those who were bound to him by private ties than about the public interest, all this was perfectly natural, and not altogether unpardonable. Those who intrust a petulant, hot-blooded, ill-informed lad with power, are more to blame than he for the mischief which he may do with it. How could it be expected of a lively page, raised by a wild freak of fortune to the first influence in the empire, that he should have bestowed any serious thought on the principles which ought to guide judicial decisions? Bacon was the ablest public man then living in Europe. He was near sixty years old. He had thought much, and to good purpose, on the general principles of law. He had for many years borne a part daily in the administration of justice. It was impossible that a man with a tithe of his sagacity and experience should not have known that a judge who suffers friends or patrons to dictate his decrees violates the plainest rules of duty. In fact, as we have seen, he knew this well: he expressed it admirably. Neither on this occasion nor on any other could his bad actions be attributed to any defect of the head. They sprang from quite a different cause.

A man who stooped to render such services to others was not likely to be scrupulous as to the means by which he enriched himself. He and his dependants accepted large presents from persons who were engaged in Chancery suits. The amount of the plunder which he collected in this way it is impossible to estimate. There can be no doubt that he received very much more
than was proved on his trial, though, it may be, less than was
suspected by the public. His enemies stated his illicit gains at
a hundred thousand pounds. But this was probably an exaggeration.

It was long before the day of reckoning arrived. During the
interval between the second and third Parliaments of James, the
nation was absolutely governed by the Crown. The prospects of the
Lord Keeper were bright and serene. His great place rendered the
splendour of his talents even more conspicuous, and gave an
additional charm to the serenity of his temper, the courtesy of
his manners, and the eloquence of his conversation. The pillaged
suitor might mutter. The austere Puritan patriot might, in his
retreat, grieve that one on whom God had bestowed without measure
all the abilities which qualify men to take the lead in great
reforms should be found among the adherents of the worst abuses.
But the murmurs of the suitor and the lamentations of the patriot
had scarcely any avenue to the ears of the powerful. The King,
and the Minister who was the King's master, smiled on their
illustrious flatterer. The whole crowd of courtiers and nobles
sought his favour with emulous eagerness. Men of wit and learning
hailed with delight the elevation of one who had so signally
shown that a man of profound learning and of brilliant wit might
understand, far better than any plodding dunce, the art of
thriving in the world.

Once, and but once, this course of prosperity was for a moment
interrupted. It would seem that even Bacon's brain was not strong
enough to bear without some discomposure the inebriating effect of so much good fortune. For some time after his elevation, he showed himself a little wanting in that wariness and self-command to which, more than even to his transcendent talents, his elevation was to be ascribed. He was by no means a good hater. The temperature of his revenge, like that of his gratitude, was scarcely ever more than lukewarm. But there was one person whom he had long regarded with an animosity which, though studiously suppressed, was perhaps the stronger for the suppression. The insults and injuries which, when a young man struggling into note and professional practice, he had received from Sir Edward Coke, were such as might move the most placable nature to resentment. About the time at which Bacon received the Seals, Coke had, on account of his contumacious resistance to the royal pleasure, been deprived of his seat in the Court of King's Bench, and had ever since languished in retirement. But Coke's opposition to the Court, we fear, was the effect not of good principles, but of a bad temper. Perverse and testy as he was, he wanted true fortitude and dignity of character. His obstinacy, unsupported by virtuous motives, was not proof against disgrace. He solicited a reconciliation with the favourite, and his solicitations were successful. Sir John Villiers, the brother of Buckingham, was looking out for a rich wife. Coke had a large fortune and an unmarried daughter. A bargain was struck. But Lady Coke, the lady whom twenty years before Essex had wooed on behalf of Bacon, would not hear of the match. A violent and scandalous family quarrel followed. The mother carried the girl away by stealth. The father pursued them, and regained possession of his daughter
by force. The King was then in Scotland, and Buckingham had attended him thither. Bacon was during their absence at the head of affairs in England. He felt towards Coke as much malevolence as it was in his nature to feel towards anybody. His wisdom had been laid to sleep by prosperity. In an evil hour he determined to interfere in the disputes which agitated his enemy's household. He declared for the wife, countenanced the Attorney-General in the filing an information in the Star-Chamber against the husband, and wrote letters to the King and the favourite against the proposed marriage. The strong language which he used in those letters shows that, sagacious as he was, he did not quite know his place, and that he was not fully acquainted with the extent either of Buckingham's power, or of the change which the possession of that power had produced in Buckingham's character. He soon had a lesson which he never forgot. The favourite received the news of the Lord Keeper's interference with feelings of the most violent resentment, and made the King even more angry than himself. Bacon's eyes were at once opened to his error, and to all its possible consequences. He had been elated, if not intoxicated, by greatness. The shock sobered him in an instant. He was all himself again. He apologised submissively for his interference. He directed the Attorney-General to stop the proceedings against Coke. He sent to tell Lady Coke that he could do nothing for her. He announced to both the families that he was desirous to promote the connection. Having given these proofs of contrition, he ventured to present himself
before Buckingham. But the young upstart did not think that he
had yet sufficiently humbled an old man who had been his friend
and his benefactor, who was the highest civil functionary
in the realm, and the most eminent man of letters of the world.

It is said that on two successive days Bacon repaired to
Buckingham's house, that on two successive days he was suffered
to remain in an antechamber among footboys, seated on an old
wooden box, with the Great Seal of England at his side; and that
when at length he was admitted, he flung himself on the floor,
kissed the favourite's feet, and vowed never to rise till he was
forgiven. Sir Anthony Weldon, on whose authority this story
rests, is likely enough to have exaggerated the meanness of Bacon
and the insolence of Buckingham. But it is difficult to imagine
that so circumstantial a narrative, written by a person who avers
that he was present on the occasion, can be wholly without
foundation; and, unhappily, there is little in the character
either of the favourite or of the Lord Keeper to make the
narrative improbable. It is certain that a reconciliation took
place on terms humiliating to Bacon, who never more ventured to
cross any purpose of anybody who bore the name of Villiers. He
put a strong curb on those angry passions which had for the first
time in his life mastered his prudence. He went through the forms
of a reconciliation with Coke, and did his best, by seeking
opportunities of paying little civilities, and by avoiding all
that could produce collision, to tame the untameable ferocity of
his old enemy.
In the main, however, Bacon's life, while he held the Great Seal, was, in outward appearance, most enviable. In London he lived with great dignity at York House, the venerable mansion of his father. Here it was that, in January 1620, he celebrated his entrance into his sixtieth year amidst a splendid circle of friends. He had then exchanged the appellation of Keeper for the higher title of Chancellor. Ben Jonson was one of the party, and wrote on the occasion some of the happiest of his rugged rhymes. All things, he tells us, seemed to smile about the old house, "the fire, the wine, the men." The spectacle of the accomplished host, after a life marked by no great disaster, entered on a green old age, in the enjoyment of riches, power, high honours, undiminished mental activity, and vast literary reputation, made a strong impression on the poet, if we may judge from those well-known lines:

"England's high Chancellor, the destined heir, In his soft cradle, to his father's chair, Whose even thread the Fates spin round and full Out of their choicest and their whitest wool."

In the intervals of rest which Bacon's political and judicial functions afforded, he was in the habit of retiring to Gorhambury. At that place his business was literature, and his favourite amusement gardening, which in one of his most interesting Essays he calls "the purest of human pleasures." In his magnificent grounds he erected, at a cost of ten thousand
pounds, a retreat to which he repaired when he wished to avoid all visitors, and to devote himself wholly to study. On such occasions, a few young men of distinguished talents were sometimes the companions of his retirement; and among them his quick eye soon discerned the superior abilities of Thomas Hobbes. It is not probable, however, that he fully appreciated the powers of his disciple, or foresaw the vast influence, both for good and for evil, which that most vigorous and acute of human intellects was destined to exercise on the two succeeding generations.

In January 1621, Bacon had reached the zenith of his fortunes. He had just published the Novum Organum; and that extraordinary book had drawn forth the warmest expressions of admiration from the ablest men in Europe. He had obtained honours of a widely different kind, but perhaps not less valued by him. He had been created Baron Verulam. He had subsequently been raised to the higher dignity of Viscount St. Albans. His patent was drawn in the most flattering terms, and the Prince of Wales signed it as a witness. The ceremony of investiture was performed with great state at Theobalds, and Buckingham condescended to be one of the chief actors. Posterity has felt that the greatest of English philosophers could derive no accession of dignity from any title which James could bestow, and, in defiance of the royal letters patent, has obstinately refused to degrade Francis Bacon into Viscount St. Albans.

In a few weeks was signally brought to the test the value of
those objects for which Bacon had sullied his integrity, had
resigned his independence, had violated the most sacred
obligations of friendship and gratitude, had flattered the
worthless, had persecuted the innocent, had tampered with judges,
had tortured prisoners, had plundered suitors, had wasted on
paltry intrigues all the powers of the most exquisitely
constructed intellect that has ever been bestowed on any of the
children of men. A sudden and terrible reverse was at hand. A
Parliament had been summoned. After six years of silence the
voice of the nation was again to be heard. Only three days after
the pageant which was performed at Theobalds in honour of Bacon,
the Houses met.

Want of money had, as usual, induced the King to convene his
Parliament. It may be doubted, however, whether, if he or his
Ministers had been at all aware of the state of public feeling,
they would not have tried any expedient, or borne with any
inconvenience, rather than have ventured to face the deputies of
a justly exasperated nation. But they did not discern those
times. Indeed almost all the political blunders of James, and of
his more unfortunate son, arose from one great error. During the
fifty years which preceded the Long Parliament a great and
progressive change was taking place in the public mind. The
nature and extent of this change was not in the least understood
by either of the first two Kings of the House of Stuart, or by
any of their advisers. That the nation became more and more
discontented every year, that every House of Commons was more
unmanageable than that which had preceded it, were facts which it was impossible not to perceive. But the Court could not understand why these things were so. The Court could not see that the English people and the English Government, though they might once have been well suited to each other, were suited to each other no longer; that the nation had outgrown its old institutions, was every day more uneasy under them, was pressing against them, and would soon burst through them. The alarming phaenomena, the existence of which no sycophant could deny, were ascribed to every cause except the true one. "In my first Parliament," said James, "I was a novice. In my next, there was a kind of beasts called undertakers" and so forth. In the third Parliament he could hardly be called a novice, and those beasts, the undertakers, did not exist. Yet his third Parliament gave him more trouble than either the first or the second.

The Parliament had no sooner met than the House of Commons proceeded, in a temperate and respectful, but most determined manner, to discuss the public grievances. Their first attacks were directed against those odious patents, under cover of which Buckingham and his creatures had pillaged and oppressed the nation. The vigour with which these proceedings were conducted spread dismay through the Court. Buckingham thought himself in danger, and, in his alarm, had recourse to an adviser who had lately acquired considerable influence over him, Williams, Dean of Westminster. This person had already been of great use to the favourite in a very delicate matter. Buckingham had set his heart
on marrying Lady Catherine Manners, daughter and heiress of the
Earl of Rutland. But the difficulties were great. The Earl was
haughty and impracticable, and the young lady was a Catholic.
Williams soothed the pride of the father, and found arguments
which, for a time at least, quieted the conscience of the
daughter. For these services he had been rewarded with
considerable preferment in the Church; and he was now rapidly
rising to the same place in the regard of Buckingham which had
formerly been occupied by Bacon.

Williams was one of those who are wiser for others than for
themselves. His own public life was unfortunate, and was made
unfortunate by his strange want of judgment and self-command at
several important conjunctures. But the counsel which he gave on
this occasion showed no want of worldly wisdom. He advised the
favourite to abandon all thoughts of defending the monopolies, to
find some foreign embassy for his brother Sir Edward, who was
deeply implicated in the villanies of Mompesson, and to leave the
other offenders to the justice of Parliament. Buckingham received
this advice with the warmest expressions of gratitude, and
declared that a load had been lifted from his heart. He then
repaired with Williams to the royal presence. They found the King
engaged in earnest consultation with Prince Charles. The plan of
operations proposed by the Dean was fully discussed, and approved
in all its parts.

The first victims whom the Court abandoned to the vengeance of
the Commons were Sir Giles Mompesson and Sir Francis Michell. It was some time before Bacon began to entertain any apprehensions. His talents and his address gave him great influence in the House of which he had lately become a member, as indeed they must have done in any assembly. In the House of Commons he had many personal friends and many warm admirers. But at length, about six weeks after the meeting of Parliament, the storm burst.

A committee of the lower House had been appointed to inquire into the state of the Courts of Justice. On the fifteenth of March the chairman of that committee, Sir Robert Philips, member for Bath, reported that great abuses had been discovered. "The person," said he, "against whom these things are alleged is no less than the Lord Chancellor, a man so endued with all parts, both of nature and art, as that I will say no more of him, being not able to say enough." Sir Robert then proceeded to state, in the most temperate manner, the nature of the charges. A person of the name of Aubrey had a case depending in Chancery. He had been almost ruined by law expenses, and his patience had been exhausted by the delays of the court. He received a hint from some of the hangers-on of the Chancellor that a present of one hundred pounds would expedite matters. The poor man had not the sum required. However, having found out an usurer who accommodated him with it at high interest, he carried it to York House. The Chancellor took the money, and his dependants assured the suitor that all would go right. Aubrey was, however, disappointed; for, after considerable delay, "a killing decree" was pronounced against
him. Another suitor of the name of Egerton complained that he had been induced by two of the Chancellor's jackals to make his Lordship a present of four hundred pounds, and that, nevertheless, he had not been able to obtain a decree in his favour. The evidence to these facts was overwhelming. Bacon's friends could only entreat the House to suspend its judgment, and to send up the case to the Lords, in a form less offensive than an impeachment.

On the nineteenth of March the King sent a message to the Commons, expressing his deep regret that so eminent a person as the Chancellor should be suspected of misconduct. His Majesty declared that he had no wish to screen the guilty from justice, and proposed to appoint a new kind of tribunal consisting of eighteen commissioners, who might be chosen from among the members of the two Houses, to investigate the matter. The Commons were not disposed to depart from their regular course of proceeding. On the same day they held a conference with the Lords, and delivered in the heads of the accusation against the Chancellor. At this conference Bacon was not present. Overwhelmed with shame and remorse, and abandoned by all those in whom he had weakly put his trust, he had shut himself up in his chamber from the eyes of men. The dejection of his mind soon disordered his body. Buckingham, who visited him by the King's order, "found his Lordship very sick and heavy." It appears, from a pathetic letter which the unhappy man addressed to the Peers on the day of the conference, that he neither expected nor wished to survive his
disgrace. During several days he remained in his bed, refusing to see any human being. He passionately told his attendants to leave him, to forget him, never again to name his name, never to remember that there had been such a man in the world. In the meantime, fresh instances of corruption were every day brought to the knowledge of his accusers. The number of charges rapidly increased from two to twenty-three. The Lords entered on the investigation of the case with laudable alacrity. Some witnesses were examined at the bar of the House. A select committee was appointed to take the depositions of others; and the inquiry was rapidly proceeding, when on the twenty-sixth of March, the King adjourned the Parliament for three weeks.

This measure revived Bacon's hopes. He made the most of his short respite. He attempted to work on the feeble mind of the King. He appealed to all the strongest feelings of James, to his fears, to his vanity, to his high notions of prerogative. Would the Solomon of the age commit so gross an error as to encourage the encroaching spirit of Parliaments? Would God's anointed, accountable to God alone, pay homage to the clamorous multitude?

"Those," exclaimed Bacon, "who now strike at the Chancellor will soon strike at the Crown. I am the first sacrifice. I wish I may be the last." But all his eloquence and address were employed in vain. Indeed, whatever Mr. Montagu may say, we are firmly convinced that it was not in the King's power to save Bacon, without having recourse to measures which would have convulsed the realm. The Crown had not sufficient influence over the
Parliament to procure an acquittal in so clear a case of guilt.

And to dissolve a Parliament which is universally allowed to have been one of the best Parliaments that ever sat, which had acted liberally and respectfully towards the Sovereign, and which enjoyed in the highest degree the favour of the people, only in order to stop a grave, temperate, and constitutional inquiry into the personal integrity of the first judge in the kingdom, would have been a measure more scandalous and absurd than any of those which were the ruin of the House of Stuart. Such a measure, while it would have been as fatal to the Chancellor's honour as a conviction, would have endangered the very existence of the monarchy. The King, acting by the advice of Williams, very properly refused to engage in a dangerous struggle with his people, for the purpose of saving from legal condemnation a Minister whom it was impossible to save from dishonour. He advised Bacon to plead guilty, and promised to do all in his power to mitigate the punishment. Mr. Montagu is exceedingly angry with James on this account. But though we are, in general, very little inclined to admire that Prince's conduct, we really think that his advice was, under all the circumstances, the best advice that could have been given.

On the seventeenth of April the Houses reassembled, and the Lords resumed their inquiries into the abuses of the Court of Chancery. On the twenty-second, Bacon addressed to the Peers a letter, which the Prince of Wales condescended to deliver. In this artful and pathetic composition, the Chancellor acknowledged his guilt
in guarded and general terms, and, while acknowledging,
endeavoured to palliate it. This, however, was not thought
sufficient by his judges. They required a more particular
confession, and sent him a copy of the charges. On the thirtieth,
he delivered a paper in which he admitted, with few and
unimportant reservations, the truth of the accusations brought
against him, and threw himself entirely on the mercy of his
peers. "Upon advised consideration of the charges," said he,
"descending into my own conscience, and calling my memory to
account so far as I am able, I do plainly and ingenuously confess
that I am guilty of corruption, and do renounce all defence."

The Lords came to a resolution that the Chancellor's confession
appeared to be full and ingenuous, and sent a committee to
inquire of him whether it was really subscribed by himself. The
deputies, among whom was Southampton, the common friend, many
years before, of Bacon and Essex, performed their duty with great
delicacy. Indeed, the agonies of such a mind and the degradation
of such a name might well have softened the most obdurate
natures. "My Lords," said Bacon, "it is my act, my hand, my
heart. I beseech your Lordships to be merciful to a broken reed."
They withdrew; and he again retired to his chamber in the deepest
dejection. The next day, the sergeant-at-arms and the usher of
the House of Lords came to conduct him to Westminster Hall, where
sentence was to be pronounced. But they found him so unwell that
he could not leave his bed; and this excuse for his absence was
readily accepted. In no quarter does there appear to have been
the smallest desire to add to his humiliation.

The sentence was, however, severe—the more severe, no doubt, because the Lords knew that it would not be executed, and that they had an excellent opportunity of exhibiting, at small cost, the inflexibility of their justice, and their abhorrence of corruption. Bacon was condemned to pay a fine of forty thousand pounds, and to be imprisoned in the Tower during the King's pleasure. He was declared incapable of holding any office in the State or of sitting in Parliament: and he was banished for life from the verge of the court. In such misery and shame ended that long career of worldly wisdom and worldly prosperity.

Even at this pass Mr. Montagu does not desert his hero. He seems indeed to think that the attachment of an editor ought to be as devoted as that of Mr. Moore's lovers; and cannot conceive what biography was made for,

"if 'tis not the same
Through joy and through torment, through glory and shame."

He assures us that Bacon was innocent, that he had the means of making a perfectly satisfactory defence, that when "he plainly and ingenuously confessed that he was guilty of corruption," and when he afterwards solemnly affirmed that his confession was "his act, his hand, his heart," he was telling a great lie, and that
he refrained from bringing forward proofs of his innocence,
because he durst not disobey the King and the favourite, who, for
their own selfish objects, pressed him to plead guilty.

Now, in the first place, there is not the smallest reason to
believe that, if James and Buckingham had thought that Bacon had
a good defence, they would have prevented him from making it.
What conceivable motive had they for doing so? Mr. Montagu
perpetually repeats that it was their interest to sacrifice
Bacon. But he overlooks an obvious distinction. It was their
interest to sacrifice Bacon on the supposition of his guilt; but
not on the supposition of his innocence. James was very properly
unwilling to run the risk of protecting his Chancellor against
the Parliament. But if the Chancellor had been able, by force of
argument, to obtain an acquittal from the Parliament, we have no
doubt that both the King and Villiers would have heartily
rejoiced. They would have rejoiced, not merely on account of
their friendship for Bacon, which seems, however, to have been as
sincere as most friendships of that sort, but on selfish grounds.
Nothing could have strengthened the Government more than such a
victory. The King and the favourite abandoned the Chancellor
because they were unable to avert his disgrace, and unwilling to
share it. Mr. Montagu mistakes effect for cause. He thinks that
Bacon did not prove his innocence, because he was not supported
by the Court. The truth evidently is that the Court did not
venture to support Bacon, because he could not prove his
innocence.
Again, it seems strange that Mr. Montagu should not perceive
that, while attempting to vindicate Bacon’s reputation, he is
really casting on it the foulest of all aspersions. He imputes to
his idol a degree of meanness and depravity more loathsome than
judicial corruption itself. A corrupt judge may have many good
qualities. But a man who, to please a powerful patron, solemnly
declares himself guilty of corruption when he knows himself to be
innocent, must be a monster of servility and impudence. Bacon
was, to say nothing of his highest claims to respect, a
gentleman, a nobleman, a scholar, a statesman, a man of the first
consideration in society, a man far advanced in years. Is it
possible to believe that such a man would, to gratify any human
being, irreparably ruin his own character by his own act? Imagine
a grey-headed judge, full of years and honours, owning with
tears, with pathetic assurances of his penitence and of his
sincerity, that he has been guilty of shameful malpractices,
repeatedly asseverating the truth of his confession, subscribing
it with his own hand, submitting to conviction, receiving a
humiliating sentence and acknowledging its justice, and all this
when he has it in his power to show that his conduct has been
irreproachable! The thing is incredible. But if we admit it to be
ture, what must we think of such a man, if indeed he deserves the
name of man, who thinks anything that kings and minions can
bestow more precious than honour, or anything that they can
inflict more terrible than infamy?
Of this most disgraceful imputation we fully acquit Bacon. He had no defence; and Mr. Montagu's affectionate attempt to make a defence for him has altogether failed.

The grounds on which Mr. Montagu rests the case are two: the first, that the taking of presents was usual, and, what he seems to consider as the same thing, not discreditable; the second, that these presents were not taken as bribes.

Mr Montagu brings forward many facts in support of his first proposition. He is not content with showing that many English judges formerly received gifts from suitors, but collects similar instances from foreign nations and ancient times. He goes back to the commonwealths of Greece, and attempts to press into his service a line of Homer and a sentence of Plutarch, which, we fear, will hardly serve his turn. The gold of which Homer speaks was not intended to fee the judges, but was paid into court for the benefit of the successful litigant; and the gratuities which Pericles, as Plutarch states, distributed among the members of the Athenian tribunals, were legal wages paid out of the public revenue. We can supply Mr. Montagu with passages much more in point. Hesiod, who, like poor Aubrey, had a "killing decree" made against him in the Chancery of Ascra, forgot decorum so far that he ventured to designate the learned persons who presided in that court, as Basileas dorophagous. Plutarch and Diodorus have handed down to the latest ages the respectable name of Anytus,
the son of Anthemion, the first defendant who, eluding all the safeguards which the ingenuity of Solon could devise, succeeded in corrupting a bench of Athenian judges. We are indeed so far from grudging Mr. Montagu the aid of Greece, that we will give him Rome into the bargain. We acknowledge that the honourable senators who tried Verres received presents which were worth more than the fee-simple of York House and Gorhambury together, and that the no less honourable senators and knights who professed to believe in the alibi of Clodius obtained marks still more extraordinary of the esteem and gratitude of the defendant. In short, we are ready to admit that, before Bacon's time, and in Bacon's time, judges were in the habit of receiving gifts from suitors.

But is this a defence? We think not. The robberies of Cacus and Barabbas are no apology for those of Turpin. The conduct of the two men of Belial who swore away the life of Naboth has never been cited as an excuse for the perjuries of Oates and Dangerfield. Mr. Montagu has confounded two things which it is necessary carefully to distinguish from each other, if we wish to form a correct judgment of the characters of men of other countries and other times. That an immoral action is in a particular society, generally considered as innocent, is a good plea for an individual who, being one of that society, and having adopted the notions which prevail among his neighbours, commits that action. But the circumstance that a great many people are in the habit of committing immoral actions is no plea at all. We
should think it unjust to call St. Louis a wicked man, because in
an age in which toleration was generally regarded as a sin, he
persecuted heretics. We should think it unjust to call Cowper's
friend, John Newton, a hypocrite and monster, because at a time
when the slave-trade was commonly considered by the most
respectable people as an innocent and beneficial traffic, he
went, largely provided with hymn-books and handcuffs, on a Guinea
voyage. But the circumstance that there are twenty thousand
thieves in London is no excuse for a fellow who is caught
breaking into a shop. No man is to be blamed for not making
discoveries in morality, for not finding out that something which
everybody else thinks to be good is really bad. But, if a man
does that which he and all around him know to be bad, it is no
excuse for him that many others have done the same. We should be
ashamed of spending so much time in pointing out so clear a
distinction, but that Mr. Montagu seems altogether to overlook
it.

Now, to apply these principles to the case before us; let Mr.
Montagu prove that, in Bacon's age, the practices for which Bacon
was punished were generally considered as innocent, and we admit
that he has made out his point. But this we defy him to do. That
these practices were common we admit; but they were common just
as all wickedness to which there is strong temptation always was
and always will be common. They were common just as theft,
cheating, perjury, adultery have always been common. They were
common, not because people did not know what was right, but
because people liked to do what was wrong. They were common, though prohibited by law. They were common, though condemned by public opinion. They were common, because in that age law and public opinion united had not sufficient force to restrain the greediness of powerful and unprincipled magistrates. They were common, as every crime will be common when the gain to which it leads is great, and the chance of punishment small. But, though common, they were universally allowed to be altogether unjustifiable; they were in the highest degree odious; and, though many were guilty of them, none had the audacity publicly to avow and defend them.

We could give a thousand proofs that the opinion then entertained concerning these practices was such as we have described. But we will content ourselves with calling a single witness, honest Hugh Latimer. His sermons, preached more than seventy years before the inquiry into Bacon's conduct, abound with the sharpest invectives against those very practices of which Bacon was guilty, and which, as Mr. Montagu seems to think, nobody ever considered as blamable till Bacon was punished for them. We could easily fill twenty pages with the homely, but just and forcible rhetoric of the brave old bishop. We shall select a few passages as fair specimens, and no more than fair specimens, of the rest. "Omnes diligunt munera. They all love bribes. Bribery is a princely kind of thieving. They will be waged by the rich, either to give sentence against the poor, or to put off the poor man's cause. This is the noble theft of princes and magistrates. They are
bribe-takers. Nowadays they call them gentle rewards. Let them leave their colouring, and call them by their Christian name—bribes." And again. "Cambyses was a great emperor, such another as our master is. He had many lord-deputies, lord-presidents, and lieutenants under him. It is a great while ago since I read the history. It chanced he had under him, in one of his dominions, a briber, a gift-taker, a gratifier of rich men; he followed gifts as fast as he that followed the pudding, a hand-maker in his office to make his son a great man, as the old saying is: Happy is the child whose father goeth to the devil. The cry of the poor widow came to the emperor's ear, and caused him to flay the judge quick, and laid his skin in the chair of judgment, that all judges that should give judgment afterwards should sit in the same skin. Surely it was a goodly sign, a goodly monument, the sign of the judge's skin. I pray God we may once see the skin in England." "I am sure," says he, in another sermon, "this is scala inferni, the right way to hell, to be covetous, to take bribes, and pervert justice. If a judge should ask me the way to hell, I would show him this way. First, let him be a covetous man; let his heart be poisoned with covetousness. Then let him go a little further, and take bribes; and, lastly, pervert judgment. Lo, here is the mother, and the daughter, and the daughter's daughter. Avarice is the mother: she brings forth bribe-taking, and bribe-taking perverting of judgment. There lacks a fourth thing to make up the mess, which, so help me God, if I were judge, should be hangum tuum, a Tyburn tippet to take with him; an it were the judge of the King's Bench, my Lord Chief Judge of England, yea, an it were my Lord Chancellor himself, to Tyburn with him." We
will quote but one more passage. "He that took the silver basin and ewer for a bribe, thinketh that it will never come out.

But he may now know that I know it, and I know it not alone; there be more beside me that know it. Oh, briber and bribery!

He was never a good man that will so take bribes. Nor can I believe that he that is a briber will be a good justice. It will never be merry in England till we have the skins of such.

For what needeth bribing where men do their things uprightly?"

This was not the language of a great philosopher who had made new discoveries in moral and political science. It was the plain talk of a plain man, who sprang from the body of the people, who sympathised strongly with their wants and their feelings, and who boldly uttered their opinions. It was on account of the fearless way in which stout-hearted old Hugh exposed the misdeeds of men in ermine tippets and gold collars, that the Londoners cheered him, as he walked down the Strand to preach at Whitehall, struggled for a touch of his gown, and bawled, "Have at them, Father Latimer!" It is plain, from the passages which we have quoted, and from fifty others which we might quote, that, long before Bacon was born, the accepting of presents by a judge was known to be a wicked and shameful act, that the fine words under which it was the fashion to veil such corrupt practices were even then seen through by the common people, that the distinction on which Mr. Montagu insists between compliments and bribes was even then laughed at as a mere colouring. There may be some oratorical exaggeration in what Latimer says about the Tyburn tippet and the
sign of the judge's skin; but the fact that he ventured to use such expressions is amply sufficient to prove that the gift-taking judges, the receivers of silver basins and ewers, were regarded as such pests of the commonwealth that a venerable divine might, without any breach of Christian charity, publicly pray to God for their detection and their condign punishment.

Mr. Montagu tells us, most justly, that we ought not to transfer the opinions of our age to a former age. But he has himself committed a greater error than that against which he has cautioned his readers. Without any evidence, nay, in the face of the strongest evidence, he ascribes to the people of a former age a set of opinions which no people ever held. But any hypothesis is in his view more probable than that Bacon should have been a dishonest man. We firmly believe that, if papers were to be discovered which should irresistibly prove that Bacon was concerned in the poisoning of Sir Thomas Overbury, Mr. Montagu would tell us that, at the beginning of the seventeenth century, it was not thought improper in a man to put arsenic into the broth of his friends, and that we ought to blame, not Bacon, but the age in which he lived.

But why should we have recourse to any other evidence, when the proceeding against Lord Bacon is itself the best evidence on the subject? When Mr. Montagu tells us that we ought not to transfer the opinions of our age to Bacon's age, he appears altogether to forget that it was by men of Bacon's own age, that Bacon was
prosecuted, tried, convicted, and sentenced. Did not they know what their own opinions were? Did not they know whether they thought the taking of gifts by a judge a crime or not? Mr. Montagu complains bitterly that Bacon was induced to abstain from making a defence. But, if Bacon's defence resembled that which is made for him in the volume before us, it would have been unnecessary to trouble the Houses with it. The Lords and Commons did not want Bacon to tell them the thoughts of their own hearts, to inform them that they did not consider such practices as those in which they had detected him as at all culpable. Mr. Montagu's proposition may indeed be fairly stated thus:--It was very hard that Bacon's contemporaries should think it wrong in him to do what they did not think it wrong in him to do. Hard indeed; and withal somewhat improbable. Will any person say that the Commons who impeached Bacon for taking presents, and the Lords who sentenced him to fine, imprisonment, and degradation for taking presents, did not know that the taking of presents was a crime? Or, will any person say that Bacon did not know what the whole House of Commons and the whole House of Lords knew? Nobody who is not prepared to maintain one of these absurd propositions can deny that Bacon committed what he knew to be a crime.

It cannot be pretended that the Houses were seeking occasion to ruin Bacon, and that they therefore brought him to punishment on charges which they themselves knew to be frivolous. In no quarter was there the faintest indication of a disposition to treat him harshly. Through the whole proceeding there was no symptom of
personal animosity or of factious violence in either House.

Indeed, we will venture to say that no State-Trial in our History
is more creditable to all who took part in it, either as
prosecutors or judges. The decency, the gravity, the public
spirit, the justice moderated but not unnerved by compassion,
which appeared in every part of the transaction, would do honour
to the most respectable public men of our own times. The
accusers, while they discharged their duty to their constituents
by bringing the misdeeds of the Chancellor to light, spoke with
admiration of his many eminent qualities. The Lords, while
condemning him, complimented him on the ingenuousness of his
confession, and spared him the humiliation of a public appearance
at their bar. So strong was the contagion of good feeling that
even Sir Edward Coke, for the first time in his life, behaved
like a gentleman. No criminal ever had more temperate prosecutors
than Bacon. No criminal ever had more favourable judges. If he
was convicted, it was because it was impossible to acquit him
without offering the grossest outrage to justice and common
sense.

Mr. Montagu's other argument, namely, that Bacon, though he took
gifts, did not take bribes, seems to us as futile as that which
we have considered. Indeed, we might be content to leave it to be
answered by the plainest man among our readers. Demosthenes
noticed it with contempt more than two thousand years ago.
Latimer, we have seen, treated this sophistry with similar
disdain. "Leave colouring," said he, "and call these things by
their Christian name, bribes." Mr. Montagu attempts, somewhat unfairly, we must say, to represent the presents which Bacon received as similar to the perquisites which suitors paid to the members of the Parliaments of France. The French magistrate had a legal right to his fee; and the amount of the fee was regulated by law. Whether this be a good mode of remunerating judges is not the question. But what analogy is there between payments of this sort, and the presents which Bacon received, presents which were not sanctioned by the law, which were not made under the public eye, and of which the amount was regulated only by private bargain between the magistrate and the suitor?

Again, it is mere trifling to say that Bacon could not have meant to act corruptly, because he employed the agency of men of rank, of bishops, privy councillors, and members of Parliament; as if the whole history of that generation was not full of the low actions of high people; as if it was not notorious that men, as exalted in rank as any of the decoys that Bacon employed, had pimped for Somerset, and poisoned Overbury.

But, says Mr. Montagu, these presents "were made openly and with the greatest publicity." This would indeed be a strong argument in favour of Bacon. But we deny the fact. In one, and one only, of the cases in which Bacon was accused of corruptly receiving gifts, does he appear to have received a gift publicly. This was in a matter depending between the Company of Apothecaries and the Company of Grocers. Bacon, in his Confession, insisted strongly
on the circumstance that he had on this occasion taken a present
publicly, as a proof that he had not taken it corruptly. Is it
not clear that, if he had taken the presents mentioned in the
other charges in the same public manner, he would have dwelt on
this point in his answer to those charges? The fact that he
insists so strongly on the publicity of one particular present is
of itself sufficient to prove that the other presents were not
publicly taken. Why he took this present publicly and the rest
secretly, is evident. He on that occasion acted openly, because
he was acting honestly. He was not on that occasion sitting
judicially. He was called in to effect an amicable arrangement
between two parties. Both were satisfied with his decision. Both
joined in making him a present in return for his trouble. Whether
it was quite delicate in a man of his rank to accept a present
under such circumstances, may be questioned. But there is no
ground in this case for accusing him of corruption.

Unhappily, the very circumstances which prove him to have been
innocent in this case prove him to have been guilty on the other
charges. Once, and once only, he alleges that he received a
present publicly. The natural inference is that in all the other
cases mentioned in the articles against him he received presents
secretly. When we examine the single case in which he alleges
that he received a present publicly, we find that it is also the
single case in which there was no gross impropriety in his
receiving a present. Is it then possible to doubt that his reason
for not receiving other presents in as public a manner was that
he knew that it was wrong to receive them?

One argument still remains, plausible in appearance, but admitting of easy and complete refutation. The two chief complainants, Aubrey and Egerton, had both made presents to the Chancellor. But he had decided against them both. Therefore, he had not received those presents as bribes. "The complaints of his accusers were," says Mr. Montagu, "not that the gratuities had, but that they had not influenced Bacon's judgment, as he had decided against them."

The truth is, that it is precisely in this way that an extensive system of corruption is generally detected. A person who, by a bribe, has procured a decree in his favour, is by no means likely to come forward of his own accord as an accuser. He is content. He has his quid pro quo. He is not impelled either by interested or by vindictive motives to bring the transaction before the public. On the contrary, he has almost as strong motives for holding his tongue as the judge himself can have. But when a judge practises corruption, as we fear that Bacon practised it, on a large scale, and has many agents looking out in different quarters for prey, it will sometimes happen that he will be bribed on both sides. It will sometimes happen that he will receive money from suitors who are so obviously in the wrong that he cannot with decency do anything to serve them. Thus he will now and then be forced to pronounce against a person from whom he has received a present; and he makes that person a deadly enemy.
The hundreds who have got what they paid for remain quiet. It is
the two or three who have paid, and have nothing to show for
their money, who are noisy.

The memorable case of the Goezmans is an example of this.
Beaumarchais had an important suit depending before the
Parliament of Paris. M. Goezman was the judge on whom chiefly the
decision depended. It was hinted to Beaumarchais that Madame
Goezman might be propitiated by a present. He accordingly offered
a purse of gold to the lady, who received it graciously. There
can be no doubt that, if the decision of the court had been
favourable to him, these things would never have been known to
the world. But he lost his cause. Almost the whole sum which he
had expended in bribery was immediately refunded; and those who
had disappointed him probably thought that he would not, for the
mere gratification of his malevolence, make public a transaction
which was discreditable to himself as well as to them. They knew
little of him. He soon taught them to curse the day in which they
had dared to trifle with a man of so revengeful and turbulent a
spirit, of such dauntless effrontery, and of such eminent talents
for controversy and satire. He compelled the Parliament to put a
degrading stigma on M. Goezman. He drove Madame Goezman to a
convent. Till it was too late to pause, his excited passions did
not suffer him to remember that he could effect their ruin only
by disclosures ruinous to himself. We could give other instances.
But it is needless. No person well acquainted with human nature
can fail to perceive that, if the doctrine for which Mr. Montagu
contends were admitted, society would be deprived of almost the only chance which it has of detecting the corrupt practices of judges.

We return to our narrative. The sentence of Bacon had scarcely been pronounced when it was mitigated. He was indeed sent to the Tower. But this was merely a form. In two days he was set at liberty, and soon after he retired to Gorhambury. His fine was speedily released by the Crown.

He was next suffered to present himself at Court; and at length, in 1624, the rest of his punishment was remitted. He was now at liberty to resume his seat in the House of Lords, and he was actually summoned to the next Parliament. But age, infirmity, and perhaps shame, prevented him from attending. The Government allowed him a pension of twelve hundred pounds a year; and his whole annual income is estimated by Mr. Montagu at two thousand five hundred pounds, a sum which was probably above the average income of a nobleman of that generation, and which was certainly sufficient for comfort and even for splendour. Unhappily, Bacon was fond of display, and unused to pay minute attention to domestic affairs. He was not easily persuaded to give up any part of the magnificence to which he had been accustomed in the time of his power and prosperity. No pressure of distress could induce him to part with the woods of Gorhambury. "I will not," he said, "be stripped of my feathers." He travelled with so splendid an equipage and so large a retinue that Prince Charles, who once
fell in with him on the road, exclaimed with surprise, "Well; do what we can, this man scorns to go out in snuff." This carelessness and ostentation reduced Bacon to frequent distress. He was under the necessity of parting with York House, and of taking up his residence, during his visits to London, at his old chambers in Gray's Inn. He had other vexations, the exact nature of which is unknown. It is evident from his will that some part of his wife's conduct had greatly disturbed and irritated him.

But, whatever might be his pecuniary difficulties or his conjugal discomforts, the powers of his intellect still remained undiminished. Those noble studies for which he had found leisure in the midst of professional drudgery and of courtly intrigues gave to this last sad stage of his life a dignity beyond what power or titles could bestow. Impeached, convicted, sentenced, driven with ignominy from the presence of his Sovereign, shut out from the deliberations of his fellow nobles, loaded with debt, branded with dishonour, sinking under the weight of years, sorrows, and diseases, Bacon was Bacon still. "My conceit of his person," says Ben Jonson very finely, "was never increased towards him by his place or honours; but I have and do reverence him for the greatness that was only proper to himself; in that he seemed to me ever, by his work, one of the greatest men and most worthy of admiration, that had been in many ages. In his adversity I ever prayed that God would give him strength; for greatness he could not want."
The services which Bacon rendered to letters during the last five years of his life, amidst ten thousand distractions and vexations, increase the regret with which we think on the many years which he had wasted, to use the words of Sir Thomas Bodley, "on such study as was not worthy of such a student.” He commenced a Digest of the Laws of England, a History of England under the Princes of the House of Tudor, a body of Natural History, a Philosophical Romance. He made extensive and valuable additions to his Essays. He published the inestimable Treatise De Augmentis Scientiarum. The very trifles with which he amused himself in hours of pain and languor bore the mark of his mind. The best collection of jests in the world is that which he dictated from memory, without referring to any book, on a day on which illness had rendered him incapable of serious study.

The great apostle of experimental philosophy was destined to be its martyr. It had occurred to him that snow might be used with advantage for the purpose of preventing animal substances from putrefying. On a very cold day, early in the spring of the year 1626, he alighted from his coach near Highgate, in order to try the experiment. He went into a cottage, bought a fowl, and with his own hands stuffed it with snow. While thus engaged he felt a sudden chill, and was soon so much indisposed that it was impossible for him to return to Gray's Inn. The Earl of Arundel, with whom he was well acquainted, had a house at Highgate. To that house Bacon was carried. The Earl was absent; but the servants who were in charge of the place showed great respect and
attention to the illustrious guest. Here, after an illness of about a week, he expired early on the morning of Easter-day, 1626. His mind appears to have retained its strength and liveliness to the end. He did not forget the fowl which had caused his death. In the last letter that he ever wrote, with fingers which, as he said, could not steadily hold a pen, he did not omit to mention that the experiment of the snow had succeeded "excellently well."

Our opinion of the moral character of this great man has already been sufficiently explained. Had his life been passed in literary retirement, he would, in all probability, have deserved to be considered, not only as a great philosopher, but as a worthy and good-natured member of society. But neither his principles nor his spirit were such as could be trusted, when strong temptations were to be resisted, and serious dangers to be braved.

In his will he expressed with singular brevity, energy, dignity, and pathos, a mournful consciousness that his actions had not been such as to entitle him to the esteem of those under whose observation his life had been passed, and, at the same time, a proud confidence that his writings had secured for him a high and permanent place among the benefactors of mankind. So at least we understand those striking words which have been often quoted, but which we must quote once more. "For my name and memory, I leave it to men's charitable speeches, and to foreign nations, and to the next age."
His confidence was just. From the day of his death his fame has been constantly and steadily progressive; and we have no doubt that his name will be named with reverence to the latest ages, and to the remotest ends of the civilised world.

The chief peculiarity of Bacon's philosophy seems to us to have been this, that it aimed at things altogether different from those which his predecessors had proposed to themselves. This was his own opinion. " Finis scientiarum," says he, "a nemine adhuc bene positus est."[Novum Organum, Lib. i. Aph. 81.] And again, "Omnium gravissimus error in deviatrione ab ultimo doctrinarum fine consistit." [De Augmentis, Lib. i.] " Nec ipsa meta," says he elsewhere, "adhuc uilli, quod sciam, mortalium posita est et defixa."[Cogitata et visa.] The more carefully his works are examined, the more clearly, we think, it will appear that this is the real clue to his whole system, and that he used means different from those used by other philosophers, because he wished to arrive at an end altogether different from theirs.

What then was the end which Bacon proposed to himself? It was, to use his own emphatic expression, "fruit." It was the multiplying of human enjoyments and the mitigating of human sufferings. It was "the relief of man's estate." [Advancement of Learning, Book i.] It was "commodis humanis inservire." [De Augmentis, Lib. vii. Cap. i.] It was "efficaciter operari ad sublevanda vitae humanae
incommoda." [Ib., Lib. ii. Cap. ii.] It was "dotare vitam humanam
novis inventis et copiis." [Novum Organum, Lib. i., Aph. 81.] It
was "genus humanum novis operibus et potestatibus continuo
dotare." [Cogitata et visa.] This was the object of all his
speculations in every department of science, in natural
philosophy, in legislation, in politics, in morals.

Two words form the key of the Baconian doctrine, Utility and
Progress. The ancient philosophy disdained to be useful, and was
content to be stationary. It dealt largely in theories of moral
perfection, which were so sublime that they never could be more
than theories; in attempts to solve insoluble enigmas; in
exhortations to the attainment of unattainable frames of mind. It
could not condescend to the humble office of ministering to the
comfort of human beings. All the schools contemned that office as
degrading; some censured it as immoral. Once indeed Posidonius, a
distinguished writer of the age of Cicero and Caesar, so far
forgot himself as to enumerate, among the humbler blessings which
mankind owed to philosophy, the discovery of the principle of the
arch, and the introduction of the use of metals. This eulogy was
considered as an affront, and was taken up with proper spirit.
Seneca vehemently disclaims these insulting compliments. [Seneca,
Epist. 90.] Philosophy, according to him, has nothing to do with
teaching men to rear arched roofs over their heads. The true
philosopher does not care whether he has an arched roof or any
roof, Philosophy has nothing to do with teaching men the uses of
metals. She teaches us to be independent of all material
substances, of all mechanical contrivances. The wise man lives according to nature. Instead of attempting to add to the physical comforts of his species, he regrets that his lot was not cast in that golden age when the human race had no protection against the cold but the skins of wild beasts, no screen from the sun but a cavern. To impute to such a man any share in the invention or improvement of a plough, a ship, or a mill is an insult. "In my own time," says Seneca, "there have been inventions of this sort, transparent windows, tubes for diffusing warmth equally through all parts of a building, shorthand, which has been carried to such a perfection that a writer can keep pace with the most rapid speaker. But the inventing of such things is drudgery for the lowest slaves; philosophy lies deeper. It is not her office to teach men how to use their hands. The object of her lessons is to.form the soul. Non est, inquam, instrumentorum ad usus necessarios opifex." If the non were left out, this last sentence would be no bad description of the Baconian philosophy, and would, indeed, very much resemble several expressions in the Novum Organum. "We shall next be told," exclaims Seneca, "that the first shoemaker was a philosopher." For our own part, if we are forced to make our choice between the first shoemaker and the author of the three books "On Anger," we pronounce for the shoemaker. It may be worse to be angry than to be wet. But shoes have kept millions from being wet; and we doubt whether Seneca ever kept anybody from being angry.

It is very reluctantly that Seneca can be brought to confess that
any philosopher had ever paid the smallest attention to anything
that could possibly promote what vulgar people would consider as
the well-being of mankind. He labours to clear Democritus from
the disgraceful imputation of having made the first arch, and
Anacharsis from the charge of having contrived the potter's
wheel. He is forced to own that such a thing might happen; and it
may also happen, he tells us, that a philosopher may be swift of
foot. But it is not in his character of philosopher that he
either wins a race or invents a machine. No, to be sure. The
business of a philosopher was to declaim in praise of poverty
with two millions sterling out at usury, to meditate epigrammatic
conceits about the evils of luxury, in gardens which moved the
envy of sovereigns, to rant about liberty, while fawning on the
insolent and pampered freedmen of a tyrant, to celebrate the
divine beauty of virtue with the same pen which had just before
written a defence of the murder of a mother by a son.

From the cant of this philosophy, a philosophy meanly proud of
its own unprofitableness, it is delightful to turn to the lessons
of the great English teacher. We can almost forgive all the
faults of Bacon's life when we read that singularly graceful and
dignified passage: "Ego certe, ut de me ipso, quod res est,
loquar, et in iis quae nunc edo, et in iis quae in posterum
meditor, dignitatem ingenii et nominis mei, si qua sit, saepius
sciens et volens projicio, dum commodis humanis inserviam; quique
architectus fortasse in philosophia et scientiis esse debeam,
etiam operarius, et bajulus, et quidvis demum fio, cum haud pauca
quae omnino fieri necesse sit, alii autem ob innatum superbiam subterfugiant, ipsi sustineam et exsequar." [De Augmentis, Lib. vii. Cap. i.] This philanthropia, which, as he said in one of the most remarkable of his early letters, "was so fixed in his mind, as it could not be removed," this majestic humility, this persuasion that nothing can be too insignificant for the attention of the wisest, which is not too insignificant to give pleasure or pain to the meanest, is the great characteristic distinction, the essential spirit of the Baconian philosophy. We trace it in all that Bacon has written on Physics, on Laws, on Morals. And we conceive that from this peculiarity all the other peculiarities of his system directly and almost necessarily sprang.

The spirit which appears in the passage of Seneca to which we have referred tainted the whole body of the ancient philosophy from the time of Socrates downwards, and took possession of intellects with which that of Seneca cannot for a moment be compared. It pervades the dialogues of Plato. It may be distinctly traced in many parts of the works of Aristotle. Bacon has dropped hints from which it may be inferred that, in his opinion, the prevalence of this feeling was in a great measure to be attributed to the influence of Socrates. Our great countryman evidently did not consider the revolution which Socrates effected in philosophy as a happy event, and constantly maintained that the earlier Greek speculators, Democritus in particular, were, on the whole, superior to their more celebrated successors. [Novum
Assuredly if the tree which Socrates planted and Plato watered is to be judged of by its flowers and leaves, it is the noblest of trees. But if we take the homely test of Bacon, if we judge of the tree by its fruits, our opinion of it may perhaps be less favourable. When we sum up all the useful truths which we owe to that philosophy, to what do they amount? We find, indeed, abundant proofs that some of those who cultivated it were men of the first order of intellect. We find among their writings incomparable specimens both of dialectical and rhetorical art. We have no doubt that the ancient controversies were of use, in so far as they served to exercise the faculties of the disputants; for there is no controversy so idle that it may not be of use in this way. But, when we look for something more, for something which adds to the comforts or alleviates the calamities of the human race, we are forced to own ourselves disappointed. We are forced to say with Bacon that this celebrated philosophy ended in nothing but disputation, that it was neither a vineyard nor an olive-ground, but an intricate wood of briars and thistles, from which those who lost themselves in it brought back many scratches and no food. [Novum Organum, Lib. i. Aph. 73.]

We readily acknowledge that some of the teachers of this unfruitful wisdom were among the greatest men that the world has
ever seen. If we admit the justice of Bacon's censure, we admit it with regret, similar to that which Dante felt when he learned the fate of those illustrious heathens who were doomed to the first circle of Hell:

"Gran duol mi prese al cuor quando lo 'ntesi,
Perocche gente di molto valore
Conobbi che 'n quel limbo eran sospesi."

But in truth the very admiration which we feel for the eminent philosophers of antiquity forces us to adopt the opinion that their powers were systematically misdirected. For how else could it be that such powers should effect so little for mankind? A pedestrian may show as much muscular vigour on a treadmill as on the highway road. But on the road his vigour will assuredly carry him forward; and on the treadmill he will not advance an inch. The ancient philosophy was a treadmill, not a path. It was made up of revolving questions, of controversies which were always beginning again. It was a contrivance for having much exertion and no progress. We must acknowledge that more than once, while contemplating the doctrines of the Academy and the Portico, even as they appear in the transparent splendour of Cicero's incomparable diction, we have been tempted to mutter with the surly centurion in Persius, "Cur quis non prandeat hoc est?"

What is the highest good, whether pain be an evil, whether all things be fated, whether we can be certain of anything, whether we can be certain that we are certain of nothing, whether a wise
man can be unhappy, whether all departures from right be equally reprehensible; these, and other questions of the same sort, occupied the brains, the tongues, and the pens of the ablest men in the civilised world during several centuries. This sort of philosophy, it is evident, could not be progressive. It might indeed sharpen and invigorate the minds of those who devoted themselves to it; and so might the disputes of the orthodox Lilliputians and the heretical Blefuscudians about the big ends and the little ends of eggs. But such disputes could add nothing to the stock of knowledge. The human mind accordingly, instead of marching, merely marked time. It took as much trouble as would have sufficed to carry it forward; and yet remained on the same spot. There was no accumulation of truth, no heritage of truth acquired by the labour of one generation and bequeathed to another, to be again transmitted with large additions to a third. Where this philosophy was in the time of Cicero, there it continued to be in the time of Seneca, and there it continued to be in the time of Favorinus. The same sects were still battling with the same unsatisfactory arguments, about the same interminable questions. There had been no want of ingenuity, of zeal, of industry. Every trace of intellectual cultivation was there, except a harvest. There had been plenty of ploughing, harrowing, reaping, threshing. But the garners contained only smut and stubble.

The ancient philosophers did not neglect natural science but they did not cultivate it for the purpose of increasing the power and
ameliorating the condition of man. The taint of barrenness had spread from ethical to physical speculations. Seneca wrote largely on natural philosophy, and magnified the importance of that study. But why? Not because it tended to assuage suffering, to multiply the conveniences of life, to extend the empire of man over the material world; but solely because it tended to raise the mind above low cares, to separate it from the body, to exercise its subtilty in the solution of very obscure questions. [Seneca, Nat. Quaest. praef. Lib. iii.] Thus natural philosophy was considered in the light merely of a mental exercise. It was made subsidiary to the art of disputation; and it consequently proved altogether barren of useful discoveries.

There was one sect which, however absurd and pernicious some of its doctrines may have been, ought, it should seem, to have merited an exception from the general censure which Bacon has pronounced on the ancient schools of wisdom. The Epicurean, who referred all happiness to bodily pleasure, and all evil to bodily pain, might have been expected to exert himself for the purpose of bettering his own physical condition and that of his neighbours. But the thought seems never to have occurred to any member of that school. Indeed their notion, as reported by their great poet, was, that no more improvements were to be expected in the arts which conduce to the comfort of life.

"Ad victum quae flagitat usus
Omnia jam ferme mortalibus esse parata."
This contented despondency, this disposition to admire what has been done, and to expect that nothing more will be done, is strongly characteristic of all the schools which preceded the school of Fruit and Progress. Widely as the Epicurean and the Stoic differed on most points, they seem to have quite agreed in their contempt for pursuits so vulgar as to be useful. The philosophy of both was a garrulous, declaiming, canting, wrangling philosophy. Century after century they continued to repeat their hostile war-cries, Virtue and Pleasure; and in the end it appeared that the Epicurean had added as little to the quantity of pleasure as the Stoic to the quantity of virtue.

It is on the pedestal of Bacon, not on that of Epicurus, that those noble lines ought to be inscribed

"O tenebris tantis tam clarum extollere lumen
Qui primus potuisti, illustrans commoda vitae."

In the fifth century Christianity had conquered Paganism, and Paganism had infected Christianity. The Church was now victorious and corrupt. The rites of the Pantheon had passed into her worship, the subtleties of the Academy into her creed. In an evil day, though with great pomp and solemnity,—we quote the language of Bacon,—was the ill-starred alliance stricken between the old philosophy and the new faith. [Cogitata et visa.] Questions
widely
different from those which had employed the ingenuity of Pyrrho
and Carneades, but just as subtle, just as interminable, and just
as unprofitable, exercised the minds of the lively and voluble
Greeks. When learning began to revive in the West, similar
trifles occupied the sharp and vigorous intellects of the
Schoolmen. There was another sowing of the wind, and another
reaping of the whirlwind. The great work of improving the
condition of the human race was still considered as unworthy of a
man of learning. Those who undertook that task, if what they
effected could be readily comprehended, were despised as
mechanics; if not, they were in danger of being burned as
conjurers.

There cannot be a stronger proof of the degree in which the human
mind had been misdirected than the history of the two greatest
events which took place during the middle ages. We speak of the
invention of Gunpowder and of the invention of Printing. The
dates of both are unknown. The authors of both are unknown. Nor
was this because men were too rude and ignorant to value
intellectual superiority. The inventor of gunpowder appears to
have been contemporary with Petrarch and Boccaccio. The inventor
of printing was certainly contemporary with Nicholas the Fifth,
with Cosmo de' Medici, and with a crowd of distinguished
scholars. But the human mind still retained that fatal bent which
it had received two thousand years earlier. George of Trebisond
and Marsilio Ficino would not easily have been brought to believe
that the inventor of the printing-press had done more for mankind
than themselves, or than those ancient writers of whom they were
the enthusiastic votaries.

At length the time arrived when the barren philosophy which had,
during so many ages, employed the faculties of the ablest of men,
was destined to fall. It had worn many shapes. It had mingled
itself with many creeds. It had survived revolutions in which
empires, religions, languages, races, had perished. Driven from
its ancient haunts, it had taken sanctuary in that Church which
it had persecuted, and had, like the daring fiends of the poet,
placed its seat

"next the seat of God,
And with its darkness dared affront his light."

Words, and more words, and nothing but words, had been all the
fruit of all the toil of all the most renowned sages of sixty
generations. But the days of this sterile exuberance were
numbered.

Many causes predisposed the public mind to a change. The study of
a great variety of ancient writers, though it did not give a
right direction to philosophical research, did much towards
destroying that blind reverence for authority which had prevailed
when Aristotle ruled alone. The rise of the Florentine sect of
Platonists, a sect to which belonged some of the finest minds of the fifteenth century, was not an unimportant event. The mere substitution of the Academic for the Peripatetic philosophy would indeed have done little good. But anything was better than the old habit of unreasoning servility. It was something to have a choice of tyrants. "A spark of freedom," as Gibbon has justly remarked, "was produced by this collision of adverse servitude."

Other causes might be mentioned. But it is chiefly to the great reformation of religion that we owe the great reformation of philosophy. The alliance between the Schools and the Vatican had for ages been so close that those who threw off the dominion of the Vatican could not continue to recognise the authority of the Schools. Most of the chiefs of the schism treated the Peripatetic philosophy with contempt, and spoke of Aristotle as if Aristotle had been answerable for all the dogmas of Thomas Aquinas. "Nullo apud Lutheranos philosophiam esse in pretio," was a reproach which the defenders of the Church of Rome loudly repeated, and which many of the Protestant leaders considered as a compliment. Scarcely any text was more frequently cited by the reformers than that in which St. Paul cautions the Colossians not to let any man spoil them by philosophy. Luther, almost at the outset of his career, went so far as to declare that no man could be at once a proficient in the school of Aristotle and in that of Christ. Zwingle, Bucer, Peter Martyr, Calvin, held similar language. In some of the Scotch universities, the Aristotelian system was discarded for that of Ramus. Thus, before the birth of Bacon, the
empire of the scholastic philosophy had been shaken to its foundations. There was in the intellectual world an anarchy resembling that which in the political world often follows the overthrow of an old and deeply rooted Government. Antiquity, prescription, the sound of great names, have ceased to awe mankind. The dynasty which had reigned for ages was at an end; and the vacant throne was left to be struggled for by pretenders.

The first effect of this great revolution was, as Bacon most justly observed, [De Augmentis, Lib. i.] to give for a time an undue importance to the mere graces of style. The new breed of scholars, the Aschams and Buchanans, nourished with the finest compositions of the Augustan age, regarded with loathing the dry, crabbed, and barbarous diction of respondents and opponents. They were far less studious about the matter of their writing than about the manner. They succeeded in reforming Latinity; but they never even aspired to effect a reform in Philosophy.

At this time Bacon appeared. It is altogether incorrect to say, as has often been said, that he was the first man who rose up against the Aristotelian philosophy when in the height of his power. The authority of that philosophy had, as we have shown, received a fatal blow long before he was born. Several speculators, among whom Ramus is the best known, had recently attempted to form new sects. Bacon's own expressions about the state of public opinion in the time of Luther are clear and strong: "Accedebat," says he, "odium et contemptus, illis ipsis
temporibus ortus erga Scholasticos." And again, "Scholasticoorum
doctrina despectui prorsus haberi coepit tanquam aspera et
barbara." [Both these passages are in the first book of the De
Augmentis.] The part which Bacon played in this great change was
the part, not of Robespierre, but of Bonaparte. The ancient order
of things had been subverted. Some bigots still cherished with
devoted loyalty the remembrance of the fallen monarchy, and
exerted themselves to effect a restoration. But the majority had
no such feeling. Freed, yet not knowing how to use their freedom,
they pursued no determinate course, and had found no leader
capable of conducting them.

That leader at length arose. The philosophy which he taught was
essentially new. It differed from that of the celebrated ancient
teachers, not merely in method, but also in object. Its object
was the good of mankind, in the sense in which the mass of
mankind always have understood and always will understand the
word good. "Meditor," said Bacon, "instaurationem philosophiae
ejusmodi quae nihil inanis aut abstracti habeat, quaeque vitae
humanae conditiones in melius provehat." [Redargutio
Philosophiarum.]

The difference between the philosophy of Bacon and that of his
predecessors cannot, we think, be better illustrated than by
comparing his views on some important subjects with those of
Plato. We select Plato, because we conceive that he did more than
any other person towards giving to the minds of speculative men
that bent which they retained till they received from Bacon a new
impulse in a diametrically opposite direction.

It is curious to observe how differently these great men
estimated the value of every kind of knowledge. Take Arithmetic
for example. Plato, after speaking slightly of the convenience of
being able to reckon and compute in the ordinary transactions of
life, passes to what he considers as a far more important
advantage. The study of the properties of numbers, he tells us,
habituates the mind to the contemplation of pure truth, and
raises us above the material universe. He would have his
disciples apply themselves to this study, not that they may be
able to buy or sell, not that they may qualify themselves to be
shopkeepers or travelling merchants, but that they may learn to
withdraw their minds from the ever-shifting spectacle of this
visible and tangible world, and to fix them on the immutable
essences of things. [Plato's Republic, Book vii.]

Bacon, on the other hand, valued this branch of knowledge, only
on account of its uses with reference to that visible and
tangible world which Plato so much despised. He speaks with scorn
of the mystical arithmetic of the later Platonists, and laments
the propensity of mankind to employ, on mere matters of
curiosity, powers the whole exertion of which is required for
purposes of solid advantage. He advises arithmeticians to leave
these trifles, and to employ themselves in framing convenient
expressions, which may be of use in physical researches. [De
The same reasons which led Plato to recommend the study of arithmetic led him to recommend also the study of mathematics. The vulgar crowd of geometricians, he says, will not understand him. They have practice always in view. They do not know that the real use of the science is to lead men to the knowledge of abstract, essential, eternal truth. [Plato's Republic, Book vii.]

Indeed, if we are to believe Plutarch, Plato carried this feeling so far that he considered geometry as degraded by being applied to any purpose of vulgar utility. Archytas, it seems, had framed machines of extraordinary power on mathematical principles. [Plutarch, Sympos. viii. and Life of Marcellus. The machines of Archytas are also mentioned by Aulus Gellius and Diogenes Laertius.] Plato remonstrated with his friend, and declared that this was to degrade a noble intellectual exercise into a low craft, fit only for carpenters and wheelwrights. The office of geometry, he said, was to discipline the mind, not to minister to the base wants of the body. His interference was successful; and from that time, according to Plutarch, the science of mechanics was considered as unworthy of the attention of a philosopher.

Archimedes in a later age imitated and surpassed Archytas. But even Archimedes was not free from the prevailing notion that geometry was degraded by being employed to produce anything useful. It was with difficulty that he was induced to stoop from speculation to practice. He was half ashamed of those inventions
which were the wonder of hostile nations, and always spoke of them slightly as mere amusements, as trifles in which a mathematician might be suffered to relax his mind after intense application to the higher parts of his science.

The opinion of Bacon on this subject was diametrically opposed to that of the ancient philosophers. He valued geometry chiefly, if not solely, on account of those uses, which to Plato appeared so base. And it is remarkable that the longer Bacon lived the stronger this feeling became. When in 1605 he wrote the two books on the Advancement of Learning, he dwelt on the advantages which mankind derived from mixed mathematics; but he at the same time admitted that the beneficial effect produced by mathematical study on the intellect, though a collateral advantage, was "no less worthy than that which was principal and intended." But it is evident that his views underwent a change. When, near twenty years later, he published the De Augmentis, which is the Treatise on the Advancement of Learning, greatly expanded and carefully corrected, he made important alterations in the part which related to mathematics. He condemned with severity the high pretensions of the mathematicians, "delicias et fastum mathematicorum." Assuming the well-being of the human race to be the end of knowledge, [Usui et commodis hominum consulimus.] he pronounced that mathematical science could claim no higher rank than that of an appendage or auxiliary to other sciences. Mathematical science, he says, is the handmaid of natural philosophy; she ought to demean herself as such; and he declares
that he cannot conceive by what ill chance it has happened that
she presumes to claim precedence over her mistress. He predicts--
a prediction which would have made Plato shudder--that as more
and more discoveries are made in physics, there will be more and
more branches of mixed mathematics. Of that collateral advantage
the value of which, twenty years before, he rated so highly, he
says not one word. This omission cannot have been the effect of
mere inadvertence. His own treatise was before him. From that
treatise he deliberately expunged whatever was favourable to the
study of pure mathematics, and inserted several keen reflections
on the ardent votaries of that study. This fact, in our opinion,
admits of only one explanation. Bacon's love of those pursuits
which directly tend to improve the condition of mankind, and his
jealousy of all pursuits merely curious, had grown upon him, and
had, it may be, become immoderate. He was afraid of using any
expression which might have the effect of inducing any man of
talents to employ in speculations, useful only to the mind of the
speculator, a single hour which might be employed in extending
the empire of man over matter. [Compare the passage relating to
mathematics in the Second Book of the Advancement of Learning
with the De Augmentis Lib. iii. Cap. 6.] If Bacon erred here,
we must acknowledge that we greatly prefer his error to the
opposite error of Plato. We have no patience with a philosophy
which, like those Roman matrons who swallowed abortives in
order to preserve their shapes, takes pains to be barren for
fear of being homely.
Let us pass to astronomy. This was one of the sciences which Plato exhorted his disciples to learn, but for reasons far removed from common habits of thinking. "Shall we set down astronomy," says Socrates, "among the subjects of study?"

[Plato's Republic, Book vii.] "I think so," answers his young friend Glaucon: "to know something about the seasons, the months, and the years is of use for military purposes, as well as for agriculture and navigation." "It amuses me," says Socrates, "to see how afraid you are, lest the common herd of people should accuse you of recommending useless studies." He then proceeds, in that pure and magnificent diction which, as Cicero said, Jupiter would use if Jupiter spoke Greek, to explain, that the use of astronomy is not to add to the vulgar comforts of life, but to assist in raising the mind to the contemplation of things which are to be perceived by the pure intellect alone. The knowledge of the actual motions of the heavenly bodies Socrates considers as of little value. The appearances which make the sky beautiful at night are, he tells us, like the figures which a geometrician draws on the sand, mere examples, mere helps to feeble minds. We must get beyond them; we must neglect them; we must attain to an astronomy which is as independent of the actual stars as geometrical truth is independent of the lines of an ill-drawn diagram. This is, we imagine, very nearly if not exactly, the astronomy which Bacon compared to the ox of Prometheus, [De Augmentis, Lib. iii. Cap. 4] a sleek, well-shaped hide, stuffed with rubbish, goodly to look at, but containing nothing to eat. He complained that astronomy had, to its great injury, been separated from natural philosophy, of which it was one of the
noblest provinces, and annexed to the domain of mathematics. The world stood in need, he said, of a very different astronomy, of a living astronomy, [Astronomia viva.] of an astronomy which should set forth the nature, the motion, and the influences of the heavenly bodies, as they really are. [Quae substantiam et motum et influxum ecelestium, prout re vera sunt proponat." Compare this language with Plato's "ta d'en to ourano easomen."]

On the greatest and most useful of all human inventions, the invention of alphabetical writing, Plato did not look with much complacency. He seems to have thought that the use of letters had operated on the human mind as the use of the go-cart in learning to walk, or of corks in learning to swim, is said to operate on the human body. It was a support which, in his opinion, soon became indispensable to those who used it, which made vigorous exertion first unnecessary and then impossible. The powers of the intellect would, he conceived, have been more fully developed without this delusive aid. Men would have been compelled to exercise the understanding and the memory, and, by deep and assiduous meditation, to make truth thoroughly their own. Now, on the contrary, much knowledge is traced on paper, but little is engraved in the soul. A man is certain that he can find information at a moment's notice when he wants it. He therefore suffers it to fade from his mind. Such a man cannot in strictness be said to know anything. He has the show without the reality of wisdom. These opinions Plato has put into the mouth of an ancient king of Egypt. [Plato's Phaedrus.] But it is evident from the
context that they were his own; and so they were understood to be by Quinctilian. [Quinctilian, xi.] Indeed they are in perfect accordance with the whole Platonic system.

Bacon's views, as may easily be supposed, were widely different. [De Augmentis, Lib. v. Cap. 5.] The powers of the memory, he observes, without the help of writing, can do little towards the advancement of any useful science. He acknowledges that the memory may be disciplined to such a point as to be able to perform very extraordinary feats. But on such feats he sets little value. The habits of his mind, he tells us, are such that he is not disposed to rate highly any accomplishment, however rare, which is of no practical use to mankind. As to these prodigious achievements of the memory, he ranks them with the exhibitions of rope-dancers and tumblers. "These two performances," he says, "are much of the same sort. The one is an abuse of the powers of the body; the other is an abuse of the powers of the mind. Both may perhaps excite our wonder; but neither is entitled to our respect."

To Plato, the science of medicine appeared to be of very disputable advantages. [Plato's Republic, Book iii.] He did not indeed object to quick cures for acute disorders, or for injuries produced by accidents. But the art which resists the slow sap of a chronic disease, which repairs frames enervated by lust, swollen by gluttony, or inflamed by wine, which encourages sensuality by mitigating the natural punishment of the
sensualist, and prolongs existence when the intellect has ceased
to retain its entire energy, had no share of his esteem. A life
protracted by medical skill he pronounced to be a long death. The
exercise of the art of medicine ought, he said, to be tolerated,
so far as that art may serve to cure the occasional distempers of
men whose constitutions are good. As to those who have bad
constitutions, let them die; and the sooner the better. Such men
are unfit for war, for magistracy, for the management of their
domestic affairs, for severe study and speculation. If they
engage in any vigorous mental exercise, they are troubled with
giddiness and fulness of the head, all which they lay to the
account of philosophy. The best thing that can happen to such
wretches is to have done with life at once. He quotes mythical
authority in support of this doctrine; and reminds his disciples
that the practice of the sons of Aeculapius, as described by
Homer, extended only to the cure of external injuries.

Far different was the philosophy of Bacon. Of all the sciences,
that which he seems to have regarded with the greatest interest
was the science which, in Plato's opinion, would not be tolerated
in a well-regulated community. To make men perfect was no part of
Bacon's plan. His humble aim was to make imperfect men
comfortable. The beneficence of his philosophy resembled the
beneficence of the common Father, whose sun rises on the evil and
the good, whose rain descends for the just and the unjust. In
Plato's opinion man was made for philosophy; in Bacon's opinion
philosophy was made for man; it was a means to an end; and that
end was to increase the pleasures and to mitigate the pains of millions who are not and cannot be philosophers. That a valetudinarian who took great pleasure in being wheeled along his terrace, who relished his boiled chicken, and his weak wine and water, and who enjoyed a hearty laugh over the Queen of Navarre's tales, should be treated as a caput lupinum because he could not read the Timaeus without a headache, was a notion which the humane spirit of the English school of wisdom altogether rejected. Bacon would not have thought it beneath the dignity of a philosopher to contrive an improved garden chair for such a valetudinarian, to devise some way of rendering his medicines more palatable, to invent repasts which he might enjoy, and pillows on which he might sleep soundly; and this though there might not be the smallest hope that the mind of the poor invalid would ever rise to the contemplation of the ideal beautiful and the ideal good. As Plato had cited the religious legends of Greece to justify his contempt for the more recondite parts of the heart of healing, Bacon vindicated the dignity of that art by appealing to the example of Christ, and reminded men that the great physician of the soul did not disdain to be also the physician of the body. [De Augmentis, Lib. iv. Cap.2]

When we pass from the science of medicine to that of legislation, we find the same difference between the systems of these two great men. Plato, at the commencement of the Dialogue on Laws, lays it down as a fundamental principle that the end of legislation is to make men virtuous. It is unnecessary to point
out the extravagant conclusions to which such a proposition
leads. Bacon well knew to how great an extent the happiness of
every society must depend on the virtue of its members; and he
also knew what legislators can and what they cannot do for the
purpose of promoting virtue. The view which he has given of the
end of legislation, and of the principal means for the attainment
of that end, has always seemed to us eminently happy, even among
the many happy passages of the same kind with which his works
abound. "Finis et scopus quem leges intueri atque ad quem
jussiones et sanctiones suas dirigere debent, non alius est quam
ut cives faciletur degant. Id fieri si pietate et religione recte
instituti, moribus honesti, armis adversus hostes externos tuti,
legum auxilio adversus seditiones et privatas injurias muniti,
imperio et magistratus obsequentes, copiis et opibus locupletes
et florentes fuerint." [De Augmentis, Lib. viii. Cap. 3, Aph. 5.]
The end is the well-being of the people. The means are the
imparting of moral and religious education; the providing of
everything necessary for defence against foreign enemies; the
maintaining of internal order; the establishing of a judicial,
financial, and commercial system, under which wealth may be
rapidly accumulated and securely enjoyed.

Even with respect to the form in which laws ought to be drawn,
there is a remarkable difference of opinion between the Greek and
the Englishman. Plato thought a preamble essential; Bacon thought
it mischievous. Each was consistent with himself. Plato,
considering the moral improvement of the people as the end of
legislation, justly inferred that a law which commanded and
threatened, but which neither convinced the reason, nor touched
the heart, must be a most imperfect law. He was not content with
deterring from theft a man who still continued to be a thief at
heart, with restraining a son who hated his mother from beating
his mother. The only obedience on which he set much value was the
obedience which an enlightened understanding yields to reason,
and which a virtuous disposition yields to precepts of virtue. He
really seems to have believed that, by prefixing to every law an
eloquent and pathetic exhortation, he should, to a great extent,
render penal enactments superfluous. Bacon entertained no such
romantic hopes; and he well knew the practical inconveniences of
the course which Plato recommended. "Neque nobis," says he,
"prologi legum qui inepti olim habiti sunt, et leges introducunt
disputantes non jubentes, utique placerent, si priscos mores
ferre possemus. . . . Quantum fieri potest prologi evitentur, et
lex incipiat a jussione." [Ibid., Lib. viii. Cap. 3, Aph. 69.]

Each of the great men whom we have compared intended to
illustrate his system by a philosophical romance; and each left
his romance imperfect. Had Plato lived to finish the Critias, a
comparison between that noble fiction and the new Atlantis would
probably have furnished us with still more striking instances
than any which we have given. It is amusing to think with what
horror he would have seen such an institution as Solomon's House
rising in his republic: with what vehemence he would have ordered
the brew-houses, the perfume-houses, and the dispensaries to be
pulled down--and with what inexorable rigour he would have driven
beyond the frontier all the Fellows of the College, Merchants of
Light and Depredators, Lamps and Pioneers.

To sum up the whole, we should say that the aim of the Platonic
philosophy was to exalt man into a god. The aim of the Baconian
philosophy was to provide man with what he requires while he
continues to be man. The aim of the Platonic philosophy was to
raise us far above vulgar wants. The aim of the Baconian
philosophy was to supply our vulgar wants. The former aim was
noble; but the latter was attainable. Plato drew a good bow; but,
like Acestes in Virgil, he aimed at the stars; and therefore,
though there was no want of strength or skill, the shot was
thrown away. His arrow was indeed followed by a track of dazzling
radiance, but it struck nothing.

"Volans liquidis in nubibus arsit arundo
Signavitque viam flammis, tenuisque recessit
Consumta in ventos."

Bacon fixed his eye on a mark which was placed on the earth, and
within bow-shot, and hit it in the white. The philosophy of Plato
began in words and ended in words, noble words indeed, words such
as were to be expected from the finest of human intellects
exercising boundless dominion over the finest of human languages.
The philosophy of Bacon began in observations and ended in arts.
The boast of the ancient philosophers was that their doctrine formed the minds of men to a high degree of wisdom and virtue. This was indeed the only practical good which the most celebrated of those teachers even pretended to effect; and undoubtedly, if they had effected this, they would have deserved far higher praise than if they had discovered the most salutary medicines or constructed the most powerful machines. But the truth is that, in those very matters in which alone they professed to do any good to mankind, in those very matters for the sake of which they neglected all the vulgar interests of mankind, they did nothing, or worse than nothing. They promised what was impracticable; they despised what was practicable; they filled the world with long words and long beards; and they left it as wicked and as ignorant as they found it.

An acre in Middlesex is better than a principality in Utopia. The smallest actual good is better than the most magnificent promises of impossibilities. The wise man of the Stoics would, no doubt, be a grander object than a steam-engine. But there are steam-engines. And the wise man of the Stoics is yet to be born. A philosophy which should enable a man to feel perfectly happy while in agonies of pain would be better than a philosophy which assuages pain. But we know that there are remedies which will assuage pain; and we know that the ancient sages liked the toothache just as little as their neighbours. A philosophy which should extinguish cupidity would be better than a philosophy
which should devise laws for the security of property. But it is possible to make laws which shall, to a very great extent, secure property. And we do not understand how any motives which the ancient philosophy furnished could extinguish cupidity. We know indeed that the philosophers were no better than other men. From the testimony of friends as well as of foes, from the confessions of Epictetus and Seneca, as well as from the sneers of Lucian and the fierce invectives of Juvenal, it is plain that these teachers of virtue had all the vices of their neighbours, with the additional vice of hypocrisy. Some people may think the object of the Baconian philosophy a low object, but they cannot deny that, high or low, it has been attained. They cannot deny that every year makes an addition to what Bacon called "fruit." They cannot deny that mankind have made, and are making, great and constant progress in the road which he pointed out to them. Was there any such progressive movement among the ancient philosophers? After they had been declaiming eight hundred years, had they made the world better than when they began? Our belief is that, among the philosophers themselves, instead of a progressive improvement there was a progressive degeneracy. An abject superstition which Democritus or Anaxagoras would have rejected with scorn, added the last disgrace to the long dotage of the Stoic and Platonic schools. Those unsuccessful attempts to articulate which are so delightful and interesting in a child shock and disgust in an aged paralytic; and in the same way, those wild and mythological fictions which charm us, when we hear them lisped by Greek poetry in its infancy, excite a mixed sensation of pity and loathing, when mumbled by Greek philosophy in its old age. We know that
guns, cutlery, spy-glasses, clocks, are better in our time than
they were in the time of our fathers, and were better in the time
of our fathers than they were in the time of our grandfathers. We
might, therefore, be inclined to think that, when a philosophy
which boasted that its object was the elevation and purification
of the mind, and which for this object neglected the sordid
office of ministering to the comforts of the body, had flourished
in the highest honour during many hundreds of years, a vast moral
amelioration must have taken place. Was it so? Look at the
schools of this wisdom four centuries before the Christian era
and four centuries after that era. Compare the men whom those
schools formed at those two periods. Compare Plato and Libanius.
Compare Pericles and Julian. This philosophy confessed, nay
boasted, that for every end but one it was useless. Had it
attained that one end?

Suppose that Justinian, when he closed the schools of Athens, had
called on the last few sages who still haunted the Portico, and
lingered round the ancient plane-trees, to show their title to
public veneration: suppose that he had said: "A thousand years
have elapsed since, in this famous city, Socrates posed
Protagoras and Hippias; during those thousand years a large
proportion of the ablest men of every generation has been
employed in constant efforts to bring to perfection the
philosophy which you teach, that philosophy has been munificently
patronised by the powerful; its professors have been held in the
highest esteem by the public; it has drawn to itself almost all
the sap and vigour of the human intellect: and what has it
effected? What profitable truth has it taught us which we should
not equally have known without it? What has it enabled us to do
which we should not have been equally able to do without it?"

Such questions, we suspect, would have puzzled Simplicius and
Isidore. Ask a follower of Bacon what the new philosophy, as it
was called in the time of Charles the Second, has effected for
mankind, and his answer is ready; "It has lengthened life; it has
mitigated pain; it has extinguished diseases; it has increased
the fertility of the soil; it has given new securities to the
mariner; it has furnished new arms to the warrior; it has spanned
great rivers and estuaries with bridges of form unknown to our
fathers; it has guided the thunderbolt innocuously from heaven to
everth; it has lighted up the night with the splendour of the day;
it has extended the range of the human vision; it has multiplied
the power of the human muscles; it has accelerated motion; it has
annihilated distance; it has facilitated intercourse,
correspondence, all friendly offices, all despatch of business;
it has enabled man to descend to the depths of the sea, to soar
into the air, to penetrate securely into the noxious recesses of
the earth, to traverse the land in cars which whirl along without
horses, and the ocean in ships which run ten knots an hour
against the wind. These are but a part of its fruits, and of its
first fruits. For it is a philosophy which never rests, which has
never attained, which is never perfect. Its law is progress. A
point which yesterday was invisible is its goal to-day, and will
be its starting-post to-morrow."
Great and various as the powers of Bacon were, he owes his wide and durable fame chiefly to this, that all those powers received their direction from common sense. His love of the vulgar useful, his strong sympathy with the popular notions of good and evil, and the openness with which he avowed that sympathy, are the secret of his influence. There was in his system no cant, no illusion. He had no anointing for broken bones, no fine theories de finibus, no arguments to persuade men out of their senses. He knew that men, and philosophers as well as other men, do actually love life, health, comfort, honour, security, the society of friends, and do actually dislike death, sickness, pain, poverty, disgrace, danger, separation from those to whom they are attached. He knew that religion, though it often regulates and moderates these feelings, seldom eradicates them; nor did he think it desirable for mankind that they should be eradicated. The plan of eradicating them by conceits like those of Seneca, or syllogisms like those of Chrysippus, was too preposterous to be for a moment entertained by a mind like his. He did not understand what wisdom there could be in changing names where it was impossible to change things; in denying that blindness, hunger, the gout, the rack, were evils, and calling them apopoeugmena in refusing to acknowledge that health, safety, plenty, were good things, and dubbing them by the name of adiaphora. In his opinions on all these subjects, he was not a Stoic, nor an Epicurean, nor an Academic, but what would have been called by Stoics, Epicureans, and Academics a mere idiots, a mere common man. And it was precisely because he was so that
his name makes so great an era in the history of the world. It was because he dug deep that he was able to pile high. It was because, in order to lay his foundations, he went down into those parts of human nature which lie low, but which are not liable to change, that the fabric which he reared has risen to so stately an elevation, and stands with such immovable strength.

We have sometimes thought that an amusing fiction might be written, in which a disciple of Epictetus and a disciple of Bacon should be introduced as fellow-travellers. They come to a village where the smallpox has just begun to rage, and find houses shut up, intercourse suspended, the sick abandoned, mothers weeping in terror over their children. The Stoic assures the dismayed population that there is nothing bad in the smallpox, and that to a wise man disease, deformity, death, the loss of friends, are not evils. The Baconian takes out a lancet and begins to vaccinate. They find a body of miners in great dismay. An explosion of noisome vapours has just killed many of those who were at work; and the survivors are afraid to venture into the cavern. The Stoic assures them that such an accident is nothing but a mere apoprotegmenon. The Baconian, who has no such fine word at his command, contents himself with devising a safety-lamp. They find a shipwrecked merchant wringing his hands on the shore. His vessel with an inestimable cargo has just gone down, and he is reduced in a moment from opulence to beggary. The Stoic exhorts him not to seek happiness in things which lie without himself, and repeats the whole chapter of Epictetus pros tous ten
The Baconian constructs a diving-bell, goes down in it, and returns with the most precious effects from the wreck. It would be easy to multiply illustrations of the difference between the philosophy of thorns and the philosophy of fruit, the philosophy of words and the philosophy of works.

Bacon has been accused of overrating the importance of those sciences which minister to the physical well-being of man, and of underrating the importance of moral philosophy; and it cannot be denied that persons who read the Novum Organum and the De Augmentis, without adverting to the circumstances under which those works were written, will find much that may seem to countenance the accusation. It is certain, however, that, though in practice he often went very wrong, and though, as his historical work and his essays prove, he did not hold, even in theory, very strict opinions on points of political morality, he was far too wise a man not to know how much our well-being depends on the regulation of our minds. The world for which he wished was not, as some people seem to imagine, a world of water-wheels, power-loom, steam-carriages, sensualists, and knaves. He would have been as ready as Zeno himself to maintain that no bodily comforts which could be devised by the skill and labour of a hundred generations would give happiness to a man whose mind was under the tyranny of licentious appetite, of envy, of hatred, or of fear. If he sometimes appeared to ascribe importance too exclusively to the arts which increase the outward comforts of our species, the reason is plain. Those arts had been most unduly
depreciated. They had been represented as unworthy of the attention of a man of liberal education. "Cogitavit," says Bacon of himself,

"eam esse opinionem sive aestimationem humidam et damnosam, minue nempe majestatem mentis humanae, si in experimentis et rebus particularibus, sensui subjectis, et in materia terminatis, diu ac multum versetur: præsertim cum hujusmodi res ad inquirendum laboriosae, ad meditandum ignobiles, ad discendum asperae, ad practicam illiberales, numero infinitae, et subtilitatis pusillae videri soleant, et ob hujusmodi conditiones, gloriae artium minus sint accommodatae." [Cogitata et visa. The expression opinio humida may surprise a reader not accustomed to Bacon's style. The allusion is to the maxim of Heraclitus the obscure: "Dry light is the best." By dry light, Bacon understood the light of the intellect, not obscured by the mists of passion, interest, or prejudice.] This opinion seemed to him "omnia in familia humana turbasse." It had undoubtedly caused many arts which were of the greatest utility, and which were susceptible of the greatest improvements, to be neglected by speculators, and abandoned to joiners, masons, smiths, weavers, apothecaries. It was necessary to assert the dignity of those arts, to bring them prominently forward, to proclaim that, as they have a most serious effect on human happiness, they are not unworthy of the attention of the highest human intellects. Again, it was by illustrations drawn from these arts that Bacon could most easily illustrate his principles. It was by improvements effected in these arts that the soundness of his principles could be most speedily and
decisively brought to the test, and made manifest to common understandings. He acted like a wise commander who thins every other part of his line to strengthen a point where the enemy is attacking with peculiar fury, and on the fate of which the event of the battle seems likely to depend. In the Novum Organum, however, he distinctly and most truly declares that his philosophy is no less a Moral than a Natural Philosophy, that, though his illustrations are drawn from physical science, the principles which those illustrations are intended to explain are just as applicable to ethical and political inquiries as to inquiries into the nature of heat and vegetation. [Novum Organum, Lib. I. Aph 127.]

He frequently treated of moral subjects; and he brought to those subjects that spirit which was the essence of his whole system. He has left us many admirable practicable observations on what he somewhat quaintly called the Georgics of the mind, on the mental culture which tends to produce good dispositions. Some persons, he said, might accuse him of spending labour on a matter so simple that his predecessors had passed it by with contempt. He desired such persons to remember that he had from the first announced the objects of his search to be not the splendid and the surprising, but the useful and the true, not the deluding dreams which go forth through the shining portal of ivory, but the humbler realities of the gate of horn. [De Augmentis, Lib. vii. Cap. 3.]
True to this principle, he indulged in no rants about the fitness of things, the all-sufficiency of virtue, and the dignity of human nature. He dealt not at all in resounding nothings, such as those with which Bolingbroke pretended to comfort himself in exile, and in which Cicero vainly sought consolation after the loss of Tullia. The casuistical subtleties which occupied the attention of the keenest spirits of his age had, it should seem, no attractions for him. The doctors whom Escobar afterwards compared to the four beasts and the four-and-twenty elders in the Apocalypse Bacon dismissed with most contemptuous brevity. "Inanes plerumque evadunt et futiles." [Ibid. Lib. vii. Cap. 2.]

Nor did he ever meddle with those enigmas which have puzzled hundreds of generations, and will puzzle hundreds more. He said nothing about the grounds of moral obligation, or the freedom of the human will. He had no inclination to employ himself in labours resembling those of the damned in the Grecian Tartarus, to spin for ever on the same wheel round the same pivot, to gape for ever after the same deluding clusters, to pour water for ever into the same bottomless buckets, to pace for ever to and fro on the same wearisome path after the same recoiling stone. He exhorted his disciples to prosecute researches of a very different description, to consider moral science as a practical science, a science of which the object was to cure the diseases and perturbations of the mind, and which could be improved only by a method analogous to that which has improved medicine and surgery. Moral philosophers ought, he said, to set themselves vigorously to work for the purpose of discovering what are the
actual effects produced on the human character by particular
modes of education, by the indulgence of particular habits, by
the study of particular books, by society, by emulation, by
imitation. Then we might hope to find out what mode of training
was most likely to preserve and restore moral health. [Ibid.:
Lib. vii. Cap. 3.]

What he was as a natural philosopher and a moral philosopher,
that he was also as a theologian. He was, we are convinced,
a sincere believer in the divine authority of the Christian
revelation. Nothing can be found in his writings, or in any
other writings, more eloquent and pathetic than some passages
which were apparently written under the influence of strong
devotional feeling. He loved to dwell on the power of the
Christian religion to effect much that the ancient philosophers
could only promise. He loved to consider that religion as the
bond of charity, the curb of evil passions, the consolation of
the wretched, the support of the timid, the hope of the dying.
But controversies on speculative points of theology seem to have
engaged scarcely any portion of his attention. In what he wrote
on Church Government he showed, as far as he dared, a tolerant
and charitable spirit. He troubled himself not at all about
Homoousians and Homoiousians, Monothelites and Nestorians. He
lived in an age in which disputes on the most subtle points of
divinity excited an intense interest throughout Europe, and
nowhere more than in England. He was placed in the very thick of
the conflict. He was in power at the time of the Synod of Dort,
and must for months have been daily deafened with talk about
election, reprobation, and final perseverance. Yet we do not
remember a line in his works from which it can be inferred that
he was either a Calvinist or an Arminian. While the world was
resounding with the noise of a disputatious philosophy and a
disputatious theology, the Baconian school, like Allworthy seated
between Square and Thwackum, preserved a calm neutrality, half
scornful, half benevolent, and content with adding to the sum of
practical good, left the war of words to those who liked it.

We have dwelt long on the end of the Baconian philosophy, because
from this peculiarity all the other peculiarities of that
philosophy necessary arose. Indeed, scarcely any person who
proposed to himself the same end with Bacon could fail to hit
upon the same means.

The vulgar notion about Bacon we take to be this, that he
invented a new method of arriving at truth, which method is
called Induction, and that he detected some fallacy in the
syllogistic reasoning which had been in vogue before his time.
This notion is about as well founded as that of the people who,
in the middle ages, imagined that Virgil was a great conjurer.
Many who are far too well-informed to talk such extravagant
nonsense entertain what we think incorrect notions as to what
Bacon really effected in this matter.
The inductive method has been practised ever since the beginning of the world by every human being. It is constantly practised by the most ignorant clown, by the most thoughtless schoolboy, by the very child at the breast. That method leads the clown to the conclusion that if he sows barley he shall not reap wheat. By that method the schoolboy learns that a cloudy day is the best for catching trout. The very infant, we imagine, is led by induction to expect milk from his mother or nurse, and none from his father.

Not only is it not true that Bacon invented the inductive method; but it is not true that he was the first person who correctly analysed that method and explained its uses. Aristotle had long before pointed out the absurdity of supposing that syllogistic reasoning could ever conduct men to the discovery of any new principle, had shown that such discoveries must be made by induction, and by induction alone, and had given the history of the inductive process, concisely indeed, but with great perspicuity and precision.

Again, we are not inclined to ascribe much practical value to that analysis of the inductive method which Bacon has given, in the second book of the Novum Organum. It is indeed an elaborate and correct analysis. But it is an analysis of that which we are all doing from morning to night, and which we continue to do even in our dreams. A plain man finds his stomach out of order. He never heard Lord Bacon's name. But he proceeds in the
strictest conformity with the rules laid down in the second book
of the Novum Organum, and satisfies himself that minced pies have
done the mischief. "I ate minced pies on Monday and Wednesday,
and I was kept awake by indigestion all night." This is the
comparentia ad intellectum instantiarum convenientium. "I did not
eat any on Tuesday and Friday, and I was quite well." This is the
comparentia instantiarum in proximo quae natura data privantur.
"I ate very sparingly of them on Sunday, and was very slightly
indisposed in the evening. But on Christmas-day I almost dined on
them, and was so ill that I was in great danger." This is the
comparentia instantiarum secundum magis et minus. "It cannot
have been the brandy which I took with them. For I have drunk
brandy daily for years without being the worse for it." This is
the rejectio naturarum. Our invalid then proceeds to what is
termed by Bacon the Vindemiatio, and pronounces that minced pies
do not agree with him.

We repeat that we dispute neither the ingenuity nor the accuracy
of the theory contained in the second book of the Novum Organum;
but we think that Bacon greatly overrated its utility. We
conceive that the inductive process, like many other processes,
is not likely to be better performed merely because men know how
they perform it. William Tell would not have been one whit more
likely to cleave the apple if he had known that his arrow would
describe a parabola under the influence of the attraction of the
earth. Captain Barclay would not have been more likely to walk a
thousand miles in a thousand hours, if he had known the place and
name of every muscle in his legs. Monsieur Jourdain probably did not pronounce D and F more correctly after he had been apprised that D is pronounced by touching the teeth with the end of the tongue, and F by putting the upper teeth on the lower lip. We cannot perceive that the study of grammar makes the smallest difference in the speech of people who have always lived in good society. Not one Londoner in ten thousand can lay down the rules for the proper use of will and shall. Yet not one Londoner in a million ever misplaces his will and shall. Dr. Robertson could, undoubtedly, have written a luminous dissertation on the use of those words. Yet, even in his latest work, he sometimes misplaced them ludicrously. No man uses figures of speech with more propriety because he knows that one figure is called a metonymy and another a synecdoche. A drayman in a passion calls out, "You are a pretty fellow.", without suspecting that he is uttering irony, and that irony is one of the four primary tropes. The old systems of rhetoric were never regarded by the most experienced and discerning judges as of any use for the purpose of forming an orator. "Ego hanc vim intelligo," said Cicero, "esse in praecptis omnibus, non ut ea securi oratores eloquentiae laudem sint adepti, sed quae sua sponte homines eloquentes facerent, ea quosdam observasse, atque id egisse; sic esse non eloquentiam ex artificio, sed artificio ex eloquentia natum." We must own that we entertain the same opinion concerning the study of Logic which Cicero entertained concerning the study of Rhetoric. A man of sense syllogises in celarent and cesare all day long without suspecting it; and, though he may not know what an ignoratio elenchi is, has no difficulty in exposing it whenever he falls in
with it; which is likely to be as often as he falls in with a
Reverend Master of Arts nourished on mode and figure in the
cloisters of Oxford. Considered merely as an intellectual feat,
the Organum of Aristotle can scarcely be admired too highly. But
the more we compare individual with individual, school with
school, nation with nation, generation with generation, the more
do we lean to the opinion that the knowledge of the theory of
logic has no tendency whatever to make men good reasoners.

What Aristotle did for the syllogistic process Bacon has, in the
second book of the Novum Organum, done for the inductive process;
that is to say, he has analysed it well. His rules are quite
proper, but we do not need them, because they are drawn from our
own constant practice.

But, though everybody is constantly performing the process
described in the second book of the Novum Organum, some men
perform it well and some perform it ill. Some are led by it to
truth, and some to error. It led Franklin to discover the nature
of lightning. It led thousands, who had less brains than
Franklin, to believe in animal magnetism. But this was not
because Franklin went through the process described by Bacon, and
the dupes of Mesmer through a different process. The comparentiae
and rejectiones of which we have given examples will be found in
the most unsound inductions. We have heard that an eminent judge
of the last generation was in the habit of jocosely propounding
after dinner a theory, that the cause of the prevalence of
Jacobinism was the practice of bearing three names. He quoted on the one side Charles James Fox, Richard Brinsley Sheridan, John Horne Tooke, John Philpot Curran, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Theobald Wolfe Tone. These were instantiae convenientes. He then proceeded to cite instances absentiae in proximo, William Pitt, John Scott, William Windham, Samuel Horsley, Henry Dundas, Edmund Burke. He might have gone on to instances secundum magis et minus. The practice of giving children three names has been for some time a growing practice, and Jacobinism has also been growing. The practice of giving children three names is more common in America than in England. In England we still have a King and a House of Lords; but the Americans are Republicans. The rejectiones are obvious. Burke and Theobald Wolfe Tone are both Irishmen: therefore the being an Irishman is not the cause of Jacobinism. Horsley and Horne Tooke are both clergymen; therefore the being a clergyman is not the cause of Jacobinism. Fox and Windham were both educated at Oxford; therefore the being educated at Oxford is not the cause of Jacobinism. Pitt and Horne Tooke were both educated at Cambridge; therefore the being educated at Cambridge is not the cause of Jacobinism. In this way, our inductive philosopher arrives at what Bacon calls the Vintage, and pronounces that the having three names is the cause of Jacobinism.

Here is an induction corresponding with Bacon's analysis and ending in a monstrous absurdity. In what then does this induction differ from the induction which leads us to the conclusion that
the presence of the sun is the cause of our having more light by
day than by night? The difference evidently is not in the kind of
instances, but in the number of instances; that is to say, the
difference is not in that part of the process for which Bacon has
given precise rules, but in a circumstance for which no precise
rule can possibly be given. If the learned author of the theory
about Jacobinism had enlarged either of his tables a little, his
system would have been destroyed. The names of Tom Paine and
William Wyndham Grenville would have been sufficient to do the
work.

It appears to us, then, that the difference between a sound and
unsound induction does not lie in this, that the author of the
sound induction goes through the process analysed in the second
book of the Novum Organum, and the author of the unsound
induction through a different process. They both perform the same
process. But one performs it foolishly or carelessly; the other
performs it with patience, attention, sagacity, and judgment. Now
precepts can do little towards making men patient and attentive,
and still less towards making them sagacious and judicious. It is
very well to tell men to be on their guard against prejudices,
not to believe facts on slight evidence, not to be content with a
scanty collection of facts, to put out of their minds the idola
which Bacon has so finely described. But these rules are too
general to be of much practical use. The question is, What is a
prejudice? How long does the incredulity with which I hear a new
theory propounded continue to be a wise and salutary incredulity?
When does it become an idolum specus, the unreasonable pertinacity of a too sceptical mind? What is slight evidence? What collection of facts is scanty? Will ten instances do, or fifty, or a hundred? In how many months would the first human beings who settled on the shores of the ocean have been justified in believing that the moon had an influence on the tides? After how many experiments would Jenner have been justified in believing that he had discovered a safeguard against the small-pox? These are questions to which it would be most desirable to have a precise answer; but, unhappily, they are questions to which no precise answer can be returned.

We think, then, that it is possible to lay down accurate rules, as Bacon has done, for the performing of that part of the inductive process which all men perform alike; but that these rules, though accurate, are not wanted, because in truth they only tell us to do what we are all doing. We think that it is impossible to lay down any precise rule for the performing of that part of the inductive process which a great experimental philosopher performs in one way, and a superstitious old woman in another.

On this subject, we think, Bacon was in an error. He certainly attributed to his rules a value which did not belong to them. He went so far as to say, that, if his method of making discoveries were adopted, little would depend on the degree of force or acuteness of any intellect; that all minds would be reduced to
one level, that his philosophy resembled a compass or a rule which equalises all hands, and enables the most unpractised person to draw a more correct circle or line than the best draftsmen can produce without such aid. [Novum Organum, Praef. and Lib. I Aph. 122.] This really seems to us as extravagant as it would have been in Lindley Murray to announce that everybody who should learn his Grammar would write as good English as Dryden, or in that very able writer, the Archbishop of Dublin, to promise that all the readers of his Logic would reason like Chillingworth, and that all the readers of his Rhetoric would speak like Burke. That Bacon was altogether mistaken as to this point will now hardly be disputed. His philosophy has flourished during two hundred years, and has produced none of this levelling. The interval between a man of talents and a dunce is as wide as ever; and is never more clearly discernible than when they engage in researches which require the constant use of induction.

It will be seen that we do not consider Bacon's ingenious analysis of the inductive method as a very useful performance. Bacon was not, as we have already said, the inventor of the inductive method. He was not even the person who first analysed the inductive method correctly, though he undoubtedly analysed it more minutely than any who preceded him. He was not the person who first showed that by the inductive method alone new truth could be discovered. But he was the person who first turned the minds of speculative men, long occupied in verbal disputes, to
the discovery of new and useful truth; and, by doing so, he at
once gave to the inductive method an importance and dignity which
had never before belonged to it. He was not the maker of that
road; he was not the discoverer of that road; he was not the
person who first surveyed and mapped that road. But he was the
person who first called the public attention to an inexhaustible
mine of wealth, which had been utterly neglected, and which was
accessible by that road alone. By doing so he caused that road,
which had previously been trodden only by peasants and higglers,
to be frequented by a higher class of travellers.

That which was eminently his own in his system was the end which
he proposed to himself. The end being given, the means, as it
appears to us, could not well be mistaken. If others had aimed at
the same object with Bacon, we hold it to be certain that they
would have employed the same method with Bacon. It would have
been hard to convince Seneca that the inventing of a safety-lamp
was an employment worthy of a philosopher. It would have been
hard to persuade Thomas Aquinas to descend from the making of
syllogisms to the making of gunpowder. But Seneca would never
have doubted for a moment that it was only by means of a series
of experiments that a safety-lamp could be invented. Thomas
Aquinas would never have thought that his barbara and baralipont
would enable him to ascertain the proportion which charcoal ought
to bear to saltpetre in a pound of gunpowder. Neither common
sense nor Aristotle would have suffered him to fall into such an
absurdity.
By stimulating men to the discovery of new truth, Bacon stimulated them to employ the inductive method, the only method, even the ancient philosophers and the schoolmen themselves being judges, by which new truth can be discovered. By stimulating men to the discovery of useful truth, he furnished them with a motive to perform the inductive process well and carefully. His predecessors had been, in his phrase, not interpreters, but anticipators of nature. They had been content with the first principles at which they had arrived by the most scanty and slovenly induction. And why was this? It was, we conceive, because their philosophy proposed to itself no practical end, because it was merely an exercise of the mind. A man who wants to contrive a new machine or a new medicine has a strong motive to observe accurately and patiently, and to try experiment after experiment. But a man who merely wants a theme for disputation or declamation has no such motive. He is therefore content with premises grounded on assumption, or on the most scanty and hasty induction. Thus, we conceive, the schoolmen acted. On their foolish premises they often argued with great ability; and as their object was "assensum subjugare, non res," [Novum Organum, Lib. i. Aph. 29.] to be victorious in controversy not to be victorious over nature, they were consistent. For just as much logical skill could be shown in reasoning on false as on true premises. But the followers of the new philosophy, proposing to themselves the discovery of useful truth as their object, must have altogether failed of attaining that object if they had been
content to build theories on superficial induction.

Bacon has remarked [De Augmentis, Lib. i.] that, in ages when philosophy was stationary, the mechanical arts went on improving. Why was this? Evidently because the mechanic was not content with so careless a mode of induction as served the purpose of the philosopher. And why was the philosopher more easily satisfied than the mechanic? Evidently because the object of the mechanic was to mould things, whilst the object of the philosopher was only to mould words. Careful induction is not at all necessary to the making of a good syllogism. But it is indispensable to the making of a good shoe. Mechanics, therefore, have always been, as far as the range of their humble but useful callings extended, not anticipators but interpreters of nature. And when a philosophy arose, the object of which was to do on a large scale what the mechanic does on a small scale, to extend the power and to supply the wants of man, the truth of the premises, which logically is a matter altogether unimportant, became a matter of the highest importance; and the careless induction with which men of learning had previously been satisfied gave place, of necessity, to an induction far more accurate and satisfactory.

What Bacon did for inductive philosophy may, we think, be fairly stated thus. The objects of preceding speculators were objects which could be attained without careful induction. Those speculators, therefore, did not perform the inductive process carefully. Bacon stirred up men to pursue an object which could
be attained only by induction, and by induction carefully
performed; and consequently induction was more carefully
performed. We do not think that the importance of what Bacon did
for inductive philosophy has ever been overrated. But we think
that the nature of his services is often mistaken, and was not
fully understood even by himself. It was not by furnishing
philosophers with rules for performing the inductive process
well, but by furnishing them with a motive for performing it
well, that he conferred so vast a benefit on society.

To give to the human mind a direction which it shall retain for
ages is the rare prerogative of a few imperial spirits. It
cannot, therefore, be uninteresting to inquire what was the moral
and intellectual constitution which enabled Bacon to exercise so
vast an influence on the world.

In the temper of Bacon,—we speak of Bacon the philosopher, not
of Bacon the lawyer and politician,—there was a singular union
of audacity and sobriety. The promises which he made to mankind
might, to a superficial reader, seem to resemble the rants which
a great dramatist has put into the mouth of all Oriental
conqueror half-crazed by good fortune and by violent passions:

"He shall have chariots easier than air,
Which I will have invented; and thyself
That art the messenger shall ride before him,
On a horse cut out of an entire diamond,
That shall be made to go with golden wheels,
I know not how yet."

But Bacon performed what he promised. In truth, Fletcher would
not have dared to make Arbaces promise, in his wildest fits of
excitement, the tithe of what the Baconian philosophy has
performed.

The true philosophical temperament may, we think, be described in
four words, much hope, little faith; a disposition to believe
that anything, however extraordinary, may be done; an
indisposition to believe that anything extraordinary has been
done. In these points the constitution of Bacon's mind seems to
us to have been absolutely perfect. He was at once the Mammon and
the Surly of his friend Ben. Sir Epicure did not indulge in
visions more magnificent and gigantic, Surly did not sift
evidence with keener and more sagacious incredulity.

Closely connected with this peculiarity of Bacon's temper was a
striking peculiarity of his understanding. With great minuteness
of observation, he had an amplitude of comprehension such as has
never yet been vouchsafed to any other human being. The small
fine mind of Labruyere had not a more delicate tact than the
large intellect of Bacon. The Essays contain abundant proofs that
no nice feature of character, no peculiarity in the ordering of a
house, a garden, or a court-masque, would escape the notice of one whose mind was capable of taking in the whole world of knowledge. His understanding resembled the tent which the fairy Paribanou gave to Prince Ahmed. Fold it; and it seemed a toy for the hand of a lady. Spread it; and the armies of powerful Sultans might repose beneath its shade.

In keenness of observation he has been equalled, though perhaps never surpassed. But the largeness of his mind was all his own. The glance with which he surveyed the intellectual universe resembled that which the Archangel, from the golden threshold of heaven, darted down into the new creation:

"Round he surveyed,—and well might, where he stood
So high above the circling canopy
Of night's extended shade,—from eastern point
Of Libra, to the fleecy star which bears
Andromeda far off Atlantic seas
Beyond the horizon."

His knowledge differed from that of other men, as a terrestrial globe differs from an Atlas which contains a different country on every leaf. The towns and roads of England, France, and Germany are better laid down in the Atlas than on the globe. But while we are looking at England we see nothing of France; and while we are looking at France we see nothing of Germany. We may go to the
Atlas to learn the bearings and distances of York and Bristol, or of Dresden and Prague. But it is useless if we want to know the bearings and distances of France and Martinique, or of England and Canada. On the globe we shall not find all the market towns in our own neighbourhood; but we shall learn from it the comparative extent and the relative position of all the kingdoms of the earth. "I have taken," said Bacon, in a letter written when he was only thirty-one, to his uncle Lord Burleigh, "I have taken all knowledge to be my province." In any other young man, indeed in any other man, this would have been a ridiculous flight of presumption. There have been thousands of better mathematicians, astronomers, chemists, physicians, botanists, mineralogists, than Bacon. No man would go to Bacon's works to learn any particular science or art, any more than he would go to a twelve-inch globe in order to find his way from Kennington turnpike to Clapham Common. The art which Bacon taught was the art of inventing arts. The knowledge in which Bacon excelled all men was a knowledge of the mutual relations of all departments of knowledge.

The mode in which he communicated his thoughts was peculiar to him. He had no touch of that disputatious temper which he often censured in his predecessors. He effected a vast intellectual revolution in opposition to a vast mass of prejudices; yet he never engaged in any controversy, nay, we cannot at present recollect, in all his philosophical works, a single passage of a controversial character. All those works might with propriety
have been put into the form which he adopted in the work entitled Cogitata et visa: “Franciscus Baconus sic cogitavit.” These are thoughts which have occurred to me: weigh them well: and take them or leave them.

Borgia said of the famous expedition of Charles the Eighth, that the French had conquered Italy, not with steel, but with chalk for that the only exploit which they had found necessary for the purpose of taking military occupation of any place had been to mark the doors of the houses where they meant to quarter. Bacon often quoted this saying, and loved to apply it to the victories of his own intellect. [Novum Organum, Lib. i. Aph. 35 and elsewhere.] His philosophy, he said, came as a guest, not as an enemy. She found no difficulty in gaining admittance, without a contest, into every understanding fitted, by its structure and by its capacity, to receive her. In all this we think that he acted most judiciously; first, because, as he has himself remarked, the difference between his school and other schools was a difference so fundamental that there was hardly any common ground on which a controversial battle could be fought; and, secondly, because his mind, eminently observant, preeminently discursive and capacious, was, we conceive, neither formed by nature nor disciplined by habit for dialectical combat.

Though Bacon did not arm his philosophy with the weapons of logic, he adorned her profusely with all the decorations of rhetoric. His eloquence, though not untainted with the vicious
taste of his age, would alone have entitled him to a high rank in literature. He had a wonderful talent for packing thought close, and rendering it portable. In wit, if by wit be meant the power of perceiving analogies between things which appear to have nothing in common, he never had an equal, not even Cowley, not even the author of Hudibras. Indeed, he possessed this faculty, or rather this faculty possessed him, to a morbid degree. When he abandoned himself to it without reserve, as he did in the Sapientia Veterum, and at the end of the second book of the De Augmentis, the feats which he performed were not merely admirable, but portentous, and almost shocking. On those occasions we marvel at him as clowns on a fair-day marvel at a juggler, and can hardly help thinking that the devil must be in him.

These, however, were freaks in which his ingenuity now and then wantoned, with scarcely any other object than to astonish and amuse. But it occasionally happened that, when he was engaged in grave and profound investigations, his wit obtained the mastery over all his other faculties, and led him into absurdities into which no dull man could possibly have fallen. We will give the most striking instance which at present occurs to us. In the third book of the De Augmentis he tells us that there are some principles which are not peculiar to one science, but are common to several. That part of philosophy which concerns itself with these principles is, in his nomenclature, designated as philosophia prima. He then proceeds to mention some of the
principles with which this philosophia prima is conversant. One
of them is this. An infectious disease is more likely to be
communicated while it is in progress than when it has reached its
height. This, says he, is true in medicine. It is also true in
morals; for we see that the example of very abandoned men injures
public morality less than the example of men in whom vice has not
yet extinguished all good qualities. Again, he tells us that in
music a discord ending in a concord is agreeable, and that the
same thing may be noted in the affections. Once more, he tells
us, that in physics the energy with which a principle acts is
often increased by the antiperistasis of its opposite; and that
it is the same in the contests of factions. If the making of
ingenious and sparkling similitudes like these be indeed the
philosophia prima, we are quite sure that the greatest
philosophical work of the nineteenth century is Mr. Moore's Lalla
Rookh. The similitudes which we have cited are very happy
similitudes. But that a man like Bacon should have taken them for
more, that he should have thought the discovery of such
resemblances as these an important part of philosophy, has always
appeared to us one of the most singular facts in the history of
letters.

The truth is that his mind was wonderfully quick in perceiving
analogies of all sorts. But, like several eminent men whom we
could name, both living and dead, he sometimes appeared strangely
deficient in the power of distinguishing rational from fanciful
analogies, analogies which are arguments from analogies which are
mere illustrations, analogies like that which Bishop Butler so
ably pointed out, between natural and revealed religion, from
analogies like that which Addison discovered, between the series
of Grecian gods carved by Phidias and the series of English kings
painted by Kneller. This want of discrimination has led to many
strange political speculations. Sir William Temple deduced a
theory of government from the properties of the pyramid. Mr.
Southey's whole system of finance is grounded on the phaenomena
of evaporation and rain. In theology, this perverted ingenuity
has made still wilder work. From the time of Irenaeus and Origen
down to the present day, there has not been a single generation
in which great divines have not been led into the most absurd
expositions of Scripture, by mere incapacity to distinguish
analogies proper, to use the scholastic phrase, from analogies
metaphorical. [See some interesting remarks on this subject in
Bishop Berkeley's Minute Philosopher, Dialogue iv.] It is curious
that Bacon has himself mentioned this very kind of delusion among
the idola specus; and has mentioned it in language which, we are
inclined to think, shows that he knew himself to be subject to
it. It is the vice, he tells us, of subtle minds to attach too
much importance to slight distinctions; it is the vice, on the
other hand, of high and discursive intellects to attach too much
importance to slight resemblances; and he adds that, when this
last propensity is indulged to excess, it leads men to catch at
shadows instead of substances. [Novum Organum, Lib. i. Aph. 55.]

Yet we cannot wish that Bacon's wit had been less luxuriant. For,
to say nothing of the pleasure which it affords, it was in the vast majority of cases employed for the purpose of making obscure truth plain, of making repulsive truth attractive, of fixing in the mind for ever truth which might otherwise have left but a transient impression.

The poetical faculty was powerful in Bacon's mind, but not, like his wit, so powerful as occasionally to usurp the place of his reason, and to tyrannise over the whole man. No imagination was ever at once so strong and so thoroughly subjugated. It never stirred but at a signal from good sense. It stopped at the first check from good sense. Yet, though disciplined to such obedience, it gave noble proofs of its vigour. In truth, much of Bacon's life was passed in a visionary world, amidst things as strange as any that are described in the Arabian Tales, or in those romances on which the curate and barber of Don Quixote's village performed so cruel an auto-de-fe, amidst buildings more sumptuous than the palace of Aladdin, fountains more wonderful than the golden water of Parizade, conveyances more rapid than the hippogryph of Ruggiero, arms more formidable than the lance of Astolfo, remedies more efficacious than the balsam of Fierabras. Yet in his magnificent daydreams there was nothing wild, nothing but what sober reason sanctioned. He knew that all the secrets feigned by poets to have been written in the books of enchanters are worthless when compared with the mighty secrets which are really written in the book of nature, and which, with time and patience, will be read there. He knew that all the wonders
wrought by all the talismans in fable were trifles when compared to the wonders which might reasonably be expected from the philosophy of fruit, and that, if his words sank deep into the minds of men, they would produce effects such as superstition had never ascribed to the incantations of Merlin and Michael Scott. It was here that he loved to let his imagination loose. He loved to picture to himself the world as it would be when his philosophy should, in his own noble phrase, "have enlarged the bounds of human empire." [New Atlantis.] We might refer to many instances. But we will content ourselves with the strongest, the description of the House of Solomon in the New Atlantis. By most of Bacon's contemporaries, and by some people of our time, this remarkable passage would, we doubt not, be considered as an ingenious rodomontade, a counterpart to the adventures of Sinbad or Baron Munchausen. The truth is, that there is not to be found in any human composition a passage more eminently distinguished by profound and serene wisdom. The boldness and originality of the fiction is far less wonderful than the nice discernment which carefully excluded from that long list of prodigies everything that can be pronounced impossible, everything that can be proved to lie beyond the mighty magic of induction and time. Already some parts, and not the least startling parts, of this glorious prophecy have been accomplished, even according to the letter; and the whole, construed according to the spirit, is daily accomplishing all around us.

One of the most remarkable circumstances in the history of
Bacon’s mind is the order in which its powers expanded themselves. With him the fruit came first and remained till the last; the blossoms did not appear till late. In general, the development of the fancy is to the development of the judgment what the growth of a girl is to the growth of a boy. The fancy attains at an earlier period to the perfection of its beauty, its power, and its fruitfulness; and, as it is first to ripen, it is also first to fade. It has generally lost something of its bloom and freshness before the sterner faculties have reached maturity; and is commonly withered and barren while those faculties still retain all their energy. It rarely happens that the fancy and the judgment grow together. It happens still more rarely that the judgment grows faster than the fancy. This seems, however, to have been the case with Bacon. His boyhood and youth appear to have been singularly sedate. His gigantic scheme of philosophical reform is said by some writers to have been planned before he was fifteen, and was undoubtedly planned while he was still young. He observed as vigilantly, meditated as deeply, and judged as temperately when he gave his first work to the world as at the close of his long career. But in eloquence, in sweetness and variety of expression, and in richness of illustration, his later writings are far superior to those of his youth. In this respect the history of his mind bears some resemblance to the history of the mind of Burke. The treatise on the Sublime and Beautiful, though written on a subject which the coldest metaphysician could hardly treat without being occasionally betrayed into florid writing, is the most unadorned of all Burke’s works. It appeared when he was twenty-five or twenty-six. When, at forty, he wrote
the Thoughts on the Causes of the existing Discontents, his reason and his judgment had reached their full maturity; but his eloquence was still in its splendid dawn. At fifty, his rhetoric was quite as rich as good taste would permit; and when he died, at almost seventy, it had become ungracefully gorgeous. In his youth he wrote on the emotions produced by mountains and cascades, by the master-pieces of painting and sculpture, by the faces and necks of beautiful women, in the style of a Parliamentary report. In his old age he discussed treaties and tariffs in the most fervid and brilliant language of romance. It is strange that the Essay on the Sublime and Beautiful, and the Letter to a Noble Lord, should be the productions of one man. But it is far more strange that the Essay should have been a production of his youth, and the Letter of his old age.

We will give very short specimens of Bacon's two styles. In 1597, he wrote thus: "Crafty men contemn studies; simple men admire them; and wise men use them; for they teach not their own use: that is a wisdom without them, and won by observation. Read not to contradict, nor to believe, but to weigh and consider. Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested. Reading maketh a full man, conference a ready man, and writing an exact man. And therefore if a man write little, he had need have a great memory; if he confer little, have a present wit; and if he read little, have much cunning to seem to know that he doth not. Histories make men wise, poets witty, the mathematics subtle, natural philosophy deep, morals
grave, logic and rhetoric able to contend." It will hardly be

disputed that this is a passage to be "chewed and digested." We
do not believe that Thucydides himself has anywhere compressed so
much thought into so small a space.

In the additions which Bacon afterwards made to the Essays, there
is nothing superior in truth or weight to what we have quoted.

But his style was constantly becoming richer and softer. The
following passage, first published in 1625, will show the extent
of the change: "Prosperity is the blessing of the Old Testament;
adversity is the blessing of the New, which carrieth the greater
benediction and the clearer evidence of God's favour. Yet, even
in the Old Testament, if you listen to David's harp you shall
hear as many hearse-like airs as carols; and the pencil of the
Holy Ghost hath laboured more in describing the afflictions of
Job than the felicities of Solomon. Prosperity is not without
many fears and distastes; and adversity is not without comforts
and hopes. We see in needleworks and embroideries it is more
pleasing to have a lively work upon a sad and solemn ground, than
to have a dark and melancholy work upon a lightsome ground. Judge
therefore of the pleasure of the heart by the pleasure of the
eye. Certainly virtue is like precious odours, most fragrant when
they are incensed or crushed; for prosperity doth best discover
vice, but adversity doth best discover virtue."

It is by the Essays that Bacon is best known to the multitude.
The Novum Organum and the De Augmentis are much talked of, but
little read. They have produced indeed a vast effect on the opinions of mankind; but they have produced it through the operation of intermediate agents. They have moved the intellects which have moved the world. It is in the Essays alone that the mind of Bacon is brought into immediate contact with the minds of ordinary readers. There he opens an exoteric school, and talks to plain men, in language which everybody understands, about things in which everybody is interested. He has thus enabled those who must otherwise have taken his merits on trust to judge for themselves; and the great body of readers have, during several generations, acknowledged that the man who has treated with such consummate ability questions with which they are familiar may well be supposed to deserve all the praise bestowed on him by those who have sat in his inner-school.

Without any disparagement to the admirable treatise De Augmentis, we must say that, in our judgment, Bacon's greatest performance is the first book of the Novum Organum. All the peculiarities of his extraordinary mind are found there in the highest perfection. Many of the aphorisms, but particularly those in which he gives examples of the influence of the idola, show a nicety of observation that has never been surpassed. Every part of the book blazes with wit, but with wit which is employed only to illustrate and decorate truth. No book ever made so great a revolution in the mode of thinking, overthrew so many prejudices, introduced so many new opinions. Yet no book was ever written in a less contentious spirit. It truly conquers with chalk and not
with steel. Proposition after proposition enters into the mind, is received not as an invader, but as a welcome friend, and, though previously unknown, becomes at once domesticated. But what we most admire is the vast capacity of that intellect which, without effort, takes in at once all the domains of science, all the past, the present, and the future, all the errors of two thousand years, all the encouraging signs of the passing times, all the bright hopes of the coming age. Cowley, who was among the most ardent, and not among the least discerning followers of the new philosophy, has, in one of his finest poems, compared Bacon to Moses standing on Mount Pisgah. It is to Bacon, we think, as he appears in the first book of the Novum Organum, that the comparison applies with peculiar felicity. There we see the great Lawgiver looking round from his lonely elevation on an infinite expanse; behind him a wilderness of dreary sands and bitter waters in which successive generations have sojourned, always moving, yet never advancing, reaping no harvest, and building no abiding city; before him a goodly land, a land of promise, a land flowing with milk and honey. While the multitude below saw only the flat sterile desert in which they had so long wandered, bounded on every side by a near horizon, or diversified only by some deceitful mirage, he was gazing from a far higher stand on a far lovelier country, following with his eye the long course of fertilising rivers, through ample pastures, and under the bridges of great capitals, measuring the distances of marts and havens, and portioning out all those wealthy regions from Dan to Beersheba.
It is painful to turn back from contemplating Bacon's philosophy to contemplate his life. Yet without so turning back it is impossible fairly to estimate his powers. He left the University at an earlier age than that at which most people repair thither. While yet a boy he was plunged into the midst of diplomatic business. Thence he passed to the study of a vast technical system of law, and worked his way up through a succession of laborious offices to the highest post in his profession. In the meantime he took an active part in every Parliament; he was an adviser of the Crown: he paid court with the greatest assiduity and address to all whose favour was likely to be of use to him; he lived much in society; he noted the slightest peculiarities of character and the slightest changes of fashion. Scarcely any man has led a more stirring life than that which Bacon led from sixteen to sixty. Scarcely any man has been better entitled to be called a thorough man of the world. The founding of a new philosophy, the imparting of a new direction to the minds of speculators, this was the amusement of his leisure, the work of hours occasionally stolen from the Woolsack and the Council Board. This consideration, while it increases the admiration with which we regard his intellect, increases also our regret that such an intellect should so often have been unworthily employed. He well knew the better course and had, at one time, resolved to pursue it. "I confess," said he in a letter written when he was still young, "that I have as vast contemplative ends as I have moderate civil ends." Had his civil ends continued to be moderate, he would have been, not only the Moses, but the Joshua
of philosophy. He would have fulfilled a large part of his own magnificent predictions. He would have led his followers, not only to the verge, but into the heart of the promised land. He would not merely have pointed out, but would have divided the spoil. Above all, he would have left, not only a great, but a spotless name. Mankind would then have been able to esteem their illustrious benefactor. We should not then be compelled to regard his character with mingled contempt and admiration, with mingled aversion and gratitude. We should not then regret that there should be so many proofs of the narrowness and selfishness of a heart, the benevolence of which was large enough to take in all races and all ages. We should not then have to blush for the disingenuousness of the most devoted worshipper of speculative truth, for the servility of the boldest champion of intellectual freedom. We should not then have seen the same man at one time far in the van, and at another time far in the rear of his generation. We should not then be forced to own that he who first treated legislation as a science was among the last Englishmen who used the rack, that he who first summoned philosophers to the great work of interpreting nature was among the last Englishmen who sold justice. And we should conclude our survey of a life placidly, honourably, beneficently passed, "in industrious observations, grounded conclusions, and profitable inventions and discoveries," [From a Letter of Bacon to Lord Burleigh.] with feelings very different from those with which we now turn away from the checkered spectacle of so much glory and so much shame.
JOHN BUNYAN

(December 1831)

THIS is an eminently beautiful and splendid edition of a book which well deserves all that the printer and the engraver can do for it. The Life of Bunyan is, of course, not a performance which can add much to the literary reputation of such a writer as Mr. Southey. But it is written in excellent English, and, for the most part, in an excellent spirit. Mr. Southey propounds, we need not say, many opinions from which we altogether dissent; and his attempts to excuse the odious persecution to which Bunyan was subjected have sometimes moved our indignation. But we will avoid this topic. We are at present much more inclined to join in paying homage to, the genius of a great man than to engage in a controversy concerning church-government and toleration.

We must not pass without notice the engravings with which this volume is decorated. Some of Mr. Harvey's woodcuts are admirably designed and executed. Mr. Martin's illustrations do not please us quite so well. His Valley of the Shadow of Death is not that Valley of the Shadow of Death which Bunyan imagined. At all
events, it is not that dark and horrible glen which has from
childhood been in our mind's eye. The valley is a cavern: the
quagmire is a lake: the straight path runs zigzag: and Christian
appears like a speck in the darkness of the immense vault. We
miss, too, those hideous forms which make so striking a part of
the description of Bunyan, and which Salvator Rosa would have
loved to draw. It is with unfeigned diffidence that we pronounce
judgment on any question relating to the art of painting. But it
appears to us that Mr. Martin has not of late been fortunate in
his choice of subjects. He should never have attempted to
illustrate the Paradise Lost. There can be no two manners more
directly opposed to each other than the manner of his painting
and the manner of Milton's poetry. Those things which are mere
accessories in the descriptions become the principal objects in
the pictures; and those figures which are most prominent in the
descriptions can be detected in the pictures only by a very close
scrutiny. Mr. Martin has succeeded perfectly in representing the
pillars and candelabras of Pandaemonium. But he has forgotten
that Milton's Pandaemonium is merely the background to Satan. In
the picture, the Archangel is scarcely visible amidst the endless
colonnades of his infernal palace. Milton's Paradise, again, is
merely the background to his Adam and Eve. But in Mr. Martin's
picture the landscape is everything. Adam, Eve, and Raphael
attract much less notice than the lake and the mountains, the
gigantic flowers, and the giraffes which feed upon them. We read
that James the Second sat to Varelst, the great flower-painter.
When the performance was finished, his Majesty appeared in the
midst of a bower of sun-flowers and tulips, which completely drew
away all attention from the central figure. All who looked at the portrait took it for a flower-piece. Mr. Martin, we think, introduces his immeasurable spaces, his innumerable multitudes, his gorgeous prodigies of architecture and landscape, almost as unseasonably as Varelst introduced his flower-pots and nosegays. If Mr. Martin were to paint Lear in the storm, we suspect that the blazing sky, the sheets of rain, the swollen torrents, and the tossing forest, would draw away all attention from the agonies of the insulted king and father. If he were to paint the death of Lear, the old man, asking the bystanders to undo his button, would be thrown into the shade by a vast blaze of pavilions, standards, armour, and heralds' coats. Mr. Martin would illustrate the Orlando Furioso well, the Orlando Innamorato still better, the Arabian Nights best of all. Fairy palaces and gardens, porticoes of agate, and groves flowering with emeralds and rubies, inhabited by people for whom nobody cares, these are his proper domain. He would succeed admirably in the enchanted ground of Alcina, or the mansion of Aladdin. But he should avoid Milton and Bunyan.

The characteristic peculiarity of the Pilgrim's Progress is that it is the only work of its kind which possesses a strong human interest. Other allegories only amuse the fancy. The allegory of Bunyan has been read by many thousands with tears. There are some good allegories in Johnson's works, and some of still higher merit by Addison. In these performances there is, perhaps, as much
wit
and ingenuity as in the Progress, But the pleasure which is
produced by the Vision of Mirza, the Vision of Theodore, the
Genealogy of Wit, or the Contest between Rest and Labour, is
exactly similar to the pleasure which we derive from one of
Cowley's odes, or from a canto of Hudibras. It is a pleasure
which
belongs wholly to the understanding, and in which the feelings
have no part whatever. Nay, even Spenser himself, though
assuredly
one of the greatest poets that ever lived, could not succeed in
the attempt to make allegory interesting. It was in vain that he
lavished the riches of his mind on the House of Pride and the
House of Temperance. One unpardonable fault, the fault of
tediousness, pervades the whole of the Fairy Queen. We become
sick
of cardinal virtues and deadly sins, and long for the society of
plain men and women. Of the persons who read the first canto, not
one in ten reaches the end of the first book, and not one in a
hundred perseveres to the end of the poem. Very few and very
weary
are those who are in at the death of the Blatant Beast. If the
last six books, which are said to have been destroyed in Ireland,
had been preserved, we doubt whether any heart less stout than
that of a commentator would have held out to the end.

It is not so with the Pilgrim's Progress. That wonderful book,
while it obtains admiration from the most fastidious critics, is
loved by those who are too simple to admire it. Dr. Johnson, all
whose studies were desultory, and who hated, as he said, to read
books through, made an exception in favour of the Pilgrim's
Progress. That work was one of the two or three works which he
wished longer. It was by no common merit that the illiterate
sectary extracted praise like this from the most pedantic of
critics and the most bigoted of Tories. In the wildest parts of
Scotland the Pilgrim's Progress is the delight of the peasantry.
In every nursery the Pilgrim's Progress is a greater favourite
than Jack the Giant-killer. Every reader knows the straight and
narrow path as well as he knows a road in which he has gone
backward and forward a hundred times. This is the highest miracle
of genius, that things which are not should be as though they
were, that the imaginations of one mind should become the
personal
recollections of another. And this miracle the tinker has
wrought.

There is no ascent, no declivity, no resting-place, no
turn-stile,
with which we are not perfectly acquainted. The wicket-gate, and
the desolate swamp which separates it from the City of
Destruction, the long line of road, as straight as a rule can
make
it, the Interpreter's house and all its fair shows, the prisoner
in the iron cage, the palace, at the doors of which armed men
kept
guard, and on the battlements of which walked persons clothed all
in gold, the cross, and the sepulchre, the steep hill and the
pleasant arbour, the stately front of the House Beautiful by the
wayside, the chained lions crouching in the porch, the low green
valley of Humiliation, rich with grass and covered with flocks,
all are as well known to us as the sights of our own street. Then
we come to the narrow place where Apollyon strode right across
the
whole breadth of the way, to stop the journey of Christian, and
where, afterwards, the pillar was set up to testify how bravely
the pilgrim had fought the good fight. As we advance, the valley
becomes deeper and deeper. The shade of the precipices on both
sides falls blacker and blacker. The clouds gather overhead.
Doleful voices, the clanking of chains, and the rush of many feet
to and fro, are heard through the darkness. The way, hardly
discernible in gloom, runs close by the mouth of the burning pit,
which sends forth its flames, its noisome smoke, and its hideous
shapes to terrify the adventurer. Thence he goes on, amidst the
snares and pitfalls, with the mangled bodies of those who have
perished lying in the ditch by his side. At the end of the long
dark valley he passes the dens in which the old giants dwelt,
amidst the bones of those whom they had slain.

Then the road passes straight on through a waste moor, till at
length the towers of a distant city appear before the traveller;
and soon he is in the midst of the innumerable multitudes of
Vanity Fair. There are the jugglers and the apes, the shops and
the puppet-shows. There are Italian Row, and French Row, and
Spanish Row, and British Row, with their crowds of buyers, sellers, and loungers, jabbering all the languages of the earth.

Thence we go on by the little hill of the silver mine, and through the meadow of lilies, along the bank of that pleasant river which is bordered on both sides by fruit-trees. On the left branches off the path leading to the horrible castle, the courtyard of which is paved with the skulls of pilgrims; and right onward are the sheepfolds and orchards of the Delectable Mountains.

From the Delectable Mountains, the way lies through the fogs and briars of the Enchanted Ground, with here and there a bed of soft cushions spread under a green arbour. And beyond is the land of Beulah, where the flowers, the grapes, and the songs of birds never cease, and where the sun shines night and day. Thence are plainly seen the golden pavements and streets of pearl, on the other side of that black and cold river over which there is no bridge.

All the stages of the journey, all the forms which cross or overtake the pilgrims, giants, and hobgoblins, ill-favoured ones, and shining ones, the tall, comely, swarthy Madam Bubble, with her great purse by her side, and her fingers playing with the money, the black man in the bright vesture, Mr. Wordly-Wise-man and my Lord Hategood, Mr. Talkative, and Mrs. Timorous, all are
actually existing beings to us. We follow the travellers through
their allegorical progress with interest not inferior to that
with which we follow Elizabeth from Siberia to Moscow, or Jeanie
Deans from Edinburgh to London. Bunyan is almost the only writer
who ever gave to the abstract the interest of the concrete. In
the works of many celebrated authors, men are mere
personifications. We have not a jealous man, but jealousy; not a
traitor, but perfidy; not a patriot, but patriotism. The mind of
Bunyan, on the contrary, was so imaginative that
personifications, when he dealt with them, became men. A dialogue
between two qualities, in his dream, has more dramatic effect
than a dialogue between two human beings in most plays. In this
respect the genius of Bunyan bore a great resemblance to that of
a man who had very little else in common with him, Percy Bysshe
Shelley. The strong imagination of Shelley made him an idolater
in his own despite. Out of the most indefinite terms of a hard,
cold, dark, metaphysical system, he made a gorgeous Pantheon,
full of beautiful, majestic, and life-like forms. He turned
atheism itself into a mythology, rich with visions as glorious as
the gods that live in the marble of Phidias, or the virgin saints
that smile on us from the canvas of Murillo. The Spirit of
Beauty, the Principle of Good, the Principle of Evil, when he
treated of them, ceased to be abstractions. They took shape and
colour. They were no longer mere words; but intelligible forms,
fair humanities, objects of love, of adoration, or of fear. As
there can be no stronger sign of a mind destitute of the poetical
faculty than that tendency which was so common among the writers
of the French school to turn images into abstractions, Venus
for example, into Love, Minerva into Wisdom, Mars into War, and Bacchus into Festivity, so there can be no stronger sign of a mind truly poetical than a disposition to reverse this abstracting process, and to make individuals out of generalities. Some of the metaphysical and ethical theories of Shelley were certainly most absurd and pernicious. But we doubt whether any modern poet has possessed in an equal degree some of the highest qualities of the great ancient masters. The words bard and inspiration, which seem so cold and affected when applied to other modern writers, have a perfect propriety when applied to him. He was not an author, but a bard. His poetry seems not to have been an art, but an inspiration. Had he lived to the full age of man, he might not improbably have given to the world some great work of the very highest rank in design and execution. But, alas!

O daphnis eba roon' ekluse dina
ton Mosais philon andra, ton ou Numphaisin apekthi.

But we must return to Bunyan. The Pilgrim's Progress undoubtedly is not a perfect allegory. The types are often inconsistent with each other; and sometimes the allegorical disguise is altogether thrown off. The river, for example, is emblematic of death; and we are told that every human being must pass through the river. But Faithful does not pass through it. He is martyred, not in shadow, but in reality, at Vanity Fair. Hopeful talks to Christian about Esau's birthright and about his own convictions
of sin as Bunyan might have talked with one of his own
congregation. The damsels at the House Beautiful catechise
Christiana's boys, as any good ladies might catechise any boys at
a Sunday School. But we do not believe that any man, whatever
might be his genius, and whatever his good luck, could long
continue a figurative history without falling into many
inconsistencies. We are sure that inconsistencies, scarcely less
gross than the worst into which Bunyan has fallen, may be found
in the shortest and most elaborate allegories of the Spectator
and the Rambler. The Tale of a Tub and the History of John Bull
swarm with similar errors, if the name of error can be properly
applied to that which is unavoidable. It is not easy to make a
simile go on all-fours. But we believe that no human ingenuity
could produce such a centipede as a long allegory in which the
correspondence between the outward sign and the thing signified
should be exactly preserved. Certainly no writer, ancient or
modern, has yet achieved the adventure. The best thing, on the
whole, that an allegorist can do, is to present to his readers a
succession of analogies, each of which may separately be striking
and happy, without looking very nicely to see whether they
harmonise with each other. This Bunyan has done; and, though a
minute scrutiny may detect inconsistencies in every page of his
tale, the general effect which the tale produces on all persons,
learned and unlearned, proves that he has done well. The passages
which it is most difficult to defend are those in which he
altogether drops the allegory, and puts into the mouth of his
pilgrims religious ejaculations and disquisitions better suited
to his own pulpit at Bedford or Reading than to the Enchanted
Ground or to the Interpreter's Garden. Yet even these passages, though we will not undertake to defend them against the objections of critics, we feel that we could ill spare. We feel that the story owes much of its charm to these occasional glimpses of solemn and affecting subjects, which will not be hidden, which force themselves through the veil, and appear before us in their native aspect. The effect is not unlike that which is said to have been produced on the ancient stage, when the eyes of the actor were seen flaming through his mask, and giving life and expression to what would else have been an inanimate and uninteresting disguise.

It is very amusing and very instructive to compare the Pilgrim's Progress with the Grace Abounding. The latter work is indeed one of the most remarkable pieces of autobiography in the world. It is a full and open confession of the fancies which passed through the mind of an illiterate man, whose affections were warm, whose nerves were irritable, whose imagination was ungovernable, and who was under the influence of the strongest religious excitement. In whatever age Bunyan had lived, the history of his feelings would, in all probability, have been very curious. But the time in which his lot was cast was the time of a great stirring of the human mind. A tremendous burst of public feeling, produced by the tyranny of the hierarchy, menaced the old ecclesiastical institutions with destruction. To the gloomy regularity of one intolerant Church had succeeded the licence of innumerable sects, drunk with the sweet and heady must of their
new liberty. Fanaticism, engendered by persecution, and destined to engender persecution in turn, spread rapidly through society. Even the strongest and most commanding minds were not proof against this strange taint. Any time might have produced George Fox and James Naylor. But to one time alone belong the fanatic delusions of such a statesman as Vane, and the hysterical tears of such a soldier as Cromwell.

The history of Bunyan is the history of a most excitable mind in an age of excitement. By most of his biographers he has been treated with gross injustice. They have understood in a popular sense all those strong terms of self-condemnation which he employed in a theological sense. They have, therefore, represented him as an abandoned wretch, reclaimed by means almost miraculous, or, to use their favourite metaphor, "as a brand plucked from the burning." Mr. Ivimey calls him the depraved Bunyan and the wicked tinker of Elstow. Surely Mr. Ivimey ought to have been too familiar with the bitter accusations which the most pious people are in the habit of bringing against themselves, to understand literally all the strong expressions which are to be found in the Grace Abounding. It is quite clear, as Mr. Southey most justly remarks, that Bunyan never was a vicious man. He married very early; and he solemnly declares that he was strictly faithful to his wife. He does not appear to have been a drunkard. He owns, indeed, that, when a boy, he never spoke without an oath. But a single admonition cured him of this bad habit for life; and the cure must have been wrought early;
for at eighteen he was in the army of the Parliament; and if he 
had carried the vice of profaneness into that service, he would 
doubtless have received something more than an admonition from 
Serjeant Bind-their-kings-in-chains, or Captain Hew-Agag-in-
pieces-before-the-Lord. Bell-ringing and playing at hockey on 
Sundays seem to have been the worst vices of this depraved 
tinker. They would have passed for virtues with Archbishop Laud. 
It is quite clear that, from a very early age, Bunyan was a man 
of a strict life and of a tender conscience. "He had been," says 
Mr. Southey, "a blackguard." Even this we think too hard a 
censure. Bunyan was not, we admit, so fine a gentleman as Lord 
Digby; but he was a blackguard no otherwise than as every 
labouring man that ever lived has been a blackguard. Indeed Mr. 
Southey acknowledges this. "Such he might have been expected to 
be by his birth, breeding, and vocation. Scarcely, indeed, by 
possibility, could he have been otherwise." A man whose manners 
and sentiments are decidedly below those of his class deserves to 
be called a blackguard. But it is surely unfair to apply so 
strong a word of reproach to one who is only what the great mass 
of every community must inevitably be.

Those horrible internal conflicts which Bunyan has described with 
so much power of language prove, not that he was a worse man than 
his neighbours, but that his mind was constantly occupied by 
religious considerations, that his fervour exceeded his 
knowledge, and that his imagination exercised despotic power over 
his body and mind. He heard voices from heaven. He saw strange
visions of distant hills, pleasant and sunny as his own

Delectable Mountains. From those abodes he was shut out, and placed in a dark and horrible wilderness, where he wandered through ice and snow, striving to make his way into the happy region of light. At one time he was seized with an inclination to work miracles. At another time he thought himself actually possessed by the devil. He could distinguish the blasphemous whispers. He felt his infernal enemy pulling at his clothes behind him. He spurned with his feet and struck with his hands at the destroyer. Sometimes he was tempted to sell his part in the salvation of mankind. Sometimes a violent impulse urged him to start up from his food, to fall on his knees, and to break forth into prayer. At length he fancied that he had committed the unpardonable sin. His agony convulsed his robust frame. He was, he says, as if his breastbone would split; and this he took for a sign that he was destined to burst asunder like Judas. The agitation of his nerves made all his movements tremulous; and this trembling, he supposed, was a visible mark of his reprobation, like that which had been set on Cain. At one time, indeed, an encouraging voice seemed to rush in at the window, like the noise of wind, but very pleasant, and commanded, as he says, a great calm in his soul. At another time, a word of comfort "was spoke loud unto him; it showed a great word; it seemed to be writ in great letters." But these intervals of case were short. His state, during two years and a half, was generally the most horrible that the human mind can imagine. "I walked," says he, with his own peculiar eloquence, "to a neighbouring town; and sat down upon a settle in the street, and fell into a
very deep pause about the most fearful state my sin had brought me to; and, after long musing, I lifted up my head; but methought I saw as if the sun that shineth in the heavens did grudge to give me light; and as if the very stones in the street, and tiles upon the houses, did band themselves against me. Methought that they all combined together to banish me out of the world. I was abhorred of them, and unfit to dwell among them, because I had sinned against the Saviour. Oh, how happy now was every creature for they stood fast, and kept their station. But I was gone and lost.” Scarcely any madhouse could produce an instance of delusion so strong, or of misery so acute.

It was through this Valley of the Shadow of Death, overhung by darkness, peopled with devils, resounding with blasphemy and lamentation, and passing amidst quagmires, snares, and pitfalls, close by the very mouth of hell, that Bunyan journeyed to that bright and fruitful land of Beulah, in which he sojourned during the latter period of his pilgrimage. The only trace which his cruel sufferings and temptations seem to have left behind them was an affectionate compassion for those who were still in the state in which he had once been. Religion has scarcely ever worn a form so calm and soothing as in his allegory. The feeling which predominates through the whole book is a feeling of tenderness for weak, timid, and harassed minds. The character of Mr. Fearing, of Mr. Feeble-Mind, of Mr. Despondency and his daughter Miss Much-afraid, the account of poor Little-faith who was robbed by the three thieves of his spending money, the description of
Christian's terror in the dungeons of Giant Despair and in his passage through the river, all clearly show how strong a sympathy Bunyan felt, after his own mind had become clear and cheerful, for persons afflicted with religious melancholy.

Mr. Southey, who has no love for the Calvinists, admits that, if Calvinism had never worn a blacker appearance than in Bunyan's works, it would never have become a term of reproach. In fact, those works of Bunyan with which we are acquainted are by no means more Calvinistic than the articles and homilies of the Church of England. The moderation of his opinions on the subject of predestination gave offence to some zealous persons. We have seen an absurd allegory, the heroine of which is named Hephzibah, written by some raving supralapsarian preacher who was dissatisfied with the mild theology of the Pilgrim's Progress. In this foolish book, if we recollect rightly, the Interpreter is called the Enlightener, and the House Beautiful is Castle Strength. Mr. Southey tells us that the Catholics had also their Pilgrim's Progress, without a Giant Pope, in which the Interpreter is the Director, and the House Beautiful Grace's Hall. It is surely a remarkable proof of the power of Bunyan's genius, that two religious parties, both of which regarded his opinions as heterodox, should have had recourse to him for assistance.

There are, we think, some characters and scenes in the Pilgrim's Progress, which can be fully comprehended and enjoyed only by
persons familiar with the history of the times through which
Bunyan lived. The character of Mr. Greatheart, the guide, is an
dexample. His fighting is, of course, allegorical; but the
allegory is not strictly preserved. He delivers a sermon on
imputed righteousness to his companions; and, soon after, he
gives battle to Giant Grim, who had taken upon him to back the
lions. He expounds the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah to the
household and guests of Gaius; and then he sallies out to attack
Slay-good, who was of the nature of flesh-eaters, in his den.
These are inconsistencies; but they are inconsistencies which
add, we think, to the interest of the narrative. We have not the
least doubt that Bunyan had in view some stout old Great-heart of
Naseby and Worcester, who prayed with his men before he drilled
them, who knew the spiritual state of every dragoon in his troop,
and who, with the praises of God in his mouth, and a two-edged
sword in his hand, had turned to flight, on many fields of
battle, the swearing, drunken braves of Rupert and Lunsford.

Every age produces such men as By-ends. But the middle of the
seventeenth century was eminently prolific of such men. Mr.
Southey thinks that the satire was aimed at some particular
individual; and this seems by no means improbable. At all events
Bunyan must have known many of those hypocrites who followed
religion only when religion walked in silver slippers, when the
sun shone, and when the people applauded. Indeed he might have
easily found all the kindred of By-ends among the public men of
his time. He might have found among the peers my Lord Turn-about,
my Lord Time-server, and my Lord Fair-speech; in the House of Commons, Mr. Smooth-man, Mr. Anything, and Mr. Facing-both-ways; nor would "the parson of the parish, Mr. Two-tongues," have been wanting. The town of Bedford probably contained more than one politician who, after contriving to raise an estate by seeking the Lord during the reign of the saints, contrived to keep what he had got by persecuting the saints during the reign of the strumpets, and more than one priest who, during repeated changes in the discipline and doctrines of the Church, had remained constant to nothing but his benefice.

One of the most remarkable passages in the Pilgrim's Progress is that in which the proceedings against Faithful are described. It is impossible to doubt that Bunyan intended to satirise the mode in which state trials were conducted under Charles the Second. The licence given to the witnesses for the prosecution, the shameless partiality and ferocious insolence of the judge, the precipitancy and the blind rancour of the jury, remind us of those odious mummeries which, from the Restoration to the Revolution, were merely forms preliminary to hanging, drawing, and quartering. Lord Hate-good performs the office of counsel for the prisoners as well as Scroggs himself could have performed it.

"JUDGE. Thou runagate, heretic, and traitor, hast thou heard what these honest gentlemen have witnessed against thee?
"FAITHFUL. May I speak a few words in my own defence?

"JUDGE. Sirrah, sirrah! thou deservest to live no longer, but to be slain immediately upon the place; yet, that all men may see our gentleness towards thee, let us hear what thou, vile runagate, hast to say."

No person who knows the state trials can be at a loss for parallel cases. Indeed, write what Bunyan would, the baseness and cruelty of the lawyers of those times "sinned up to it still," and even went beyond it. The imaginary trial of Faithful, before a jury composed of personified vices, was just and merciful, when compared with the real trial of Alice Lisle before that tribunal where all the vices sat in the person of Jeffreys.

The style of Bunyan is delightful to every reader, and invaluable as a study to every person who wishes to obtain a wide command over the English language. The vocabulary is the vocabulary of the common people. There is not an expression, if we except a few technical terms of theology, which would puzzle the rudest peasant. We have observed several pages which do not contain a single word of more than two syllables. Yet no writer has said more exactly what he meant to say. For magnificence, for pathos, for vehement exhortation, for subtle disquisition, for every purpose of the poet, the orator, and the divine, this homely dialect, the dialect of plain working men, was perfectly
sufficient. There is no book in our literature on which we would
so readily stake the fame of the old unpolluted English language,
no book which shows so well how rich that language is in its own
proper wealth, and how little it has been improved by all that it
has borrowed.

Cowper said, forty or fifty years ago, that he dared not name
John Bunyan in his verse, for fear of moving a sneer. To our
refined forefathers, we suppose, Lord Roscommon's Essay on
Translated Verse, and the Duke of Buckinghamshire's Essay on
Poetry, appeared to be compositions infinitely superior to the
allegory of the preaching tinker. We live in better times; and we
are not afraid to say, that, though there were many clever men in
England during the latter half of the seventeenth century, there
were only two minds which possessed the imaginative faculty in a
very eminent degree. One of those minds produced the Paradise
Lost, the other the Pilgrim's Progress.

LEIGH HUNT

(January 1841)

The Dramatic Works of WYCHERLEY, CONGREVE, VANBRUGH, and
FARQUHAR, with Biographical and Critical Notices. By LEIGH HUNT.
WE have a kindness for Mr. Leigh Hunt. We form our judgment of
him, indeed, only from events of universal notoriety, from his
own works, and from the works of other writers, who have
generally abused him in the most rancorous manner. But, unless we
are greatly mistaken, he is a very clever, a very honest, and a
very good-natured man. We can clearly discern, together with many
merits, many faults both in his writings and in his conduct. But
we really think that there is hardly a man living whose merits
have been so grudgingly allowed, and whose faults have been so
cruelly expiated.

In some respects Mr. Leigh Hunt is excellently qualified for the
task which he has now undertaken. His style, in spite of its
mannerism, nay, partly by reason of its mannerism, is well-suited
for light, garrulous, desultory ana, half critical, half
biographical. We do not always agree with his literary judgments;
but we find in him what is very rare in our time, the power of
justly appreciating and heartily enjoying good things of very
different kinds. He can adore Shakspeare and Spenser without
denying poetical genius to the author of Alexander's Feast, or
fine observation, rich fancy and exquisite humour to him who
imagined Will Honeycomb and Sir Roger de Coverley. He has paid
particular attention to the history of the English drama, from
the age of Elizabeth down to our own time, and has every right to
be heard with respect on that subject.
The plays to which he now acts as introducer are, with few exceptions, such as, in the opinion of many very respectable people, ought not to be reprinted. In this opinion we can by no means concur. We cannot wish that any work or class of works which has exercised a great influence on the human mind, and which illustrates the character of an important epoch in letters, politics, and morals, should disappear from the world. If we err in this matter, we err with the gravest men and bodies of men in the empire, and especially with the Church of England, and with the great schools of learning which are connected with her. The whole liberal education of our countrymen is conducted on the principle, that no book which is valuable, either by reason of the excellence of its style, or by reason of the light which it throws on the history, polity, and manners of nations, should be withheld from the student on account of its impurity. The Athenian Comedies, in which there are scarcely a hundred lines together without some passage of which Rochester would have been ashamed, have been reprinted at the Pitt Press, and the Clarendon Press, under the direction of Syndics, and delegates appointed by the Universities, and have been illustrated with notes by reverend, very reverend, and right reverend commentators. Every year the most distinguished young men in the kingdom are examined by bishops and professors of divinity in such works as the Lysistrata of Aristophanes and the Sixth Satire of Juvenal. There is certainly something a little ludicrous in the idea of a conclave of venerable fathers of the Church praising and rewarding a lad on account of his intimate acquaintance with
writings compared with which the loosest tale in Prior is modest.

But, for our own part, we have no doubt that the greatest societies which direct the education of the English gentry have herein judged wisely. It is unquestionable that an extensive acquaintance with ancient literature enlarges and enriches the mind. It is unquestionable that a man whose mind has been thus enlarged and enriched is likely to be far more useful to the State and to the Church than one who is unskilled or little skilled, in classical learning. On the other hand, we find it difficult to believe that, in a world so full of temptation as this, any gentleman whose life would have been virtuous if he had not read Aristophanes and Juvenal will be made vicious by reading them. A man who, exposed to all the influences of such a state of society as that in which we live, is yet afraid of exposing himself to the influences of a few Greek or Latin verses, acts, we think, much like the felon who begged the sheriffs to let him have an umbrella held over his head from the door of Newgate to the gallows, because it was a drizzling morning, and he was apt to take cold.

The virtue which the world wants is a healthful virtue, not a valetudinarian virtue, a virtue which can expose itself to the risks inseparable from all spirited exertion, not a virtue which keeps out of the common air for fear of infection, and eschews the common food as too stimulating. It would be indeed absurd to attempt to keep men from acquiring those qualifications which fit them to play their part in life with honour to themselves and
advantage to their country, for the sake of preserving a delicacy
which cannot be preserved, a delicacy which a walk from
Westminster to the Temple is sufficient to destroy.

But we should be justly chargeable with gross inconsistency if,
while we defend the policy which invites the youth of our country
to study such writers as Theocritus and Catullus, we were to set
up a cry against a new edition of the Country Wife or the Wife of
the World. The immoral English writers of the seventeenth century
are indeed much less excusable than those of Greece and Rome. But
the worst English writings of the seventeenth century are decent,
compared with much that has been bequeathed to us by Greece and
Rome. Plato, we have little doubt, was a much better man than Sir
George Etherege. But Plato has written things at which Sir George
Etherege would have shuddered. Buckhurst and Sedley, even in
those wild orgies at the Cock in Bow Street for which they were
pelted by the rabble and fined by the Court of King's Bench,
would never have dared to hold such discourse as passed between
Socrates and Phaedrus on that fine summer day under the plane-
tree, while the fountain warbled at their feet, and the cicadas
chirped overhead. If it be, as we think it is, desirable that an
English gentleman should be well informed touching the government
and the manners of little commonwealths which both in place and
time are far removed from us, whose independence has been more
than two thousand years extinguished, whose language has not been
spoken for ages, and whose ancient magnificence is attested only
by a few broken columns and friezes, much more must it be
desirable that he should be intimately acquainted with the
history of the public mind of his own country, and with the
causes, the nature, and the extent of those revolutions of
opinion and feeling which, during the last two centuries, have
alternately raised and depressed the standard of our national
morality. And knowledge of this sort is to be very sparingly
gleaned from Parliamentary debates, from State papers, and from
the works of grave historians. It must either not be acquired at
all, or it must be acquired by the perusal of the light
literature which has at various periods been fashionable. We are
therefore by no means disposed to condemn this publication,
though we certainly cannot recommend the handsome volume before
us as an appropriate Christmas present for young ladies.

We have said that we think the present publication perfectly
justifiable. But we can by no means agree with Mr. Leigh Hunt,
who seems to hold that there is little or no ground for the
charge of immorality so often brought against the literature of
the Restoration. We do not blame him for not bringing to the
judgment-seat the merciless rigour of Lord Angelo; but we really
think that such flagitious and impudent offenders as those who
are now at the bar deserved at least the gentle rebuke of
Escalus. Mr. Leigh Hunt treats the whole matter a little too much
in the easy style of Lucio; and perhaps his exceeding lenity
disposes us to be somewhat too severe.

And yet it is not easy to be too severe. For in truth this part
of our literature is a disgrace to our language and our national
caracter. It is clever, indeed, and very entertaining; but it
is, in the most emphatic sense of the words, "earthly, sensual,
devilish." Its indecency, though perpetually such as is condemned
not less by the rules of good taste than by those of morality, is
not, in our opinion, so disgraceful a fault as its singularly
inhuman spirit. We have here Belial, not as when he inspired Ovid
and Ariosto, "graceful and humane," but with the iron eye and
cruel sneer of Mephistopheles. We find ourselves in a world, in
which the ladies are like very profligate, impudent and unfeeling
men, and in which the men are too bad for any place but
Pandaemonium or Norfolk Island. We are surrounded by foreheads of
bronze, hearts like the nether millstone, and tongues set on fire
of hell.

Dryden defended or excused his own offences and those of his
contemporaries by pleading the example of the earlier English
dramatists; and Mr. Leigh Hunt seems to think there is force in
the plea. We altogether differ from this opinion. The crime
charged is not mere coarseness of expression. The terms which are
delicate in one age become gross in the next. The diction of the
English version of the Pentateuch is sometimes such as Addison
would not have ventured to imitate; and Addison, the standard of
moral purity in his own age, used many phrases which are now
proscribed. Whether a thing shall be designated by a plain
noun-substantive or by a circumlocution is mere matter of
fashion.
Morality is not at all interested in the question. But morality is deeply interested in this, that what is immoral shall not be presented to the imagination of the young and susceptible in constant connection with what is attractive. For every person who has observed the operation of the law of association in his own mind and in the minds of others knows that whatever is constantly presented to the imagination in connection with what is attractive will itself become attractive. There is undoubtedly a great deal of indelicate writing in Fletcher and Massinger, and more than might be wished even in Ben Jonson and Shakspeare, who are comparatively pure. But it is impossible to trace in their plays any systematic attempt to associate vice with those things which men value most and desire most, and virtue with every thing ridiculous and degrading. And such a systematic attempt we find in the whole dramatic literature of the generation which followed the return of Charles the Second. We will take, as an instance of what we mean, a single subject of the highest importance to the happiness of mankind, conjugal fidelity. We can at present hardly call to mind a single English play, written before the civil war, in which the character of a seducer of married women is represented in a favourable light. We remember many plays in which such persons are baffled, exposed, covered with derision, and insulted by triumphant husbands. Such is the fate of Falstaff, with all his wit and knowledge of the world. Such is the fate of Brisac in Fletcher's Elder Brother, and of Ricardo and Ubaldo in Massinger's Picture. Sometimes, as in the Fatal Dowry and Love's Cruelty, the outraged honour of families is repaired by a bloody revenge. If now and then the lover is
represented as an accomplished man, and the husband as a person
of weak or odious character, this only makes the triumph of
female virtue the more signal, as in Johnson's Celia and Mrs.
Fitzdottrel, and in Fletcher's Maria. In general we will venture
to say that the dramatists of the age of Elizabeth and James the
First either treat the breach of the marriage-vow as a serious
crime, or, if they treat it as matter for laughter, turn the
laugh against the gallant.

On the contrary, during the forty years which followed the
Restoration, the whole body of the dramatists invariably
represent adultery, we do not say as a peccadillo, we do not say
as an error which the violence of passion may excuse, but as the
calling of a fine gentleman, as a grace without which his
character would be imperfect. It is as essential to his breeding
and to his place in society that he should make love to the wives
of his neighbours as that he should know French, or that he
should have a sword at his side. In all this there is no passion,
and scarcely anything that can be called preference. The hero
intrigues just as he wears a wig; because, if he did not, he
would be a queer fellow, a city prig, perhaps a Puritan. All the
agreeable qualities are always given to the gallant. All the
contempt and aversion are the portion of the unfortunate husband.
Take Dryden for example; and compare Woodall with Brainsick, or
Lorenzo with Gomez. Take Wycherley; and compare Horner with
Pinchwife. Take Vanbrugh; and compare Constant with Sir John
Brute. Take Farquhar; and compare Archer with Squire Sullen. Take
Congreve; and compare Bellmour with Fondlewife, Careless with Sir
Paul Plyant, or Scandal with Foresight. In all these cases, and
in many more which might be named, the dramatist evidently does
his best to make the person who commits the injury graceful,
sensible, and spirited, and the person who suffers it a fool, or
a tyrant, or both.

Mr. Charles Lamb, indeed, attempted to set up a defence for this
way of writing. The dramatists of the latter part of the
seventeenth century are not, according to him, to be tried by the
standard of morality which exists, and ought to exist in real
life. Their world is a conventional world. Their heroes and
heroines belong, not to England, not to Christendom, but to an
Utopia of gallantry, to a Fairyland, where the Bible and Burn's
justice are unknown, where a prank which on this earth would be
rewarded with the pillory is merely matter for a peal of elvish
laughter. A real Homer, a real Careless, would, it is admitted,
be exceedingly bad men. But to predicate morality or immorality
of the Horner of Wycherley and the Careless of Congreve is as
absurd as it would be to arraign a sleeper for his dreams. "They
belong to the regions of pure comedy, where no cold moral reigns.
When we are among them we are among a chaotic people. We are not
to judge them by our usages. No reverend institutions are
insulted by their proceedings, for they have none among them. No
peace of families is violated, for no family ties exist among
them. There is neither right nor wrong, gratitude or its
opposite, claim or duty, paternity or sonship."
This is, we believe, a fair summary of Mr. Lamb's doctrine. We are sure that we do not wish to represent him unfairly. For we admire his genius; we love the kind nature which appears in all his writings; and we cherish his memory as much as if we had known him personally. But we must plainly say that his argument, though ingenious, is altogether sophistical.

Of course we perfectly understand that it is possible for a writer to create a conventional world in which things forbidden by the Decalogue and the Statute Book shall be lawful, and yet that the exhibition may be harmless, or even edifying. For example, we suppose that the most austere critics would not accuse Fenelon of impiety and immorality on account of his Telemachus and his Dialogues of the Dead. In Telemachus and the Dialogues of the Dead we have a false religion, and consequently a morality which is in some points incorrect. We have a right and a wrong differing from the right and the wrong of real life. It is represented as the first duty of men to pay honour to Jove and Minerva. Philocles, who employs his leisure in making graven images of these deities, is extolled for his piety in a way which contrasts singularly with the expressions of Isaiah on the same subject. The dead are judged by Minos, and rewarded with lasting happiness for actions which Fenelon would have been the first to pronounce splendid sins. The same may be said of Mr. Southey's Mahommmedan and Hindoo heroes and heroines. In Thalaba, to speak in derogation of the Arabian impostor is blasphemy: to drink wine...
is a crime: to perform ablutions and to pay honour to the holy
cities are works of merit. In the Curse of Kehama, Kailyal is
commended for her devotion to the statue of Mariataly, the
goddess of the poor. But certainly no person will accuse Mr.
Southey of having promoted or intended to promote either Islamism
or Brahminism.

It is easy to see why the conventional worlds of Fenelon and Mr.
Southey are unobjectionable. In the first place, they are utterly
unlike the real world in which we live. The state of society, the
laws even of the physical world, are so different from those with
which we are familiar, that we cannot be shocked at finding the
morality also very different. But in truth the morality of these
conventional worlds differs from the morality of the real world
only in points where there is no danger that the real world will
ever go wrong. The generosity and docility of Telemachus, the
fortitude, the modesty, the filial tenderness of Kailyal, are
virtues of all ages and nations. And there was very little danger
that the Dauphin would worship Minerva, or that an English damsel
would dance, with a bucket on her head, before the statue of
Mariataly.

The case is widely different with what Mr. Charles Lamb calls the
conventional world of Wycherley and Congreve. Here the garb, the
manners, the topics of conversation are those of the real town
and of the passing day. The hero is in all superficial
accomplishments exactly the fine gentleman whom every youth in
the pit would gladly resemble. The heroine is the fine lady whom
every youth in the pit would gladly marry. The scene is laid in
some place which is as well known to the audience as their own
houses, in St. James's Park, Park, or Hyde Park, or Westminster
Hall. The lawyer bustles about with his bag, between the Common
Pleas and the Exchequer. The Peer calls for his carriage to go to
the House of Lords on a private bill. A hundred little touches
are employed to make the fictitious world appear like the actual
world. And the immorality is of a sort which never can be out of
date, and which all the force of religion, law, and public
opinion united can but imperfectly restrain.

In the name of art, as well as in the name of virtue, we protest
against the principle that the world of pure comedy is one into
which no moral enters. If comedy be an imitation, under whatever
conventions, of real life, how is it possible that it can have no
reference to the great rule which directs life, and to feelings
which are called forth by every incident of life? If what Mr.
Charles Lamb says were correct, the inference would be that these
dramatists did not in the least understand the very first
principles of their craft. Pure landscape-painting into which no
light or shade enters, pure portrait-painting into which no
expression enters, are phrases less at variance with sound
criticism than pure comedy into which no moral enters.

But it is not the fact that the world of these dramatists is a
world into which no moral enters. Morality constantly enters into
that world, a sound morality, and an unsound morality; the sound
morality to be insulted, derided, associated with everything mean
and hateful; the unsound morality to be set off to every
advantage, and inculcated by all methods, direct and indirect. It
is not the fact that none of the inhabitants of this conventional
world feel reverence for sacred institutions and family ties.
Fondlewife, Pinchwife, every person in short of narrow
understanding and disgusting manners, expresses that reverence
strongly. The heroes and heroines, too, have a moral code of
their own, an exceedingly bad one, but not, as Mr. Charles Lamb
seems to think, a code existing only in the imagination of
dramatists. It is, on the contrary, a code actually received and
obeyed by great numbers of people. We need not go to Utopia or
Fairyland to find them. They are near at hand. Every night some
of them cheat at the hells in the Quadrant, and others pace the
Piazza in Covent Garden. Without flying to Nephelococcygia or to
the Court of Queen Mab, we can meet with sharpers, bullies, hard-
hearted impudent debauchees, and women worthy of such paramours.
The morality of the Country Wife and the Old Bachelor is the
morality, not, as Mr. Charles Lamb maintains, of an unreal world,
but of a world which is a great deal too real. It is the
morality, not of a chaotic people, but of low town-rakes, and of
those ladies whom the newspapers call "dashing Cyprians."

And the question is simply this, whether a man of genius who
constantly and systematically endeavours to make this sort of
character attractive, by uniting it with beauty, grace, dignity,
spirit, a high social position, popularity, literature, wit, taste, knowledge of the world, brilliant success in every undertaking, does or does not make an ill use of his powers. We own that we are unable to understand how this question can be answered in any way but one.

It must, indeed, be acknowledged, in justice to the writers of whom we have spoken thus severely, that they were to a great extent the creatures of their age, And if it be asked why that age encouraged immorality which no other age would have tolerated, we have no hesitation in answering that this, great depravation of the national taste was the effect of the prevalence of Puritanism under the Commonwealth.

To punish public outrages on morals and religion is unquestionably within the competence of rulers. But when a government, not content with requiring decency, requires sanctity, it oversteps the bounds which mark its proper functions. And it may be laid down as a universal rule that a government which attempts more than it ought will perform less. A lawgiver who, in order to protect distressed borrowers, limits the rate of interest, either makes it impossible for the objects of his care to borrow at all, or places them at the mercy of the worst class of usurers. A lawgiver who, from tenderness for labouring men, fixes the hours of their work and the amount of their wages, is certain to make them far more wretched than he found them. And so a government which, not content with
repressing scandalous excesses, demands from its subjects fervent and austere piety, will soon discover that, while attempting to render an impossible service to the cause of virtue, it has in truth only promoted vice.

For what are the means by which a government can effect its ends? Two only, reward and punishment; powerful means, indeed, for influencing the exterior act, but altogether impotent for the purpose of touching the heart. A public functionary who is told that he will be promoted if he is a devout Catholic, and turned out of his place if he is not, will probably go to mass every morning, exclude meat from his table on Fridays, shrive himself regularly, and perhaps let his superiors know that he wears a hair shirt next his skin. Under a Puritan government, a person who is apprised that piety is essential to thriving in the world will be strict in the observance of the Sunday, or, as he will call it, Sabbath, and will avoid a theatre as if it were plague-stricken. Such a show of religion as this the hope of gain and the fear of loss will produce, at a week's notice, in any abundance which a government may require. But under this show, sensuality, ambition, avarice, and hatred retain unimpaired power, and the seeming convert has only added to the vices of a man of the world all the still darker vices which are engendered by the constant practice of dissimulation. The truth cannot be long concealed. The public discovers that the grave persons who are proposed to it as patterns are more utterly destitute of moral principle and of moral sensibility than avowed libertines.
It sees that these Pharisees are farther removed from real
goodness than publicans and harlots. And, as usual, it rushes to
the extreme opposite to that which it quits. It considers a high
religious profession as a sure mark of meanness and depravity. On
the very first day on which the restraint of fear is taken away,
and on which men can venture to say what they think, a frightful
peal of blasphemy and ribaldry proclaims that the short-sighted
policy which aimed at making a nation of saints has made a nation
of scoffers.

It was thus in France about the beginning of the eighteenth
century. Lewis the Fourteenth in his old age became religious: he
determined that his subjects should be religious too: he shrugged
his shoulders and knitted his brows if he observed at his levee
or near his dinner-table any gentleman who neglected the duties
enjoined by the Church, and rewarded piety with blue ribands,
invitations to Marli, governments, pensions, and regiments.
Forthwith Versailles became, in everything but dress, a convent.
The pulpits and confessionals were surrounded by swords and
embroidery. The Marshals of France were much in prayer; and there
was hardly one among the Dukes and Peers who did not carry good
little books in his pocket, fast during Lent, and communicate at
Easter. Madame de Maintenon, who had a great share in the blessed
work, boasted that devotion had become quite the fashion. A
fashion indeed it was; and like a fashion it passed away. No
sooner had the old king been carried to St. Denis than the whole
Court unmasked. Every man hastened to indemnify himself, by the
excess of licentiousness and impudence, for years of
mortification. The same persons who, a few months before, with
meek voices and demure looks, had consulted divines about the
state of their souls, now surrounded the midnight table where,
amidst the bounding of champagne corks, a drunken prince,
enthroned between Dubois and Madame de Parabere, hiccoughed out
atheistical arguments and obscene jests. The early part of the
reign of Lewis the Fourteenth had been a time of licence; but the
most dissolute men of that generation would have blushed at the
orgies of the Regency.

It was the same with our fathers in the time of the Great Civil
War. We are by no means unmindful of the great debt which mankind
owes to the Puritans of that time, the deliverers of England, the
founders of the American Commonwealths. But in the day of their
power, those men committed one great fault, which left deep and
lasting traces in the national character and manners. They
mistook the end and overrated the force of government. They
determined, not merely to protect religion and public morals from
insult, an object for which the civil sword, in discreet hands,
may be beneficially employed, but to make the people committed to
their rule truly devout. Yet, if they had only reflected on
events which they had themselves witnessed and in which they had
themselves borne a great part, they would have seen what was
likely to be the result of their enterprise. They had lived under
a government which, during a long course of years, did all that
could be done, by lavish bounty and by rigorous punishment, to
enforce conformity to the doctrine and discipline of the Church of England. No person suspected of hostility to that Church had the smallest chance of obtaining favour at the Court of Charles. Avowed dissent was punished by imprisonment, by ignominious exposure, by cruel mutilations, and by ruinous fines. And the event had been that the Church had fallen, and had, in its fall, dragged down with it a monarchy which had stood six hundred years. The Puritan might have learned, if from nothing else, yet from his own recent victory, that governments which attempt things beyond their reach are likely not merely to fail, but to produce an effect directly the opposite of that which they contemplate as desirable.

All this was overlooked. The saints were to inherit the earth. The theatres were closed. The fine arts were placed under absurd restraints. Vices which had never before been even misdemeanours were made capital felonies. It was solemnly resolved by Parliament "that no person shall be employed but such as the House shall be satisfied of his real godliness." The pious assembly had a Bible lying on the table for reference. If they had consulted it they might have learned that the wheat and the tares grow together inseparably, and must either be spared together or rooted up together. To know whether a man was really godly was impossible. But it was easy to know whether he had a plain dress, lank hair, no starch in his linen, no gay furniture in his house; whether he talked through his nose, and showed the whites of his eyes; whether he named his children Assurance,
Tribulation, Mahershalal-hash-baz; whether he avoided Spring
Garden when in town, and abstained from hunting and hawking when
in the country; whether he expounded hard scriptures to his troop
of dragoons, and talked in a committee of ways and means about
seeking the Lord. These were tests which could easily be applied.
The misfortune was that they were tests which proved nothing.
Such as they were, they were employed by the dominant party. And
the consequence was that a crowd of impostors, in every walk of
life, began to mimic and to caricature what were then regarded as
the outward signs of sanctity. The nation was not duped. The
restraints of that gloomy time were such as would have been
impatiently borne, if imposed by men who were universally
believed to be saints. Those restraints became altogether
insupportable when they were known to be kept up for the profit
of hypocrites. It is quite certain that, even if the royal family
had never returned, even if Richard Cromwell or Henry Cromwell
had been at the head of the administration, there would have been
a great relaxation of manners. Before the Restoration many signs
indicated that a period of licence was at hand. The Restoration
crushed for a time the Puritan party, and placed supreme power in
the hands of a libertine. The political counter-revolution
assisted the moral counter-revolution, and was in turn assisted
by it. A period of wild and desperate dissoluteness followed.
Even in remote manor-houses and hamlets the change was in some
degree felt; but in London the outbreak of debauchery was
appalling; and in London the places most deeply infected were the
Palace, the quarters inhabited by the aristocracy, and the Inns
of Court. It was on the support of these parts of the town that
the playhouses depended. The character of the drama became
conformed to the character of its patrons. The comic poet was the
mouthpiece of the most deeply corrupted part of a corrupted
society. And in the plays before us we find, distilled and
condensed, the essential spirit of the fashionable world during
the anti-Puritan reaction.

The Puritan had affected formality; the comic poet laughed at
decorum. The Puritan had frowned at innocent diversions; the
comic poet took under his patronage the most flagitious excesses.
The Puritan had canted; the comic poet blasphemed. The Puritan
had made an affair of gallantry felony without benefit of clergy;
the comic poet represented it as an honourable distinction. The
Puritan spoke with disdain of the low standard of popular
morality; his life was regulated by a far more rigid code; his
virtue was sustained by motives unknown to men of the world.
Unhappily it had been amply proved in many cases, and might well
be suspected in many more, that these high pretensions were
unfounded. Accordingly, the fashionable circles, and the comic
poets who were the spokesmen of those circles, took up the notion
that all professions of piety and integrity were to be construed
by the rule of contrary; that it might well be doubted whether
there was such a thing as virtue in the world; but that, at all
events, a person who affected to be better than his neighbours
was sure to be a knave.

In the old drama there had been much that was reprehensible. But
whoever compares even the least decorous plays of Fletcher with
those contained in the volume before us will see how much the
profligacy which follows a period of overstrained austerity goes
beyond the profligacy which precedes such a period. The nation
resembled the demoniac in the New Testament. The Puritans boasted
that the unclean spirit was cast out. The house was empty, swept,
and garnished; and for a time the expelled tenant wandered
through dry places seeking rest and finding none. But the force
of the exorcism was spent. The fiend returned to his abode; and
returned not alone. He took to him seven other spirits more
wicked than himself. They entered in, and dwelt together: and the
second possession was worse than the first.

We will now, as far as our limits will permit, pass in review the
writers to whom Mr. Leigh Hunt has introduced us. Of the four,
Wycherley stands, we think, last in literary merit, but first in
order of time, and first, beyond all doubt, in immorality.

WILLIAM WYCHERLEY was born in 1640. He was the son of a
Shropshire gentleman of old family, and of what was then
accounted a good estate: The properly was estimated at six
hundred a year, a fortune which, among the fortunes at that time,
probably ranked as a fortune of two thousand a year would rank in
our days.

William was an infant when the civil war broke out; and, while
he was still in his rudiments, a Presbyterian hierarchy and a republican government were established on the ruins of the ancient Church and throne. Old Mr. Wycherley was attached to the royal cause, and was not disposed to intrust the education of his heir to the solemn Puritans who now ruled the universities and public schools. Accordingly the young gentleman was sent at fifteen to France. He resided some time in the neighbourhood of the Duke of Montausier, chief of one of the noblest families of Touraine. The Duke's wife, a daughter of the house of Rambouillet, was a finished specimen of those talents and accomplishments for which her race was celebrated. The young foreigner was introduced to the splendid circle which surrounded the Duchess, and there he appears to have learned some good and some evil. In a few years he returned to his country a fine gentleman and a Papist. His conversion, it may safely be affirmed, was the effect not of any strong impression on his understanding, or feelings, but partly of intercourse with an agreeable society in which the Church of Rome was the fashion, and partly of that aversion to Calvinistic austerities which was then almost universal among young Englishmen of parts and spirit, and which, at one time, seemed likely to make one half of them Catholics, and the other half Atheists.

But the Restoration came. The universities were again in loyal hands; and there was reason to hope that there would be again a national Church fit for a gentleman. Wycherley became a member of Queen's College, Oxford, and abjured the errors of the Church of
Rome. The somewhat equivocal glory of turning, for a short time, a good-for-nothing Papist into a good-for-nothing Protestant is ascribed to Bishop Barlow.

Wycherley left Oxford without taking a degree, and entered at the Temple, where he lived gaily for some years, observing the humours of the town, enjoying its pleasures, and picking up just as much law as was necessary to make the character of a pettifogging attorney or of a litigious client entertaining in a comedy.

From an early age he had been in the habit of amusing himself by writing. Some wretched lines of his on the Restoration are still extant. Had he devoted himself to the making of verses, he would have been nearly as far below Tate and Blackmore as Tate and Blackmore are below Dryden. His only chance for renown would have been that he might have occupied a niche in a satire, between Flecknoe and Settle. There was, however, another kind of composition in which his talents and acquirements qualified him to succeed; and to that he judiciously betook himself.

In his old age he used to say that he wrote Love in a Wood at nineteen, the Gentleman Dancing-Master at twenty-one, the Plain Dealer at twenty-five, and the Country Wife at one or two and thirty. We are incredulous, we own, as to the truth of this story. Nothing that we know of Wycherley leads us to think him
incapable of sacrificing truth to vanity. And his memory in the
decline of his life played him such strange tricks that we might
question the correctness of his assertion without throwing any
imputation on his veracity. It is certain that none of his plays
was acted till 1672, when he gave Love in a Wood to the public.
It seems improbable that he should resolve, on so important an
occasion as that of a first appearance before the world, to run
his chance with a feeble piece, written before his talents were
ripe, before his style was formed, before he had looked abroad
into the world; and this when he had actually in his desk two
highly-finished plays, the fruit of his matured powers. When we
look minutely at the pieces themselves, we find in every part of
them reason to suspect the accuracy of Wycherley's statement. In
the first scene of Love in a Wood, to go no further, we find many
passages which he could not have written when he was nineteen.
There is an allusion to gentlemen's periwigs, which first came
into fashion in 1663; an allusion to guineas, which were first
struck in 1663; an allusion to the vests which Charles ordered to
be worn at Court in 1666; an allusion to the fire of 1666; and
several political allusions which must be assigned to times later
than the year of the Restoration, to times when the Government
and the city were opposed to each other, and when the
Presbyterian ministers had been driven from the parish churches
to the conventicles. But it is needless to dwell on particular
expressions. The whole air and spirit of the piece belong to a
period subsequent to that mentioned by Wycherley. As to the Plain
Dealer, which is said to have been written when he was twenty-
five, it contains one scene unquestionably written after 1675,
several which are later than 1668, and scarcely a line which can have been composed before the end of 1666.

Whatever may have been the age at which Wycherley composed his plays, it is certain that he did not bring them before the public till he was upwards of thirty. In 1672, Love in a Wood was acted with more success than it deserved, and this event produced a great change in the fortunes of the author. The Duchess of Cleveland cast her eyes upon him, and was pleased with his appearance. This abandoned woman, not content with her complaisant husband and her royal keeper, lavished her fondness on a crowd of paramours of all ranks, from dukes to rope-dancers. In the time of the commonwealth she commenced her career of gallantry, and terminated it under Anne, by marrying, when a great-grandmother, that worthless fop, Beau Fielding. It is not strange that she should have regarded Wycherley with favour. His figure was commanding, his countenance strikingly handsome, his look and deportment full of grace and dignity. He had, as Pope said long after, "the true nobleman look," the look which seems to indicate superiority, and a not unbecoming consciousness of superiority. His hair indeed, as he says in one of his poems, was prematurely grey. But in that age of periwigs this misfortune was of little importance. The Duchess admired him, and proceeded to make love to him, after the fashion of the coarse-minded and shameless circle to which she belonged. In the Ring, when the crowd of beauties and fine gentlemen was thickest, she put her head out of her coach-window, and bawled to him, "Sir, you are a
rascal; you are a villain"; and, if she is not belied, she added
another phrase of abuse which we will not quote, but of which we
may say that it might most justly have been applied to her own
children. Wycherley called on her Grace the next day, and with
great humility begged to know in what way he had been so
unfortunate as to disoblige her. Thus began an intimacy from
which the poet probably expected wealth and honours. Nor were
such expectations unreasonable. A handsome young fellow about the
Court, known by the name of Jack Churchill, was, about the same
time, so lucky as to become the object of a short-lived fancy of
the Duchess. She had presented him with five thousand pounds, the
price, in all probability, of some title or pardon. The prudent
youth had lent the money on high interest and on landed security;
and this judicious investment was the beginning of the most
splendid private fortune in Europe. Wycherley was not so lucky.
The partiality with which the great lady regarded him was indeed
the talk of the whole town; and sixty years later old men who
remembered those days told Voltaire that she often stole from the
Court to her lover's chambers in the Temple, disguised like a
country girl, with a straw hat on her head, pattens on her feet,
and a basket in her hand. The poet was indeed too happy and proud
to be discreet. He dedicated to the Duchess the play which had
led to their acquaintance, and in the dedication expressed
himself in terms which could not but confirm the reports which
had gone abroad. But at Whitehall such an affair was regarded in
no serious light. The lady was not afraid to bring Wycherley to
Court, and to introduce him to a splendid society, with which, as
far as appears, he had never before mixed. The easy King, who
allowed to his mistresses the same liberty which he claimed for himself, was pleased with the conversation and manners of his new rival. So high did Wycherley stand in the royal favour that once, when he was confined by a fever to his lodgings in Bow Street, Charles, who, with all his faults, was certainly a man of social and affable disposition, called on him, sat by his bed, advised him to try change of air, and gave him a handsome sum of money to defray the expense of the journey. Buckingham, then Master of the Horse, and one of that infamous ministry known by the name of the Cabal, had been one of the Duchess's innumerable paramours. He at first showed some symptoms of jealousy, but he soon, after his fashion, veered round from anger to fondness, and gave Wycherley a commission in his own regiment and a place in the royal household.

It would be unjust to Wycherley's memory not to mention here the only good action, as far as we know, of his whole life. He is said to have made great exertions to obtain the patronage of Buckingham for the illustrious author of Hudibras, who was now sinking into an obscure grave, neglected by a nation proud of his genius, and by a Court which he had served too well. His Grace consented to see poor Butler; and an appointment was made. But unhappily two pretty women passed by; the volatile Duke ran after them; the opportunity was lost, and could never be regained.

The second Dutch war, the most disgraceful war in the whole history of England, was now raging. It was not in that age
considered as by any means necessary that a naval officer should receive a professional education. Young men of rank, who were hardly able to keep their feet in a breeze, served on board the King's ships, sometimes with commissions, and sometimes as volunteers. Mulgrave, Dorset, Rochester, and many others, left the playhouses in the Mall for hammocks and salt pork, and, ignorant as they were of the rudiments of naval service, showed, at least, on the day of battle, the courage which is seldom wanting in an English gentleman. All good judges of maritime affairs complained that, under this system, the ships were grossly mismanaged, and that the tarpaulins contracted the vices, without acquiring the graces, of the Court. But on this subject, as on every other where the interests or whims of favourites were concerned, the Government of Charles was deaf to all remonstrances. Wycherley did not choose to be out of the fashion. He embarked, was present at a battle, and celebrated it, on his return, in a copy of verses too bad for the bellman.

[Mr. Leigh Hunt supposes that the battle at which Wycherley was present was that which the Duke of York gained over Opdam, in 1665. We believe that it was one of the battles between Rupert and De Ruyter, in 1673.

The point is of no importance; and there cannot be said to be much evidence either way. We offer, however, to Mr. Leigh Hunt's consideration three arguments, of no great weight certainly, yet such as ought, we think, to prevail in the absence of better.
First, it is not very likely that a young Templar, quite unknown in the world,—and Wycherley was such in 1665,—should have quitted his chambers to go to sea. On the other hand, it would be in the regular course of things, that, when a courtier and an equerry, he should offer his services. Secondly, his verses appear to have been written after a drawn battle, like those of 1673, and not after a complete victory, like that of 1665. Thirdly, in the epilogue to the Gentleman Dancing-Master, written in 1673, he says that "all gentlemen must pack to sea"; an expression which makes it probable that he did not himself mean to stay behind.

About the same time, he brought on the stage his second piece, the Gentleman Dancing-Master. The biographers say nothing, as far as we remember, about the fate of this play. There is, however, reason to believe that, though certainly far superior to Love in a Wood, it was not equally successful. It was first tried at the west end of the town, and, as the poet confessed, "would scarce do there." It was then performed in Salisbury Court, but, as it should seem, with no better event. For, in the prologue to the Country Wife, Wycherley described himself as "the late so baffled scribbler."

In 1675, the Country Wife was performed with brilliant success, which, in a literary point of view, was not wholly unmerited. For, though one of the most profligate and heartless of human compositions, it is the elaborate production of a mind, not
indeed rich, original, or imaginative, but ingenious, observant, quick to seize hints, and patient of the toil of polishing.

The Plain Dealer, equally immoral and equally well written, appeared in 1677. At first this piece pleased the people less than the critics; but after a time its unquestionable merits and the zealous support of Lord Dorset, whose influence in literary and fashionable society was unbounded, established it in the public favour.

The fortune of Wycherley was now in the zenith, and began to decline. A long life was still before him. But it was destined to be filled with nothing but shame and wretchedness, domestic dissensions, literary failures, and pecuniary embarrassments.

The King, who was looking about for an accomplished man to conduct the education of his natural son, the young Duke of Richmond, at length fixed on Wycherley. The poet, exulting in his good luck, went down to amuse himself at Tunbridge Wells, looked into a bookseller's shop on the Pantiles, and, to his great delight, heard a handsome woman ask for the Plain Dealer, which had just been published. He made acquaintance with the lady, who proved to be the Countess of Drogheda, a gay young widow, with an ample jointure. She was charmed with his person and his wit, and, after a short flirtation, agreed to become his wife. Wycherley seems to have been apprehensive that this connection might not
suit well with the King's plans respecting the Duke of Richmond.

He accordingly prevailed on the lady to consent to a private
marriage. All came out. Charles thought the conduct of Wycherley
both disrespectful and disingenuous. Other causes probably
assisted to alienate the sovereign from the subject who had
lately been so highly favoured. Buckingham was now in opposition,
and had been committed to the Tower; not, as Mr. Leigh Hunt
supposes, on a charge of treason, but by an order of the House of
Lords for some expressions which he had used in debate. Wycherley
wrote some bad lines in praise of his imprisoned patron, which,
if they came to the knowledge of the King, would certainly have
made his majesty very angry. The favour of the Court was
completely withdrawn from the poet. An amiable woman with a large
fortune might indeed have been an ample compensation for the
loss. But Lady Drogheda was ill-tempered, imperious, and
extravagantly jealous. She had herself been a maid of honour at
Whitehall. She well knew in what estimation conjugal fidelity was
held among the fine gentlemen there, and watched her town husband
as assiduously as Mr. Pinchwife watched his country wife. The
unfortunate wit was, indeed, allowed to meet his friends at a
tavern opposite to his own house. But on such occasions the
windows were always open, in order that her Ladyship, who was
posted on the other side of the street, might be satisfied that
no woman was of the party.

The death of Lady Drogheda released the poet from this distress;
but a series of disasters, in rapid succession, broke down his
health, his spirits, and his fortune. His wife meant to leave him a good property, and left him only a lawsuit. His father could not or would not assist him. Wycherley was at length thrown into the Fleet, and languished there during seven years, utterly forgotten, as it should seem, by the gay and lively circle of which he had been a distinguished ornament. In the extremity of his distress he implored the publisher who had been enriched by the sale of his works, to lend him twenty pounds, and was refused.

His comedies, however, still kept possession of the stage, and drew great audiences, which troubled themselves little about the situation of the author. At length James the Second, who had now succeeded to the throne, happened to go to the theatre on an evening when the Plain Dealer was acted. He was pleased by the performance, and touched by the fate of the writer, whom he probably remembered as one of the gayest and handsomest of his brother's courtiers. The King determined to pay Wycherley's debts, and to settle on the unfortunate poet a pension of two hundred pounds a year. This munificence on the part of a prince who was little in the habit of rewarding literary merit, and whose whole soul was devoted to the interests of his Church, raises in us a surmise which Mr. Leigh Hunt will, we fear, pronounce very uncharitable. We cannot help suspecting that it was at this time that Wycherley returned to the communion of the Church of Rome. That he did return to the communion of the Church of Rome is certain. The date of his reconversion, as far as we know, has never been mentioned by any biographer. We
believe that, if we place it at this time, we do no injustice to
the character either of Wycherley or James.

Not long after, old Mr. Wycherley died; and his son, now past the
middle of life, came to the family estate. Still, however, he was
not at his ease. His embarrassments were great: his property was
strictly tied up; and he was on very bad terms with the heir-at-
law. He appears to have led, during a long course of years, that
most wretched life, the life of a vicious old boy about town.
Expensive tastes with little money, and licentious appetites with
declining vigour, were the just penance for his early
irregularities. A severe illness had produced a singular effect
on his intellect. His memory played him pranks stranger than
almost any that are to be found in the history of that strange
faculty. It seemed to be at once preternaturally strong and
preternaturally weak. If a book was read to him before he went to
bed, he would wake the next morning with his mind full of the
thoughts and expressions which he had heard over night; and he
would write them down, without in the least suspecting that they
were not his own. In his verses the same ideas, and even the same
words, came over and over again several times in a short
composition. His fine person bore the marks of age, sickness, and
sorrow; and he mourned for his departed beauty with an effeminate
regret. He could not look without a sigh at the portrait which
Lely had painted of him when he was only twenty-eight, and often
murmured, Quantum mutatus ab illo. He was still nervously anxious
about his literary reputation, and, not content with the fame
which he still possessed as a dramatist, was determined to be renowned as a satirist and an amatory poet. In 1704, after twenty-seven years of silence, he again appeared as an author. He put forth a large folio of miscellaneous verses, which, we believe, has never been reprinted. Some of these pieces had probably circulated through the town in manuscript. For, before the volume appeared, the critics at the coffee-houses very confidently predicted that it would be utterly worthless, and were in consequence bitterly reviled by the poet in an ill-written, foolish, and egotistical preface. The book amply vindicated the most unfavourable prophecies that had been hazarded. The style and versification are beneath criticism; the morals are those of Rochester. For Rochester, indeed, there was some excuse. When his offences against decorum were committed, he was a very young man, misled by a prevailing fashion. Wycherley was sixty-four. He had long outlived the times when libertinism was regarded as essential to the character of a wit and a gentleman. Most of the rising poets, Addison, for example, John Philips and Rowe, were studious of decency. We can hardly conceive any thing more miserable than the figure which the ribald old man makes in the midst of so many sober and well-conducted youths.

In the very year in which this bulky volume of obscene doggerel was published, Wycherley formed an acquaintance of a very singular kind. A little, pale, crooked, sickly, bright-eyed urchin, just turned of sixteen, had written some copies of verses
in which discerning judges could detect the promise of future
eminence. There was, indeed, as yet nothing very striking or
original in the conceptions of the young poet. But he was already
skilled in the art of metrical composition. His diction and his
music were not those of the great old masters; but that which his
ablest contemporaries were labouring to do, he already did best.
His style was not richly poetical; but it was always neat,
compact, and pointed. His verse wanted variety of pause, of
swell, and of cadence, but never grated harshly on the ear, or
disappointed it by a feeble close. The youth was already free of
the company of wits, and was greatly elated at being introduced
to the author of the Plain Dealer and the Country Wife.

It is curious to trace the history of the intercourse which took
place between Wycherley and Pope, between the representative of
the age that was going out, and the representative of the age
that was coming in, between the friend of Rochester and
Buckingham, and the friend of Lyttelton and Mansfield. At first
the boy was enchanted by the kindness and condescension of so
eminent a writer, haunted his door, and followed him about like a
spaniel from coffee-house to coffee-house. Letters full of
affection, humility, and fulsome flattery were interchanged
between the friends, But the first ardour of affection could not
last. Pope, though at no time scrupulously delicate in his
writings or fastidious as to the morals of his associates, was
shocked by the indecency of a rake who, at seventy, was still the
representative of the monstrous profligacy of the Restoration.
the youth grew older, as his mind expanded and his fame rose, he appreciated both himself and Wycherley more correctly. He felt a just contempt for the old gentleman's verses, and was at no great pains to conceal his opinion. Wycherley, on the other hand, though blinded by self-love to the imperfections of what he called his poetry, could not but see that there was an immense difference between his young companion's rhymes and his own. He was divided between two feelings. He wished to have the assistance of so skilful a hand to polish his lines; and yet he shrank from the humiliation of being beholden for literary assistance to a lad who might have been his grandson. Pope was willing to give assistance, but was by no means disposed to give assistance and flattery too. He took the trouble to retouch whole reams of feeble stumbling verses, and inserted many vigorous lines which the least skilful reader will distinguish in an instant. But he thought that by these services he acquired a right to express himself in terms which would not, under ordinary circumstances, become one who was addressing a man of four times his age. In one letter he tells Wycherley that "the worst pieces are such as, to render them very good, would require almost the entire new writing of them." In another, he gives the following account of his corrections: "Though the whole be as short again as at first, there is not one thought omitted but what is a repetition of something in your first volume, or in this very paper; and the versification throughout is, I believe, such as nobody can be shocked at. The repeated permission you gave me of dealing freely with you, will, I hope, excuse what I have done; for, if I had not spared you when I thought severity would do you
a kindness, I have not mangled you where I thought there was no absolute need of amputation." Wycherley continued to return thanks for all this hacking and hewing, which was, indeed, of inestimable service to his compositions. But at last his thanks began to sound very like reproaches. In private, he is said to have described Pope as a person who could not cut out a suit, but who had some skill in turning old coats. In his letters to Pope, while he acknowledged that the versification of the poems had been greatly improved, he spoke of the whole art of versification with scorn, and sneered at those who preferred sound to sense.

Pope revenged himself for this outbreak of spleen by return of post. He had in his hands a volume of Wycherley's rhymes, and he wrote to say that this volume was so full of faults that he could not correct it without completely defacing the manuscript. "I am," he said, "equally afraid of sparing you, and of offending you by too impudent a correction." This was more than flesh and blood could bear. Wycherley reclaimed his papers, in a letter in which resentment shows itself plainly through the thin disguise of civility. Pope, glad to be rid of a troublesome and inglorious task, sent back the deposit, and, by way of a parting courtesy, advised the old man to turn his poetry into prose, and assured him that the public would like his thoughts much better without his versification. Thus ended this memorable correspondence.

Wycherley lived some years after the termination of the strange friendship which we have described. The last scene of his life was, perhaps, the most scandalous. Ten days before his death, at
seventy-five, he married a young girl, merely in order to injure
his nephew, an act which proves that neither years, nor
adversity, nor what he called his philosophy, nor either of the
religions which he had at different times professed, had taught
him the rudiments of morality. He died in December 1715, and lies
in the vault under the church of St. Paul in Covent Garden.

His bride soon after married a Captain Shrimpton, who thus became
possessed of a large collection of manuscripts. These were sold
to a bookseller. They were so full of erasures and
interlineations that no printer could decipher them. It was
necessary to call in the aid of a professed critic; and Theobald,
the editor of Shakspeare, and the hero of the first Dunciad, was
employed to ascertain the true reading. In this way a volume of
miscellanies in verse and prose was got up for the market. The
collection derives all its value from the traces of Pope's hand,
which are everywhere discernible.

Of the moral character of Wycherley it can hardly be necessary
for us to say more. His fame as a writer rests wholly on his
comedies, and chiefly on the last two. Even as a comic writer, he
was neither of the best school, nor highest in his school. He was
in truth a worse Congreve. His chief merit, like Congreve's, lies
in the style of his dialogue, but the wit which lights up the
Plain Dealer and the Country Wife is pale and flickering, when
compared with the gorgeous blaze which dazzles us almost to
blindness in Love for Love and the Way of the World. Like
Congreve, and, indeed, even more than Congreve, Wycherley is ready to sacrifice dramatic propriety to the liveliness of his dialogue. The poet speaks out of the mouths of all his dunces and coxcombs, and makes them describe themselves with a good sense and acuteness which puts them on a level with the wits and heroes. We will give two instances, the first which occur to us, from the Country Wife. There are in the world fools who find the society of old friends insipid, and who are always running after new companions. Such a character is a fair subject for comedy. But nothing can be more absurd than to introduce a man of this sort saying to his comrade, "I can deny you nothing: for though I have known thee a great while, never go if I do not love thee as well as a new acquaintance." That town-wits, again, have always been rather a heartless class, is true. But none of them, we will answer for it, ever said to a young lady to whom he was making love, "We wits rail and make love often, but to show our parts: as we have no affections, so we have no malice."

Wycherley's plays are said to have been the produce of long and patient labour. The epithet of "slow" was early given to him by Rochester, and was frequently repeated. In truth his mind, unless we are greatly mistaken, was naturally a very meagre soil, and was forced only by great labour and outlay to bear fruit which, after all, was not of the highest flavour. He has scarcely more claim to originality than Terence. It is not too much to say that there is hardly anything of the least value in his plays of which the hint is not to be found elsewhere. The best scenes in the
Gentleman Dancing-Master were suggested by Calderon's Maestro de Danzar, not by any means one of the happiest comedies of the great Castilian poet. The Country Wife is borrowed from the Ecole des Maris and the Ecole des Femmes. The groundwork of the Plain Dealer is taken from the Misanthrope of Moliere. One whole scene is almost translated from the Critique de l'Ecole des Femmes. Fidelia is Shakspeare's Viola stolen, and marred in the stealing; and the Widow Blackacre, beyond comparison Wycherley's best comic character, is the Countess in Racine's Plaideurs, talking the jargon of English instead of that of French chicane.

The only thing original about Wycherley, the only thing which he could furnish from his own mind in inexhaustible abundance, was profligacy. It is curious to observe how everything that he touched, however pure and noble, took in an instant the colour of his own mind. Compare the Ecole des Femmes with the Country Wife. Agnes is a simple and amiable girl, whose heart is indeed full of love, but of love sanctioned by honour, morality, and religion. Her natural talents are great. They have been hidden, and, as it might appear, destroyed by an education elaborately bad. But they are called forth into full energy by a virtuous passion. Her lover, while he adores her beauty, is too honest a man to abuse the confiding tenderness of a creature so charming and inexperienced. Wycherley takes this plot into his hands; and forthwith this sweet and graceful courtship becomes a licentious intrigue of the lowest and least sentimental kind, between an impudent London rake and the idiot wife of a country squire. We
will not go into details. In truth, Wycherley's indecency is protected against the critics as a skunk is protected against the hunters. It is safe, because it is too filthy to handle and too noisome even to approach.

It is the same with the Plain Dealer. How careful has Shakspeare been in Twelfth Night to preserve the dignity and delicacy of Viola under her disguise! Even when wearing a page's doublet and hose, she is never mixed up with any transaction which the most fastidious mind could regard as leaving a stain on her. She is employed by the Duke on an embassy of love to Olivia, but on an embassy of the most honourable kind. Wycherley borrows Viola; and Viola forthwith becomes a pandar of the basest sort. But the character of Manly is the best illustration of our meaning. Moliere exhibited in his misanthrope a pure and noble mind, which had been sorely vexed by the sight of perfidy and malevolence, disguised under the forms of politeness. As every extreme naturally generates its contrary, Alceste adopts a standard of good and evil directly opposed to that of the society which surrounds him. Courtesy seems to him a vice; and those stern virtues which are neglected by the fops and coquettes of Paris become too exclusively the objects of his veneration. He is often to blame; he is often ridiculous; but he is always a good man; and the feeling which he inspires is regret that a person so estimable should be so unamiable. Wycherley borrowed Alceste, and turned him,—we quote the words of so lenient a critic as Mr. Leigh Hunt,—into "a ferocious sensualist, who believed himself
as great a rascal as he thought everybody else." The surliness of
Moliere's hero is copied and caricatured. But the most nauseous
libertinism and the most dastardly fraud are substituted for the
purity and integrity of the original. And, to make the whole
complete, Wycherley does not seem to have been aware that he was
not drawing the portrait of an eminently honest man. So depraved
was his moral taste that, while he firmly believed that he was
producing a picture of virtue too exalted for the commerce of
this world, he was really delineating the greatest rascal that is
to be found, even in his own writings.

We pass a very severe censure on Wycherley, when we say that it
is a relief to turn from him to Congreve. Congreve's writings,
indeed, are by no means pure; nor was he, as far as we are able
to judge, a warm-hearted or high-minded man. Yet, in coming to
him, we feel that the worst is over, that we are one remove
further from the Restoration, that we are past the Nadir of
national taste and morality.

WILLIAM CONGREVE was born in 1670, at Bardsey, in the
neighbourhood of Leeds. His father, a younger son of a very
ancient Staffordshire family, had distinguished himself among the
cavaliers in the civil war, was set down after the Restoration
for the Order of the Royal Oak, and subsequently settled in
Ireland, under the patronage of the Earl of Burlington.
Congreve passed his childhood and youth in Ireland. He was sent to school at Kilkenny, and thence went to the University of Dublin. His learning does great honour to his instructors. From his writings it appears, not only that he was well acquainted with Latin literature, but that his knowledge of the Greek poets was such as was not, in his time, common even in a college.

When he had completed his academical studies, he was sent to London to study the law, and was entered of the Middle Temple. He troubled himself, however, very little about pleading or conveyancing, and gave himself up to literature and society. Two kinds of ambition early took possession of his mind, and often pulled it in opposite directions. He was conscious of great fertility of thought and power of ingenious combination. His lively conversation, his polished manners, and his highly respectable connections, had obtained for him ready access to the best company. He longed to be a great writer. He longed to be a man of fashion. Either object was within his reach. But could he secure both? Was there not something vulgar in letters, something inconsistent with the easy apathetic graces of a man of the mode? Was it aristocratical to be confounded with creatures who lived in the cock lofts of Grub Street, to bargain with publishers, to hurry printers' devils and be hurried by them, to squabble with managers, to be applauded or hissed by pit, boxes, and galleries? Could he forego the renown of being the first wit of his age? Could he attain that renown without sullying what he valued quite as much, his character for gentility? The history of his life is
the history of a conflict between these two impulses. In his youth the desire of literary fame had the mastery; but soon the meaner ambition overpowered the higher, and obtained supreme dominion over his mind.

His first work, a novel of no great value, he published under the assumed name of Cleophil. His second was the Old Bachelor, acted in 1693, a play inferior indeed to his other comedies, but, in its own line, inferior to them alone. The plot is equally destitute of interest and of probability. The characters are either not distinguishable, or are distinguished only by peculiarities of the most glaring kind. But the dialogue is resplendent with wit and eloquence, which indeed are so abundant that the fool comes in for an ample share, and yet preserves a certain colloquial air, a certain indescribable ease of which Wycherley had given no example, and which Sheridan in vain attempted to imitate. The author, divided between pride and shame, pride at having written a good play, and shame at having done an ungentlemanlike thing, pretended that he had merely scribbled a few scenes for his own amusement, and affected to yield unwillingly to the importunities of those who pressed him to try his fortune on the stage. The Old Bachelor was seen in manuscript by Dryden, one of whose best qualities was a hearty and generous admiration for the talents of others. He declared that he had never read such a first play, and lent his services to bring it into a form fit for representation. Nothing was wanted to the success of the piece. It was so cast as to bring
into play all the comic talent, and to exhibit on the boards in one view all the beauty, which Drury Lane Theatre, then the only theatre in London, could assemble. The result was a complete triumph; and the author was gratified with rewards more substantial than the applauses of the pit. Montagu, then a Lord of the Treasury, immediately gave him a place, and, in a short time, added the reversion of another place of much greater value, which, however, did not become vacant till many years had elapsed.

In 1694, Congreve brought out the Double Dealer, a comedy in which all the powers which had produced the Old Bachelor showed themselves, matured by time and improved by exercise. But the audience was shocked by the characters of Maskwell and Lady Touchwood. And, indeed, there is something strangely revolting in the way in which a group that seems to belong to the House of Laius or of Pelops is introduced into the midst of the Brisks, Froths, Carelesses, and Plyants. The play was unfavourably received. Yet, if the praise of distinguished men could compensate an author for the disapprobation of the multitude, Congreve had no reason to repine. Dryden, in one of the most ingenious, magnificent, and pathetic pieces that he ever wrote, extolled the author of the Double Dealer in terms which now appear extravagantly hyperbolical. Till Congreve came forth, --so ran this exquisite flattery, --the superiority of the poets who preceded the civil wars was acknowledged.
"Theirs was the giant race before the flood."

Since the return of the Royal House, much art and ability had been exerted, but the old masters had been still unrivalled.

"Our builders were with want of genius curst,
The second temple was not like the first."

At length a writer had arisen who, just emerging from boyhood, had surpassed the authors of the Knight of the Burning Pestle and of the Silent Woman, and who had only one rival left to contend with.

"Heaven, that but once was prodigal before,
To Shakspeare gave as much, she could not give him more."

Some lines near the end of the poem are singularly graceful and touching, and sank deep into the heart of Congreve.

"Already am I worn with cares and age,
And just abandoning the ungrateful stage
But you, whom every Muse and Grace adorn,
Whom I foresee to better fortune born,
Be kind to my remains; and oh, defend
Against your judgment your departed friend.
Let not the insulting foe my fame pursue,
But guard those laurels which descend to you."

The crowd, as usual, gradually came over to the opinion of the
men of note; and the Double Dealer was before long quite as much
admired, though perhaps never so much liked, as the Old Bachelor.

In 1695 appeared Love for Love, superior both in wit and in
scenic effect to either of the preceding plays. It was performed
at a new theatre which Betterton and some other actors, disgusted
by the treatment which they had received in Drury Lane, had just
opened in a tennis-court near Lincoln's Inn. Scarcely any comedy
within the memory of the oldest man had been equally successful.
The actors were so elated that they gave Congreve a share in
their theatre; and he promised in return to furnish them with a
play every year, if his health would permit. Two years passed,
however, before he produced the Mourning Bride, a play which,
paltry as it is when compared, we do not say, with Lear or
Macbeth, but with the best dramas of Massinger and Ford, stands
very high among the tragedies of the age in which it was written.
To find anything so good we must go twelve years back to Venice
Preserved, or six years forward to the Fair Penitent. The noble
passage which Johnson, both in writing and in conversation,
extolled above any other in the English drama, has suffered
greatly in the public estimation from the extravagance of his
praise. Had he contented himself with saying that it was finer
than anything in the tragedies of Dryden, Otway, Lee, Rowe, Southern, Hughes, and Addison, than anything, in short, that had been written for the stage since the days of Charles the First, he would not have been in the wrong.

The success of the Mourning Bride was even greater than that of Love for Love. Congreve was now allowed to be the first tragic as well as the first comic dramatist of his time; and all this at twenty-seven. We believe that no English writer except Lord Byron has, at so early an age, stood so high in the estimation of his contemporaries.

At this time took place an event which deserves, in our opinion, a very different sort of notice from that which has been bestowed on it by Mr. Leigh Hunt. The nation had now nearly recovered from the demoralising effect of the Puritan austerity. The gloomy follies of the reign of the Saints were but faintly remembered. The evils produced by profaneness and debauchery were recent and glaring. The Court, since the Revolution, had ceased to patronise licentiousness. Mary was strictly pious; and the vices of the cold, stern, and silent William, were not obtruded on the public eye. Discountenanced by the Government, and failing in the favour of the people, the profligacy of the Restoration still maintained its ground in some parts of society. Its strongholds were the places where men of wit and fashion congregated, and above all, the theatres. At this conjunction arose a great reformer whom, widely as we differ from him in many important points, we can
JEREMY COLLIER was a clergyman of the Church of England, bred at Cambridge. His talents and attainments were such as might have been expected to raise him to the highest honours of his profession. He had an extensive knowledge of books; yet he had mingled much with polite society, and is said not to have wanted either grace or vivacity in conversation.

There were few branches of literature to which he had not paid some attention. But ecclesiastical antiquity was his favourite study. In religious opinions he belonged to that section of the Church of England which lies furthest from Geneva and nearest to Rome. His notions touching Episcopal government, holy orders, the efficacy of the sacraments, the authority of the Fathers, the guilt of schism, the importance of vestments, ceremonies, and solemn days, differed little from those which are now held by Dr. Pusey and Mr. Newman. Towards the close of his life, indeed, Collier took some steps which brought him still nearer to Popery, mixed water with the wine in the Eucharist, made the sign of the cross in confirmation, employed oil in the visitation of the sick, and offered up prayers for the dead. His politics were of a piece with his divinity. He was a Tory of the highest sort, such as in the cant of his age was called a Tantivy. Not even the persecution of the bishops and the spoliation of the universities could shake his steady loyalty. While the Convention was sitting, he wrote with vehemence in defence of the fugitive king, and was
in consequence arrested. But his dauntless spirit was not to be so tamed. He refused to take the oaths, renounced all his preferments, and, in a succession of pamphlets written with much violence and with some ability, attempted to excite the nation against its new masters. In 1692, he was again arrested on suspicion of having been concerned in a treasonable plot. So unbending were his principles that his friends could hardly persuade him to let them bail him; and he afterwards expressed his remorse for having been induced thus to acknowledge, by implication, the authority of an usurping government. He was soon in trouble again. Sir John Friend and Sir William Parkins, were tried and convicted of high treason for planning the murder of King William. Collier administered spiritual consolation to them, attended them to Tyburn, and, just before they were turned off, laid his hands on their heads, and by the authority which he derived from Christ, solemnly absolved them. This scene gave indescribable scandal. Tories joined with Whigs in blaming the conduct of the daring priest. Some acts, it was said, which fall under the definition of treason are such that a good man may, in troubled times, be led into them even by his virtues. It may be necessary for the protection of society to punish such a man. But even in punishing him we consider him as legally rather than morally guilty, and hope that his honest error, though it cannot be pardoned here, will not be counted to him for sin hereafter. But such was not the case of Collier's penitents. They were concerned in a plot for waylaying and butchering, in an hour of security, one who, whether he were or were not their king, was at all events their fellow-creature. Whether the Jacobite theory
about the rights of governments and the duties of subjects were or were not well founded, assassination must always be considered as a great crime. It is condemned even by the maxims of worldly honour and morality. Much more must it be an object of abhorrence to the pure Spouse of Christ. The Church cannot surely, without the saddest and most mournful forebodings, see one of her children who has been guilty of this great wickedness pass into eternity without any sign of repentance. That these traitors had given any sign of repentance was not alleged. It might be that they had privately declared their contrition; and, if so, the minister of religion might be justified in privately assuring them of the Divine forgiveness. But a public remission ought to have been preceded by a public atonement. The regret of these men, if expressed at all, had been expressed in secret. The hands of Collier had been laid on them in the presence of thousands. The inference which his enemies drew from his conduct was that he did not consider the conspiracy against the life of William as sinful. But this inference he very vehemently, and, we doubt not, very sincerely denied.

The storm raged. The bishops put forth a solemn censure Of the absolution. The Attorney-General brought the matter before the Court of King's Bench. Collier had now made up his mind not to give bail for his appearance before any court which derived its authority from the usurper. He accordingly absconded and was outlawed. He survived these events about thirty years. The prosecution was not pressed; and he was soon suffered to resume
his literary pursuits in quiet. At a later period, many attempts were made to shake his perverse integrity by offers of wealth and dignity, but in vain. When he died towards the end of the reign of George the First, he still under the ban of the law.

We shall not be suspected of regarding either the politics or the theology of Collier with partiality; but we believe him to have been as honest and courageous a man as ever lived. We will go further, and say that, though passionate and often wrong-headed, he was a singularly fair controversialist, candid, generous, too high-spirited to take mean advantages even in the most exciting disputes, and pure from all taint of personal malevolence. It must also be admitted that his opinions on ecclesiastical and political affairs, though in themselves absurd and pernicious, eminently qualified him to be the reformer of our lighter literature. The libertinism of the press and of the stage was, as we have said, the effect of a reaction against the Puritan strictness. Profligacy was, like the oak-leaf of the twenty-ninth of May, the badge of a cavalier and a High Churchman. Decency was associated with conventicles and calves' heads. Grave prelates were too much disposed to wink at the excesses of a body of zealous and able allies who covered Roundheads and Presbyterians with ridicule. If a Whig raised his voice against the impiety and licentiousness of the fashionable writers, his mouth was instantly stopped by the retort: You are one of those who groan at a light quotation from Scripture, and raise estates out of the plunder of the Church, who shudder at a double entendre, and chop
off the heads of kings. A Baxter, a Burnet, even a Tillotson, would have done little to purify our literature. But when a man fanatical in the cause of episcopacy and actually under outlawry for his attachment to hereditary right, came forward as the champion of decency, the battle was already half won.

In 1698, Collier published his Short View of the Profaneness and Immorality of the English Stage, a book which threw the whole literary world into commotion, but which is now much less read than it deserves. The faults of the work, indeed, are neither few nor small. The dissertations on the Greek and Latin drama do not at all help the argument, and, whatever may have been thought of them by the generation which fancied that Christ Church had refuted Bentley, are such as, in the present day, a scholar of very humble pretensions may venture to pronounce boyish, or rather babyish. The censures are not sufficiently discriminating. The authors whom Collier accused had been guilty of such gross sins against decency that he was certain to weaken instead of strengthening his case, by introducing into his charge against them any matter about which there could be the smallest dispute. He was, however, so injudicious as to place among the outrageous offences which he justly arraigned, some things which are really quite innocent, and some slight instances of levity which, though not perhaps strictly correct, could easily be paralleled from the works of writers who had rendered great services to morality and religion. Thus he blames Congreve, the number and gravity of whose real transgressions made it quite unnecessary to tax him
with any that were not real, for using the words "martyr" and
"inspiration" in a light sense; as if an archbishop might not say
that a speech was inspired by claret or that an alderman was a
martyr to the gout. Sometimes, again, Collier does not
sufficiently distinguish between the dramatist and the persons of
the drama. Thus he blames Vanbrugh for putting into Lord
Foppington's mouth some contemptuous expressions respecting the
Church service; though it is obvious that Vanbrugh could not
better express reverence than by making Lord Foppington express
contempt. There is also throughout the Short View too strong a
display of professional feeling. Collier is not content with
claiming for his order an immunity from indiscriminate
scurrility; he will not allow that, in any case, any word or act
of a divine can be a proper subject for ridicule. Nor does he
confine this benefit of clergy to the ministers of the
Established Church. He extends the privilege to Catholic priests,
and, what in him is more surprising, to Dissenting preachers.
This, however, is a mere trifle. Imaums, Brahmins, priests of
Jupiter, priests of Baal, are all to be held sacred. Dryden is
blamed for making the Mufti in Don Sebastian talk nonsense. Lee
is called to a severe account for his incivility to Tiresias. But
the most curious passage is that in which Collier resents some
uncivil reflections thrown by Cassandra, in Dryden's Cleomenes,
on the calf Apis and his hierophants. The words "grass-eating,
foddered god," words which really are much in the style of
several passages in the Old Testament, give as much offence to
this Christian divine as they could have given to the priests of
Memphis.
But, when all deductions have been made, great merit must be allowed to this work. There is hardly any book of that time from which it would be possible to select specimens of writing so excellent and so various. To compare Collier with Pascal would indeed be absurd. Yet we hardly know where, except in the Provincial Letters, we can find mirth so harmoniously and becomingly blended with solemnity as in the Short View. In truth, all the modes of ridicule, from broad fun to polished and antithetical sarcasm, were at Collier's command. On the other hand, he was complete master of the rhetoric of honest indignation.

We scarcely know any volume which contains so many bursts of that peculiar eloquence which comes from the heart and goes to the heart. Indeed the spirit of the book is truly heroic. In order fairly to appreciate it, we must remember the situation in which the writer stood. He was under the frown of power. His name was already a mark for the invectives of one half of the writers of the age, when, in the cause of good taste, good sense, and good morals, he gave battle to the other half. Strong as his political prejudices were, he seems on this occasion to have entirely laid them aside. He has forgotten that he is a Jacobite, and remembers only that he is a citizen and a Christian. Some of his sharpest censures are directed against poetry which had been hailed with delight by the Tory party, and had inflicted a deep wound on the Whigs. It is inspiring to see how gallantly the solitary outlaw advances to
attack enemies, formidable separately, and, it might have been
thought, irresistible when combined, distributes his swashing
blows right and left among Wycherley, Congreve, and Vanbrugh,
treads the wretched D’Urfey down in the dirt beneath his feet,
and strikes with all his strength full at the towering crest of
Dryden.

The effect produced by the Short View was immense. The nation was
on the side of Collier. But it could not be doubted that, in the
great host which he had defied, some champion would be found to
lift the gauntlet. The general belief was that Dryden would take
the field; and all the wits anticipated a sharp contest between
two well-paired combatants. The great poet had been singled out
in the most marked manner. It was well known that he was deeply
hurt, that much smaller provocations had formerly roused him to
violent resentment, and that there was no literary weapon,
offensive or defensive, of which he was not master. But his
conscience smote him; he stood abashed, like the fallen archangel
at the rebuke of Zephon.--

"And felt how awful goodness is, and saw
Virtue in her shape how lovely; saw and pined
His loss."

At a later period he mentioned the Short View in the preface to
his Fables. He complained, with some asperity, of the harshness
with which he had been treated, and urged some matters in mitigation. But, on the whole, he frankly acknowledged that he had been justly reproved. "If," said he, "Mr. Collier be my enemy, let him triumph. If he be my friend, as I have given him no personal occasion to be otherwise, he will be glad of my repentance."

It would have been wise in Congreve to follow his master's example. He was precisely in that situation in which it is madness to attempt a vindication; for his guilt was so clear, that no address or eloquence could obtain an acquittal. On the other hand, there were in his case many extenuating circumstances which, if he had acknowledged his error and promised amendment, would have procured his pardon. The most rigid censor could not but make great allowances for the faults into which so young a man had been seduced by evil example, by the luxuriance of a vigorous fancy, and by the inebriating effect of popular applause. The esteem, as well as the admiration, of the public was still within his reach. He might easily have effaced all memory of his transgressions, and have shared with Addison the glory of showing that the most brilliant wit may be the ally of virtue. But, in any case, prudence should have restrained him from encountering Collier. The nonjuror was a man thoroughly fitted by nature, education, and habit, for polemical dispute. Congreve's mind, though a mind of no common fertility and vigour, was of a different class. No man understood so well the art of polishing epigrams and repartees into the clearest effulgence,
and setting them neatly in easy and familiar dialogue. In this
sort of jewellery he attained to a mastery unprecedented and
imitable. But he was altogether rude in the art of
controversy; and he had a cause to defend which scarcely any art
could have rendered victorious.

The event was such as might have been foreseen. Congreve's answer
was a complete failure. He was angry, obscure, and dull. Even the
Green Room and Will's Coffee-House were compelled to acknowledge
that in wit, as well as in argument, the parson had a decided
advantage over the poet. Not only was Congreve unable to make any
show of a case where he was in the wrong; but he succeeded in
putting himself completely in the wrong where he was in the
right. Collier had taxed him with profaneness for calling a
clergyman Mr. Prig, and for introducing a coachman named Jehu, in
allusion to the King of Israel, who was known at a distance by
his furious driving. Had there been nothing worse in the Old
Bachelor and Double Dealer, Congreve might pass for as pure a
writer as Cowper himself, who, in poems revised by so austere a
censor as John Newton, calls a fox-hunting squire Nimrod, and
gives to a chaplain the disrespectful name of Smug. Congreve
might with good effect have appealed to the public whether it
might not be fairly presumed that, when such frivolous charges
were made, there were no very serious charges to make. Instead of
doing this, he pretended that he meant no allusion to the Bible
by the name of Jehu, and no reflection by the name of Prig.
Strange, that a man of such parts should, in order to defend
himself against imputations which nobody could regard as
important, tell untruths which it was certain that nobody would
believe!

One of the pleas which Congreve set up for himself and his
brethren was that, though they might be guilty of a little levity
here and there, they were careful to inculcate a moral, packed
close into two or three lines, at the end of every play. Had the
fact been as he stated it, the defence would be worth very
little. For no man acquainted with human nature could think that
a sententious couplet would undo all the mischief that five
profligate acts had done. But it would have been wise in Congreve
to have looked again at his own comedies before he used this
argument. Collier did so; and found that the moral of the Old
Bachelor, the grave apophthegm which is to be a set-off against
all the libertinism of the piece is contained in the following
triplet:

"What rugged ways attend the noon of life!
Our sun declines, and with what anxious strife,
What pain, we tug that galling load--a wife."

"Love for Love," says Collier, "may have a somewhat better
farewell, but it would do a man little service should he remember
it to his dying day":
"The miracle to-day is, that we find
A lover true, not that a woman's kind."

Collier's reply was severe and triumphant. One of his repartees we will quote, not as a favourable specimen of his manner, but because it was called forth by Congreve's characteristic affectation. The poet spoke of the Old Bachelor as a trifle to which he attached no value, and which had become public by a sort of accident, "I wrote it," he said," to amuse myself in a slow recovery from a fit of sickness." "What his disease was," replied Collier, "I am not to inquire, but it must be a very ill one to be worse than the remedy."

All that Congreve gained by coming forward on this occasion, was that he completely deprived himself of the excuse which he might with justice have pleaded for his early offences. "Why," asked Collier, "should the man laugh at the mischief of the boy, and make the disorders of his nonage his own, by an after approbation?"

Congreve was not Collier's only opponent. Vanbrugh, Dennis, and Settle took the field. And from a passage in a contemporary satire, we are inclined to think that among the answers to the Short View was one written, or supposed to be written, by Wycherley. The victory remained with Collier. A great and rapid reform in almost all the departments of our lighter literature
was the effect of his labours. A new race of wits and poets arose, who generally treated with reverence the great ties which bind society together, and whose very indecencies were decent when compared with those of the school which flourished during the last forty years of the seventeenth century.

This controversy probably prevented Congreve from fulfilling the engagements into which he had entered with the actors. It was not till 1700 that he produced the Way of the World, the most deeply meditated and the most brilliantly written of all his works. It wants, perhaps, the constant movement, the effervescence of animal spirits, which we find in love for Love. But the hysterical rants of Lady Wishfort, the meeting of Witwould and his brother, the country knight's courtship and his subsequent revel, and, above all, the chase and surrender of Millamant, are superior to anything that is to be found in the whole range of English comedy from the civil war downwards. It is quite inexplicable to us that this play should have failed on the stage. Yet so it was; and the author, already sore with the wounds which Collier had inflicted, was galled past endurance by this new stroke. He resolved never again to expose himself to the rudeness of a tasteless audience, and took leave of the theatre for ever.

He lived twenty-eight years longer, without adding to the high literary reputation which he had attained. He read much while he retained his eyesight, and now and then wrote a short essay, or
put an idle tale into verse; but he appears never to have planned any considerable work. The miscellaneous pieces which he published in 1710 are of little value, and have long been forgotten.

The stock of fame which he had acquired by his comedies was sufficient, assisted by the graces of his manner and conversation, to secure for him a high place in the estimation of the world. During the winter, he lived among the most distinguished and agreeable people in London. His summers were passed at the splendid country-seats of ministers and peers. Literary envy and political faction, which in that age respected nothing else, respected his repose. He professed to be one of the party of which his patron Montagu, now Lord Halifax, was the head. But he had civil words and small good offices for men of every shade of opinion. And men of every shade of opinion spoke well of him in return.

His means were for a long time scanty. The place which he had in possession barely enabled him to live with comfort. And, when the Tories came into power, some thought that he would lose even this moderate provision. But Harley, who was by no means disposed to adopt the exterminating policy of the October club, and who, with all his faults of understanding and temper, had a sincere kindness for men of genius, reassured the anxious poet by quoting very gracefully and happily the lines of Virgil,
"Non obtusa adeo gestamus pectora Poeni,
Nec tam aversus equos Tyria Sol jungit ab urbe."

The indulgence with which Congreve was treated by the Tories was not purchased by any concession on his part which could justly offend the Whigs. It was his rare good fortune to share the triumph of his friends without having shared their proscription. When the House of Hanover came to the throne, he partook largely of the prosperity of those with whom he was connected. The reversion to which he had been nominated twenty years before fell in. He was made secretary to the island of Jamaica; and his whole income amounted to twelve hundred a year, a fortune which, for a single man, was in that age not only easy but splendid. He continued, however, to practise the frugality which he had learned when he could scarce spare, as Swift tells us, a shilling to pay the chairman who carried him to Lord Halifax's. Though he had nobody to save for, he laid up at least as much as he spent.

The infirmities of age came early upon him. His habits had been intemperate; he suffered much from gout; and, when confined to his chamber, he had no longer the solace of literature. Blindness, the most cruel misfortune that can befall the lonely student, made his books useless to him. He was thrown on society for all his amusement; and in society his good breeding and vivacity made him always welcome.
By the rising men of letters he was considered not as a rival, but as a classic. He had left their arena; he never measured his strength with them; and he was always loud in applause of their exertions. They could, therefore, entertain no jealousy of him and thought no more of detracting from his fame than of carping at the great men who had been lying a hundred years in Poets' Corner. Even the inmates of Grub Street, even the heroes of the Dunciad, were for once just to living merit. There can be no stronger illustration of the estimation in which Congreve was held than the fact that the English Iliad, a work which appeared with more splendid auspices than any other in our language, was dedicated to him. There was not a duke in the kingdom who would not have been proud of such a compliment. Dr. Johnson expresses great admiration for the independence of spirit which Pope showed on this occasion. "He passed over peers and statesmen to inscribe his Iliad to Congreve, with a magnanimity of which the praise had been complete, had his friend's virtue been equal to his wit. Why he was chosen for so great an honour, it is not now possible to know." It is certainly impossible to know; yet we think it is possible to guess. The translation of the Iliad had been zealously befriended by men of all political opinions. The poet who, at an early age, had been raised to affluence by the emulous liberality of Whigs and Tories, could not with propriety inscribe to a chief of either party a work which had been munificently patronised by both. It was necessary to find some person who was at once eminent and neutral. It was therefore necessary to pass over peers and statesmen. Congreve had a high name in letters.
He had a high name in aristocratic circles. He lived on terms of civility with men of all parties. By a courtesy paid to him, neither the Ministers nor the leaders of the Opposition could be offended.

The singular affectation which had from the first been characteristic of Congreve grew stronger and stronger as he advanced in life. At last it became disagreeable to him to hear his own comedies praised. Voltaire, whose soul was burned up by the raging desire for literary renown, was half puzzled and half disgusted by what he saw, during his visit to England, of this extraordinary whim. Congreve disclaimed the character of a poet, declared that his plays were trifles produced in an idle hour, and begged that Voltaire would consider him merely as a gentleman. "If you had been merely a gentleman," said Voltaire, "I should not have come to see you."

Congreve was not a man of warm affections. Domestic ties he had none; and in the temporary connections which he formed with a succession of beauties from the green-room his heart does not appear to have been interested. Of all his attachments that to Mrs. Bracegirdle lasted the longest and was the most celebrated. This charming actress, who was, during many years, the idol of all London, whose face caused the fatal broil in which Mountfort fell, and for which Lord Mohun was tried by the Peers, and to whom the Earl of Scarsdale was said to have made honourable addresses, had conducted herself, in very trying circumstances,
with extraordinary discretion. Congreve at length became her
confidential friend. They constantly rode out together and dined
together. Some people said that she was his mistress, and others
that she would soon be his wife. He was at last drawn away from
her by the influence of a wealthier and haughtier beauty.
Henrietta, daughter of the great Marlborough, and Countess of
Godolphin, had, on her father's death, succeeded to his dukedom,
and to the greater part of his immense property. Her husband was
an insignificant man, of whom Lord Chesterfield said that he came
to the House of Peers only to sleep, and that he might as well
sleep on the right as on the left of the woolsack. Between the
Duchess and Congreve sprang up a most eccentric friendship. He
had a seat every day at her table, and assisted in the direction
of her concerts. That malignant old beldame, the Dowager Duchess
Sarah, who had quarrelled with her daughter as she had quarrelled
with every body else, affected to suspect that there was
something wrong. But the world in general appears to have thought
that a great lady might, without any imputation on her character,
pay marked attention to a man of eminent genius who was near
sixty years old, who was still older in appearance and in
constitution, who was confined to his chair by gout, and who was
unable to read from blindness.

In the summer of 1728, Congreve was ordered to try the Bath
waters. During his excursion he was overturned in his chariot,
and received some severe internal injury from which he never
recovered. He came back to London in a dangerous state,
complained constantly of a pain in his side, and continued to
sink, till in the following January he expired.

He left ten thousand pounds, saved out of the emoluments of his
lucrative places. Johnson says that this money ought to have gone
to the Congreve family, which was then in great distress. Doctor
Young and Mr. Leigh Hunt, two gentlemen who seldom agree with
each other, but with whom, on this occasion, we are happy to
agree, think that it ought to have gone to Mrs. Bracegirdle.
Congreve bequeathed two hundred pounds to Mrs. Bracegirdle, and
an equal sum to a certain Mrs. Jellat; but the bulk of his
accumulations went to the Duchess of Marlborough, in whose
immense wealth such a legacy was as a drop in the bucket. It
might have raised the fallen fortunes of a Staffordshire squire;
it might have enabled a retired actress to enjoy every comfort,
and, in her sense, every luxury: but it was hardly sufficient to
defray the Duchess’s establishment for three months.

The great lady buried her friend with a pomp seldom seen at the
funerals of poets. The corpse lay in state under the ancient roof
of the Jerusalem Chamber, and was interred in Westminster Abbey.
The pall was borne by the Duke of Bridgewater, Lord Cobham, the
Earl of Wilmington, who had been Speaker, and was afterwards
First Lord of the Treasury, and other men of high consideration.
Her Grace laid out her friend’s bequest in a superb diamond
necklace, which she wore in honour of him, and, if report is to
be believed, showed her regard in ways much more extraordinary.
It is said that a statue of him in ivory, which moved by
clockwork, was placed daily at her table, and that she had a wax
doll made in imitation of him, and that the feet of the doll were
regularly blistered and anointed by the doctors, as poor
Congreve's feet had been when he suffered from the gout. A
monument was erected to the poet in Westminster Abbey, with an
inscription written by the Duchess; and Lord Cobham, honoured him
with a cenotaph, which seems to us, though that is a bold word,
the ugliest and most absurd of the buildings at Stowe.

We have said that Wycherley was a worse Congreve. There was,
indeed, a remarkable analogy between the writings and lives of
these two men. Both were gentlemen liberally educated. Both led
town lives, and knew human nature only as it appears between Hyde
Park and the Tower. Both were men of wit. Neither had much
imagination. Both at an early age produced lively and profligate
comedies. Both retired from the field while still in early
manhood, and owed to their youthful achievements in literature
whatever consideration they enjoyed in later life. Both, after
they had ceased to write for the stage, published volumes of
miscellanies which did little credit either to their talents or
to their morals. Both, during their declining years, hung loose
upon society; and both, in their last moments, made eccentric and
unjustifiable dispositions of their estates.

But in every point Congreve maintained his superiority to
Wycherley. Wycherley had wit; but the wit of Congreve far
outshines that of every comic writer, except Sheridan, who has
within the last two centuries. Congreve had not, in,
a large measure, the poetical faculty; but compared with
Wycherley he might be called a great poet. Wycherley had some
knowledge of books; but Congreve was a man of real learning.
Congreve's offences against decorum, though highly culpable, were
not so gross as those of Wycherley; nor did Congreve, like
Wycherley, exhibit to the world the deplorable spectacle of a
licentious dotage. Congreve died in the enjoyment of high
consideration; Wycherley forgotten or despised. Congreve's will
was absurd and capricious; but Wycherley's last actions appear to
have been prompted by obdurate malignity.

Here, at least for the present, we must stop. Vanbrugh and
Farquhar are not men to be hastily dismissed, and we have not
left ourselves space to do them justice.

THE LIFE AND WRITINGS OF ADDISON

(July 1843)

The Life of Joseph Addison. BY LUCY AIKIN. 2 vols. 8vo. London:
1843.

SOME reviewers are of opinion that a lady who dares to publish a
book renounces by that act the franchises appertaining to her
sex, and can claim no exemption from the utmost rigour of
critical procedure. From that opinion we dissent. We admit,
indeed, that in a country which boasts of many female writers,
eminently qualified by their talents and acquirements to
influence the public mind, it would be of most pernicious
consequence that inaccurate history or unsound philosophy should
be suffered to pass uncensured, merely because the offender
chanced to be a lady. But we conceive that, on such occasions, a
critic would do well to imitate the courteous Knight who found
himself compelled by duty to keep the lists against Bradamante.
He, we are told, defended successfully the cause of which he was
the champion; but, before the fight began, exchanged Balisarda
for a less deadly sword, of which he carefully blunted the point
and edge. [Orlando Furioso, xiv. 68.]

Nor are the immunities of sex the only immunities which Miss
Aikin may rightfully plead. Several of her works, and especially
the very pleasing Memoirs of the Reign of James the First have
fully entitled her to the privileges enjoyed by good writers. One
of those privileges we hold to be this, that such writers, when,
either from the unlucky choice of a subject, or from the
indolence too often produced by success, they happen to fail,
shall not be subjected to the severe discipline which it is
sometimes necessary to inflict upon dunces and impostors, but
shall merely be reminded by a gentle touch, like that which the
Laputan flapper roused his dreaming lord, that it is high time to
Our readers will probably infer from what we have said that Miss Aikin's book has disappointed us. The truth is, that she is not well acquainted with her subject. No person who is not familiar with the political and literary history of England during the reigns of William the Third, of Anne, and of George the First, can possibly write a good life of Addison.

Now, we mean no reproach to Miss Aikin, and many will think that we pay her a compliment, when we say that her studies have taken a different direction. She is better acquainted with Shakspeare and Raleigh, than with Congreve and Prior; and is far more at home among the ruffs and peaked beards of Theobalds than among the Steenkirs and flowing periwigs which surrounded Queen Anne's tea-table at Hampton. She seems to have written about the Elizabethan age, because she had read much about it; she seems, on the other hand, to have read a little about the age of Addison, because she had determined to write about it. The consequence is that she has had to describe men and things without having either a correct or a vivid idea of them, and that she has often fallen into errors of a very serious kind. The reputation which Miss Aikin has justly earned stands so high, and the charm of Addison's letters is so great, that a second edition of this work may probably be required. If so, we hope that every paragraph will be revised, and that every date and fact about which there can be the smallest doubt will be carefully verified.
To Addison himself we are bound by a sentiment as much like affection as any sentiment can be which is inspired by one who has been sleeping a hundred and twenty years in Westminster Abbey. We trust, however, that this feeling will not betray us into that abject idolatry which we have often had occasion to reprehend in others, and which seldom fails to make both the idolater and the idol ridiculous. A man of genius and virtue is but a man. All his powers cannot be equally developed; nor can we expect from him perfect self-knowledge. We need not, therefore, hesitate to admit that Addison has left us some compositions which do not rise above mediocrity, some heroic poems hardly equal to Parnell's, some criticism as superficial as Dr. Blair's, and a tragedy not very much better than Dr. Johnson's. It is praise enough to say of a writer that, in a high department of literature, in which many eminent writers have distinguished themselves, he has had no equal; and this may with strict justice be said of Addison.

As a man, he may not have deserved the adoration which he received from those who, bewitched by his fascinating society, and indebted for all the comforts of life to his generous and delicate friendship, worshipped him nightly, in his favourite temple at Button's. But, after full inquiry and impartial reflection, we have long been convinced that he deserved as much love and esteem as can be justly claimed by any of our infirm and erring race. Some blemishes may undoubtedly be detected in his
character; but the more carefully it is examined, the more will it appear, to use the phrase of the old anatomists, sound in the noble parts, free from all taint of perfidy, of cowardice, of cruelty, of ingratitude, of envy. Men may easily be named, in whom some particular good disposition has been more conspicuous than in Addison. But the just harmony of qualities, the exact temper between the stern and the humane virtues, the habitual observance of every law, not only of moral rectitude, but of moral grace and dignity, distinguish him from all men who have been tried by equally strong temptations, and about whose conduct we possess equally full information.

His father was the Reverend Lancelot Addison, who, though eclipsed by his more celebrated son, made some figure in the world, and occupies with credit, two folio pages in the Biographia Britannica. Lancelot was sent up, as a poor scholar, from Westmoreland to Queen's College, Oxford, in the time of the Commonwealth, made some progress in learning, became, like most of his fellow-students, a violent Royalist, lampooned the heads of the University, and was forced to ask pardon on his bended knees. When he had left college, he earned a humble subsistence by reading the liturgy of the fallen Church to the families of those sturdy squires whose manor-houses were scattered over the Wild of Sussex. After the Restoration, his loyalty was rewarded with the post of chaplain to the garrison of Dunkirk. When Dunkirk was sold to France, he lost his employment. But Tangier had been ceded by Portugal to England as part of the marriage
portion of the Infanta Catherine; and to Tangier Lancelot Addison
was sent. A more miserable situation can hardly be conceived. It
was difficult to say whether the unfortunate settlers were more
tormented by the heats or by the rains, by the soldiers within
the wall or by the Moors without it. One advantage the chaplain
had. He enjoyed an excellent opportunity of studying the history
and manners of Jews and Mahometans and of this opportunity he
appears to have made excellent use. On his return to England,
after some years of banishment, he published an interesting
volume on the Polity and Religion of Barbary, and another on the
Hebrew Customs and the State of Rabbinical Learning. He rose to
eminence in his profession, and became one of the royal
chaplains, a Doctor of Divinity, Archdeacon of Salisbury, and
Dean of Lichfield. It is said that he would have been made a
bishop after the Revolution, if he had not given offence to the
Government by strenuously opposing, in the Convocation of 1689,
the liberal policy of William and Tillotson.

In 1672, not long after Dr. Addison's return from Tangier, his
son Joseph was born. Of Joseph's childhood we know little. He
learned his rudiments at school in his father's neighbourhood,
and was then sent to the Charter House. The anecdotes which are
popularly related about his boyish tricks do not harmonise very
well with what we know of his riper years. There remains a
tradition that he was the ringleader in a barring out, and
another tradition that he ran away from school and hid himself in
a wood, where he fed on berries and slept in a hollow tree, till
after a long search he was discovered and brought home. If these stories be true, it would be curious to know by what moral discipline so mutinous and enterprising a lad was transformed into the gentlest and most modest of men.

We have abundant proof that, whatever Joseph's pranks may have been, he pursued his studies vigorously and successfully. At fifteen he was not only fit for the university, but carried thither a classical taste and a stock of learning which would have done honour to a Master of Arts. He was entered at Queen's College, Oxford; but he had not been many months there, when some of his Latin verses fell by accident into the hands of Dr. Lancaster, Dean of Magdalen College. The young scholar's diction and versification were already such as veteran professors might envy. Dr. Lancaster was desirous to serve a boy of such promise; nor was an opportunity long wanting. The Revolution had just taken place; and nowhere had it been hailed with more delight than at Magdalen College. That great and opulent corporation had been treated by James, and by his Chancellor, with an insolence and injustice which, even in such a Prince and in such a Minister, may justly excite amazement, and which had done more than even the prosecution of the Bishops to alienate the Church of England from the throne. A president, duly elected, had been violently expelled from his dwelling: a Papist had been set over the society by a royal mandate: the Fellows who, in conformity with their oaths, had refused to submit to this usurper, had been driven forth from their quiet cloisters and gardens, to die of
want or to live on charity. But the day of redress and retribution speedily came. The intruders were ejected: the venerable House was again inhabited by its old inmates: learning flourished under the rule of the wise and virtuous Hough; and with learning was united a mild and liberal spirit too often wanting in the princely colleges of Oxford. In consequence of the troubles through which the society had passed, there had been no valid election of new members during the year 1688. In 1689, therefore, there was twice the ordinary number of vacancies; and thus Dr. Lancaster found it easy to procure for his young friend admittance to the advantages of a foundation then generally esteemed the wealthiest in Europe.

At Magdalen Addison resided during ten years. He was, at first, one of those scholars who were called Demies, but was subsequently elected a Fellow. His college is still proud of his name: his portrait still hangs in the hall; and strangers are still told that his favourite walk was under the elms which fringe the meadow on the banks of the Cherwell. It is said, and is highly probable, that he was distinguished among his fellow-students by the delicacy of his feelings, by the shyness of his manners, and by the assiduity with which he often prolonged his studies far into the night. It is certain that his reputation for ability and learning stood high. Many years later, the ancient doctors of Magdalen continued to talk in their common room of his boyish compositions, and expressed their sorrow that no copy of exercises so remarkable had been preserved.
It is proper, however, to remark that Miss Aikin has committed the error, very pardonable in a lady, of overrating Addison's classical attainments. In one department of learning, indeed, his proficiency was such as it is hardly possible to overrate. His knowledge of the Latin poets, from Lucretius and Catullus down to Claudian and Prudentius, was singularly exact and profound. He understood them thoroughly, entered into their spirit, and had the finest and most discriminating perception of all their peculiarities of style and melody; nay, he copied their manner with admirable skill, and surpassed, we think, all their British imitators who had preceded him, Buchanan and Milton alone excepted. This is high praise; and beyond this we cannot with justice go. It is clear that Addison's serious attention during his residence at the university, was almost entirely concentrated on Latin poetry, and that, if he did not wholly neglect other provinces of ancient literature, he vouchsafed to them only a cursory glance. He does not appear to have attained more than an ordinary acquaintance with the political and moral writers of Rome; nor was his own Latin prose by any means equal to his Latin Verse. His knowledge of Greek, though doubtless such as was, in his time, thought respectable at Oxford, was evidently less than that which many lads now carry away every year from Eton and Rugby. A minute examination of his works, if we had time to make such an examination, would fully bear out these remarks. We will briefly advert to a few of the facts on which our judgment is grounded.
Great praise is due to the Notes which Addison appended to his version of the second and third books of the Metamorphoses. Yet those notes, while they show him to have been, in his own domain, an accomplished scholar, show also how confined that domain was. They are rich in apposite references to Virgil, Statius, and Claudian; but they contain not a single illustration drawn from the Greek poets. Now, if, in the whole compass of Latin literature, there be a passage which stands in need of illustration drawn from the Greek poets, it is the story of Pentheus in the third book of the Metamorphoses. Ovid was indebted for that story to Euripides and Theocritus, both of whom he has sometimes followed minutely. But neither to Euripides nor to Theocritus does Addison make the faintest allusion; and we, therefore, believe that we do not wrong him by supposing that he had little or no knowledge of their works.

His travels in Italy, again, abound with classical quotations happily introduced; but scarcely one of those quotations is in prose. He draws more illustrations from Ausonius and Manilius than from Cicero. Even his notions of the political and military affairs of the Romans seem to be derived from poets and poetasters. Spots made memorable by events which have changed the destinies of the world, and which have been worthily recorded by great historians, bring to his mind only scraps of some ancient versifier. In the gorge of the Apennines he naturally remembers the hardships which Hannibal's army endured, and proceeds to
cite, not the authentic narrative of Polybius, not the
picturesque narrative of Livy, but the languid hexameters of
Silius Italicus. On the banks of the Rubicon he never thinks of
Plutarch's lively description, or of the stern conciseness of the
Commentaries, or of those letters to Atticus which so forcibly
express the alternations of hope and fear in a sensitive mind at
a great crisis. His only authority for the events of the civil
war is Lucan.

All the best ancient works of art at Rome and Florence are Greek.
Addison saw them, however, without recalling one single verse of
Pindar, of Callimachus, or of the Attic dramatists; but they
brought to his recollection innumerable passages of Horace,
Juvenal, Statius, and Ovid.

The same may be said of the Treatise on Medals. In that pleasing
work we find about three hundred passages extracted with great
judgment from the Roman poets; but we do not recollect a single
passage taken from any Roman orator or historian; and we are
confident that not a line is quoted from any Greek writer. No
person, who had derived all his information on the subject of
medals from Addison, would suspect that the Greek coins were in
historical interest equal, and in beauty of execution far
superior to those of Rome.

If it were necessary to find any further proof that Addison's
classical knowledge was confined within narrow limits, that proof
would be furnished by his Essay on the Evidences of Christianity.
The Roman poets throw little or no light on the literary and
historical questions which he is under the necessity of examining
in that Essay. He is, therefore, left completely in the dark; and
it is melancholy to see how helplessly he gropes his way from
blunder to blunder. He assigns, as grounds for his religious
belief, stories as absurd as that of the Cock-Lane ghost, and
forgeries as rank as Ireland's Vortigern, puts faith in the lie
about the Thundering Legion, is convinced that Tiberius moved the
senate to admit Jesus among the gods, and pronounces the letter
of Abgarus King of Edessa to be a record of great authority. Nor
were these errors the effects of superstition; for to
superstition Addison was by no means prone. The truth is that he
was writing about what he did not understand.

Miss Aikin has discovered a letter, from which it appears that,
while Addison resided at Oxford, he was one of several writers
whom the booksellers engaged to make an English version of
Herodotus; and she infers that he must have been a good Greek
scholar. We can allow very little weight to this argument, when
we consider that his fellow-labourers were to have been Boyle and
Blackmore. Boyle is remembered chiefly as the nominal author of
the worst book on Greek history and philology that ever was
printed; and this book, bad as it is, Boyle was unable to produce
without help. Of Blackmore's attainments in the ancient tongues,
it may be sufficient to say that, in his prose, he has confounded
an aphorism with an apophthegm, and that when, in his verse, he
treats of classical subjects, his habit is to regale his readers
with four false quantities to a page.

It is probable that the classical acquirements of Addison were of
as much service to him as if they had been more extensive. The
world generally gives its admiration, not to the man who does
what nobody else even attempts to do, but to the man who does
best what multitudes do well. Bentley was so immeasurably
superior to all the other scholars of his time that few among
them could discover his superiority. But the accomplishment in
which Addison excelled his contemporaries was then, as it is now,
highly valued and assiduously cultivated at all English seats of
learning. Everybody who had been at a public school had written
Latin verses; many had written such verses with tolerable
success, and were quite able to appreciate, though by no means
able to rival, the skill with which Addison imitated Virgil. His
lines on the Barometer and the Bowling Green were applauded by
hundreds, to whom the Dissertation on the Epistles of Phalaris
was as unintelligible as the hieroglyphics on an obelisk.

Purity of style, and an easy flow of numbers, are common to all
Addison's Latin poems. Our favourite piece is the Battle of the
Cranes and Pigmies; for in that piece we discern a gleam of the
fancy and humour which many years later enlivened thousands of
breakfast tables. Swift boasted that he was never known to steal
a hint; and he certainly owed as little to his predecessors as
any modern writer. Yet we cannot help suspecting that he
borrowed, perhaps unconsciously, one of the happiest touches in
his "Voyage to Lilliput" from Addison's verses. Let our readers
judge.

"The Emperor," says Gulliver, "is Tatler by about the breadth of
my nail than any of his court, which alone is enough to strike an
awe into the beholders."

About thirty years before Gulliver's Travels appeared, Addison
wrote these lines:

"Jamque acies inter medias sese arduus infert
Pygmeadum ductor, qui, majestate verendus,
Incessuque gravis, reliquos supereminet omnes
Mole gigantea, mediamque exsurgit in ulnam."

The Latin poems of Addison were greatly and justly admired both
at Oxford and Cambridge, before his name had ever been heard by
the wits who thronged the coffee-houses round Drury Lane Theatre.
In his twenty-second year, he ventured to appear before the
public as a writer of English verse. He addressed some
complimentary lines to Dryden, who, after many triumphs and many
reverses, had at length reached a secure and lonely eminence
among the literary men of that age. Dryden appears to have been
much gratified by the young scholar's praise; and an interchange
of civilities and good offices followed. Addison was probably
introduced by Dryden to Congreve, and was certainly presented by
Congreve to Charles Montague, who was then Chancellor of the
Exchequer, and leader of the Whig party in the House of Commons.

At this time Addison seemed inclined to devote himself to poetry.
He published a translation of part of the fourth Georgic, Lines
on
King William, and other performances of equal value, that is to
say, of no value at all. But in those days, the public was in the
habit of receiving with applause pieces which would now have
little chance of obtaining the Newdigate prize or the Seatonian
prize. And the reason is obvious. The heroic couplet was then the
favourite measure. The art of arranging words in that measure, so
that the lines may flow smoothly, that the accents may fall
correctly, that the rhymes may strike the ear strongly, and that
there may be a pause at the end of every distich, is an art as
mechanical as that of mending a kettle or shoeing a horse, and
may be learned by any human being who has sense enough to learn
anything. But, like other mechanical arts, it was gradually
improved by means of many experiments and many failures. It was
reserved for Pope to discover the trick, to make himself complete
master of it, and to teach it to everybody else. From the time
when his Pastorals appeared, heroic versification became matter
of rule and compass; and, before long, all artists were on a
level. Hundreds of dunces who never blundered on one happy
thought or expression were able to write reams of couplets which,
as far as euphony was concerned, could not be distinguished from
those of Pope himself, and which very clever writers of the reign
of Charles the Second, Rochester, for example, or Marvel, or
Oldham, would have contemplated with admiring despair.

Ben Jonson was a great man, Hoole a very small man. But Hoole
coming after Pope, had learned how to manufacture decasyllable
verses, and poured them forth by thousands and tens of thousands,
all as well turned, as smooth, and as like each other as the
blocks which have passed through Mr. Brunel's mill in the
dockyard at Portsmouth. Ben's heroic couplets resemble blocks
rudely hewn out by an unpractised hand, with a blunt hatchet.
Take as a specimen his translation Of a celebrated passage in the
Aeneid:

"This child our parent earth, stirr'd up with spite
Of all the gods, brought forth, and, as some write,
She was last sister of that giant race
That sought to scale Jove's court, right swift of pace,
And swifter far of wing, a monster vast
And dreadful. Look, how many plumes are placed
On her huge corpse, so many waking eyes
Stick underneath, and, which may stranger rise
In the report, as many tongues she wears."

Compare with these jagged misshapen distichs the neat fabric
which Hoole's machine produces in unlimited abundance. We take
the first lines on which we open in his version of Tasso. They
are neither better nor worse than the rest

O thou, whoe'er thou art, whose steps are led,
By choice or fate, these lonely shores to tread,
No greater wonders east or west can boast
Than yon small island on the pleasing coast.
If e'er thy sight would blissful scenes explore,
The current pass, and seek the further shore."

Ever since the time of Pope there had been a glut of lines of
this sort; and we are now as little disposed to admire a man for
being able to write them, as for being able to write his name.
But in the days of William the Third such versification was rare;
and a rhymer who had any skill in it passed for a great poet,
just as in the dark ages a person who could write his name passed
for a great clerk. Accordingly, Duke, Stepney, Granville, Walsh,
and others whose only title to fame was that they said in
tolerable metre what might have been as well said in prose, or
what was not worth saying at all, were honoured with marks of
distinction which ought to be reserved for genius. With these
Addison must have ranked, if he had not earned true and lasting
glory by performances which very little resembled his juvenile
poems.
Dryden was now busied with Virgil, and obtained from Addison a critical preface to the Georgics. In return for this service, and for other services of the same kind, the veteran poet, in the postscript to the translation of the Aeniad complimented his young friend with great liberality, and indeed with more liberality than sincerity. He affected to be afraid that his own performance would not sustain a comparison with the version of the fourth Georgic, by "the most ingenious Mr. Addison of Oxford." "After his bees," added Dryden, "my latter swarm is scarcely worth the hiving."

The time had now arrived when it was necessary for Addison to choose a calling. Everything seemed to point his course towards the clerical profession. His habits were regular, his opinions orthodox. His college had large ecclesiastical preferment in its gift, and boasts that it has given at least one bishop to almost every see in England. Dr. Lancelot Addison held an honourable place in the Church, and had set his heart on seeing his son a clergyman. It is clear, from some expressions in the young man's rhymes, that his intention was to take orders. But Charles Montague interfered. Montague had first brought himself into notice by verses well-timed and not contemptibly written, but never, we think, rising above mediocrity. Fortunately for himself and for his country, he early quitted poetry, in which he could never have attained a rank as high as that of Dorset or Rochester, and turned his mind to official and parliamentary business. It is written that the ingenious person who undertook
to instruct Rasselas, prince of Abyssinia, in the art of flying, ascended an eminence, waved his wings, sprang into the air, and instantly dropped into the lake. But it is added that the wings, which were unable to support him through the sky, bore him up effectually as soon as he was in the water. This is no bad type of the fate of Charles Montague and of men like him. When he attempted to soar into the regions of poetical invention, he altogether failed; but, as soon as he had descended from that ethereal elevation into a lower and grosser element, his talents instantly raised him above the mass. He became a distinguished financier, debater, courtier, and party leader. He still retained his fondness for the pursuits of his early days; but he showed that fondness not by wearying the public with his own feeble performances, but by discovering and encouraging literary excellence in others. A crowd of wits and poets, who would easily have vanquished him as a competitor, revered him as a judge and a patron. In his plans for the encouragement of learning, he was cordially supported by the ablest and most virtuous of his colleagues, the Lord Chancellor Somers. Though both these great statesmen had a sincere love of letters, it was not solely from a love of letters that they were desirous to enlist youths of high intellectual qualifications in the public service. The Revolution had altered the whole system of government. Before that event the press had been controlled by censors, and the Parliament had sat only two months in eight years. Now the press was free, and had begun to exercise unprecedented influence on the public mind. Parliament met annually and sat long. The chief power in the State had passed to the House of Commons. At such a conjuncture,
it was natural that literary and oratorical talents should rise in value. There was danger that a government which neglected such talents might be subverted by them. It was, therefore, a profound and enlightened policy which led Montague and Somers to attach such talents to the Whig party, by the strongest ties both of interest and of gratitude.

It is remarkable that in a neighbouring country, we have recently seen similar effects follow from similar causes. The revolution of July 1830 established representative government in France. The men of letters instantly rose to the highest importance in the State. At the present moment most of the persons whom we see at the head both of the Administration and of the Opposition have been professors, historians, journalists, poets. The influence of the literary class in England, during the generation which followed the Revolution, was great, but by no means so great as it has lately been in France. For in England, the aristocracy of intellect had to contend with a powerful and deeply-rooted aristocracy of a very different kind. France had no Somersets and Shrewsburys to keep down her Addisons and Priors.

It was in the year 1699, when Addison had just completed his twenty-seventh year, that the course of his life was finally determined. Both the great chiefs of the Ministry were kindly disposed towards him. In political opinions he already was what he continued to be through life, a firm, though a moderate Whig. He had addressed the most polished and vigorous of his early
English lines to Somers, and had dedicated to Montague a Latin poem, truly Virgilian, both in style and rhythm, on the peace of Ryswick. The wish of the young poet's great friends was, it should seem, to employ him in the service of the Crown abroad.

But an intimate knowledge of the French language was a qualification indispensable to a diplomatist; and this qualification Addison had not acquired. It was, therefore, thought desirable that he should pass some time on the Continent in preparing himself for official employment. His own means were not such as would enable him to travel: but a pension of three hundred pounds a year was procured for him by the interest of the Lord Chancellor. It seems to have been apprehended that some difficulty might be started by the rulers of Magdalen College.

But the Chancellor of the Exchequer wrote in the strongest terms to Hough. The State--such was the purport of Montague's letter--could not, at that time spare to the Church such a man as Addison. Too many high civil posts were already occupied by adventurers, who, destitute of every liberal art and sentiment, at once pillaged and disgraced the country which they pretended to serve. It had become necessary to recruit for the public service from a very different class, from that class of which Addison was the representative. The close of the Minister's letter was remarkable. "I am called," he said, "an enemy of the Church. But I will never do it any other injury than keeping Mr. Addison out of it."

This interference was successful; and, in the summer of 1699,
Addison, made a rich man by his pension, and still retaining his fellowship, quitted his beloved Oxford, and set out on his travels. He crossed from Dover to Calais, proceeded to Paris, and was received there with great kindness and politeness by a kinsman of his friend Montague, Charles Earl of Manchester, who had just been appointed Ambassador to the Court of France. The Countess, a Whig and a toast, was probably as gracious as her lord; for Addison long retained an agreeable recollection of the impression which she at this time made on him, and in some lively lines written on the glasses of the Kit-Cat Club, described the envy which her cheeks, glowing with the genuine bloom of England, had excited among the painted beauties of Versailles.

Lewis the Fourteenth was at this time expiating the vices of his youth by a devotion which had no root in reason, and bore no fruit of charity. The servile literature of France had changed its character to suit the changed character of the prince. No book appeared that had not an air of sanctity. Racine, who was just dead, had passed the close of his life in writing sacred dramas; and Dacier was seeking for the Athanasian mysteries in Plato. Addison described this state of things in a short but lively and graceful letter to Montague. Another letter, written about the same time to the Lord Chancellor, conveyed the strongest assurances of gratitude and attachment. "The only return I can make to your Lordship," said Addison, "will be to apply myself entirely to my business." With this view he quitted Paris and repaired to Blois, a place where it was supposed that
the French language was spoken in its highest purity, and where not a single Englishman could be found. Here he passed some months pleasantly and profitably. Of his way of life at Blois, one of his associates, an Abbe named Philippeaux, gave an account to Joseph Spence. If this account is to be trusted, Addison studied much, mused much, talked little, had fits of absence, and either had no love affairs, or was too discreet to confide them to the Abbe. A man who, even when surrounded by fellow-countrymen and fellow-students, had always been remarkably shy and silent, was not likely to be loquacious in a foreign tongue, and among foreign companions. But it is clear from Addison's letters, some of which were long after published in the Guardian, that, while he appeared to be absorbed in his own meditations, he was really observing French society with that keen and sly, yet not ill-natured side glance, which was peculiarly his own.

From Blois he returned to Paris; and, having now mastered the French language, found great pleasure in the society of French philosophers and poets. He gave an account, in a letter to Bishop Hough, of two highly interesting conversations, one with Malbranche, the other with Boileau. Malbranche expressed great partiality for the English, and extolled the genius of Newton, but shook his head when Hobbes was mentioned, and was indeed so unjust as to call the author of the Leviathan a poor, silly creature. Addison's modesty restrained him from fully relating, in his letter, the circumstances of his introduction to Boileau. Boileau, having survived the friends and rivals of his youth,
old, deaf, and melancholy, lived in retirement, seldom went
either to Court or to the Academy, and was almost inaccessible to
strangers. Of the English and of English literature he knew
nothing. He had hardly heard the name of Dryden. Some of our
countrymen, in the warmth of their patriotism, have asserted that
this ignorance must have been affected. We own that we see no
ground for such a supposition. English literature was to the
French of the age of Lewis the Fourteenth what German literature
was to our own grandfathers. Very few, we suspect, of the
accomplished men who, sixty or seventy years ago, used to dine in
Leicester Square with Sir Joshua, or at Streatham. with Mrs.
Thrale, had the slightest notion that Wieland was one of the
first wits and poets, and Lessing, beyond all dispute, the first
critic in Europe. Boileau knew just as little about the Paradise
Lost, and about Absalom and Achitophel; but he had read Addison's
Latin poems, and admired them greatly. They had given him, he
said, quite a new notion of the state of learning and taste among
the English. Johnson will have it that these praises were
insincere. "Nothing," says he, "is better known of Boileau than
that he had an injudicious and peevish contempt of modern Latin;
and therefore his profession of regard was probably the effect of
his civility rather than approbation." Now, nothing is better
known of Boileau than that he was singularly sparing of
compliments. We do not remember that either friendship or fear
ever induced him to bestow praise on any composition which he did
not approve. On literary questions his caustic, disdainful, and
self-confident spirit rebelled against that authority to which
everything else in France bowed down. He had the spirit to tell
Lewis the Fourteenth firmly and even rudely, that his Majesty knew nothing about poetry, and admired verses which were detestable. What was there in Addison's position that could induce the satirist, Whose stern and fastidious temper had been the dread of two generations, to turn sycophant for the first and last time? Nor was Boileau's contempt of modern Latin either injudicious or peevish. He thought, indeed, that no poem of the first order would ever be written in a dead language. And did he think amiss? Has not the experience of centuries confirmed his opinion? Boileau also thought it probable that, in the best modern Latin, a writer of the Augustan age would have detected ludicrous improprieties. And who can think otherwise? What modern scholar can honestly declare that he sees the smallest impurity in the style of Livy? Yet is it not certain that, in the style of Livy, Pollio, whose taste had been formed on the banks of the Tiber, detected the inelegant idiom of the Po? Has any modern scholar understood Latin better than Frederic the Great understood French? Yet is it not notorious that Frederic the Great, after reading, speaking, writing French, and nothing but French, during more than half a century, after unlearning his mother tongue in order to learn French, after living familiarly during many years with French associates, could not, to the last, compose in French, without imminent risk of committing some mistake which would have moved a smile in the literary circles of Paris? Do we believe that Erasmus and Fracastorius wrote Latin as well as Dr. Robertson and Sir Walter Scott wrote English? And are there not
in the Dissertation on India, the last of Dr. Robertson's works, 
in Waverley, in Marmion, Scotticisms at which a London apprentice 
would laugh? But does it follow, because we think thus, that we 
can find nothing to admire in the noble alcaics of Gray, or in 
the playful elegiacs of Vincent Bourne? Surely not. Nor was 
Boileau so ignorant or tasteless as to be incapable of 
appreciating good modern Latin. In the very letter to which 
Johnson alludes, Boileau says—"Ne croyez pas pourtant que je 
veuille par la blamer les vers Latins que vous m'avez envoyes 
d'un de vos illustres academiciens. Je les ai trouves fort beaux, 
et dignes de Vida et de Sannazar, mais non pas d'Horace et de 
Virgile." Several poems, in modern Latin, have been 
praised by Boileau quite as liberally as it was his habit to 
praise anything. He says, for example, of the Pere Fraguier's 
epigrams, that Catullus seems to have come to life again. But the 
best proof that Boileau did not feel the undiscerning contempt 
for modern Latin verses which has been imputed to him, is, that 
he wrote and published Latin verses in several metres. Indeed it 
happens, curiously enough, that the most severe censure ever 
pronounced by him on modern Latin is conveyed in Latin 
hexameters. We allude to the fragment which begins

"Quid numeris iterum me balbutire Latinis,  
Longe Alpes citra natum de patre Sicambro,  
Musa, jubes?"

For these reasons we feel assured that the praise which Boileau
bestowed on the Machinae Gesticulantes and the Gerano Pygmaomachia, was sincere. He certainly opened himself to Addison with a freedom which was a sure indication of esteem. Literature was the chief subject of conversation. The old man talked on his favourite theme much and well, indeed, as his young hearer thought, incomparably well. Boileau had undoubtedly some of the qualities of a great critic. He wanted imagination; but he had strong sense. His literary code was formed on narrow principles; but in applying it, he showed great judgment and penetration. In mere style, abstracted from the ideas of which style is the garb, his taste was excellent. He was well acquainted with the great Greek writers; and, though unable fully to appreciate their creative genius, admired the majestic simplicity of their manner, and had learned from them to despise bombast and tinsel. It is easy we think, to discover, in the Spectator, and the Guardian: traces of the influence, in part salutary and in part pernicious, which the mind of Boileau had on the mind of Addison.

While Addison was at Paris, an event took place which made that capital a disagreeable residence for an Englishman and a Whig. Charles, second of the name, King of Spain, died; and bequeathed his dominions to Philip, Duke of Anjou, a younger son of the Dauphin. The King of France, in direct violation of his engagements both with Great Britain and with the States-General, accepted the bequest on behalf of his grandson. The House of Bourbon was at the summit of human grandeur. England had been outwitted, and found herself in a situation at once degrading and
perilous. The people of France, not presaging the calamities by which they were destined to expiate the perfidy of their sovereign, went mad with pride and delight. Every man looked as if a great estate had just been left him. "The French conversation," said Addison, "begins to grow insupportable; that which was before the vainest nation in the world is now worse than ever." Sick of the arrogant exultation of the Parisians, and probably foreseeing that the peace between France and England could not be of long duration, he set off for Italy.

In December 1701 [It is strange that Addison should, in the first line of his travels, have misdated his departure from Marseilles by a whole year, and still more strange that this slip of the pen, which throws the whole narrative into inextricable confusion, should have been repeated in a succession of editions, and never detected by Tickell or by Hurd.] he embarked at Marseilles. As he glided along the Ligurian coast, he was delighted by the sight of myrtles and olive trees, which retained their verdure under the winter solstice. Soon, however, he encountered one of the black storms of the Mediterranean. The captain of the ship gave up all for lost, and confessed himself to a capuchin who happened to be on board. The English heretic, in the meantime, fortified himself against the terrors of death with devotions of a very different kind. How strong an impression this perilous voyage made on him, appears from the ode, "How are thy servants blest, 0 Lord!" which was long after published in the Spectator. After some days of discomfort and danger, Addison
was glad to land at Savona, and to make his way, over mountains where no road had yet been hewn out by art, to the city of Genoa.

At Genoa, still ruled by her own Doge, and by the nobles whose names were inscribed on her Book of Gold, Addison made a short stay. He admired the narrow streets overhung by long lines of towering palaces, the walls rich with frescoes, the gorgeous temple of the Annunciation, and the tapestries whereon were recorded the long glories of the House of Doria. Thence he hastened to Milan, where he contemplated the Gothic magnificence of the cathedral with more wonder than pleasure. He passed Lake Benacus while a gale was blowing, and saw the waves raging as they raged when Virgil looked upon them. At Venice, then the gayest spot in Europe, the traveller spent the Carnival, the gayest season of the year, in the midst of masques, dances, and serenades. Here he was at once diverted and provoked, by the absurd dramatic pieces which then disgraced the Italian stage. To one of those pieces, however, he was indebted for a valuable hint. He was present when a ridiculous play on the death of Cato was performed. Cato, it seems, was in love with a daughter of Scipio. The lady had given her heart to Caesar. The rejected lover determined to destroy himself. He appeared seated in his library, a dagger in his hand, a Plutarch and a Tasso before him; and, in this position, he pronounced a soliloquy before he struck the blow. We are surprised that so remarkable a circumstance as this should have escaped the notice of all Addison's biographers. There cannot, we conceive, be the smallest doubt that this scene,
in spite of its absurdities and anachronisms, struck the
traveller's imagination, and suggested to him the thought of
bringing Cato on the English stage. It is well known that about
this time he began his tragedy, and that he finished the first
four acts before he returned to England,

On his way from Venice to Rome, he was drawn some miles out of
the beaten road, by a wish to see the smallest independent state
in Europe. On a rock where the snow still lay, though the Italian
spring was now far advanced, was perched the little fortress of
San Marino. The roads which led to the secluded town were so bad
that few travellers had ever visited it, and none had ever
published an account of it. Addison could not suppress a good-
natured smile at the simple manners and institutions of this
singular community. But he observed, with the exultation of a
Whig, that the rude mountain tract which formed the territory of
the republic swarmed with an honest, healthy, and contented
peasantry, while the rich plain which surrounded the metropolis
of civil and spiritual tyranny was scarcely less desolate than
the uncleared wilds of America.

At Rome Addison remained on his first visit only long enough to
catch a glimpse of St. Peter's and of the Pantheon. His haste is
the more extraordinary because the Holy Week was close at hand.
He has given no hint which can enable us to pronounce why he
chose to fly from a spectacle which every year allures from
distant regions persons of far less taste and sensibility than
his. Possibly, travelling, as he did, at the charge of a
government distinguished by its enmity to the Church of Rome, he
may have thought that it would be imprudent in him to assist at
the most magnificent rite of that Church. Many eyes would be upon
him; and he might find it difficult to behave in such a manner as
to give offence neither to his patrons in England, nor to those
among whom he resided. Whatever his motives may have been, he
turned his back on the most august and affecting ceremony which
is known among men, and posted along the Appian Way to Naples.

Naples was then destitute of what are now, perhaps, its chief
attractions. The lovely bay and the awful mountain were indeed
there. But a farmhouse stood on the theatre of Herculaneum, and
rows of vines grew over the streets of Pompeii. The temples of
Paestum had not indeed been hidden from the eye of man by any
great convulsion of nature; but, strange to say, their existence
was a secret even to artists and antiquaries. Though situated
within a few hours’ journey of a great capital, where Salvator
had not long before painted, and where Vico was then lecturing,
those noble remains were as little known to Europe as the ruined
cities overgrown by the forests of Yucatan. What was to be seen
at Naples, Addison saw. He climbed Vesuvius, explored the tunnel
of Posilipo, and wandered among the vines and almond trees of
Capreae. But neither the wonders of nature, nor those of art,
could so occupy his attention as to prevent him from noticing,
though cursorily, the abuses of the Government and the misery of
the people. The great kingdom which had just descended to Philip
the Fifth, was in a state of paralytic dotage. Even Castile and Aragon were sunk in wretchedness. Yet, compared with the Italian dependencies of the Spanish crown, Castile and Aragon might be called prosperous. It is clear that all the observations which Addison made in Italy tended to confirm him in the political opinions which he had adopted at home. To the last, he always spoke of foreign travel as the best cure for Jacobitism. In his Freeholder, the Tory fox-hunter asks what travelling is good for, except to teach a man to jabber French, and to talk against passive obedience.

From Naples, Addison returned to Rome by sea, along the coast which his favourite Virgil had celebrated. The felucca passed the headland where the oar and trumpet were placed by the Trojan adventurers on the tomb of Misenus, and anchored at night under the shelter of the fabled promontory of Circe. The voyage ended in the Tiber, still overhung with dark verdure, and still turbid with yellow sand, as when it met the eyes of Aeneas. From the ruined port of Ostia, the stranger hurried to Rome; and at Rome he remained during those hot and sickly months when, even in the Augustan age, all who could make their escape fled from mad dogs and from streets black with funerals, to gather the first figs of the season in the country. It is probable that, when he, long after, poured forth in verse his gratitude to the Providence which had enabled him to breathe unhurt in tainted air, he was thinking of the August and September which he passed at Rome.
It was not till the latter end of October that he tore himself away from the masterpieces of ancient and modern art which are collected in the city so long the mistress of the world. He then journeyed northward, passed through Sienna, and for a moment forgot his prejudices in favour of classic architecture as he looked on the magnificent cathedral. At Florence he spent some days with the Duke of Shrewsbury, who, cloyed with the pleasures of ambition, and impatient of its pains, fearing both parties, and loving neither, had determined to hide in an Italian retreat talents and accomplishments which, if they had been united with fixed principles and civil courage, might have made him the foremost man of his age. These days we are told, passed pleasantly; and we can easily believe it. For Addison was a delightful companion when he was at his ease; and the Duke, though he seldom forgot that he was a Talbot, had the invaluable art of putting at case all who came near him.

Addison gave some time to Florence, and especially to the sculptures in the Museum, which he preferred even to those of the Vatican. He then pursued his journey through a country in which the ravages of the last war were still discernible, and in which all men were looking forward with dread to a still fiercer conflict. Eugene had already descended from the Rhaetian Alps, to dispute with Catinat the rich plain of Lombardy. The faithless ruler of Savoy was still reckoned among the allies of Lewis. England had not yet actually declared war against France: but Manchester had left Paris; and the negotiations which produced
the Grand Alliance against the House of Bourbon were in progress. Under such circumstances, it was desirable for an English traveller to reach neutral ground without delay. Addison resolved to cross Mont Cenis. It was December; and the road was very different from that which now reminds the stranger of the power and genius of Napoleon. The winter, however, was mild; and the passage was, for those times, easy. To this journey Addison alluded when, in the ode which we have already quoted, he said that for him the Divine goodness had warmed the hoary Alpine hills.

It was in the midst of the eternal snow that he composed his "Epistle" to his friend Montague, now Lord Halifax. That Epistle, once widely renowned, is now known only to curious readers, and will hardly be considered by those to whom it is known as in any perceptible degree heightening Addison's fame. It is, however, decidedly superior to any English composition which he had previously published. Nay, we think it quite as good as any poem in heroic metre which appeared during the interval between the death of Dryden and the publication of the Essay on Criticism. It contains passages as good as the second-rate passages of Pope, and would have added to the reputation of Parnell or Prior.

But, whatever be the literary merits or defects of the Epistle, it undoubtedly does honour to the principles and spirit of the author. Halifax had now nothing to give. He had fallen from power, had been held up to obloquy, had been impeached by the
House of Commons, and, though his Peers had dismissed the impeachment, had, as it seemed, little chance of ever again filling high office. The Epistle, written, at such a time, is one among many proofs that there was no mixture of cowardice or meanness in the suavity and moderation which distinguished Addison from all the other public men of those stormy times.

At Geneva, the traveller learned that a partial change of Ministry had taken place in England, and that the Earl of Manchester had become Secretary of State. Manchester exerted himself to serve his young friend. It was thought advisable that an English agent should be near the person of Eugene in Italy; and Addison, whose diplomatic education was now finished, was the man selected. He was preparing to enter on his honourable functions, when all his prospects were for a time darkened by the death of William the Third.

Anne had long felt a strong aversion, personal, political, and religious, to the Whig party. That aversion appeared in the first measure of her reign. Manchester was deprived of the seals, after he had held them only a few weeks. Neither Somers nor Halifax was sworn of the Privy Council. Addison shared the fate of his three patrons. His hopes of employment in the public service were at an end; his pension was stopped; and it was necessary for him to support himself by his own exertions. He became tutor to a young English traveller, and appears to have rambled with his pupil over great part of Switzerland and Germany. At this time he wrote
his pleasing Treatise on Medals. It was not published till after
his death; but several distinguished scholars saw the manuscript,
and gave just praise to the grace of the style, and to the
learning and ingenuity evinced by the quotations.

From Germany Addison repaired to Holland, where he learned the
melancholy news of his father's death. After passing some months
in the United Provinces, he returned about the close of the year
1703 to England. He was there cordially received by his friends,
and introduced by them into the Kit Cat Club, a society in which
were collected all the various talents and accomplishments which
then gave lustre to the Whig party.

Addison was, during some months after his return from the
Continent, hard pressed by pecuniary difficulties. But it was
soon in the power of his noble patrons to serve him effectually.
A political change, silent and gradual, but of the highest
importance, was in daily progress. The accession of Anne had been
hailed by the Tories with transports of joy and hope; and for a
time it seemed that the Whigs had fallen, never to rise again.
The throne was surrounded by men supposed to be attached to the
prerogative and to the Church; and among these none stood so high
in the favour of the Sovereign as the Lord Treasurer Godolphin
and the Captain-General Marlborough.

The country gentlemen and country clergymen had fully expected
that the policy of these Ministers would be directly opposed to
that which had been almost constantly followed by William; that
the landed interest would be favoured at the expense of trade;
that no addition would be made to the funded debt; that the
privileges conceded to Dissenters by the late King would be
curtailed, if not withdrawn; that the war with France, if there
must be such a war, would, on our part, be almost entirely naval;
and that the Government would avoid close connections with
foreign powers, and, above all, with Holland.

But the country gentlemen and country clergymen were fated to be
deceived, not for the last time. The prejudices and passions
which raged without control in vicarages, in cathedral closes,
and in the manor-houses of fox-hunting squires, were not shared
by the chiefs of the Ministry. Those statesmen saw that it was
both for the public interest, and for their own interest, to
adopt a Whig policy, at least as respected the alliances of the
country and the conduct of the war. But, if the foreign policy of
the Whigs were adopted, it was impossible to abstain from
adopting also their financial policy. The natural consequences
followed. The rigid Tories were alienated from the Government.
The votes of the Whigs became necessary to it. The votes of the
Whigs could be secured only by further concessions; and further
concessions the Queen was induced to make.

At the beginning of the year 1704, the state of parties bore a
close analogy to the state of parties in 1826. In 1826, as in
1704, there was a Tory Ministry divided into two hostile
sections. The position of Mr. Canning and his friends in 1826
corresponded to that which Marlborough and Godolphin occupied in
1704. Nottingham and Jersey were, in 1704, what Lord Eldon and
Lord Westmoreland were in 1826. The Whigs of 1704 were in a
situation resembling that in which the Whigs of 1826 stood. In
1704, Somers, Halifax, Sunderland, Cowper, were not in office.
There was no avowed coalition between them and the moderate
Tories. It is probable that no direct communication tending to
such a coalition had yet taken place; yet all men saw that such a
coalition was inevitable, nay, that it was already half formed.
Such, or nearly such, was the state of things when tidings
arrived of the great battle fought at Blenheim on the 13th
August, 1704. By the Whigs the news was hailed with transports of
joy and pride. No fault, no cause of quarrel, could be remembered
by them against the Commander whose genius had, in one day,
changed the face of Europe, saved the Imperial throne, humbled
the House of Bourbon, and secured the Act of Settlement against
foreign hostility. The feeling of the Tories was very different.
They could not indeed, without imprudence, openly express regret
at an event so glorious to their country; but their
congratulations were so cold and sullen as to give deep disgust
to the victorious general and his friends.

Godolphin was not a reading man. Whatever time he could spare
from business he was in the habit of spending at Newmarket or at
the card-table. But he was not absolutely indifferent to poetry;
and he was too intelligent an observer not to perceive that
literature was a formidable engine of political warfare, and that
the great Whig leaders had strengthened their party, and raised
their character, by extending a liberal and judicious patronage
to good writers. He was mortified, and not without reason, by the
exceeding badness of the poems which appeared in honour of the
battle of Blenheim. One of these poems has been rescued from
oblivion by the exquisite absurdity of three lines:

"Think of two thousand gentlemen at least,
And each man mounted on his capering beast
Into the Danube they were pushed by shoals."

Where to procure better verses the Treasurer did not know. He
understood how to negotiate a loan, or remit a subsidy: he was
also well versed in the history of running horses and fighting
cocks; but his acquaintance among the poets was very
small. He consulted Halifax; but Halifax affected to decline the
office of adviser. He had, he said, done his best, when he had
power, to encourage men whose abilities and acquirements might do
honour to their country. Those times were over. Other maxims had
prevailed. Merit was suffered to pine in obscurity: and the
public money was squandered on the undeserving. "I do know," he
added, "a gentleman who would celebrate the battle in a manner
worthy of the subject; but I will not name him." Godolphin, who
was expert at the soft answer which turneth away wrath, and who
was under the necessity of paying court to the Whigs, gently
replied that there was too much ground for Halifax’s complaints, but that what was amiss should in time be rectified, and that in the meantime the services of a man such as Halifax had described should be liberally rewarded. Halifax then mentioned Addison, but, mindful of the dignity as well as of the pecuniary interest of his friend, insisted that the Minister should apply in the most courteous manner to Addison himself; and this Godolphin promised to do.

Addison then occupied a garret up three pair of stairs, over a small shop in the Haymarket. In this humble lodging he was surprised, on the morning which followed the conversation between Godolphin and Halifax, by a visit from no less a person than the Right Honourable Henry Boyle, then Chancellor of the Exchequer, and afterwards Lord Carleton. This highborn Minister had been sent by the Lord Treasurer as ambassador to the needy poet. Addison readily undertook the proposed task, a task which, to so good a Whig, was probably a pleasure. When the poem was little more than half finished, he showed it to Godolphin, who was delighted with it, and particularly with the famous similitude of the Angel. Addison was instantly appointed to a Commissionership worth about two hundred pounds a year, and was assured that this appointment was only an earnest of greater favours.

The Campaign came forth, and was as much admired by the public as by the Minister. It pleases us less on the whole than the "Epistle to Halifax." Yet it undoubtedly ranks high among the
poems which appeared during the interval between the death of Dryden and the dawn of Pope's genius. The chief merit of the Campaign, we think, is that which was noticed by Johnson, the manly and rational rejection of fiction. The first great poet whose works have come down to us sang of war long before war became a science or a trade. If, in his time, there was enmity between two little Greek towns, each poured forth its crowd of citizens, ignorant of discipline, and armed with implements of labour rudely turned into weapons. On each side appeared conspicuous a few chiefs, whose wealth had enabled them to procure good armour, horses, and chariots, and whose leisure had enabled them to practise military exercises. One such chief, if he were a man of great strength, agility, and courage, would probably be more formidable than twenty common men; and the force and dexterity with which he flung his spear might have no inconsiderable share in deciding the event of the day. Such were probably the battles with which Homer was familiar. But Homer related the actions of men of a former generation, of men who sprang from the Gods, and communed with the Gods face to face, of men, one of whom could with ease hurl rocks which two sturdy hinds of a later period would be unable even to lift. He therefore naturally represented their martial exploits as resembling in kind, but far surpassing in magnitude, those of the stoutest and most expert combatants of his own age. Achilles, clad in celestial armour, drawn by celestial coursers, grasping the spear which none but himself could raise, driving all Troy and Lycia before him, and choking Scamander with dead, was only a magnificent exaggeration of the real hero, who, strong, fearless,
accustomed to the use of weapons, guarded by a shield and helmet of the best Sidonian fabric, and whirled along by horses of Thessalian breed, struck down with his own right arm foe after foe. In all rude societies similar notions are found. There are at this day countries where the Lifeguardsman Shaw would be considered as a much greater warrior than the Duke of Wellington. Buonaparte loved to describe the astonishment with which the Mamelukes looked at his diminutive figure. Mourad Bey, distinguished above all his fellows by his bodily strength, and by the skill with which he managed his horse and his sabre, could not believe that a man who was scarcely five feet high, and rode like a butcher, could be the greatest soldier in Europe.

Homer's descriptions of war had therefore as much truth as poetry requires. But truth was altogether wanting to the performances of those who, writing about battles which had scarcely anything in common with the battles of his times, servilely imitated his manner. The folly of Silius Italicus, in particular, is positively nauseous. He undertook to record in verse the vicissitudes of a great struggle between generals of the first order; and his narrative is made up of the hideous wounds which these generals inflicted with their own hands. Asdrubal flings a spear which grazes the shoulder of the consul Nero; but Nero sends his spear into Asdrubal's side. Fabius slays Thuris and Butes and Maris and Arses, and the long-haired Adherbes, and the gigantic Thylis, and Sapharus and Monaesus, and the trumpeteter Morinus. Hannibal runs Perusinus through the groin
with a stake, and breaks the backbone of Telesinus with a huge stone. This detestable fashion was copied in modern times, and continued to prevail down to the age of Addison. Several versifiers had described William turning thousands to flight by his single prowess, and dyeing the Boyne with Irish blood. Nay, so estimable a writer as John Philips, the author of the Splendid Shilling, represented Marlborough as having won the battle of Blenheim merely by strength of muscle and skill in fence. The following lines may serve as an example:-

"Churchill viewing where
The violence of Tallard most prevailed,
Came to oppose his slaughtering arm.
With speed precipitate he rode, urging his way
O'er hills of gasping heroes, and fallen steeds
Rolling in death. Destruction, grim with blood,
Attends his furious course. Around his head
The glowing balls play innocent, while he
With dire impetuous sway deals fatal blows
Among the flying Gauls. In Gallic blood
He dyes his reeking sword, and strews the ground
With headless ranks. What can they do? Or how
Withstand his wide-destroying sword?"

Addison, with excellent sense and taste, departed from this ridiculous fashion. He reserved his praise for the qualities which made Marlborough truly great, energy, sagacity, military
science. But, above all, the poet extolled the firmness of that mind which, in the midst of confusion, uproar, and slaughter, examined and disposed everything with the serene wisdom of a higher intelligence.

Here it was that he introduced the famous comparison of Marlborough to an angel guiding the whirlwind. We will not dispute the general justice of Johnson's remarks on this passage. But we must point out one circumstance which appears to have escaped all the critics. The extraordinary effect which this simile produced when it first appeared, and which to the following generation seemed inexplicable, is doubtless to be chiefly attributed to a line which most readers now regard as a feeble parenthesis:--

"Such as, of late, o'er pale Britannia pass'd."

Addison spoke, not of a storm, but of the storm. The great tempest of November 1703, the only tempest which in our latitude has equalled the rage of a tropical hurricane, had left a dreadful recollection in the minds of all men. No other tempest was ever in this country the occasion of a parliamentary address or of a public fast. Whole fleets had been cast away. Large mansions had been blown down. One Prelate had been buried beneath the ruins of his palace. London and Bristol had presented the appearance of cities just sacked. Hundreds of families were still
in mourning. The prostrate trunks of large trees, and the ruins of houses, still attested, in all the southern counties, the fury of the blast. The popularity which the simile of the angel enjoyed among Addison's contemporaries, has always seemed to us to be a remarkable instance of the advantage which, in rhetoric and poetry, the particular has over the general.

Soon after the Campaign, was published Addison's Narrative of his Travels in Italy. The first effect produced by this Narrative was disappointment. The crowd of readers who expected politics and scandal, speculations on the projects of Victor Amadeus, and anecdotes about the jollities of convents and the amours of cardinals and nuns, were confounded by finding that the writer's mind was much more occupied by the war between the Trojans and Rutulians than by the war between France and Austria; and that he seemed to have heard no scandal of later date than the gallantries of the Empress Faustina. In time, however, the judgment of the many was overruled by that of the few; and, before the book was reprinted, it was so eagerly sought that it sold for five times the original price. It is still read with pleasure: the style is pure and flowing; the classical quotations and allusions are numerous and happy; and we are now and then charmed by that singularly humane and delicate humour in which Addison excelled all men. Yet this agreeable work, even when considered merely as the history of a literary tour, may justly be censured on account of its faults of omission. We have already said that, though rich in extracts from the Latin poets, it
contains scarcely any references to the Latin orators and historians. We must add, that it contains little, or rather no information, respecting the history and literature of modern Italy. To the best of our remembrance, Addison does not mention Dante, Petrarch Boccaccio, Boiardo, Berni, Lorenzo de'Medici, or Machiavelli. He coldly tells us, that at Ferrara he saw the tomb of Ariosto, and that at Venice he heard the gondoliers sing verses of Tasso. But for Tasso and Ariosto he cared far less than for Valerius Flaccus and Sidonius Apollinaris. The gentle flow of the Ticin brings a line of Silius to his mind. The sulphurous stream of Albula suggests to him several passages of Martial. But he has not a word to say of the illustrious dead of Santa Croce; he crosses the wood of Ravenna without recollecting the Spectre Huntsman, and wanders up and down Rimini without one thought of Francesca. At Paris, he had eagerly sought an introduction to Boileau; but he seems not to have been at all aware that at Florence he was in the vicinity of a poet with whom Boileau could not sustain a comparison, of the greatest lyric poet of modern times, Vincenzio Filicaja. This is the more remarkable, because Filicaja was the favourite poet of the accomplished Somers, under whose protection Addison travelled, and to whom the account of the Travels is dedicated. The truth is, that Addison knew little, and cared less, about the literature of modern Italy. His favourite models were Latin, his favourite critics were French. Half the Tuscan poetry that he had read seemed to him monstrous, and the other half tawdry.
His Travels were followed by the lively opera of Rosamond. This piece was ill set to music, and therefore failed on the stage, but it completely succeeded in print, and is indeed excellent in its kind. The smoothness with which the verses glide, and the elasticity with which they bound, is, to our ears at least, very pleasing. We are inclined to think that if Addison had left heroic couplets to Pope, and blank verse to Rowe, and had employed himself in writing airy and spirited songs, his reputation as a poet would have stood far higher than it now does. Some years after his death, Rosamond was set to new music by Doctor Arne; and was performed with complete success. Several passages long retained their popularity, and were daily sung, during the latter part of George the Second's reign, at all the harpsichords in England.

While Addison thus amused himself, his prospects, and the prospects of his party, were constantly becoming brighter and brighter. In the spring of 1705, the Ministers were freed from the restraint imposed by a House of Commons in which Tories of the most perverse class had the ascendency. The elections were favourable to the Whigs. The coalition which had been tacitly and gradually formed was now openly avowed. The Great Seal was given to Cowper. Somers and Halifax were sworn of the Council. Halifax was sent in the following year to carry the decorations of the Order of the Garter to the Electoral Prince of Hanover, and was accompanied on this honourable mission by Addison, who had just been made Under-Secretary of State. The Secretary of State under
whom Addison first served was Sir Charles Hedges, a Tory. But Hedges was soon dismissed, to make room for the most vehement of Whigs, Charles, Earl of Sunderland. In every department of the State, indeed, the High Churchmen were compelled to give place to their opponents. At the close of 1707, the Tories who still remained in office strove to rally, with Harley at their head. But the attempt, though favoured by the Queen, who had always been a Tory at heart, and who had now quarrelled with the Duchess of Marlborough, was unsuccessful. The time was not yet. The Captain-General was at the height of popularity and glory. The Low Church party had a majority in Parliament. The country squires and rectors, though occasionally uttering a savage growl, were for the most part in a state of torpor, which lasted till they were roused into activity, and indeed into madness, by the prosecution of Sacheverell. Harley and his adherents were compelled to retire. The victory of the Whigs was complete. At the general election of 1708, their strength in the House of Commons became irresistible; and, before the end of that year, Somers was made Lord President of the Council, and Wharton Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland.

Addison sat for Malmsbury in the House of Commons which was elected in 1708. But the House of Commons was not the field for him. The bashfulness of his nature made his wit and eloquence useless in debate. He once rose, but could not overcome his diffidence, and ever after remained silent. Nobody can think it strange that a great writer should fail as a speaker. But many,
probably, will think it strange that Addison's failure as a speaker should have had no unfavourable effect on his success as a politician. In our time, a man of high rank and great fortune might, though speaking very little and very ill, hold a considerable post. But it would now be inconceivable that a mere adventurer, a man who, when out of office, must live by his pen, should in a few years become successively Under-Secretary of State, Chief Secretary for Ireland, and Secretary of State, without some oratorical talent. Addison, without high birth, and with little property, rose to a post which Dukes the heads of the great Houses of Talbot, Russell, and Bentinck, have thought it an honour to fill. Without opening his lips in debate, he rose to a post, the highest that Chatham or Fox ever reached. And this he did before he had been nine years in Parliament. We must look for the explanation of this seeming miracle to the peculiar circumstances in which that generation was placed. During the interval which elapsed between the time when the Censorship of the Press ceased, and the time when parliamentary proceedings began to be freely reported, literary talents were, to a public man, of much more importance, and oratorical talents of much less importance, than in our time. At present, the best way of giving rapid and wide publicity to a fact or an argument is to introduce that fact or argument into a speech made in Parliament. If a political tract were to appear superior to the Conduct of the Allies, or to the best numbers of the Freeholder, the circulation of such a tract would be languid indeed when compared with the circulation of every remarkable word uttered in the deliberations of the legislature. A speech made in the House of Commons at four
in the morning is on thirty thousand tables before ten. A speech made on the Monday is read on the Wednesday by multitudes in Antrim and Aberdeenshire. The orator, by the help of the shorthand writer, has to a great extent superseded the pamphleteer. It was not so in the reign of Anne. The best speech could then produce no effect except on those who heard it. It was only by means of the press that the opinion of the public without doors could be influenced: and the opinion of the public without doors could not but be of the highest importance in a country governed by parliaments, and indeed at that time governed by triennial parliaments. The pen was therefore a more formidable political engine than the tongue. Mr. Pitt and Mr. Fox contended only in Parliament. But Walpole and Pulteney, the Pitt and Fox of an earlier period, had not done half of what was necessary, when they sat down amidst the acclamations of the House of Commons. They had still to plead their cause before the country, and this they could do only by means of the press. Their works are now forgotten. But it is certain that there were in Grub Street few more assiduous scribblers of Thoughts, Letters, Answers, Remarks, than these two great chiefs of parties. Pulteney, when leader of the Opposition, and possessed of thirty thousand a year, edited the Craftsman. Walpole, though not a man of literary habits, was the author of at least ten pamphlets, and retouched and corrected many more. These facts sufficiently show of how great importance literary assistance then was to the contending parties. St. John was, certainly, in Anne's reign, the best Tory speaker; Cowper was probably the best Whig speaker. But it may well be doubted whether St. John did so much for the Tories as Swift, and whether
Cowper did so much for the Whigs as Addison. When these things are duly considered, it will not be thought strange that Addison should have climbed higher in the State than any other Englishman has ever, by means merely of literary talents, been able to climb. Swift would, in all probability, have climbed as high, if he had not been encumbered by his cassock and his pudding sleeves. As far as the homage of the great went, Swift had as much of it as if he had been Lord Treasurer.

To the influence which Addison derived from his literary talents was added all the influence which arises from character. The world, always ready to think the worst of needy political adventurers, was forced to make one exception. Restlessness, violence, audacity, laxity of principle, are the vices ordinarily attributed to that class of men. But faction itself could not deny that Addison had, through all changes of fortune, been strictly faithful to his early opinions, and to his early friends; that his integrity was without stain; that his whole deportment indicated a fine sense of the becoming; that, in the utmost heat of controversy, his zeal was tempered by a regard for truth, humanity, and social decorum; that no outrage could ever provoke him to retaliation unworthy of a Christian and a gentleman; and that his only faults were a too sensitive delicacy, and a modesty which amounted to bashfulness.

He was undoubtedly one of the most popular men of his time; and much of his popularity he owed, we believe, to that very timidity
which his friends lamented. That timidity often prevented him from exhibiting his talents to the best advantage. But it propitiated Nemesis. It averted that envy which would otherwise have been excited by fame so splendid and by so rapid an elevation. No man is so great a favourite with the Public as he who is at once an object of admiration, of respect and of pity; and such were the feelings which Addison inspired. Those who enjoyed the privilege of hearing his familiar conversation, declared with one voice that it was superior even to his writings. The brilliant Mary Montague said, that she had known all the wits, and that Addison was the best company in the world. The malignant Pope was forced to own, that there was a charm in Addison's talk, which could be found nowhere else. Swift, when burning with animosity against the Whigs, could not but confess to Stella that, after all, he had never known any associate so agreeable as Addison. Steele, an excellent judge of lively conversation, said that the conversation of Addison was at once the most polite, and the most mirthful, that could be imagined; that it was Terence and Catullus in one, heightened by an exquisite something which was neither Terence nor Catullus, but Addison alone. Young, an excellent judge of serious conversation, said, that when Addison was at his ease, he went on in a noble strain of thought and language, so as to chain the attention of every hearer. Nor were Addison's great colloquial powers more admirable than the courtesy and softness of heart which appeared in his conversation. At the same time, it would be too much to say that he was wholly devoid of the malice which is, perhaps, inseparable from a keen sense of the ludicrous. He had one habit
which both Swift and Stella applauded, and which we hardly know
how to blame. If his first attempts to set a presuming dunce
right were ill received, he changed his tone, "assented with
civil leer," and lured the flattered coxcomb deeper and deeper
into absurdity. That such was his practice, we should, we think,
have guessed from his works. The Tatler's criticisms on Mr.
Softly's sonnet and the Spectator's dialogue with the politician
who is so zealous for the honour of Lady Q--p--t--s, are
excellent
specimens of this innocent mischief.

Such were Addison's talents for conversation. But his rare gifts
were not exhibited to crowds or to strangers. As soon as he
entered a large company, as soon as he saw an unknown face, his
lips were sealed and his manners became constrained. None who met
him only in great assemblies would have been able to believe that
he was the same man who had often kept a few friends listening
and laughing round a table, from the time when the play ended,
till the clock of St. Paul's in Covent Garden struck four. Yet,
even at such a table, he was not seen to the best advantage. To
enjoy his conversation in the highest perfection, it was
necessary to be alone with him, and to hear him, in his own
phrase, think aloud. "There is no such thing," he used to say,
"as real conversation, but between two persons."

This timidity, a timidity surely neither ungraceful nor
unamiable, led Addison into the two most serious faults which can
with justice be imputed to him. He found that wine broke the
spell which lay on his fine intellect, and was therefore too
easily seduced into convivial excess. Such excess was in that age
regarded, even by grave men, as the most venial of all
peccadilloes, and was so far from being a mark of ill-breeding,
that it was almost essential to the character of a fine
gentleman. But the smallest speck is seen on a white ground; and
almost all the biographers of Addison have said something about
this failing. Of any other statesman or writer of Queen Anne's
reign, we should no more think of saying that he sometimes took
too much wine, than that he wore a long wig and a sword.

To the excessive modesty of Addison's nature, we must ascribe
another fault which generally arises from a very different cause.
He became a little too fond of seeing himself surrounded by a
small circle of admirers, to whom he was as a King or rather as a
God. All these men were far inferior to him in ability, and some
of them had very serious faults. Nor did those faults escape his
observation; for, if ever there was an eye which saw through and
through men, it was the eye of Addison. But, with the keenest
observation, and the finest sense of the ridiculous, he had a
large charity. The feeling with which he looked on most of his
humble companions was one of benevolence, slightly tinctured with
contempt. He was at perfect case in their company; he was
grateful for their devoted attachment; and he loaded them with
benefits. Their veneration for him appears to have exceeded that
with which Johnson was regarded by Boswell, or Warburton by Hurd.
It was not in the power of adulation to turn such a head, or
deprave such a heart, as Addison's. But it must in candour be
admitted that he contracted some of the faults which can scarcely
be avoided by any person who is so unfortunate as to be the
oracle of a small literary coterie.

One member of this little society was Eustace Budgell, a young
Templar of some literature, and a distant relation of Addison.
There was at this time no stain on the character of Budgell, and
it is not improbable that his career would have been prosperous
and honourable, if the life of his cousin had been prolonged. But
when the master was laid in the grave, the disciple broke loose
from all restraint, descended rapidly from one degree of vice and
misery to another, ruined his fortune by follies, attempted to
repair it by crimes, and at length closed a wicked and unhappy
life by self-murder. Yet, to the last, the wretched man, gambler,
lamponer, cheat, forger, as he was, retained his affection and
veneration for Addison, and recorded those feelings in the last
lines which he traced before he hid himself from infamy under
London Bridge.

Another of Addison's favourite companions was Ambrose Phillips, a
good Whig and a middling poet, who had the honour of bringing
into fashion a species of composition which has been called,
after his name, Namby Pamby. But the most remarkable members of
the little senate, as Pope long afterwards called it, were
Richard Steele and Thomas Tickell.
Steele had known Addison from childhood. They had been together at the Charterhouse and at Oxford; but circumstances had then, for a time, separated them widely. Steele had left college without taking a degree, had been disinherited by a rich relation, had led a vagrant life, had served in the army, had tried to find the philosopher's stone, and had written a religious treatise and several comedies. He was one of those people whom it is impossible either to hate or to respect. His temper was sweet, his affections warm, his spirits lively, his passions strong, and his principles weak. His life was spent in sinning and repenting; in inculcating what was right, and doing what was wrong. In speculation, he was a man of piety and honour; in practice, he was much of the rake and a little of the swindler. He was, however, so good-natured that it was not easy to be seriously angry with him, and that even rigid moralists felt more inclined to pity than to blame him, when he diced himself into a spunging-house or drank himself into a fever.

Addison regarded Steele with kindness not unmingled with scorn, tried, with little success, to keep him out of scrapes, introduced him to the great, procured a good place for him, corrected his plays, and, though by no means rich, lent him large sums of money. One of these loans appears, from a letter dated in August 1708, to have amounted to a thousand pounds. These pecuniary transactions probably led to frequent bickerings. It is said that, on one occasion, Steele's negligence, or dishonesty, provoked Addison to repay himself by the help of a bailiff. We
cannot join with Miss Aikin in rejecting this story. Johnson heard it from Savage, who heard it from Steele. Few private transactions which took place a hundred and twenty years ago, are proved by stronger evidence than this. But we can by no means agree with those who condemn Addison's severity. The most amiable of mankind may well be moved to indignation, when what he has earned hardly, and lent with great inconvenience to himself, for the purpose of relieving a friend in distress, is squandered with insane profusion. We will illustrate our meaning by an example, which is not the less striking because it is taken from fiction. Dr. Harrison, in Fielding's Amelia, is represented as the most benevolent of human beings; yet he takes in execution, not only the goods, but the person of his friend Booth. Dr. Harrison resorts to this strong measure because he has been informed that Booth, while pleading poverty as an excuse for not paying just debts has been buying fine jewellery, and setting up a coach. No person who is well acquainted with Steele's life and correspondence can doubt that he behaved quite as ill to Addison as Booth was accused of behaving to Dr. Harrison. The real history, we have little doubt, was something like this:--A letter comes to Addison, imploring help in pathetic terms, and promising reformation and speedy repayment. Poor Dick declares that he has not an inch of candle, or a bushel of coals, or credit with the butcher for a shoulder of mutton. Addison is moved. He determines to deny himself some medals which are wanting to his series of the twelve Caesars; to put off buying the new edition of Bayle's Dictionary; and to wear his old sword and buckles another year. In this way he manages to send a hundred pounds to his friend.
The next day he calls on Steele, and finds scores of gentlemen
and ladies assembled. The fiddles are playing. The table is
groaning under Champagne, Burgundy, and pyramids of sweetmeats.
Is it strange that a man whose kindness is thus abused, should
send sheriff's officers to reclaim what is due to him?

Tickell was a young man, fresh from Oxford, who had introduced
himself to public notice by writing a most ingenious and graceful
little poem in praise of the opera of Rosamond. He deserved, and
at length attained, the first place in Addison's friendship. For
a time Steele and Tickell were on good terms. But they loved
Addison too much to love each other, and at length became as
bitter enemies as the rival bulls in Virgil.

At the close of 1708 Wharton became Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland,
and appointed Addison Chief Secretary. Addison was consequently
under the necessity of quitting London for Dublin. Besides the
chief secretaryship, which was then worth about two thousand
pounds a year, he obtained a patent appointing him keeper of the
Irish Records for life, with a salary of three or four hundred a
year. Budgell accompanied his cousin in the capacity of private
secretary.

Wharton and Addison had nothing in common but Whiggism. The Lord-
Lieutenant was not only licentious and corrupt, but was
distinguished from other libertines and jobbers by a callous
impudence which presented the strongest contrast to the Secretary's gentleness and delicacy. Many parts of the Irish administration at this time appear to have deserved serious blame. But against Addison there was not a murmur. He long afterwards asserted, what all the evidence which we have ever seen tends to prove, that his diligence and integrity gained the friendship of all the most considerable persons in Ireland.

The parliamentary career of Addison in Ireland has, we think, wholly escaped the notice of all his biographers. He was elected member for the borough of Cavan in the summer of 1709; and in the journals of two sessions his name frequently occurs. Some of the entries appear to indicate that he so far overcame his timidity as to make speeches. Nor is this by any means improbable; for the Irish House of Commons was a far less formidable audience than the English House; and many tongues which were tied by fear in the greater assembly became fluent in the smaller. Gerard Hamilton, for example, who, from fear of losing the fame gained by his single speech, sat mute at Westminster during forty years, spoke with great effect at Dublin when he was Secretary to Lord Halifax.

While Addison was in Ireland, an event occurred to which he owes his high and permanent rank among British writers. As yet his fame rested on performances which, though highly respectable, were not built for duration, and which would, if he had produced nothing else, have now been almost forgotten, on some excellent
Latin verses, on some English verses which occasionally rose above mediocrity, and on a book of travels, agreeably written, but not indicating any extraordinary powers of mind. These works showed him to be a man of taste, sense, and learning. The time had come when he was to prove himself a man of genius, and to enrich our literature with compositions which will live as long as the English language.

In the spring of 1709 Steele formed a literary project, of which he was far indeed from foreseeing the consequences. Periodical papers had during many years been published in London. Most of these were political; but in some of them questions of morality, taste, and love casuistry had been discussed. The literary merit of these works was small indeed; and even their names are now known only to the curious.

Steele had been appointed Gazetteer by Sunderland, at the request, it is said, of Addison, and thus had access to foreign intelligence earlier and more authentic than was in those times within the reach of an ordinary news-writer. This circumstance seems to have suggested to him the scheme of publishing a periodical paper on a new plan. It was to appear on the days on which the post left London for the country, which were, in that generation, the Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays. It was to contain the foreign news, accounts of theatrical representations, and the literary gossip of Will's and of the Grecian. It was also to contain remarks on the fashionable topics of the day,
compliments to beauties, pasquinades on noted sharpers, and criticisms on popular preachers. The aim of Steele does not appear to have been at first higher than this. He was not ill qualified to conduct the work which he had planned. His public intelligence he drew from the best sources. He knew the town, and had paid dear for his knowledge. He had read much more than the dissipated men of that time were in the habit of reading. He was a rake among scholars, and a scholar among rakes. His style was easy and not incorrect; and, though his wit and humour were of no high order, his gay animal spirits imparted to his compositions an air of vivacity which ordinary readers could hardly distinguish from comic genius. His writings have been well compared to those light wines which, though deficient in body and flavour, are yet a pleasant small drink, if not kept too long, or carried too far.

Isaac Bickerstaff, Esquire, Astrologer, was an imaginary person, almost as well known in that age as Mr. Paul Pry or Mr. Samuel Pickwick in ours. Swift had assumed the name of Bickerstaff in a satirical pamphlet against Partridge, the maker of almanacks. Partridge had been fool enough to publish a furious reply. Bickerstaff had rejoined in a second pamphlet still more diverting than the first. All the wits had combined to keep up the joke, and the town was long in convulsions of laughter. Steele determined to employ the name which this controversy had made popular; and, in 1709, it was announced that Isaac Bickerstaff, Esquire, Astrologer, was about to publish a paper
Addison had not been consulted about this scheme: but as soon as he heard of it, he determined to give his assistance. The effect of that assistance cannot be better described than in Steele's own words. "I fared," he said, "like a distressed prince who calls in a powerful neighbour to his aid. I was undone by my auxiliary. When I had once called him in, I could not subsist without dependence on him." "The paper," he says elsewhere, "was advanced indeed. It was raised to a greater thing than I intended it."

It is probable that Addison, when he sent across St. George's channel his first contributions to the Tatler, had no notion of the extent and variety of his own powers. He was the possessor of a vast mine, rich with a hundred ores. But he had been acquainted only with the least precious part of his treasures, and had hitherto contented himself with producing sometimes copper and sometimes lead, intermingled with a little silver. All at once, and by mere accident, he had lighted on an inexhaustible vein of the finest gold.

The mere choice and arrangement of his words would have sufficed to make his essays classical. For never, not even by Dryden, not even by Temple, had the English language been written with such sweetness, grace, and facility. But this was the smallest part of
Addison’s praise. Had he clothed his thoughts in the half French style of Horace Walpole, or in the half Latin style of Dr. Johnson, or in the half German jargon of the present day, his genius would have triumphed over all faults of manner. As a moral satirist he stands unrivalled. If ever the best Tatlers and Spectators were equalled in their own kind, we should be inclined to guess that it must have been by the lost comedies of Menander.

In wit properly so called, Addison was not inferior to Cowley or Butler. No single ode of Cowley contains so many happy analogies as are crowded into the lines to Sir Godfrey Kneller; and we would undertake to collect from the Spectators as great a number of ingenious illustrations as can be found in Hudibras. The still higher faculty of invention Addison possessed in still larger measure. The numerous fictions, generally original, often wild and grotesque, but always singularly graceful and happy, which are found in his essays, fully entitle him to the rank of a great poet, a rank to which his metrical compositions give him no claim. As an observer of life, of manners, of all the shades of human character, he stands in the first class. And what he observed he had the art of communicating in two widely different ways. He could describe virtues, vices, habits, whims, as well as Clarendon. But he could do something better. He could call human beings into existence, and make them exhibit themselves. If we wish to find anything more vivid than Addison’s best portraits, we must go either to Shakspeare or to Cervantes.
But what shall we say of Addison's humour, of his sense of the
ludicrous, of his power of awakening that sense in others, and of
drawing mirth from incidents which occur every day, and from
little peculiarities of temper and manner, such as may be found
in every man? We feel the charm: we give ourselves up to it; but
we strive in vain to analyse it.

Perhaps the best way of describing Addison's peculiar pleasantry
is to compare it with the pleasantry of some other great
satirists. The three most eminent masters of the art of ridicule,
during the eighteenth century, were, we conceive, Addison, Swift,
and Voltaire. Which of the three had the greatest power of moving
laughter may be questioned. But each of them, within his own
domain, was supreme.

Voltaire is the prince of buffoons. His merriment is without
disguise or restraint. He gambols; he grins; he shakes his sides;
he points the finger; he turns up the nose; he shoots out the
tongue. The manner of Swift is the very opposite to this. He
moves laughter, but never joins in it. He appears in his works
such as he appeared in society. All the company are convulsed
with merriment, while the Dean, the author of all the mirth,
preserves an invincible gravity, and even sourness of aspect, and
gives utterance to the most eccentric and ludicrous fancies, with
the air of a man reading the commination service.
The manner of Addison is as remote from that of Swift as from that of Voltaire. He neither laughs out like the French wit, nor, like the Irish wit, throws a double portion of severity into his countenance while laughing inwardly; but preserves a look peculiarly his own, a look of demure serenity, disturbed only by an arch sparkle of the eye, an almost imperceptible elevation of the brow, an almost imperceptible curl of the lip. His tone is never that either of a Jack Pudding or of a Cynic. It is that of a gentleman, in whom the quickest sense of the ridiculous is constantly tempered by good nature and good breeding.

We own that the humour of Addison is, in our opinion, of a more delicious flavour than the humour of either Swift or Voltaire. Thus much, at least, is certain, that both Swift and Voltaire have been successfully mimicked, and that no man has yet been able to mimic Addison. The letter of the Abbe Coyer to Pansophe is Voltaire all over, and imposed, during a long time, on the Academicians of Paris. There are passages in Arbuthnot's satirical works which we, at least, cannot distinguish from Swift's best writing. But of the many eminent men who have made Addison their model, though several have copied his mere diction with happy effect, none has been able to catch the tone of his pleasantry. In the World, in the Connoisseur, in the Mirror, in the Lounger, there are numerous Papers written in obvious imitation of his Tatlers and Spectators. Most of those papers have some merit; many are very lively and amusing; but there is
not a single one which could be passed off as Addison's on a
critic of the smallest perspicacity.

But that which chiefly distinguishes Addison from Swift, from
Voltaire, from almost all the other great masters of ridicule, is
the grace, the nobleness, the moral purity, which we find even in
his merriment. Severity, gradually hardening and darkening into
misanthropy, characterises the works of Swift. The nature of
Voltaire was, indeed, not inhuman; but he venerated nothing.
Neither in the masterpieces of art nor in the purest examples of
virtue, neither in the Great First Cause nor in the awful enigma
of the grave, could he see anything but subjects for drollery.
The more solemn and august the theme, the more monkey-like was
his grimacing and chattering. The mirth of Swift is the mirth of
Mephistopheles; the mirth of Voltaire is the mirth of Puck. If,
as, Soame Jenyns oddly imagined, a portion of the happiness of
Seraphim and just men made perfect be derived from an exquisite
perception of the ludicrous, their mirth must surely be none
other than the mirth of Addison; a mirth consistent with tender
compassion for all that is frail, and with profound reverence for
all that is sublime. Nothing great, nothing amiable, no moral
duty, no doctrine of natural or revealed religion, has ever been
associated by Addison with any degrading idea. His humanity is
without a parallel in literary history. The highest proof of
virtue is to possess boundless power without abusing it. No kind
of power is more formidable than the power of making men
ridiculous; and that power Addison possessed in boundless
measure. How grossly that power was abused by Swift and by Voltaire is well known. But of Addison it may be confidently affirmed that he has blackened no man’s character, nay, that it would be difficult if not impossible, to find in all the volumes which he has left us a single taunt which can be called ungenerous or unkind. Yet he had detractors, whose malignity might have seemed to justify as terrible a revenge as that which men, not superior to him in genius, wreaked on Bettesworth and on Franc de Pompignan. He was a politician; he was the best writer of his party; he lived in times of fierce excitement, in times when persons of high character and station stooped to scurrility such as is now practised only by the basest of mankind. Yet no provocation and no example could induce him to return railing for railing.

On the service which his Essays rendered to morality it is difficult to speak too highly. It is true that, when the Tatler appeared, that age of outrageous profaneness and licentiousness which followed the Restoration had passed away. Jeremy Collier had shamed the theatres into something which, compared with the excesses of Etherege and Wycherley, might be called decency. Yet there still lingered in the public mind a pernicious notion that there was some connection between genius and profligacy, between the domestic virtues and the sullen formality of the Puritans. That error it is the glory of Addison to have dispelled. He taught the nation that the faith and the morality of Hale and Tillotson might be found in company with wit more sparkling than
the wit of Congreve, and with humour richer than the humour of
Vanbrugh. So effectually indeed, did he retort on vice the
mockery which had recently been directed against virtue, that,
since his time, the open violation of decency has always been
considered among us as the mark of a fool. And this revolution,
the greatest and most salutary ever effected by any satirist, he
accomplished, be it remembered, without writing one personal
lampoon.

In the earlier contributions of Addison to the Tatler his
peculiar powers were not fully exhibited. Yet from the first, his
superiority to all his coadjutors was evident. Some of his later
Tatlers are fully equal to anything that he ever wrote. Among the
portraits we most admire "Tom Folio," "Ned Softly," and the
"Political Upholsterer." "The Proceedings of the Court of
Honour," the "Thermometer of Zeal," the story of the "Frozen
Words," the "Memoirs of the Shilling," are excellent specimens of
that ingenious and lively species of fiction in which Addison
excelled all men. There is one still better paper of the same
class. But though that paper, a hundred and thirty-three years
ago, was probably thought as edifying as one of Smalridge's
sermons, we dare not indicate it to the squeamish readers of the
nineteenth century.

During the session of Parliament which commenced in November
1709, and which the impeachment of Sacheverell has made
memorable, Addison appears to have resided in London, The Tatler
was now more popular than any periodical paper had ever been; and his connection with it was generally known. It was not known, however, that almost everything good in the Tatler was his. The truth is, that the fifty or sixty numbers which we owe to him were not merely the best, but so decidedly the best that any five of them are more valuable than all the two hundred numbers in which he had no share.

He required, at this time, all the solace which he could derive from literary success. The Queen had always disliked the Whigs. She had during some years disliked the Marlborough family. But, reigning by a disputed title, she could not venture directly to oppose herself to a majority of both Houses of Parliament; and, engaged as she was in a war on the event of which her own Crown was staked, she could not venture to disgrace a great and successful general. But at length, in the year 1710, the causes which had restrained her from showing her aversion to the Low Church party ceased to operate. The trial of Sacheverell produced an outbreak of public feeling scarcely less violent than the outbreaks which we can ourselves remember in 1820 and 1831. The country gentlemen, the country clergymen, the rabble of the towns, were all, for once, on the same side. It was clear that, if a general election took place before the excitement abated, the Tories would have a majority. The services of Marlborough had been so splendid that they were no longer necessary. The Queen's throne was secure from all attack on the part of Lewis. Indeed, it seemed much more likely that the
English and German armies would divide the spoils of Versailles and Marli than that a Marshal of France would bring back the Pretender to St. James's. The Queen, acting by the advice of Harley, determined to dismiss her servants. In June the change commenced. Sunderland was the first who fell. The Tories exulted over his fall. The Whigs tried, during a few weeks, to persuade themselves that her Majesty had acted only from personal dislike to the Secretary, and that she meditated no further alteration.

But, early in August, Godolphin was surprised by a letter from Anne, which directed him to break his white staff. Even after this event, the irresolution or dissimulation of Harley kept up the hopes of the Whigs during another month; and then the ruin became rapid and violent. The Parliament was dissolved. The Ministers were turned out. The Tories were called to office. The tide of popularity ran violently in favour of the High Church party. That party, feeble in the late House of Commons, was now irresistible. The power which the Tories had thus suddenly acquired, they used with blind and stupid ferocity. The howl which the whole pack set up for prey and for blood appalled even him who had roused and unchained them. When, at this distance of time, we calmly review the conduct of the discarded Ministers, we cannot but feel a movement of indignation at the injustice with which they were treated. No body of men had ever administered the Government with more energy, ability, and moderation; and their success had been proportioned to their wisdom. They had saved Holland and Germany. They had humbled France. They had, as it seemed, all but torn Spain from the House of Bourbon. They had made England the first power in Europe. At home they had united
England and Scotland. They had respected the rights of conscience and the liberty of the subject. They retired, leaving their country at the height of prosperity and glory. And yet they were pursued to their retreat by such a roar of obloquy as was never raised against the Government which threw away thirteen colonies, or against the Government which sent a gallant army to perish in the ditches of Walcheren.

None of the Whigs suffered more in the general wreck than Addison. He had just sustained some heavy pecuniary losses, of the nature of which we are imperfectly informed, when the Secretaryship was taken from him. He had reason to believe that he should also be deprived of the small Irish office which he held by patent. He had just resigned his Fellowship. It seems probable that he had already ventured to raise his eyes to a great lady, and that, while his political friends were in power, and while his own fortunes were rising, he had been, in the phrase of the romances which were then fashionable, permitted to hope. But Mr. Addison the ingenious writer, and Mr. Addison the Chief Secretary, were, in her ladyship's opinion, two very different persons. All these calamities united, however, could not disturb the serene cheerfulness of a mind conscious of innocence, and rich in its own wealth. He told his friends, with smiling resignation, that they ought to admire his philosophy, that he had lost at once his fortune, his place, his Fellowship, and his mistress, that he must think of turning tutor again, and yet that his spirits were as good as ever.
He had one consolation. Of the unpopularity which his friends had incurred, he had no share. Such was the esteem with which he was regarded that, while the most violent measures were taken for the purpose of forcing Tory members on Whig corporations, he was returned to Parliament without even a contest. Swift, who was now in London, and who had already determined on quitting the Whigs, wrote to Stella in these remarkable words. “The Tories carry it among the new members six to one. Mr. Addison’s election has passed easy and undisputed; and I believe if he had a mind to be king he would hardly be refused.”

The goodwill with which the Tories regarded Addison is the more honourable to him, because it had not been purchased by any concession on his part. During the general election he published a political journal, entitled the Whig Examiner. Of that journal it may be sufficient to say that Johnson, in spite of his strong political prejudices, pronounced it to be superior in wit to any of Swift’s writings on the other side. When it ceased to appear, Swift, in a letter to Stella, expressed his exultation at the death of so formidable an antagonist. “He might well rejoice,” says Johnson, “at the death of that which he could not have killed.” “On no occasion,” he adds, “was the genius of Addison more vigorously exerted, and on none did the superiority of his powers more evidently appear.”
The only use which Addison appears to have made of the favour with which he was regarded by the Tories was to save some of his friends from the general ruin of the Whig party. He felt himself to be in a situation which made it his duty to take a decided part in politics. But the case of Steele and of Ambrose Phillips was different. For Phillips, Addison even condescended to solicit, with what success we have not ascertained. Steele held two places. He was Gazetteer, and he was also a Commissioner of Stamps. The Gazette was taken from him. But he was suffered to retain his place in the Stamp Office, on an implied understanding that he should not be active against the new Government; and he was, during more than two years, induced by Addison to observe this armistice with tolerable fidelity.

Isaac Bickerstaff accordingly became silent on politics, and the article of news which had once formed about one-third of his paper, altogether disappeared. The Tatler had completely changed its character. It was now nothing but a series of essays on books, morals, and manners. Steele therefore resolved to bring it to a close, and to commence a new work on an improved plan. It was announced that this new work would be published daily. The undertaking was generally regarded as bold, or rather rash; but the event amply justified, the confidence with which Steele relied on the fertility of Addison's genius. On the second of January 1711, appeared the last Tatler. At the beginning of March following appeared the first of an incomparable series of papers containing observations on life and literature by an
imaginary Spectator.

The Spectator himself was conceived and drawn by Addison; and it is not easy to doubt that the portrait was meant to be in some features a likeness of the painter. The Spectator is a gentleman who, after passing a studious youth at the university, has travelled on classic ground, and has bestowed much attention on curious points of antiquity. He has, on his return, fixed his residence in London, and has observed all the forms of life which are to be found in that great city, has daily listened to the wits of Will's, has smoked with the philosophers of the Grecian, and has mingled with the parsons at Child's, and with the politicians at the St. James's. In the morning, he often listens to the hum of the Exchange; in the evening, his face is constantly to be seen in the pit of Drury Lane Theatre. But an insurmountable bashfulness prevents him from opening his mouth, except in a small circle of intimate friends.

These friends were first sketched by Steele. Four of the club, the templar, the clergyman, the soldier, and the merchant, were uninteresting figures, fit only for a background. But the other two, an old country baronet and an old town rake, though not delineated with a very delicate pencil, had some good strokes. Addison took the rude outlines into his own hands, retouched them, coloured them, and is in truth the creator of the Sir Roger de Coverley and the Will Honeycomb with whom we are all familiar.
The plan of the Spectator must be allowed to be both original and eminently happy. Every valuable essay in the series may be read with pleasure separately; yet the five or six hundred essays form a whole, and a whole which has the interest of a novel. It must be remembered, too, that at that time no novel, giving a lively and powerful picture of the common life and manners of England, had appeared. Richardson was working as a compositor. Fielding was robbing birds’ nests. Smollett was not yet born. The narrative, therefore, which connects together the Spectator’s Essays, gave to our ancestors their first taste of an exquisite and untried pleasure. That narrative was indeed constructed with no art or labour. The events were such events as occur every day. Sir Roger comes up to town to see Eugenio, as the worthy baronet always called Prince Eugene, goes with the Spectator on the water to Spring Gardens, walks among the tombs in the Abbey, and is frightened by the Mohawks, but conquers his apprehension so far as to go to the theatre when the Distressed Mother is acted. The Spectator pays a visit in the summer to Coverley Hall, is charmed with the old house, the old butler, and the old chaplain, eats a jack caught by Will Wimble, rides to the assizes, and hears a point of law discussed by Tom Touchy. At last a letter from the honest butler brings to the club the news that Sir Roger is dead. Will Honeycomb marries and reforms at sixty. The club breaks up; and the Spectator resigns his functions. Such events can hardly be said to form a plot; yet they are related with such truth, such grace, such wit, such humour, such pathos, such knowledge of the human heart, such knowledge of the ways of the world, that
they charm us on the hundredth perusal. We have not the least

doubt that if Addison had written a novel on an extensive plan,
it would have been superior to any that we possess. As it is, he
is entitled to be considered, not only as the greatest of the

English essayists, but as the forerunner of the greatest English

 novelists.


We say this of Addison alone; for Addison is the Spectator. About
three-sevenths of the work are his; and it is no exaggeration to
say, that his worst essay is as good as the best essay of his
coadjutors. His best essays approach near to absolute perfection;
nor is their excellence more wonderful than their variety. His
invention never seems to flag; nor is he ever under the necessity
of repeating himself, or of wearing out a subject. There are no
dregs in his wine. He regales us after the fashion of that
prodigal nabob who held that there was only one good glass in a
bottle. As soon as we have tasted the first sparkling foam of a
jest, it is withdrawn, and a fresh draught of nectar is at our

 lips. On the Monday we have an allegory as lively and ingenious
as Lucian's Auction of Lives; on the Tuesday an Eastern apologue,
as richly coloured as the Tales of Scherezade; on the Wednesday,
a character described with the skill of La Bruyere; on the
Thursday, a scene from common life, equal to the best chapters in
the Vicar of Wakefield; on the Friday, some sly Horatian
pleasantry on fashionable follies, on hoops, patches, or puppet
shows; and on the Saturday a religious meditation, which will
bear a comparison with the finest passages in Massillon.
It is dangerous to select where there is so much that deserves the highest praise. We will venture, however, to say, that any person who wishes to form a just notion of the extent and variety of Addison's powers, will do well to read at one sitting the following papers, the two "Visits to the Abbey," the "Visit to the Exchange," the "Journal of the Retired Citizen," the "Vision of Mirza," the "Transmigrations of Pug the Monkey," and the "Death of Sir Roger de Coverley." [Nos. 26, 329, 69, 317, 159, 343, 517. These papers are all in the first seven volumes. The eighth must be considered as a separate work.]

The least valuable of Addison's contributions to the Spectator are, in the judgment of our age, his critical papers. Yet his critical papers are always luminous, and often ingenious. The very worst of them must be regarded as creditable to him, when the character of the school in which he had been trained is fairly considered. The best of them were much too good for his readers. In truth, he was not so far behind our generation as he was before his own. No essays in the Spectator were more censured and derided than those in which he raised his voice against the contempt with which our fine old ballads were regarded, and showed the scoffers that the same gold which, burnished and polished, gives lustre to the Aeneid and the Odes of Horace, is mingled with the rude dross of Chevy Chace.
It is not strange that the success of the Spectator should have been such as no similar work has ever obtained. The number of copies daily distributed was at first three thousand. It subsequently increased, and had risen to near four thousand when the stamp tax was imposed. The tax was fatal to a crowd of journals. The Spectator, however, stood its ground, doubled its price, and, though its circulation fell off, still yielded a large revenue both to the State and to the authors. For particular papers, the demand was immense; of some, it is said, twenty thousand copies were required. But this was not all. To have the Spectator served up every morning with the bohea and rolls was a luxury for the few. The majority were content to wait till essays enough had appeared to form a volume. Ten thousand copies of each volume were immediately taken off, and new editions were called for. It must be remembered, that the population of England was then hardly a third of what it now is. The number of Englishmen who were in the habit of reading, was probably not a sixth of what it now is. A shopkeeper or a farmer who found any pleasure in literature, was a rarity. Nay, there was doubtless more than one knight of the shire whose country seat did not contain ten books, receipt books and books on farriery included. In these circumstances, the sale of the Spectator must be considered as indicating a popularity quite as great as that of the most successful works of Sir Walter Scott and Mr. Dickens in our own time.
At the close of 1712 the Spectator ceased to appear. It was probably felt that the short-faced gentleman and his club had been long enough before the town; and that it was time to withdraw them, and to replace them by a new set of characters. In a few weeks the first number of the Guardian was published. But the Guardian was unfortunate both in its birth and in its death. It began in dulness, and disappeared in a tempest of faction. The original plan was bad. Addison contributed nothing till sixty-six numbers had appeared; and it was then impossible to make the Guardian what the Spectator had been. Nestor Ironside and the Miss Lizards were people to whom even he could impart no interest. He could only furnish some excellent little essays, both serious and comic; and this he did.

Why Addison gave no assistance to the Guardian, during the first two months of its existence is a question which has puzzled the editors and biographers, but which seems to us to admit of a very easy solution. He was then engaged in bringing his Cato on the stage.

The first four acts of this drama had been lying in his desk since his return from Italy. His modest and sensitive nature shrank from the risk of a public and shameful failure; and, though all who saw the manuscript were loud in praise, some thought it possible that an audience might become impatient even of very good rhetoric, and advised Addison to print the play without hazarding a representation. At length, after many fits of
apprehension, the poet yielded to the urgency of his political
friends, who hoped that the public would discover some analogy
between the followers of Caesar and the Tories, between
Sempronius and the apostate Whigs, between Cato, struggling to
the last for the liberties of Rome, and the band of patriots who
still stood firm around Halifax and Wharton.

Addison gave the play to the managers of Drury Lane Theatre,
without stipulating for any advantage to himself. They,
therefore, thought themselves bound to spare no cost in scenery
and dresses. The decorations, it is true, would not have pleased
the skilful eye of Mr. Macready. Juba's waistcoat blazed with
gold lace; Marcia's hoop was worthy of a Duchess on the birthday;
and Cato wore a wig worth fifty guineas. The prologue was written
by Pope, and is undoubtedly a dignified and spirited composition.
The part of the hero was excellently played by Booth. Steele
undertook to pack a house. The boxes were in a blaze with the
stars of the Peers in Opposition. The pit was crowded with
attentive and friendly listeners from the Inns of Court and the
literary coffee-houses. Sir Gilbert Heathcote, Governor of the
Bank of England, was at the head of a powerful body of
auxiliaries from the city, warm men and true Whigs, but better
known at Jonathan's and Garraway's than in the haunts of wits and
critics.

These precautions were quite superfluous. The Tories, as a body,
regarded Addison with no unkind feelings. Nor was it for their
interest, professing, as they did, profound reverence for law and
prescription, and abhorrence both of popular insurrections and of
standing armies, to appropriate to themselves reflections thrown
on the great military chief and demagogue, who, with the support
of the legions and of the common people, subverted all the
ancient institutions of his country. Accordingly, every shout
that was raised by the members of the Kit Cat was echoed by the
High Churchmen of the October; and the curtain at length fell
amidst thunders of unanimous applause.

The delight and admiration of the town were described by the
Guardian in terms which we might attribute to partiality, were it
not that the Examiner, the organ of the Ministry, held similar
language. The Tories, indeed, found much to sneer at in the
conduct of their opponents. Steele had on this, as on other
occasions, shown more zeal than taste or judgment. The honest
citizens who marched under the orders of Sir Gibby, as he was
facetiously called, probably knew better when to buy and when to
sell stock than when to clap and when to hiss at a play, and
incurred some ridicule by making the hypocritical Sempronius
their favourite, and by giving to his insincere rants louder
plaudits than they bestowed on the temperate eloquence of Cato.
Wharton, too, who had the incredible effrontery to applaud the
lines about flying from prosperous vice and from the power of
impious men to a private station, did not escape the sarcasms of
those who justly thought that he could fly from nothing more
vicious or impious than himself. The epilogue, which was written
by Garth, a zealous Whig, was severely and not unreasonably
censured as ignoble and out of place. But Addison was described,
even by the bitterest Tory writers, as a gentleman of wit and
virtue, in whose friendship many persons of both parties were
happy, and whose name ought not to be mixed up with factious
squabbles.

Of the jests by which the triumph of the Whig party was
disturbed, the most severe and happy was Bolingbroke’s. Between
two acts, he sent for Booth to his box, and presented him, before
the whole theatre, with a purse of fifty guineas for defending
the cause of liberty so well against the perpetual Dictator. This
was a pungent allusion to the attempt which Marlborough had made,
not long before his fall, to obtain a patent, creating him
Captain-General for life.

It was April; and in April, a hundred and thirty years ago, the
London season was thought to be far advanced. During a whole
month, however, Cato was performed to overflowing houses, and
brought into the treasury of the theatre twice the gains of an
ordinary spring. In the summer the Drury Lane Company went down
to the Act at Oxford, and there, before an audience which
retained an affectionate remembrance of Addison’s accomplishments
and virtues, his tragedy was acted during several days. The
gownsmen began to besiege the theatre in the forenoon, and by one
in the afternoon all the seats were filled.
About the merits of the piece which had so extraordinary an
effect, the public, we suppose, has made up its mind. To compare
it with the masterpieces of the Attic stage, with the great
English dramas of the time of Elizabeth, or even with the
productions of Schiller's manhood, would be absurd indeed. Yet it
contains excellent dialogue and declamation, and among plays
fashioned on the French model, must be allowed to rank high; not
indeed with Athalie, or Saul; but, we think not below Cinna, and
certainly above any other English tragedy of the same school,
above many of the plays of Corneille, above many of the plays of
Voltaire and Alfieri, and above some plays of Racine. Be this as
it may, we have little doubt that Cato did as much as the
Tatlers, Spectators, and Freeholders united, to raise Addison's
fame among his contemporaries.

The modesty and good nature of the successful dramatist had tamed
even the malignity of faction. But literary envy, it should seem,
is a fiercer passion than party spirit. It was by a zealous Whig
that the fiercest attack on the Whig tragedy was made. John
Dennis published Remarks on Cato, which were written with some
acuteness and with much coarseness and asperity. Addison neither
defended himself nor retaliated. On many points he had an
excellent defence; and, nothing would have been easier than to
retaliate; for Dennis had written bad odes, bad tragedies, bad
comedies: he had, moreover, a larger share than most men of those
infirmitities and eccentricities which excite laughter; and
Addison's power of turning either an absurd book or an absurd man into ridicule was unrivalled. Addison, however, serenely conscious of his superiority, looked with pity on his assailant, whose temper, naturally irritable and gloomy, had been soured by want, by controversy, and by literary failures.

But among the young candidates for Addison's favour there was one distinguished by talents from the rest, and distinguished, we fear, not less by malignity and insincerity. Pope was only twenty-five. But his powers had expanded to their full maturity; and his best poem, the Rape of the Lock, had recently been published. Of his genius, Addison had always expressed high admiration. But Addison had early discerned, what might indeed have been discerned by an eye less penetrating than his, that the diminutive, crooked, sickly boy was eager to revenge himself on society for the unkindness of nature. In the Spectator, the Essay on Criticism had been praised with cordial warmth; but a gentle hint had been added, that the writer of so excellent a poem would have done well to avoid ill-natured personalities. Pope, though evidently more galled by the censure than gratified by the praise, returned thanks for the admonition, and promised to profit by it. The two writers continued to exchange civilities, counsel, and small good offices. Addison publicly extolled Pope's miscellaneous pieces; and Pope furnished Addison with a prologue. This did not last long. Pope hated Dennis, whom he had injured without provocation. The appearance of the Remarks on Cato gave the irritable poet an opportunity of venting his malice under the
show of friendship; and such an opportunity could not but be
welcome to a nature which was implacable in enmity, and which
always preferred the tortuous to the straight path. He published,
accordingly, the Narrative of the Frenzy of John Dennis. But Pope
had mistaken his powers. He was a great master of invective and
carcasm: he could dissect a character in terse and sonorous
couplets, brilliant with antithesis: but of dramatic talent he
was altogether destitute. If he had written a lampoon on Dennis,
such as that on Atticus, or that on Sporus, the old grumbler
would have been crushed. But Pope writing dialogue resembled--to
borrow Horace's imagery and his own--a wolf, which, instead of
biting, should take to kicking, or a monkey which should try to
sting. The Narrative is utterly contemptible. Of argument there
is not even the show; and the jests are such as, if they were
introduced into a farce, would call forth the hisses of the
shilling gallery. Dennis raves about the drama; and the nurse
thinks that he is calling for a dram. "There is," he cries, "no
peripetia in the tragedy, no change of fortune, no change at
all." "Pray, good sir, be not angry," says the old woman; "I'll
fetch change." This is not exactly the pleasantry of Addison.

There can be no doubt that Addison saw through this officious
zeal, and felt himself deeply aggrieved by it. So foolish and
spiteful a pamphlet could do him no good, and, if he were thought
to have any hand in it, must do him harm. Gifted with
incomparable
powers of ridicule, he had never even in self-defence, used those
powers inhumanly or uncourteously; and he was not disposed to let others make his fame and his interests a pretext under which they might commit outrages from which he had himself constantly abstained. He accordingly declared that he had no concern in the Narrative, that he disapproved of it, and that if he answered the Remarks, he could answer them like a gentleman; and he took care to communicate this to Dennis. Pope was bitterly mortified; and to this transaction we are inclined to ascribe the hatred with which he ever after regarded Addison.

In September 1713 the Guardian ceased to appear. Steele had gone mad about politics. A general election had just taken place: he had been chosen member for Stockbridge; and he fully expected to play a first part in Parliament. The immense success of the Tatler and Spectator had turned his head. He had been the editor of both those papers and was not aware how entirely they owed their influence and popularity to the genius of his friend. His spirits, always violent, were now excited by vanity, ambition, and faction, to such a pitch that he every day committed some offence against good sense and good taste. All the discreet and moderate members of his own party regretted and condemned his folly. "I am in a thousand troubles," Addison wrote, "about poor Dick, and wish that his zeal for the public may not be ruinous to himself. But he has sent me word that he is determined to go on, and that any advice I may give him in this particular will have no weight with him."
Steele set up a political paper called the Englishman, which, as it was not supported by contributions from Addison, completely failed. By this work, by some other writings of the same kind, and by the airs which he gave himself at the first meeting of the new Parliament, he made the Tories so angry that they determined to expel him. The Whigs stood by him gallantly, but were unable to save him. The vote of expulsion was regarded by all dispassionate men as a tyrannical exercise of the power of the majority. But Steele’s violence and folly, though they by no means justified the steps which his enemies took, had completely disgusted his friends; nor did he ever regain the place which he had held in the public estimation.

Addison about this time conceived the design of adding an eighth volume to the Spectator. In June 1714 the first number of the new series appeared, and during about six months three papers were published weekly. Nothing can be more striking than the contrast between the Englishman and the eighth volume of the Spectator, between Steele without Addison and Addison without Steele. The Englishman is forgotten; the eighth volume of the Spectator contains, the finest essays, both serious and playful, in the language.

Before this volume was completed, the death of Anne produced an entire change in the administration of public affairs. The blow fell suddenly. It found the Tory party distracted by internal
feuds, and unprepared for any great effort. Harley had just been disgraced. Bolingbroke, it was supposed, would be the chief Minister. But the Queen was on her deathbed before the white staff had been given, and her last public act was to deliver it with a feeble hand to the Duke of Shrewsbury. The emergency produced a coalition between all sections of public men who were attached to the Protestant succession. George the First was proclaimed without opposition. A Council, in which the leading Whigs had seats, took the direction of affairs till the new King should arrive. The first act of the Lords justices was to appoint Addison their secretary.

There is an idle tradition that he was directed to prepare a letter to the King, that he could not satisfy himself as to the style of this composition, and that the Lords Justices called in a clerk, who at once did what was wanted. It is not strange that a story so flattering to mediocrity should be popular; and we are sorry to deprive dunces of their consolation. But the truth must be told. It was well observed by Sir James Mackintosh, whose knowledge of these times was unequalled, that Addison never, in any official document, affected wit or eloquence, and that his despatches are, without exception, remarkable for unpretending simplicity. Everybody who knows with what ease Addison’s finest essays were produced must be convinced that, if well-turned phrases had been wanted, he would have had no difficulty in finding them. We are, however, inclined to believe, that the story is not absolutely without a foundation. It may well be that
Addison did not know, till he had consulted experienced clerks
who remembered the times when William the Third was absent on the
Continent, in what form a letter from the Council of Regency to
the King ought to be drawn. We think it very likely that the
ablest statesmen of our time, Lord John Russell, Sir Robert Peel,
Lord Palmerston, for example, would, in similar circumstances, be
found quite as ignorant. Every office has some little mysteries
which the dullest man may learn with a little attention, and
which the greatest man cannot possibly know by intuition. One
paper must be signed by the chief of the department; another by
his deputy: to a third the royal sign-manual is necessary. One
communication is to be registered, and another is not. One
sentence must be in black ink, and another in red ink. If the
ablest Secretary for Ireland were moved to the India Board, if
the ablest President of the India Board were moved to the War
Office, he would require instruction on points like these; and we
do not doubt that Addison required such instruction when he
became, for the first time, Secretary to the Lords Justices.

George the First took possession of his kingdom without
opposition. A new Ministry was formed, and a new Parliament
favourable to the Whigs chosen. Sunderland was appointed Lord-
Lieutenant of Ireland; and Addison again went to Dublin as Chief
Secretary.

At Dublin Swift resided; and there was much speculation about the
way in which the Dean and the Secretary would behave towards each
other. The relations which existed between these remarkable men form an interesting and pleasing portion of literary history. They had early attached themselves to the same political party and to the same patrons. While Anne's Whig Ministry was in power, the visits of Swift to London and the official residence of Addison in Ireland had given them opportunities of knowing each other. They were the two shrewdest observers of their age. But their observations on each other had led them to favourable conclusions. Swift did full justice to the rare powers of conversation which were latent under the bashful deportment of Addison. Addison, on the other hand, discerned much good-nature under the severe look and manner of Swift; and, indeed, the Swift of 1708 and the Swift of 1738 were two very different men.

But the paths of the two friends diverged widely. The Whig statesmen loaded Addison with solid benefits. They praised Swift, asked him to dinner, and did nothing more for him. His profession laid them under a difficulty. In the State they could not promote him; and they had reason to fear that, by bestowing preferment in the Church on the author of the Tale of a Tub, they might give scandal to the public, which had no high opinion of their orthodoxy. He did not make fair allowance for the difficulties which prevented Halifax and Somers from serving him, thought himself an ill-used man, sacrificed honour and consistency to revenge, joined the Tories, and became their most formidable champion. He soon found, however, that his old friends were less to blame than he had supposed. The dislike with which the Queen
and the heads of the Church regarded him was insurmountable; and
it was with the greatest difficulty that he obtained an
ecclesiastical dignity of no great value, on condition of fixing
his residence in a country which he detested.

Difference of political opinion had produced, not indeed a
quarrel, but a coolness between Swift and Addison. They at length
ceased altogether to see each other. Yet there was between them a
tacit compact like that between the hereditary guests in the
Iliad:

"'Egkhea d' allelon aleometha kai di' dmilon.
Polloi men gar emoji Troes kleitoi t' epikouroi
Kleinein on ke theos ge pori kai possi kikheio
Polloi d' au soi Akhaioi enairmen, on ke duneai."

It is not strange that Addison, who calumniated and insulted
nobody, should not have calumniated or insulted Swift. But it is
remarkable that Swift, to whom neither genius nor virtue was
sacred, and who generally seemed to find, like most other
renegades, a peculiar pleasure in attacking old friends, should
have shown so much respect and tenderness to Addison.

Fortune had now changed. The accession of the House of Hanover
had secured in England the liberties of the people, and in
Ireland the dominion of the Protestant caste. To that caste Swift
was more odious than any other man. He was hooted and even pelted in the streets of Dublin; and could not venture to ride along the strand for his health without the attendance of armed servants.

Many whom he had formerly served now libelled and insulted him.

At this time Addison arrived. He had been advised not to show the smallest civility to the Dean of St. Patrick's. He had answered, with admirable spirit, that it might be necessary for men whose fidelity to their party was suspected, to hold no intercourse with political opponents; but that one who had been a steady Whig in the worst times might venture, when the good cause was triumphant, to shake hands with an old friend who was one of the vanquished Tories. His kindness was soothing to the proud and cruelly wounded spirit of Swift; and the two great satirists resumed their habits of friendly intercourse.

Those associates of Addison whose political opinions agreed with his shared his good fortune. He took Tickell with him to Ireland.

He procured for Budgell a lucrative place in the same kingdom.

Ambrose Phillips was provided for in England, Steele had injured himself so much by his eccentricity and perverseness, that he obtained but a very small part of what he thought his due. He was, however, knighted; he had a place in the household; and he subsequently received other marks of favour from the Court.

Addison did not remain long in Ireland. In 1715 he quitted his secretaryship for a seat at the Board of Trade. In the same year his comedy of the Drummer was brought on the stage. The name of
the author was not announced; the piece was coldly received; and
some critics had expressed a doubt whether it were really
Addison's. To us the evidence, both external and internal, seems
decisive. It is not in Addison's best manner; but it contains
numerous passages which no other writer known to us could have
produced. It was again performed after Addison's death, and,
being known to be his, was loudly applauded.

Towards the close of the year 1715, while the Rebellion was still
raging in Scotland, Addison published the first number of a paper
called the Freeholder. Among his political works the Freeholder
is entitled to the first place. Even in the Spectator there are
few serious papers nobler than the character of his friend Lord
Somers, and certainly no satirical papers superior to those in
which the Tory fox-hunter is introduced. This character is the
original of Squire Western, and is drawn with all Fielding's
force, and with a delicacy of which Fielding was altogether
destitute. As none of Addison's works exhibit stronger marks of
his genius than the Freeholder, so none does more honour to his
moral character. It is difficult to extol too highly the candour
and humanity of a political writer whom even the excitement of
civil war cannot hurry into unseemly violence. Oxford, it is well
known, was then the stronghold of Toryism. The High Street had
been repeatedly lined with bayonets in order to keep down the
disaffecte gonnsmen; and traitors pursued by the messengers of
the Government had been concealed in the garrets of several
colleges. Yet the admonition which, even under such
circumstances, Addison addressed to the University, is singularly
gentle, respectful, and even affectionate. Indeed, he could not
find it in his heart to deal harshly even with imaginary persons.
His fox-hunter, though ignorant, stupid, and violent, is at heart
a good fellow, and is at last reclaimed by the clemency of the
King. Steele was dissatisfied with his friend's moderation, and,
though he acknowledged that the Freeholder was excellently
written, complained that the Ministry played on a lute when it
was necessary to blow the trumpet. He accordingly determined to
execute a flourish after his own fashion, and tried to rouse the
public spirit of the nation by means of a paper called the Town
Talk, which is now as utterly forgotten as his Englishman, as his
Crisis, as his Letter to the Bailiff of Stockbridge, as his
Reader, in short, as everything that he wrote without the help of
Addison.

In the same year in which the Drummer was acted, and in which the
first numbers of the Freeholder appeared, the estrangement of
Pope and Addison became complete. Addison had from the first seen
that Pope was false and malevolent. Pope had discovered that
Addison was jealous. The discovery was made in a strange manner.
Pope had written the Rape of the Lock, in two cantos, without
supernatural machinery. These two cantos had been loudly
applauded, and by none more loudly than by Addison. Then Pope
thought of the Sylphs and Gnomes, Ariel, Momentilla, Crispissa,
and Umbriel, and resolved to interweave the Rosicrucian mythology
with the original fabric. He asked Addison's advice. Addison said
that the poem as it stood was a delicious little thing, and 
entreated Pope not to run the risk of marring what was so 
excellent in trying to mend it. Pope afterwards declared that 
this insidious counsel first opened his eyes to the baseness of 
him who gave it.

Now there can be no doubt that Pope's plan was most ingenious, 
and that he afterwards executed it with great skill and success. 
But does it necessarily follow that Addison's advice was bad. And 
if Addison's advice was bad, does it necessarily follow that it 
was given from bad motives? If a friend were to ask us whether we 
would advise him to risk his all in a lottery of which the 
chances were ten to one against him, we should do our best to 
dissuade him from running such a risk. Even if he were so lucky 
as to get the thirty thousand pound prize, we should not admit 
that we had counselled him ill; and we should certainly think it 
the height of injustice in him to accuse us of having been 
actuated by malice. We think Addison's advice good advice. It 
rested on a sound principle, the result of long and wide 
experience. The general rule undoubtedly is that, when a 
successful work of imagination has been produced, it should not 
be recast. We cannot at this moment call to mind a single 
instance in which this rule has been transgressed with happy 
effect, except the instance of the Rape of the Lock. Tasso 
recast his Jerusalem. Akenside recast his Pleasures of the 
Imagination, and his Epistle to Curio. Pope himself, emboldened 
no doubt by the success with which he had expanded and
remodelled the Rape of the Lock, made the same experiment on the
Dunciad. All these attempts failed. Who was to foresee that
Pope would, once in his life, be able to do what he could not
himself do twice, and what nobody else has ever done?

Addison's advice was good. But had it been bad, why should we
pronounce it dishonest? Scott tells us that one of his best
friends predicted the failure of Waverley. Herder adjured Goethe
not to take so unpromising a subject as Faust. Hume tried to
dissuade Robertson from writing the History of Charles the Fifth
Nay, Pope himself was one of those who prophesied that Cato would
never succeed on the stage, and advised Addison to print it
without risking a representation. But Scott, Goethe, Robertson,
Addison, had the good sense and generosity to give their advisers
credit for the best intentions. Pope's heart was not of the same
kind with theirs.

In 1715, while he was engaged in translating the Iliad, he met
Addison at a coffee-house. Phillips and Budgell were there; but
their sovereign got rid of them, and asked Pope to dine with him
alone. After dinner Addison said that he lay under a difficulty
which he wished to explain. "Tickell," he said, "translated some
time ago the first book of the Iliad. I have promised to look it
over and correct it. I cannot therefore ask to see yours; for
that would be double-dealing." Pope made a civil reply, and
begged that his second book might have the advantage of Addison's
revision. Addison readily agreed, looked over the second book,
and sent it back with warm commendations.

Tickell's version of the first book appeared soon after this conversation. In the preface all rivalry was earnestly disclaimed. Tickell declared that he should not go on with the Iliad. That enterprise he should leave to powers which he admitted to be superior to his own. His only view, he said, in publishing this specimen was to bespeak the favour of the public to a translation of the Odyssey, in which he had made some progress.

Addison, and Addison's devoted followers, pronounced both the versions good, but maintained that Tickell's had more of the original. The town gave a decided preference to Pope's. We do not think it worth while to settle such a question of precedence. Neither of the rivals can be said to have translated the Iliad, unless, indeed, the word translation be used in the sense which it bears in the Midsummer Night's Dream. When Bottom makes his appearance with an ass's head instead of his own, Peter Quince exclaims, "Bless thee! Bottom, bless thee! thou art translated."

In this sense, undoubtedly, the readers of either Pope or Tickell may very properly exclaim, "Bless thee! Homer; thou art translated indeed."

Our readers will, we hope, agree with us in thinking that no man in Addison's situation could have acted more fairly and kindly,
both towards Pope and towards Tickell, than he appears to have done. But an odious suspicion had sprung up in the mind of Pope. He fancied, and he soon firmly believed, that there was a deep conspiracy against his fame and his fortunes. The work on which he had staked his reputation was to be depreciated. The subscription, on which rested his hopes of a competence, was to be defeated. With this view Addison had made a rival translation: Tickell had consented to father it; and the wits of Button's had united to puff it.

Is there any external evidence to support this grave accusation? The answer is short. There is absolutely none.

Was there any internal evidence which proved Addison to be the author of this version? Was it a work which Tickell was incapable of producing? Surely not. Tickell was a Fellow of a College at Oxford, and must be supposed to have been able to construe the Iliad; and he was a better versifier than his friend. We are not aware that Pope pretended to have discovered any turns of expression peculiar to Addison. Had such turns of expression been discovered, they would be sufficiently accounted for by supposing Addison to have corrected his friend's lines, as he owned that he had done.

Is there anything in the character of the accused persons which makes the accusation probable? We answer confidently--nothing.
Tickell was long after this time described by Pope himself as a very fair and worthy man. Addison had been, during many years, before the public. Literary rivals, political opponents, had kept their eyes on him. But neither envy nor faction, in their utmost rage, had ever imputed to him a single deviation from the laws of honour and of social morality. Had he been indeed a man meanly jealous of fame, and capable of stooping to base and wicked arts for the purpose of injuring his competitors, would his vices have remained latent so long? He was a writer of tragedy: had he ever injured Rowe? He was a writer of comedy: had he not done ample justice to Congreve, and given valuable help to Steele? He was a pamphleteer: have not his good nature and generosity been acknowledged by Swift, his rival in fame and his adversary in politics?

That Tickell should have been guilty of a villany seems to us highly improbable. That Addison should have been guilty of a villany seems to us highly improbable. But that these two men should have conspired together to commit a villany seems to us improbable in a tenfold degree. All that is known to us of their intercourse tends to prove, that it was not the intercourse of two accomplices in crime. These are some of the lines in which Tickell poured forth his sorrow over the coffin of Addison:

Or dost thou warn poor mortals left behind,
A task well suited to thy gentle mind?
Oh, if sometimes thy spotless form descend,
To me thine aid, thou guardian genius, lend,
When rage misguides me, or when fear alarms,
When pain distresses, or when pleasure charms,
In silent whisperings purer thoughts impart,
And turn from ill a frail and feeble heart;
Lead through the paths thy virtue trod before,
Till bliss shall join, nor death can part us more."

In what words, we should like to know, did this guardian genius
invite his pupil to join in a plan such as the Editor of the
Satirist would hardly dare to propose to the Editor of the Age?

We do not accuse Pope of bringing an accusation which he knew to
be false. We have not the smallest doubt that he believed it to
be true; and the evidence on which he believed it he found in his
own bad heart. His own life was one long series of tricks, as
mean and as malicious as that of which he suspected Addison and
Tickell. He was all stiletto and mask. To injure, to insult, and
to save himself from the consequences of injury and insult by
lying and equivocating, was the habit of his life. He published a
lampoon on the Duke of Chandos; he was taxed with it; and he lied
and equivocated. He published a lampoon on Aaron Hill; he was
taxed with it; and he lied and equivocated. He published a still
fouler lampoon on Lady Mary Wortley Montague; he was taxed with
it; and he lied with more than usual effrontery and vehemence. He
puffed himself and abused his enemies under feigned names. He
robbed himself of his own letters, and then raised the hue and
cry after them. Besides his frauds of malignity, of fear, of
interest, and of vanity, there were frauds which he seems to have
committed from love of fraud alone. He had a habit of stratagem,
a pleasure in outwitting all who came near him. Whatever his
object might be, the indirect road to it was that which he
preferred. For Bolingbroke, Pope undoubtedly felt as much love
and veneration as it was in his nature to feel for any human
being. Yet Pope was scarcely dead when it was discovered that,
from no motive except the mere love of artifice, he had been
guilty of an act of gross perfidy to Bolingbroke.

Nothing was more natural than that such a man as this should
attribute to others that which he felt within himself. A plain,
probable, coherent explanation is frankly given to him. He is
certain that it is all a romance. A line of conduct scrupulously
fair, and even friendly, is pursued towards him. He is convinced
that it is merely a cover for a vile intrigue by which he is to
be disgraced and ruined. It is vain to ask him for proofs. He has
none, and wants none, except those which he carries in his own
bosom.

Whether Pope's malignity at length provoked Addison to retaliate
for the first and last time, cannot now be known with certainty.
We have only Pope's story, which runs thus. A pamphlet appeared
containing some reflections which stung Pope to the quick. What
those reflections were, and whether they were reflections of
which he had a right to complain, we have now no means of
deciding. The Earl of Warwick, a foolish and vicious lad, who regarded Addison with the feelings with which such lads generally regard their best friends, told Pope, truly or falsely, that this pamphlet had been written by Addison's direction. When we consider what a tendency stories have to grow, in passing even from one honest man to another honest man, and when we consider that to the name of honest man neither Pope nor the Earl of Warwick had a claim, we are not disposed to attach much importance to this anecdote.

It is certain, however, that Pope was furious. He had already sketched the character of Atticus in prose. In his anger he turned this prose into the brilliant and energetic lines which everybody knows by heart, or ought to know by heart, and sent them to Addison. One charge which Pope has enforced with great skill is probably not without foundation. Addison was, we are inclined to believe, too fond of presiding over a circle of humble friends. Of the other imputations which these famous lines are intended to convey, scarcely one has ever been proved to be just, and some are certainly false. That Addison was not in the habit of "damning with faint praise" appears from innumerable passages in his writings, and from none more than from those in which he mentions Pope, And it is not merely unjust, but ridiculous, to describe a man who made the fortune of almost every one of his intimate friends, as "so obliging that he ne'er obliged."
That Addison felt the sting of Pope's satire keenly, we cannot
doubt. That he was conscious of one of the weaknesses with which
he was reproached, is highly probable. But his heart, we firmly
believe, acquitted him of the gravest part of the accusation. He
acted like himself. As a satirist he was, at his own weapons,
more than Pope's match; and he would have been at no loss for
topics. A distorted and diseased body, tenanted by a yet more
distorted and diseased mind; spite and envy thinly disguised by
sentiments as benevolent and noble as those which Sir Peter
Teazle admired in Mr. Joseph Surface; a feeble sickly
licentiousness; an odious love of filthy and noisome images;
these were things which a genius less powerful than that to which
we owe the Spectator could easily have held up to the mirth and
hatred of mankind. Addison, had, moreover, at his command, other
means of vengeance which a bad man would not have scrupled to
use. He was powerful in the State. Pope was a Catholic; and, in
those times, a Minister would have found it easy to harass the
most innocent Catholic by innumerable petty vexations. Pope, near
twenty years later, said that "through the lenity of the
Government alone he could live with comfort." "Consider," he
exclaimed, "the injury that a man of high rank and credit may do
to a private person, under penal laws and many other
disadvantages." It is pleasing to reflect that the only revenge
which Addison took was to insert in the Freeholder a warm
encomium on the translation of the Iliad, and to exhort all
lovers of learning to put down their names as subscribers. There
could be no doubt, he said, from the specimens already published,
that the masterly hand of Pope would do as much for Homer as Dryden had done for Virgil. From that time to the end of his life, he always treated Pope, by Pope's own acknowledgment, with justice. Friendship was, of course, at an end.

One reason which induced the Earl of Warwick to play the ignominious part of talebearer on this occasion, may have been his dislike of the marriage which was about to take place between his mother and Addison. The Countess Dowager, a daughter of the old and honourable family of the Middletons of Chirk, a family which, in any country but ours, would be called noble, resided at Holland House. Addison had, during some years, occupied at Chelsea a small dwelling, once the abode of Nell Gwynn. Chelsea is now a district of London, and Holland House may be called a town residence. But, in the days of Anne and George the First, milkmaids and sportsmen wandered between green hedges and over fields bright with daisies, from Kensington almost to the shore of the Thames. Addison and Lady Warwick were country neighbours, and became intimate friends. The great wit and scholar tried to allure the young Lord from the fashionable amusements of beating watchmen, breaking windows, and rolling women in hogsheads down Holborn Hill, to the study of letters, and the practice of virtue. These well-meant exertions did little good, however, either to the disciple or to the master. Lord Warwick grew up a rake; and Addison fell in love. The mature beauty of the Countess has been celebrated by poets in language which, after a very large allowance has been made for flattery, would lead us to
believe that she was a fine woman; and her rank doubtless heightened her attractions. The courtship was long. The hopes of the lover appear to have risen and fallen with the fortunes of his party. His attachment was at length a matter of such notoriety that, when he visited Ireland for the last time, Rowe addressed some consolatory verses to the Chloe of Holland House. It strikes us as a little strange that, in these verses, Addison should be called Lycidas, a name of singularly evil omen for a swain just about to cross St. George's Channel.

At length Chloe capitulated. Addison was indeed able to treat with her on equal terms. He had reason to expect preferment even higher than that which he had attained. He had inherited the fortune of a brother who died Governor of Madras. He had purchased an estate in Warwickshire, and had been welcomed to his domain in very tolerable verse by one of the neighbouring squires, the poetical fox-hunter, William Somerville. In August 1716, the newspapers announced that Joseph Addison, Esquire, famous for many excellent works both in verse and prose, had espoused the Countess Dowager of Warwick.

He now fixed his abode at Holland House, a house which can boast of a greater number of inmates distinguished in political and literary history than any other private dwelling in England. His portrait still hangs there. The features are pleasing; the complexion is remarkably fair; but, in the expression, we trace rather the gentleness of his disposition than the force and
keenness of his intellect.

Not long after his marriage he reached the height of civil
greatness. The Whig Government had, during some time, been torn
by internal dissensions. Lord Townshend led one section of the
Cabinet, Lord Sunderland the other. At length, in the spring of
1717, Sunderland triumphed. Townshend retired from office, and
was accompanied by Walpole and Cowper. Sunderland proceeded to
reconstruct the Ministry; and Addison was appointed Secretary of
State. It is certain that the Seals were pressed upon him, and
were at first declined by him. Men equally versed in official
business might easily have been found; and his colleagues knew
that they could not expect assistance from him in debate. He owed
his elevation to his popularity, to his stainless probity, and to
his literary fame.

But scarcely had Addison entered the Cabinet when his health
began to fail. From one serious attack he recovered in the
autumn; and his recovery was celebrated in Latin verses, worthy
of his own pen, by Vincent Bourne, who was then at Trinity
College, Cambridge. A relapse soon took place; and, in the
following spring, Addison was prevented by a severe asthma from
discharging the duties of his post. He resigned it, and was
succeeded by his friend Craggs, a young man whose natural parts,
though little improved by cultivation, were quick and showy,
whose graceful person and winning manners had made him generally
acceptable in society, and who, if he had lived, would probably
have been the most formidable of all the rivals of Walpole.

As yet there was no Joseph Hume. The Ministers, therefore, were able to bestow on Addison a retiring pension of fifteen hundred pounds a year. In what form this pension was given we are not told by the biographers, and have not time to inquire. But it is certain that Addison did not vacate his seat in the House of Commons.

Rest of mind and body seem to have re-established his health; and he thanked God, with cheerful piety, for having set him free both from his office and from his asthma. Many years seemed to be before him, and he meditated many works, a tragedy on the death of Socrates, a translation of the Psalms, a treatise on the evidences of Christianity. Of this last performance, a part, which we could well spare, has come down to us.

But the fatal complaint soon returned, and gradually prevailed against all the resources of medicine. It is melancholy to think that the last months of such a life should have been overclouded both by domestic and by political vexations. A tradition which began early, which has been generally received, and to which we have nothing to oppose, has represented his wife as an arrogant and imperious woman. It is said that, till his health failed him, he was glad to escape from the Countess Dowager and her magnificent dining-room, blazing with the gilded devices of the
House of Rich, to some tavern where he could enjoy a laugh, a
talk about Virgil and Boileau, and a bottle of claret, with the
friends of his happier days. All those friends, however, were not
left to him. Sir Richard Steele had been gradually estranged by
various causes. He considered himself as one who, in evil times,
had braved martyrdom for his political principles, and demanded,
when the Whig party was triumphant, a large compensation for what
he had suffered when it was militant. The Whig leaders took a
very different view of his claims. They thought that he had, by
his own petulance and folly, brought them as well as himself into
trouble, and though they did not absolutely neglect him, doled
out favours to him with a sparing hand. It was natural that he
should be angry with them, and especially angry with Addison. But
what above all seems to have disturbed Sir Richard, was the
elevation of Tickell, who, at thirty, was made by Addison Under-
Secretary of State; while the editor of the Tatler and Spectator,
and the author of the Crisis, and member for Stockbridge who had
been persecuted for firm adherence to the House of Hanover, was,
at near fifty, forced, after many solicitations and complaints,
to content himself with a share in the patent of Drury Lane
Theatre. Steele himself says, in his celebrated letter to
Congreve, that Addison, by his preference of Tickell, "incurred
the warmest resentment of other gentlemen"; and everything seems
to indicate that, of those resentful gentlemen, Steele was
himself one.

While poor Sir Richard was brooding over what he considered as
Addison's unkindness, a new cause of quarrel arose. The Whig party, already divided against itself, was rent by a new schism. The celebrated Bill for limiting the number of Peers had been brought in. The proud Duke of Somerset, first in rank of all the nobles whose religion permitted them to sit in Parliament, was the ostensible author of the measure. But it was supported, and in truth devised, by the Prime Minister.

We are satisfied that the bill was most pernicious; and we fear that the motives which induced Sunderland to frame it were not honourable to him. But we cannot deny that it was supported by many of the best and wisest men of that age. Nor was this strange. The royal prerogative had, within the memory of the generation then in the vigour of life, been so grossly abused, that it was still regarded with a jealousy which, when the peculiar situation of the House of Brunswick is considered, may perhaps be called immoderate. The particular prerogative of creating peers had, in the opinion of the Whigs, been grossly abused by Queen Anne's last Ministry; and even the Tories admitted that her Majesty, in swamping, as it has since been called, the Upper House, had done what only an extreme case could justify. The theory of the English constitution, according to many high authorities, was that three independent powers, the sovereign, the nobility, and the commons, ought constantly to act as checks on each other. If this theory were sound, it seemed to follow that to put one of these powers under the absolute control of the other two, was absurd. But if the number of peers were
unlimited, it could not well be denied that the Upper House was under the absolute control of the Crown and the Commons, and was indebted only to their moderation for any power which it might be suffered to retain.

Steele took part with the Opposition, Addison with the Ministers. Steele, in a paper called the Plebeian, vehemently attacked the bill. Sunderland called for help on Addison, and Addison obeyed the call. In a paper called the Old Whig, he answered, and indeed refuted, Steele's arguments. It seems to us that the premises of both the controversialists were unsound, that on those premises Addison reasoned well and Steele ill, and that consequently Addison brought out a false conclusion while Steele blundered upon the truth. In style, in wit, and in politeness, Addison maintained his superiority; though the Old Whig is by no means one of his happiest performances.

At first, both the anonymous opponents observed the laws of propriety. But at length Steele so far forgot himself as to throw an odious imputation on the morals of the chiefs of the administration. Addison replied with severity, but, in our opinion, with less severity than was due to so grave an offence against morality and decorum; nor did he, in his just anger, forget for a moment the laws of good taste and good breeding. One calumny which has been often repeated, and never yet contradicted, it is our duty to expose. It is asserted in the Biogaphia Britannica, that Addison designated Steele as "little
Dicky." This assertion was repeated by Johnson who had never seen
the Old Whig; and was therefore excusable. It has also been
repeated by Miss Aikin, who has seen the Old Whig, and for whom
therefore there is less excuse. Now, it is true that the words
"little Dicky" occur in the Old Whig, and that Steele's name was
Richard. It is equally true that the words "little Isaac " occur
in the Duenna, and that Newton's name was Isaac. But we
confidently affirm that Addison's "little Dicky" had no more to
do with Steele, than Sheridan's "little Isaac" with Newton. If we
apply the words "little Dicky" to Steele, we deprive a very
lively and ingenious passage, not only of all its wit, but of all
its meaning. Little Dicky was the nickname of Henry Norris, an
actor of remarkably small stature, but of great humour, who
played the usurer Gomez, then a most popular part, in Dryden's
Spanish Friar. [We will transcribe the whole paragraph. How it
can ever have been misunderstood is unintelligible to us.

"But our author's chief concern is for the poor House of Commons,
whom he represents as naked and defenceless, when the Crown, by
losing this prerogative, would be less able to protect them
against the power of a House of Lords. Who forbears laughing when
the Spanish Friar represents little Dicky under the person of
Gomez, insulting the Colonel that was able to fright him out of
his wits with a single frown? This Gomez, says he, flew upon him
like a dragon, got him down, the Devil being strong in him, and
gave him bastinado on bastinado, and buffet on buffet, which the
poor Colonel, being prostrate, suffered with a most Christian
patience. The improbability of the fact never fails to raise
mirth in the audience; and one may venture to answer for a
British House of Commons, if we may guess, from its conduct
hitherto, that it will scarce be either so tame or so weak as our
author supposes.”}

The merited reproof which Steele had received, though softened by
some kind and courteous expressions, galled him bitterly. He
replied with little force and great acrimony; but no rejoinder
appeared. Addison was fast hastening to his grave; and had, we
may well suppose, little disposition to prosecute a quarrel with
an old friend. His complaint had terminated in dropsy. He bore up
long and manfully. But at length he abandoned all hope, dismissed
his physicians, and calmly prepared himself to die.

His works he intrusted to the care of Tickell, and dedicated them
a very few days before his death to Craggs, in a letter written
with the sweet and graceful eloquence of a Saturday's Spectator.
In this, his last composition, he alluded to his approaching end
in words so manly, so cheerful, and so tender, that it is
difficult to read them without tears. At the same time he
earnestly recommended the interests of Tickell to the care of
Craggs.

Within a few hours of the time at which this dedication was
written, Addison sent to beg Gay, who was then living by his wits
about town, to come to Holland House. Gay went, and was received
with great kindness. To his amazement his forgiveness was
implored by the dying man. Poor Gay, the most good-natured and
simple of mankind, could not imagine what he had to forgive.
There was, however, some wrong, the remembrance of which weighed
on Addison's mind, and which he declared himself anxious to
repair. He was in a state of extreme exhaustion; and the parting
was doubtless a friendly one on both sides. Gay supposed that
some plan to serve him had been in agitation at Court, and had
been frustrated by Addison's influence. Nor is this improbable.
Gay had paid assiduous court to the royal family. But in the
Queen's days he had been the eulogist of Bolingbroke, and was
still connected with many Tories. It is not strange that Addison,
while heated by conflict, should have thought himself justified
in obstructing the preferment of one whom he might regard as a
political enemy. Neither is it strange that, when reviewing his
whole life, and earnestly scrutinising all his motives, he should
think that he had acted an unkind and ungenerous part, in using
his power against a distressed man of letters, who was as
harmless and as helpless as a child.

One inference may be drawn from this anecdote. It appears that
Addison, on his death-bed, called himself to a strict account,
and was not at ease till he had asked pardon for an injury which
it was not even suspected that he had committed, for an injury
which would have caused disquiet only to a very tender
conscience. Is it not then reasonable to infer that, if he had
really been guilty of forming a base conspiracy against the fame and fortunes of a rival, he would have expressed some remorse for so serious a crime? But it is unnecessary to multiply arguments and evidence for the defence, when there is neither argument nor evidence for the accusation.

The last moments of Addison were perfectly serene. His interview with his step-son is universally known. "See," he said, "how a Christian can die." The piety of Addison was, in truth, of a singularly cheerful character. The feeling which predominates in all his devotional writings, is gratitude. God was to him the all-wise and all-powerful friend who had watched over his cradle with more than maternal tenderness; who had listened to his cries before they could form themselves in prayer; who had preserved his youth from the snares of vice; who had made his cup run over with worldly blessings; who had doubled the value of those blessings, by bestowing a thankful heart to enjoy them, and dear friends to partake them; who had rebuked the waves of the Ligurian gulf, had purified the autumnal air of the Campagna, and had restrained the avalanches of Mont Cenis. Of the Psalms, his favourite was that which represents the Ruler of all things under the endearing image of a shepherd, whose crook guides the flock safe, through gloomy and desolate glens, to meadows well watered and rich with herbage. On that goodness to which he ascribed all the happiness of his life, he relied in the hour of death with the love which casteth out fear. He died on the seventeenth of June 1710. He had just entered on his forty-eighth year.
His body lay in state in the Jerusalem Chamber, and was borne thence to the Abbey at dead of night. The choir sang a funeral hymn. Bishop Atterbury, one of those Tories who had loved and honoured the most accomplished of the Whigs, met the corpse, and led the procession by torchlight, round the shrine of Saint Edward and the graves of the Plantagenets, to the Chapel of Henry the Seventh. On the north side of that Chapel, in the vault of the House of Albemarle, the coffin of Addison lies next to the coffin of Montague. Yet a few months; and the same mourners passed again along the same aisle. The same sad anthem was again chanted. The same vault was again opened; and the coffin of Craggs was placed close to the coffin of Addison.

Many tributes were paid to the memory of Addison; but one alone is now remembered. Tickell bewailed his friend in an elegy which would do honour to the greatest name in our literature, and which unites the energy and magnificence of Dryden to the tenderness and purity of Cowper. This fine poem was prefixed to a superb edition of Addison's works, which was published, in 1721, by subscription. The names of the subscribers proved how widely his fame had been spread. That his countrymen should be eager to possess his writings, even in a costly form, is not wonderful. But it is wonderful that, though English literature was then little studied on the Continent, Spanish Grandees, Italian Prelates, Marshals of France, should be found in the list. Among the most remarkable names are those of the Queen of Sweden, of
Prince Eugene, of the Grand Duke of Tuscany, of the Dukes of Parma, Modena, and Guastalla, of the Doge of Genoa, of the Regent Orleans, and of Cardinal Dubois. We ought to add that this edition, though eminently beautiful, is in some important points defective; nor, indeed, do we yet possess a complete collection of Addison's writings.

It is strange that neither his opulent and noble widow, nor any of his powerful and attached friends, should have thought of placing even a simple tablet, inscribed with his name, on the walls of the Abbey. It was not till three generations had laughed and wept over his pages that the omission was supplied by the public veneration. At length, in our own time, his image, skilfully graven, appeared in Poet's Corner. It represents him, as we can conceive him, clad in his dressing-gown, and freed from his wig, stepping from his parlour at Chelsea into his trim little garden, with the account of the "Everlasting Club," or the "Loves of Hilpa and Shalum," just finished for the next day's Spectator, in his hand. Such a mark of national respect was due to the unsullied statesman, to the accomplished scholar, to the master of pure English eloquence, to the consummate painter of life and manners. It was due, above all, to the great satirist, who alone knew how to use ridicule without abusing it, who, without inflicting a wound, effected a great social reform, and who reconciled wit and virtue, after a long and disastrous separation, during which wit had been led astray by profligacy, and virtue by fanaticism.
SAMUEL JOHNSON

(September 1831)

The Life of Samuel Johnson LL. D. Including a Journal Of a Tour
to the Hebrides by James Boswell, Esq. A new Edition, with
numerous Additions and Notes By JOHN WILSON CROKER, LL.D., F.R.S.
Five volumes, 8vo. London: 1831

THIS work has greatly disappointed us. Whatever faults we may
have been prepared to find in it, we fully expected that it would
be a valuable addition to English literature; that it would
contain many curious facts, and many judicious remarks; that the
style of the notes would be neat, clear, and precise; and that
the typographical execution would be, as in new editions of
classical works it ought to be, almost faultless. We are sorry to
be obliged to say that the merits of Mr. Croker's performance are
on a par with those of a certain leg of mutton on which Dr.
Johnson dined, while travelling from London to Oxford, and which
he, with characteristic energy, pronounced to be "as bad as bad
could be, ill fed, ill killed, ill kept, and ill dressed." This
dition is ill compiled, ill arranged, ill written, and ill
printed.
Nothing in the work has astonished us so much as the ignorance or carelessness of Mr. Croker with respect to facts and dates. Many of his blunders are such as we should be surprised to hear any well-educated gentleman commit, even in conversation. The notes absolutely swarm with misstatements, into which the editor never would have fallen, if he had taken the slightest pains to investigate the truth of his assertions, or if he had even been well acquainted with the book on which he undertook to comment.

We will give a few instances.

Mr. Croker tells us in a note that Derrick, who was master of the ceremonies at Bath, died very poor in 1760. [Vol. i. 394.] We read on; and, a few pages later, we find Dr. Johnson and Boswell talking of this same Derrick as still living and reigning, as having retrieved his character, as possessing so much power over his subjects at Bath, that his opposition might be fatal to Sheridan's lectures on oratory. [i. 404.] And all this is in 1763. The fact is, that Derrick died in 1769.

In one note we read, that Sir Herbert Croft, the author of that pompous and foolish account of Young, which appears among the Lives of the Poets, died in 1805. [Vol. iv. 321.] Another note in the same volume states, that this same Sir Herbert Croft died at Paris, after residing abroad for fifteen years, on the 27th of April, 1816. [iv. 428.]
Mr. Croker informs us, that Sir William Forbes of Pitsligo, the author of the Life of Beattie, died in 1816. [ii. 262.] A Sir William Forbes undoubtedly died in that year, but not the Sir William Forbes in question, whose death took place in 1806. It is notorious, indeed, that the biographer of Beattie lived just long enough to complete the history of his friend. Eight or nine years before the date which Mr. Croker has assigned for Sir William's death, Sir Walter Scott lamented that event in the introduction to the fourth canto of Marmion. Every schoolgirl knows the lines:

"Scarce had lamented Forbes paid
The tribute to his Minstrel's shade;
The tale of friendship scarce was told,
Ere the narrator's heart was cold:
Far may we search before we find
A heart so manly and so kind!"

In one place, we are told, that Allan Ramsay, the painter, was born in 1709, and died in 1784; [iv. 105.] in another, that he died in 1784, in the seventy-first year of his age. [v. 281.]

In one place, Mr. Croker says, that at the commencement of the intimacy between Dr. Johnson and Mrs. Thrale, in 1765, the lady was twenty-five years old. [i. 510.] In other places he says, that Mrs. Thrale's thirty-fifth year coincided with Johnson's seventieth. [iv. 271, 322.] Johnson was born in 1709. If,
therefore, Mrs. Thrale's thirty-fifth year coincided with
Johnson's seventieth, she could have been only twenty-one years
old in 1765. This is not all. Mr. Croker, in another place,
assigns the year 1777 as the date of the complimentary lines
which Johnson made on Mrs. Thrale's thirty-fifth birthday.
[iii. 463.] If this date be correct, Mrs. Thrale must have been
born in 1742, and could have been only twenty-three when her
acquaintance with Johnson commenced. Mr. Croker therefore gives
us three different statements as to her age. Two of the three
must be incorrect. We will not decide between them; we will only
say, that the reasons which Mr. Croker gives for thinking that
Mrs. Thrale was exactly thirty-five years old when Johnson was
seventy, appear to us utterly frivolous.

Again, Mr. Croker informs his readers that "Lord Mansfield
survived Johnson full ten years." [ii. 151.] Lord Mansfield
survived Dr. Johnson just eight years and a quarter.

Johnson found in the library of a French lady, whom he visited
during his short visit to Paris, some works which he regarded
with great disdain. "I looked," says he, "into the books in the
lady's closet, and, in contempt, showed them to Mr. Thrale.
Prince Titi, Bibliotheque des Fees, and other books." [iii. 271.]
The History of Prince Titi, observes Mr. Croker, "was said to be
the autobiography of Frederick Prince of Wales, but was probably
written by Ralph his secretary." A more absurd note never was
penned. The History of Prince Titi, to which Mr. Croker refers,
whether written by Prince Frederick or by Ralph, was certainly never published. If Mr. Croker had taken the trouble to read with attention that very passage in Park's Royal and Noble Authors which he cites as his authority, he would have seen that the manuscript was given up to the Government. Even if this memoir had been printed, it is not very likely to find its way into a French lady's bookcase. And would any man in his senses speak contemptuously of a French lady, for having in her possession an English work, so curious and interesting as a Life of Prince Frederick, whether written by himself or by a confidential secretary, must have been? The history at which Johnson laughed was a very proper companion to the Bibliotheque des Fees, a fairy tale about good Prince Titi and naughty Prince Violent. Mr. Croker may find it in the Magasin des Enfans, the first French book which the little girls of England read to their governesses.

Mr. Croker states that Mr. Henry Bate, who afterwards assumed the name of Dudley, was proprietor of the Morning Herald, and fought a duel with George Robinson Stoney, in consequence of some attacks on Lady Strathmore which appeared in that paper. [v. 196.] Now Mr. Bate was then connected, not with the Morning Herald, but with the Morning Post; and the dispute took place before the Morning Herald was in existence. The duel was fought in January 1777. The Chronicle of the Annual Register for that year contains an account of the transaction, and distinctly states that Mr. Bate was editor of the Morning Post. The Morning Herald, as any person may see by looking at any number of it, was
not established till some years after this affair. For this
blunder there is, we must acknowledge some excuse; for it
certainly seems almost incredible to a person living in our time
that any human being should ever have stooped to fight with a
writer in the Morning Post.

"James de Duglas," says Mr. Croker, "was requested by King Robert
Bruce, in his last hours, to repair, with his heart, to
Jerusalem, and humbly to deposit it at the sepulchre of our Lord,
which he did in 1329." [Vol. iv. 29.] Now, it is well known that
he did no such thing, and for a very sufficient reason, because
he was killed by the way. Nor was it in 1329 that he set out.
Robert Bruce died in 1329, and the expedition of Douglas took
place in the following year, "Quand le printemps vint et la
saison," says Froissart, in June 1330, says Lord Hailes, whom Mr.
Croker cites as the authority for his statement.

Mr. Croker tells us that the great Marquis of Montrose was
beheaded at Edinburgh in 1650. [ii. 526.] There is not a forward
boy at any school in England who does not know that the marquis
was hanged. The account of the execution is one of the finest
passages in Lord Clarendon's History. We can scarcely suppose
that Mr. Croker has never read that passage; and yet we can
scarcely suppose that any person who has ever perused so noble
and pathetic a story can have utterly forgotten all its most
striking circumstances.
"Lord Townshend," says Mr. Croker, "was not Secretary of State till 1720." [iii. 52.] Can Mr. Croker possibly be ignorant that Lord Townshend was made Secretary of State at the Accession of George I. in 1714, that he continued to be Secretary of State till he was displaced by the intrigues of Sunderland and Stanhope at the close of 1716, and that he returned to the office of Secretary of State, not in 1720 but in 1721?

Mr. Croker, indeed, is generally unfortunate in his statements respecting the Townshend family. He tells us that Charles Townshend, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, was "nephew of the Prime Minister, and son of a peer who was Secretary of State, and leader of the House of Lords." [iii. 368.] Charles Townshend was not nephew, but grandnephew, of the Duke of Newcastle, not son, but grandson, of the Lord Townshend who was Secretary of State, and leader of the House of Lords.

"General Burgoyne surrendered at Saratoga," says Mr. Croker, "in March 1778." [iv. 222.] General Bourgoyne surrendered on the 17th of October 1777.

Nothing," says Mr. Croker, "can be more unfounded than the assertion that Byng fell a martyr to political party. By a strange coincidence of circumstances, it happened that there was a total change of administration between his condemnation and his
death: so that one party presided at his trial, and another at
his execution: there can be no stronger proof that he was not a
political martyr." [i. 298.] Now what will our readers think of
this writer, when we assure them that this statement, so
confidently made, respecting events so notorious, is absolutely
untrue? One and the same administration was in office when the
court-martial on Byng commenced its sittings, through the whole
trial, at the condemnation, and at the execution. In the month of
November 1756, the Duke of Newcastle and Lord Hardwicke resigned;
the Duke of Devonshire became First Lord of the Treasury, and Mr.
Pitt, Secretary of State. This administration lasted till the
month of April 1757. Byng's court-martial began to sit on the
28th of December 1756. He was shot on the 14th of March 1757.
There is something at once diverting and provoking in the cool
and authoritative manner in which Mr. Croker makes these random
assertions. We do not suspect him of intentionally falsifying
history. But of this high literary misdemeanour we do without
hesitation accuse him that he has no adequate sense of the
obligation which a writer, who professes to relate facts,
owes to the public. We accuse him of a negligence and an
ignorance analogous to that crassa negligentia, and that
crassa ignorantia, on which the law animadverts in magistrates
and surgeons, even when malice and corruption are not imputed.
We accuse him of having undertaken a work which, if not
performed with strict accuracy, must be very much worse than
useless, and of having performed it as if the difference
between an accurate and an inaccurate statement was not worth
the trouble of looking into the most common book of
But we must proceed. These volumes contain mistakes more gross, if possible, than any that we have yet mentioned. Boswell has recorded some observations made by Johnson on the changes which had taken place in Gibbon's religious opinions. That Gibbon when a lad at Oxford turned Catholic is well known. "It is said," cried Johnson, laughing, "that he has been a Mahommedan." "This sarcasm," says the editor, "probably alludes to the tenderness with which Gibbon's malevolence to Christianity induced him to treat Mahommedanism in his history." Now the sarcasm was uttered in 1776; and that part of the History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire which relates to Mahommedanism was not published till 1788, twelve years after the date of this conversation, and near four years after the death of Johnson.

[A defence of this blunder was attempted. That the celebrated chapters in which Gibbon has traced the progress of Mahommedanism were not written in 1776 could not be denied. But it was confidently asserted that his partiality to Mahommedanism appeared in his first volume. This assertion is untrue. No passage which can by any art be construed into the faintest indication of the faintest partiality for Mahommedanism has ever been quoted or ever will be quoted from the first volume of the History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire.
To what, then, it has been asked, could Johnson allude? Possibly to some anecdote or some conversation of which all trace is lost.

One conjecture may be offered, though with diffidence. Gibbon tells us in his Memoirs, that at Oxford he took a fancy for studying Arabic, and was prevented from doing so by the remonstrances of his tutor. Soon after this, the young man fell in with Bossuet's controversial writings, and was speedily converted by them to the Roman Catholic faith. The apostasy of a gentleman commoner would of course be for a time the chief subject of conversation in the common room of Magdalene. His whim about Arabic learning would naturally be mentioned, and would give occasion to some jokes about the probability of his turning Mussulman. If such jokes were made, Johnson, who frequently visited Oxford, was very likely to hear of them.

"It was in the year 1761," says Mr. Croker, "that Goldsmith published his Vicar of Wakefield. This leads the editor to observe a more serious inaccuracy of Mrs. Thrale, than Mr. Boswell notices, when he says Johnson left her table to go and sell the Vicar of Wakefield for Goldsmith. Now Dr. Johnson was not acquainted with the Thrales till 1765, four years after the book had been published." [Vol. v. 409] Mr. Croker, in reprehending the fancied inaccuracy of Mrs. Thrale, has himself shown a degree of inaccuracy, or, to speak more properly, a degree of ignorance, hardly credible. In the first place, Johnson became acquainted with the Thrales, not in 1765, but in 1764, and during the last weeks of 1764 dined with them every Thursday, as
is written in Mrs. Piozzi's anecdotes. In the second place, Goldsmith published the Vicar of Wakefield, not in 1761, but in 1766. Mrs. Thrale does not pretend to remember the precise date of the summons which called Johnson from her table to the help of his friend. She says only that it was near the beginning of her acquaintance with Johnson, and certainly not later than 1766. Her accuracy is therefore completely vindicated. It was probably after one of her Thursday dinners in 1764 that the celebrated scene of the landlady, the sheriff's officer, and the bottle of Madeira, took place. [This paragraph has been altered; and a slight inaccuracy immaterial to the argument, has been removed.]

The very page which contains this monstrous blunder, contains another blunder, if possible, more monstrous still. Sir Joseph Mawbey, a foolish member of Parliament, at whose speeches and whose pig-styes the wits of Brookes's were, fifty years ago, in the habit of laughing most unmercifully, stated, on the authority of Garrick, that Johnson, while sitting in a coffee-house at Oxford, about the time of his doctor's degree, used some contemptuous expressions respecting Home's play and Macpherson's Ossian. "Many men," he said, "many women, and many children, might have written Douglas." Mr. Croker conceives that he has detected an inaccuracy, and glories over poor Sir Joseph in a most characteristic manner. I have quoted this anecdote solely with the view of showing to how little credit hearsay anecdotes are in general entitled. Here is a story published by Sir Joseph Mawbey, a member of the House of Commons, and a person every way
worthy of credit, who says he had it from Garrick. Now mark:

Johnson's visit to Oxford, about the time of his doctor's degree, was in 1754, the first time he had been there since he left the university. But Douglas was not acted till 1756, and Ossian not published till 1760. All, therefore, that is new in Sir Joseph Mawbey's story is false." [Vol. v. 409.] Assuredly we need not go far to find ample proof that a member of the House of Commons may commit a very gross error. Now mark, say we, in the language of Mr. Croker. The fact is, that Johnson took his Master's degree in 1754, [i. 262.] and his Doctor's degree in 1775. [iii. 205.] In the spring of 1776, [iii. 326.] he paid a visit to Oxford, and at this visit a conversation respecting the works on Home and Macpherson might have taken place, and, in all probability, did take place. The only real objection to the story Mr. Croker has missed. Boswell states, apparently on the best authority, that, as early at least as the year 1763, Johnson, in conversation with Blair, used the same expressions respecting Ossian, which Sir Joseph represents him as having used respecting Douglas. [i. 405.] Sir Joseph, or Garrick, confounded, we suspect, the two stories. But their error is venial, compared with that of Mr. Croker.

We will not multiply instances of this scandalous inaccuracy. It is clear that a writer who, even when warned by the text on which he is commenting, falls into such mistakes as these, is entitled to no confidence whatever. Mr. Croker has committed an error of five years with respect to the publication of Goldsmith's novel,
an error of twelve years with respect to the publication of part
of Gibbon's History, an error of twenty-one years with respect to
an event in Johnson's life so important as the taking of the
doctoral degree. Two of these three errors he has committed,
while ostentatiously displaying his own accuracy, and correcting
what he represents as the loose assertions of others. How can his
readers take on trust his statements concerning the births,
mariages, divorces, and deaths of a crowd of people, whose names
are scarcely known to this generation? It is not likely that a
person who is ignorant of what almost everybody knows can know
that of which almost everybody is ignorant. We did not open this
book with any wish to find blemishes in it. We have made no
curious researches. The work itself, and a very common knowledge
of literary and political history, have enabled us to detect the
mistakes which we have pointed out, and many other mistakes of
the same kind. We must say, and we say it with regret, that we do
not consider the authority of Mr. Croker, unsupported by other
evidence, as sufficient to justify any writer who may follow him
in relating a single anecdote or in assigning a date to a single
event.

Mr. Croker shows almost as much ignorance and heedlessness in his
criticisms as in his statements concerning facts. Dr. Johnson
said, very reasonably as it appears to us, that some of the
satires of Juvenal are too gross for imitation. Mr. Croker, who,
by the way, is angry with Johnson for defending Prior's tales
against the charge of indecency, resents this aspersion on
Juvenal, and indeed refuses to believe that the doctor can have said anything so absurd. "He probably said--some passages of them--for there are none of Juvenal's satires to which the same objection may be made as to one of Horace's, that it is altogether gross and licentious." [Vol. i. 167.] Surely Mr. Croker can never have read the second and ninth satires of Juvenal.

Indeed the decisions of this editor on points of classical learning, though pronounced in a very authoritative tone, are generally such that, if a schoolboy under our care were to utter them, our soul assuredly should not spare for his crying. It is no disgrace to a gentleman who has been engaged during near thirty years in political life that he has forgotten his Greek and Latin. But he becomes justly ridiculous if, when no longer able to construe a plain sentence, he affects to sit in judgment on the most delicate questions of style and metre. From one blunder, a blunder which no good scholar would have made, Mr. Croker was saved, as he informs us, by Sir Robert Peel, who quoted a passage exactly in point from Horace. We heartily wish that Sir Robert, whose classical attainments are well known, had been more frequently consulted. Unhappily he was not always at his friend's elbow; and we have therefore a rich abundance of the strangest errors. Boswell has preserved a poor epigram by Johnson, inscribed "Ad Lauram parituram." Mr. Croker censures the poet for applying the word puella to a lady in Laura's situation, and for talking of the beauty of Lucina. "Lucina," he says, "was
never famed for her beauty." [i. 133.] If Sir Robert Peel had seen this note, he probably would have again refuted Mr. Croker's criticisms by an appeal to Horace. In the secular ode, Lucina is used as one of the names of Diana, and the beauty of Diana is extolled by all the most orthodox doctors of the ancient mythology, from Homer in his Odyssey, to Claudian in his Rape of Proserpine. In another ode, Horace describes Diana as the goddess who assists the "laborantes utero puellas." But we are ashamed to detain our readers with this fourth-form learning.

Boswell found, in his tour to the Hebrides, an inscription written by a Scotch minister. It runs thus: "Joannes Macleod, etc. gentis suae Philarchus, etc Florae Macdonald matrimoniali vinculo conjugatus turrem hanc Beganodunensem proaevorum habitaculum longe vetustissimum, diu penitus labefactatam anno aerae vulgaris MDCLXXXVI. instauravit."--"The minister," says Mr. Croker, "seems to have been no contemptible Latinist. Is not Philarchus a very happy term to express the paternal and kindly authority of the head of a clan?" [ii. 458.] The composition of this eminent Latinist, short as it is, contains several words that are just as much Coptic as Latin, to say nothing of the incorrect structure of the sentence. The word Philarchus, even if it were a happy term expressing a paternal and kindly authority, would prove nothing for the minister's Latin, whatever it might prove for his Greek. But it is clear that the word Philarchus means, not a man who rules by love, but a man who loves rule. The Attic writers of the best age used the word philarchos in the
sense which we assign to it. Would Mr. Croker translate
philosophos, a man who acquires wisdom by means of love, or
philokerdes, a man who makes money by means of love? In fact, it
requires no Bentley or Casaubon to perceive that Philarchus is
merely a false spelling for Phylarchus, the chief of a tribe.

Mr. Croker has favoured us with some Greek of his own. "At the
altar," says Dr. Johnson, "I recommended my th ph." "These
letters," says the editor, "(which Dr. Strahan seems not to have
understood) probably mean phnetoi philoi, departed friends."

[Vol. iv. 251. An attempt was made to vindicate this blunder by
quoting a grossly corrupt passage from the Iketides of Euripides

bathi kai antiason gonaton, epi kheira balousa,
teknon te thnaton komisai demas.

The true reading, as every scholar knows, is teknon, tethneoton
komisai demas. Indeed without this emendation it would not be
easy to construe the words, even if thnaton could bear the
meaning which Mr. Croker assigns to it.] Johnson was not a first-
rate Greek scholar; but he knew more Greek than most boys when
they leave school; and no schoolboy could venture to use the word
thnetoi in the sense which Mr. Croker ascribes to it without
imminent danger of a flogging.

Mr. Croker has also given us a specimen of his skill in
translating Latin. Johnson wrote a note in which he consulted his
friend, Dr. Lawrence, on the propriety of losing some blood. The
note contains these words:--"Si per te licet, imperatur nuncio
Holderum ad me deducere." Johnson should rather have written
"imperatum est." But the meaning of the words is perfectly clear.
"If you say yes, the messenger has orders to bring Holder to me."
Mr. Croker translates the words as follows: "If you consent, pray
tell the messenger to bring Holder to me." [v. 17.] If Mr. Croker
is resolved to write on points of classical learning, we would
advise him to begin by giving an hour every morning to our old
friend Corderius.

Indeed we cannot open any volume of this work in any place, and
turn it over for two minutes in any direction, without lighting
on a blunder. Johnson, in his Life of Tickell, stated that a poem
entitled "The Royal Progress," which appears in the last volume
of the Spectator, was written on the accession of George I. The
word "arrival" was afterwards substituted for accession." "The
reader will observe," says Mr. Croker, that the Whig term
accession, which might imply legality, was altered into a
statement of the simple fact of King George's arrival." [iv.
425.] Now Johnson, though a bigoted Tory, was not quite such a
fool as Mr. Croker here represents him to be. In the Life of
Granville, Lord Lansdowne, which stands a very few pages from the
Life of Tickell, mention is made of the accession of Anne, and of
the accession of George I. The word arrival was used in the Life
of Tickell for the simplest of all reasons. It was used because
the subject of the poem called "The Royal Progress" was the
arrival of the king, and not his accession, which took place near
two months before his arrival.

The editor’s want of perspicacity is indeed very amusing. He is
perpetually telling us that he cannot understand something in the
text which is as plain as language can make it. "Mattaire," said
Dr. Johnson, "wrote Latin verses from time to time, and published
a set in his old age, which he called Senilia, in which he shows
so little learning or taste in writing, as to make Carteret a
dactyl." [iv. 335.] Hereupon we have this note: "The editor does
not understand this objection, nor the following observation."
The following observation, which Mr. Croker cannot understand, is
simply this: "In matters of genealogy," says Johnson, "it is
necessary to give the bare names as they are. But in poetry and
in prose of any elegance in the writing, they require to have
inflection given to them." If Mr. Croker had told Johnson that
this was unintelligible, the doctor would probably have replied,
as he replied on another occasion, "I have found you a reason,
sir; I am not bound to find you an understanding." Everybody who
knows anything of Latinity knows that, in genealogical tables,
Joannes Baro de Carteret, or Vice-comes de Carteret, may be
tolerated, but that in compositions which pretend to elegance,
Carteretus, or some other form which admits of inflection, ought
to be used.

All our readers have doubtless seen the two distichs of Sir
William Jones, respecting the division of the time of a lawyer.
One of the distichs is translated from some old Latin lines; the other is original. The former runs thus:

"Six hours to sleep, to law's grave study six,
Four spend in prayer, the rest on nature fix."

Rather," says Sir William Jones,

"Six hours to law, to soothing slumbers seven,
Ten to the world allot, and all to heaven."

The second couplet puzzles Mr. Croker strangely. "Sir William," says he, "has shortened his day to twenty-three hours, and the general advice of "all to heaven," destroys the peculiar appropriation of a certain period to religious exercises." [v. 233.] Now we did not think that it was in human dullness to miss the meaning of the lines so completely. Sir William distributes twenty-three hours among various employments. One hour is thus left for devotion. The reader expects that the verse will end with "and one to heaven." The whole point of the lines consist in the unexpected substitution of "all" for "one." The conceit is wretched enough, but it is perfectly intelligible, and never, we will venture to say, perplexed man, woman, or child before.
Poor Tom Davies, after failing in business, tried to live by his pen. Johnson called him "an author generated by the corruption of a bookseller." This is a very obvious, and even a commonplace allusion to the famous dogma of the old physiologists. Dryden made a similar allusion to that dogma before Johnson was born. Mr. Croker, however, is unable to understand what the doctor meant. "The expression," he says, "seems not quite clear." And he proceeds to talk about the generation of insects, about bursting into gaudier life, and Heaven knows what. [Vol. iv. 323.]

There is a still stranger instance of the editor's talent for finding out difficulty in what is perfectly plain. "No man," said Johnson, "can now be made a bishop for his learning and piety."

"From this too just observation," says Boswell, "there are some eminent exceptions." Mr. Croker is puzzled by Boswell's very natural and simple language. "That a general observation should be pronounced too just, by the very person who admits that it is not universally just, is not a little odd." [2 iii. 228.]

A very large proportion of the two thousand five hundred notes which the editor boasts of having added to those of Boswell and Malone consists of the flattest and poorest reflections, reflections such as the least intelligent reader is quite competent to make for himself, and such as no intelligent reader would think it worth while to utter aloud. They remind us of nothing so much as of those profound and interesting annotations which are pencilled by sempstresses and apothecaries' boys on the
dog-eared margins of novels borrowed from circulating libraries;
"How beautiful!" "Cursed prosy!" "I don't like Sir Reginald Malcolm at all." "I think Pelham is a sad dandy." Mr. Croker is perpetually stopping us in our progress through the most delightful narrative in the language, to observe that really Dr. Johnson was very rude, that he talked more for victory than for truth, that his taste for port wine with capillaire in it was very odd, that Boswell was impertinent, that it was foolish in Mrs. Thrale to marry the music-master; and so forth.

We cannot speak more favourably of the manner in which the notes are written than of the matter of which they consist. We find in every page words used in wrong senses, and constructions which violate the plainest rules of grammar. We have the vulgarism of "mutual friend," for "common friend." We have "fallacy" used as synonymous with "falsehood." We have many such inextricable labyrinths of pronouns as that which follows: "Lord Erskine was fond of this anecdote; he told it to the editor the first time that he had the honour of being in his company." Lastly, we have a plentiful supply of sentences resembling those which we subjoin. "Markland, who, with Jortin and Thirlby, Johnson calls three contemporaries of great eminence." [iv. 377.] "Warburton himself did not feel, as Mr. Boswell was disposed to think he did, kindly or gratefully of Johnson." [iv. 415.] "It was him that Horace Walpole called a man who never made a bad figure but as an author." [ii. 461.] One or two of these solecisms should perhaps be attributed to the printer, who has certainly done his
best to fill both the text and the notes with all sorts of
blunders. In truth, he and the editor have between them made the
book so bad, that we do not well see how it could have been
worse.

When we turn from the commentary of Mr. Croker to the work of our
old friend Boswell, we find it not only worse printed than in any
other edition with which we are acquainted, but mangled in the
most wanton manner. Much that Boswell inserted in his narrative
is, without the shadow of a reason, degraded to the appendix. The
editor has also taken upon himself to alter or omit passages
which he considers as indecorous. This prudery is quite
unintelligible to us. There is nothing immoral in Boswell's book,
nothing which tends to inflame the passions. He sometimes uses
plain words. But if this be a taint which requires expurgation,
it would be desirable to begin by expurgating the morning and
evening lessons. The delicate office which Mr. Croker has
undertaken he has performed in the most capricious manner. One
strong, old-fashioned, English word, familiar to all who read
their Bibles, is changed for a sober synonym in some passages,
and suffered to stand unaltered in others. In one place a faint
allusion made by Johnson to an indelicate subject, an allusion so
faint that, till Mr. Croker's note pointed it out to us, we had
never noticed it, and of which we are quite sure that the meaning
would never be discovered by any of those for whose sake books
are expurgated, is altogether omitted. In another place, a coarse
and stupid jest of Dr. Taylor on the same subject, expressed in
the broadest language, almost the only passage, as far as we remember, in all Boswell's book, which we should have been inclined to leave out, is suffered to remain.

We complain, however, much more of the additions than of the omissions. We have half of Mrs. Thrale's book, scraps of Mr. Tyers, scraps of Mr. Murphy, scraps of Mr. Cradock, long prosings of Sir John Hawkins, and connecting observations by Mr. Croker himself, inserted into the midst of Boswell's text. To this practice we most decidedly object. An editor might as well publish Thucydides with extracts from Diodorus interspersed, or incorporate the Lives of Suetonius with the History and Annals of Tacitus. Mr. Croker tells us, indeed, that he has done only what Boswell wished to do, and was prevented from doing by the law of copyright. We doubt this greatly. Boswell has studiously abstained from availing himself of the information given by his rivals, on many occasions on which he might have cited them without subjecting himself to the charge of piracy. Mr. Croker has himself, on one occasion, remarked very justly that Boswell was unwilling to owe any obligation to Hawkins. But, be this as it may, if Boswell had quoted from Sir John and from Mrs. Thrale, he would have been guided by his own taste and judgment in selecting his quotations. On what Boswell quoted he would have commented with perfect freedom; and the borrowed passages, so selected, and accompanied by such comments, would have become original. They would have dovetailed into the work. No hitch, no crease, would have been discernible. The whole would appear one
and indivisible.

"Ut per laeve severos
Effundat junctura ungues."

This is not the case with Mr. Croker's insertions. They are not
chosen as Boswell would have chosen them. They are not introduced
as Boswell would have introduced them. They differ from the
quotations scattered through the original Life of Johnson, as a
withered bough stuck in the ground differs from a tree skilfully
transplanted with all its life about it.

Not only do these anecdotes disfigure Boswell's book; they are
themselves disfigured by being inserted in his book. The charm of
Mrs. Thrale's little volume is utterly destroyed. The feminine
quickness of observation, the feminine softness of heart, the
colloquial incorrectness and vivacity of style, the little
amusing airs of a half-learned lady, the delightful garrulity,
the "dear Doctor Johnson," the "it was so comical," all disappear
in Mr. Croker's quotations. The lady ceases to speak in the first
person; and her anecdotes, in the process of transfusion, become
as flat as Champagne in decanters, or Herodotus in Beloe's
version. Sir John Hawkins, it is true, loses nothing; and for the
best of reasons. Sir John Hawkins has nothing to lose.

The course which Mr. Croker ought to have taken is quite clear.
He should have reprinted Boswell's narrative precisely as Boswell wrote it; and in the notes or the appendix he should have placed any anecdote which he might have thought it advisable to quote from other writers. This would have been a much more convenient course for the reader, who has now constantly to keep his eye on the margin in order to see whether he is perusing Boswell, Mrs. Thrale, Murphy, Hawkins, Tyers, Cradock, or Mr. Croker. We greatly doubt whether even the Tour to the Hebrides ought to have been inserted in the midst of the Life. There is one marked distinction between the two works. Most of the Tour was seen by Johnson in manuscript. It does not appear that he ever saw any part of the Life.

We love, we own, to read the great productions of the human mind as they were written. We have this feeling even about scientific treatises; though we know that the sciences are always in a state of progression, and that the alterations made by a modern editor in an old book on any branch of natural or political philosophy are likely to be improvements. Some errors have been detected by writers of this generation in the speculations of Adam Smith. A short cut has been made to much knowledge at which Sir Isaac Newton arrived through arduous and circuitous paths. Yet we still look with peculiar veneration on the Wealth of Nations and on the Principia, and should regret to see either of those great works garbled even by the ablest hands. But in works which owe much of their interest to the character and situation of the writers, the case is infinitely stronger. What man of taste and feeling can
endure rifacimenti, harmonies, abridgments, expurgated editions?

Who ever reads a stage-copy of a play when he can procure the
original? Who ever cut open Mrs. Siddons's Milton? Who ever got
through ten pages of Mr. Gilpin's translation of John Bunyan's
Pilgrim into modern English? Who would lose, in the confusion
of a Diatessaron, the peculiar charm which belongs to the
narrative

of the disciple whom Jesus loved? The feeling of a reader who has
become intimate with any great original work is that which Adam
expressed towards his bride:

"Should God create another Eve, and I
Another rib afford, yet loss of thee
Would never from my heart."

No substitute, however exquisitely formed, will fill the void
left by the original. The second beauty may be equal or superior
to the first; but still it is not she.

The reasons which Mr. Croker has given for incorporating passages
from Sir John Hawkins and Mrs. Thrale with the narrative of
Boswell, would vindicate the adulteration of half the classical
works in the language. If Pepys's Diary and Mrs. Hutchinson's
Memoirs had been published a hundred years ago, no human being
can doubt that Mr. Hume would have made great use of those books
in his History of England. But would it, on that account, be
judicious in a writer of our own times to publish an edition of
Hume's History of England, in which large extracts from Pepys and
Mrs. Hutchinson should be incorporated with the original text?
Surely not. Hume's history, be its faults what they may, is now
one great entire work, the production of one vigorous mind,
working on such materials as were within its reach. Additions
made by another hand may supply a particular deficiency, but
would grievously injure the general effect. With Boswell's book
the case is stronger. There is scarcely, in the whole compass of
literature, a book which bears interpolation so ill. We know no
production of the human mind which has so much of what may be
called the race, so much of the peculiar flavour of the soil from
which it sprang. The work could never have been written if the
writer had not been precisely what he was. His character is
displayed in every page, and this display of character gives a
delightful interest to many passages which have no other
interest.

The Life of Johnson is assuredly a great, a very great work.
Homer is not more decidedly the first of heroic poets, Shakspeare
is not more decidedly the first of dramatists, Demosthenes is not
more decidedly the first of orators, than Boswell is the first of
biographers. He has no second. He has distanced all his
competitors so decidedly that it is not worth while to place
them. Eclipse is first, and the rest nowhere.

We are not sure that there is in the whole history of the human
intellect so strange a phaenomenon as this book. Many of the
greatest men that ever lived have written biography. Boswell was
one of the smallest men that ever lived, and he has beaten them
all. He was, if we are to give any credit to his own account or
to the united testimony of all who knew him, a man of the meanest
and feeblest intellect. Johnson described him as a fellow who had
missed his only chance of immortality by not having been alive
when the Dunciad was written. Beauclerk used his name as a
proverbial expression for a bore. He was the laughing-stock of
the whole of that brilliant society which has owed to him the
greater part of its fame. He was always laying himself at the
feet of some eminent man, and begging to be spit upon and
trampled upon. He was always earning some ridiculous nickname,
and then "binding it as a crown unto him," not merely in
metaphor, but literally. He exhibited himself, at the Shakespeare
Jubilee, to all the crowd which filled Stratford-on-Avon, with a
placard round his hat bearing the inscription of Corsica Boswell.
In his Tour, he proclaimed to all the world that at Edinburgh he
was known by the appellation of Paoli Boswell. Servile and
impertinent, shallow and pedantic, a bigot and a sot, bloated
with family pride, and eternally blustering about the dignity of
a born gentleman, yet stooping to be a talebearer, an
eavesdropper, a common butt in the taverns of London, so curious
to know everybody who was talked about, that, Tory and High
Churchman as he was, he manœuvred, we have been told, for an
introduction to Tom Paine, so vain of the most childish
distinctions, that when he had been to Court, he drove to the
office where his book was printing without changing his clothes,
and summoned all the printer's devils to admire his new ruffles
and sword; such was this man, and such he was content and proud
to be. Everything which another man would have hidden, everything
the publication of which would have made another man hang
himself, was matter of gay and clamorous exultation to his weak
and diseased mind. What silly things he said, what bitter retorts
he provoked, how at one place he was troubled with evil
presentiments which came to nothing, how at another place, on
waking from a drunken doze, he read the prayer-book and took a
hair of the dog that had bitten him, how he went to see men
hanged and came away maudlin, how he added five hundred pounds to
the fortune of one of his babies because she was not scared at
Johnson's ugly face, how was frightened out of his wits at sea,
and how the sailors quieted him as they would have quieted a
child, how tipsy he was at Lady Cork's one evening and how much
his merriment annoyed the ladies, how impertinent he was to the
Duchess of Argyll and with what stately contempt she put down his
impertinence, how Colonel Macleod sneered to his face at his
impudent obtrusiveness, how his father and the very wife of his
bosom laughed and fretted at his fooleries; all these things he
proclaimed to all the world, as if they had been subjects for
pride and ostentatious rejoicing. All the caprices of his temper,
all the illusions of his vanity, all his hypochondriac whimsies,
al his castles in the air, he displayed with a cool self-
complacency, a perfect unconsciousness that he was making a fool
of himself, to which it is impossible to find a parallel in the
whole history of mankind. He has used many people ill; but
assuredly he has used nobody so ill as himself.
That such a man should have written one of the best books in the world is strange enough. But this is not all. Many persons who have conducted themselves foolishly in active life, and whose conversation has indicated no superior powers of mind, have left us valuable works. Goldsmith was very justly described by one of his contemporaries as an inspired idiot, and by another as a being

"Who wrote like an angel, and talked like poor Poll."

La Fontaine was in society a mere simpleton. His blunders would not come in amiss among the stories of Hierocles. But these men attained literary eminence in spite of their weaknesses. Boswell attained it by reason of his weaknesses. If he had not been a great fool, he would never have been a great writer. Without all the qualities which made him the jest and the torment of those among whom he lived, without the officiousness, the inquisitiveness, the effrontery, the toad-eating, the insensibility to all reproof, he never could have produced so excellent a book. He was a slave, proud of his servitude, a Paul Pry, convinced that his own curiosity and garrulity were virtues, an unsafe companion who never scrupled to repay the most liberal hospitality by the basest violation of confidence, a man without delicacy, without shame, without sense enough to know when he was hurting the feelings of others or when he was exposing himself to
derision; and because he was all this, he has, in an important
department of literature, immeasurably surpassed such writers as
Tacitus, Clarendon, Alfieri, and his own idol Johnson.

Of the talents which ordinarily raise men to eminence as writers,
Boswell had absolutely none. There is not in all his books a
single remark of his own on literature, politics, religion, or
society, which is not either commonplace or absurd. His
dissertations on hereditary gentility, on the slave-trade, and on
the entailing of landed estates, may serve as examples. To say
that these passages are sophistical would be to pay them an
extravagant compliment. They have no pretence to argument, or
even to meaning. He has reported innumerable observations made by
himself in the course of conversation. Of those observations we
do not remember one which is above the intellectual capacity of a
boy of fifteen. He has printed many of his own letters, and in
these letters he is always ranting or twaddling. Logic,
elocution, wit, taste, all those things which are generally
considered as making a book valuable, were utterly wanting to
him. He had, indeed, a quick observation and a retentive memory.
These qualities, if he had been a man of sense and virtue would
scarcely of themselves have sufficed to make him conspicuous; but
because he was a dunce, a parasite, and a coxcomb, they have made
him immortal.

Those parts of his book which, considered abstractedly, are most
utterly worthless, are delightful when we read them as
illustrations of the character of the writer. Bad in themselves, they are good dramatically, like the nonsense of justice Shallow, the clipped English of Dr. Caius, or the misplaced consonants of Fluellen. Of all confessors, Boswell is the most candid. Other men who have pretended to lay open their own hearts, Rousseau, for example, and Lord Byron, have evidently written with a constant view to effect, and are to be then most distrusted when they seem to be most sincere. There is scarcely any man who would not rather accuse himself of great crimes and of dark and tempestuous passions than proclaim all his little vanities and wild fancies. It would be easier to find a person who would avow actions like those of Caesar Borgia, or Danton, than one who would publish a daydream like those of Alnaschar and Malvolio. Those weaknesses which most men keep covered up in the most secret places of the mind, not to be disclosed to the eye of friendship or of love, were precisely the weaknesses which Boswell paraded before all the world. He was perfectly frank, because the weakness of his understanding and the tumult of his spirits prevented him from knowing when he made himself ridiculous. His book resembles nothing so much as the conversation of the inmates of the Palace of Truth.

His fame is great; and it will, we have no doubt, be lasting; but it is fame of a peculiar kind, and indeed marvellously resembles infamy. We remember no other case in which the world has made so great a distinction between a book and its author. In general, the book and the author are considered as one. To admire the book
is to admire the author. The case of Boswell is an exception, we
think the only exception, to this rule. His work is universally
allowed to be interesting, instructive, eminently original: yet
it has brought him nothing but contempt. All the world reads it,
all the world delights in it: yet we do not remember ever to have
read or ever to have heard any expression of respect and
admiration for the man to whom we owe so much instruction and
amusement. While edition after edition of his book was coming
forth, his son, as Mr. Croker tells us, was ashamed of it, and
hated to hear it mentioned. This feeling was natural and
reasonable. Sir Alexander saw that in proportion to the celebrity
of the work, was the degradation of the author. The very editors
of this unfortunate gentleman's books have forgotten their
allegiance, and, like those Puritan casuists who took arms by the
authority of the king against his person, have attacked the
writer while doing homage to the writings. Mr. Croker, for
example, has published two thousand five hundred notes on the
life of Johnson, and yet scarcely ever mentions the biographer,
whose performance he has taken such pains to illustrate, without
some expression of contempt.

An ill-natured man Boswell certainly was not. Yet the malignity
of the most malignant satirist could scarcely cut deeper than his
thoughtless loquacity. Having himself no sensibility to derision
and contempt, he took it for granted that all others were equally
callous. He was not ashamed to exhibit himself to the whole world
as a common spy, a common tattler, a humble companion without the
excuse of poverty, and to tell a hundred stories of his own
pertness and folly, and of the insults which his pertness and
folly brought upon him. It was natural that he should show little
discretion in cases in which the feelings or the honour of others
might be concerned. No man, surely, ever published such stories
respecting persons whom he professed to love and revere. He would
infallibly have made his hero as contemptible as he has made
himself, had not his hero really possessed some moral and
intellectual qualities of a very high order. The best proof that
Johnson was really an extraordinary man is that his character,
instead of being degraded, has, on the whole, been decidedly
raised by a work in which all his vices and weaknesses are
exposed more unsparingly than they ever were exposed by Churchill
or by Kenrick.

Johnson grown old, Johnson in the fulness of his fame and in the
enjoyment of a competent fortune, is better known to us than any
other man in history. Everything about him, his coat, his wig,
his figure, his face, his scrofula, his St. Vitus's dance, his
rolling walk, his blinking eye, the outward signs which too
clearly marked his approbation of his dinner, his insatiable
appetite for fish-sauce and veal-pie with plums, his
inextinguishable thirst for tea, his trick of touching the posts
as he walked, his mysterious practice of treasuring up scraps of
orange-peel, his morning slumbers, his midnight disputations, his
contortions, his mutterings, his gruntings, his puffings, his
vigorous, acute, and ready eloquence, his sarcastic wit, his
vehemence, his insolence, his fits of tempestuous rage, his queer
inmates, old Mr. Levett and blind Mrs. Williams, the cat Hodge
and the negro Frank, all are as familiar to us as the objects by
which we have been surrounded from childhood.

But we have no minute information respecting those years of
Johnson's life during which his character and his manners became
immutably fixed. We know him, not as he was known to the men of
his own generation, but as he was known to men whose father he
might have been. That celebrated club of which he was the most
distinguished member contained few persons who could remember a
time when his fame was not fully established and his habits
completely formed. He had made himself a name in literature while
Reynolds and the Wartons were still boys. He was about twenty
years older than Burke, Goldsmith, and Gerard Hamilton, about
thirty years older than Gibbon, Beauclerk, and Langton, and about
forty years older than Lord Stowell, Sir William Jones, and
Windham. Boswell and Mrs. Thrale, the two writers from whom we
derive most of our knowledge respecting him, never saw him till
long after he was fifty years old, till most of his great works
had become classical, and till the pension bestowed on him by the
Crown had placed him above poverty. Of those eminent men who were
his most intimate associates towards the close of his life, the
only one, as far as we remember, who knew him during the first
ten or twelve years of his residence in the capital, was David
Garrick; and it does not appear that, during those years, David
Garrick saw much of his fellow-townsman.
Johnson came up to London precisely at the time when the condition of a man of letters was most miserable and degraded. It was a dark night between two sunny days. The age of patronage had passed away. The age of general curiosity and intelligence had not arrived. The number of readers is at present so great that a popular author may subsist in comfort and opulence on the profits of his works. In the reigns of William the Third, of Anne, and of George the First, even such men as Congreve and Addison would scarcely have been able to live like gentlemen by the mere sale of their writings. But the deficiency of the natural demand for literature was, at the close of the seventeenth and at the beginning of the eighteenth century, more than made up by artificial encouragement, by a vast system of bounties and premiums. There was, perhaps, never a time at which the rewards of literary merit were so splendid, at which men who could write well found such easy admittance into the most distinguished society, and to the highest honours of the State. The chiefs of both the great parties into which the kingdom was divided, patronised literature with emulous munificence. Congreve, when he had scarcely attained his majority, was rewarded for his first comedy with places which made him independent for life. Smith, though his Hippolytus and Phaedra failed, would have been consoled with three hundred a year but for his own folly. Rowe was not only Poet Laureate, but also land-surveyor of the customs in the port of London, clerk of the council to the Prince of Wales, and secretary of the Presentations to the Lord Chancellor.
Hughes was secretary to the Commissions of the Peace. Ambrose Philips was judge of the Prerogative Court in Ireland. Locke was Commissioner of Appeals and of the Board of Trade. Newton was Master of the Mint. Stepney and Prior were employed in embassies of high dignity and importance. Gay, who commenced life as apprentice to a silk mercer, became a secretary of legation at five-and-twenty. It was to a poem on the death of Charles the Second, and to the City and Country Mouse, that Montague owed his introduction into public life, his earldom, his garter, and his Auditorship of the Exchequer. Swift, but for the unconquerable prejudice of the queen, would have been a bishop. Oxford, with his white staff in his hand, passed through the crowd of his suitors to welcome Parnell, when that ingenious writer deserted the Whigs. Steele was a commissioner of stamps and a member of Parliament. Arthur Mainwaring was a commissioner of the customs, and auditor of the imprest. Tickell was secretary to the Lords Justices of Ireland. Addison was Secretary of State.

This liberal patronage was brought into fashion, as it seems, by the magnificent Dorset, almost the only noble versifier in the Court of Charles the Second who possessed talents for composition which were independent of the aid of a coronet. Montague owed his elevation to the favour of Dorset, and imitated through the whole course of his life the liberality to which he was himself so greatly indebted. The Tory leaders, Harley and Bolingbroke in particular, vied with the chiefs of the Whig party in zeal for the encouragement of letters. But soon after the accession of the
House of Hanover a change took place. The supreme power passed to a man who cared little for poetry or eloquence. The importance of the House of Commons was constantly on the increase. The Government was under the necessity of bartering for Parliamentary support much of that patronage which had been employed in fostering literary merit; and Walpole was by no means inclined to divert any part of the fund of corruption to purposes which he considered as idle. He had eminent talents for governments and for debate. But he had paid little attention to books, and felt little respect for authors. One of the coarse jokes of his friend, Sir Charles Hanbury Williams, was far more pleasing to him than Thomson's Seasons or Richardson's Pamela. He had observed that some of the distinguished writers whom the favour of Halifax had turned into statesmen had been mere incumbrances to their party, dawdlers in office and mutes in Parliament. During the whole course of his administration, therefore, he scarcely befriended a single man of genius. The best writers of the age gave all their support to the Opposition, and contributed to excite that discontent which, after plunging the nation into a foolish and unjust war, overthrew the Minister to make room for men less able and equally immoral. The Opposition could reward its eulogists with little more than promises and caresses. St. James's would give nothing: Leicester House had nothing to give.

Thus, at the time when Johnson commenced his literary career, a writer had little to hope from the patronage of powerful individuals. The patronage of the public did not yet furnish the
means of comfortable subsistence. The prices paid by booksellers
to authors were so low that a man of considerable talents and
unremitting industry could do little more than provide for the
day which was passing over him. The lean kine had eaten up the
fat kine. The thin and withered ears had devoured the good ears.
The season of rich harvest was over, and the period of famine had
begun. All that is squalid and miserable might now be summed up
in the word Poet. That word denoted a creature dressed like a
scarecrow, familiar with compters and spunging-houses, and
perfectly qualified to decide on the comparative merits of the
Common Side in the King's Bench prison and of Mount Scoundrel in
the Fleet. Even the poorest pitied him; and they well might pity
him. For if their condition was equally abject, their aspirings
were not equally high, nor their sense of insult equally acute.
To lodge in a garret up four pair of stairs, to dine in a cellar
among footmen out of place, to translate ten hours a day for the
wages of a ditcher, to be hunted by bailiffs from one haunt of
beggary and pestilence to another, from Grub Street to St.
George's Fields, and from St. George's Fields to the alleys
behind St. Martin's church, to sleep on a bulk in June and amidst
the ashes of a glass-house in December, to die in an hospital,
and to be buried in a parish vault, was the fate of more than one
writer who, if he had lived thirty years earlier, would have been
admitted to the sittings of the Kitcat or the Scriblerus Club,
would have sat in Parliament, and would have been intrusted with
embassies to the High Allies; who, if he had lived in our time,
would have found encouragement scarcely less munificent in
Albemarle Street or in Paternoster Row.
As every climate has its peculiar diseases, so every walk of life has its peculiar temptations. The literary character, assuredly, has always had its share of faults, vanity, jealousy, morbid sensibility. To these faults were now superadded the faults which are commonly found in men whose livelihood is precarious, and whose principles are exposed to the trial of severe distress. All the vices of the gambler and of the beggar were blended with those of the author. The prizes in the wretched lottery of book-making were scarcely less ruinous than the blanks. If good fortune came, it came in such a manner that it was almost certain to be abused. After months of starvation and despair, a full third night or a well-received dedication filled the pocket of the lean, ragged, unwashed poet with guineas. He hastened to enjoy those luxuries with the images of which his mind had been haunted while he was sleeping amidst the cinders and eating potatoes at the Irish ordinary in Shoe Lane. A week of taverns soon qualified him for another year of night-cellar. Such was the life of Savage, of Boyse, and of a crowd of others. Sometimes blazing in gold-laced hats and waistcoats; sometimes lying in bed because their coats had gone to pieces, or wearing paper cravats because their linen was in pawn; sometimes drinking Champagne and Tokay with Betty Careless; sometimes standing at the window of an eating-house in Porridge island, to snuff up the scent of what they could not afford to taste; they knew luxury; they knew beggary; but they never knew comfort. These men were irreclaimable. They looked on a regular and frugal life with the
same aversion which an old gipsy or a Mohawk hunter feels for a stationary abode, and for the restraints and securities of civilised communities. They were as untameable, as much wedded to their desolate freedom, as the wild ass. They could no more be broken in to the offices of social man than the unicorn could be trained to serve and abide by the crib. It was well if they did not, like beasts of a still fiercer race, tear the hands which ministered to their necessities. To assist them was impossible; and the most benevolent of mankind at length became weary of giving relief which was dissipated with the wildest profusion as soon as it had been received. If a sum was bestowed on the wretched adventurer, such as, properly husbanded, might have supplied him for six months, it was instantly spent in strange freaks of sensuality, and, before forty-eight hours had elapsed, the poet was again pestering all his acquaintance for twopence to get a plate of shin of beef at a subterraneous cookshop. If his friends gave him an asylum in their houses, those houses were forthwith turned into bagnios and taverns. All order was destroyed; all business was suspended. The most good-natured host began to repent of his eagerness to serve a man of genius in distress when he heard his guest roaring for fresh punch at five o'clock in the morning.

A few eminent writers were more fortunate. Pope had been raised above poverty by the active patronage which, in his youth, both the great political parties had extended to his Homer. Young had received the only pension ever bestowed, to the best of our
recollect, by Sir Robert Walpole, as the reward of mere literary merit. One or two of the many poets who attached themselves to the Opposition, Thomson in particular and Mallet, obtained, after much severe suffering, the means of subsistence from their political friends. Richardson, like a man of sense, kept his shop; and his shop kept him, which his novels, admirable as they are, would scarcely have done. But nothing could be more deplorable than the state even of the ablest men, who at that time depended for subsistence on their writings. Johnson, Collins, Fielding, and Thomson, were certainly four of the most distinguished persons that England produced during the eighteenth century. It is well known that they were all four arrested for debt. Into calamities and difficulties such as these Johnson plunged in his twenty-eighth year. From that time, till he was three or four and fifty, we have little information respecting him; little, we mean, compared with the full and accurate information which we possess respecting his proceedings and habits towards the close of his life. He emerged at length from cock-lofts and sixpenny ordinaries into the society of the polished and the opulent. His fame was established. A pension sufficient for his wants had been conferred on him: and he came forth to astonish a generation with which he had almost as little in common as with Frenchmen or Spaniards.

In his early years he had occasionally seen the great; but he had seen them as a beggar. He now came among them as a companion. The demand for amusement and instruction had, during the course of
twenty years, been gradually increasing. The price of literary
labour had risen; and those rising men of letters with whom
Johnson was henceforth to associate, were for the most part
persons widely different from those who had walked about with him
all night in the streets for want of a lodging. Burke, Robertson,
the Wartons, Gray, Mason, Gibbon, Adam Smith, Beattie, Sir
William Jones, Goldsmith, and Churchill, were the most
distinguished writers of what may be called the second generation
of the Johnsonian age. Of these men Churchill was the only one in
whom we can trace the stronger lineaments of that character
which, when Johnson first came up to London, was common among
authors. Of the rest, scarcely any had felt the pressure of
severe poverty. Almost all had been early admitted into the most
respectable society on an equal footing. They were men of quite a
different species from the dependants of Curll and Osborne.

Johnson came among them the solitary specimen of a past age, the
last survivor of the genuine race of Grub Street hacks; the last
of that generation of authors whose abject misery and whose
dissolute manners had furnished inexhaustible matter to the
satirical genius of Pope. From nature he had received an uncouth
figure, a diseased constitution, and an irritable temper. The
manner in which the earlier years of his manhood had been passed
had given to his demeanour, and even to his moral character, some
peculiarities appalling to the civilised beings who were the
companions of his old age. The perverse irregularity of his
hours, the slovenliness of his person, his fits of strenuous
exertion, interrupted by long intervals of sluggishness, his strange abstinence, and his equally strange voracity, his active benevolence, contrasted with the constant rudeness and the occasional ferocity of his manners in society, made him, in the opinion of those with whom he lived during the last twenty years of his life, a complete original. An original he was, undoubtedly, in some respects. But if we possessed full information concerning those who shared his early hardships, we should probably find that what we call his singularities of manner were, for the most part, failings which he had in common with the class to which he belonged. He ate at Streatham Park as he had been used to eat behind the screen at St. John's Gate, when he was ashamed to show his ragged clothes. He ate as it was natural that a man should eat, who, during a great part of his life, had passed the morning in doubt whether he should have food for the afternoon. The habits of his early life had accustomed him to bear privation with fortitude, but not to taste pleasure with moderation. He could fast; but, when he did not fast, he tore his dinner like a famished wolf, with the veins swelling on his forehead, and the perspiration running down his cheeks. He scarcely ever took wine. But when he drank it, he drank it greedily and in large tumblers. These were, in fact, mitigated symptoms of that same moral disease which raged with such deadly malignity in his friends Savage and Boyse. The roughness and violence which he showed in society were to be expected from a man whose temper, not naturally gentle, had been long tried by the bitterest calamities, by the want of meat, of fire, and of clothes, by the importunity of creditors, by the insolence of
booksellers, by the derision of fools, by the insincerity of
patrons, by that bread which is the bitterest of all food, by
those stairs which are the most toilsome of all paths, by that
defered hope which makes the heart sick. Through all these
things the ill-dressed, coarse, ungainly pedant had struggled
manfully up to eminence and command. It was natural that, in the
exercise of his power, he should be "eo immittor, quia
toleraverat," that, though his heart was undoubtedly generous and
humane, his demeanour in society should be harsh and despotic.
For severe distress he had sympathy, and not only sympathy, but
munificent relief. But for the suffering which a harsh word
inflicts upon a delicate mind he had no pity; for it was a kind
of suffering which he could scarcely conceive. He would carry
home on his shoulders a sick and starving girl from the streets.
He turned his house into a place of refuge for a crowd of
wretched old creatures who could find no other asylum; nor could
all their peevishness and ingratitude weary out his benevolence.
But the pangs of wounded vanity seemed to him ridiculous: and he
scarcely felt sufficient compassion even for the pangs of wounded
affection. He had seen and felt so much of sharp misery, that he
was not affected by paltry vexations; and he seemed to think that
everybody ought to be as much hardened to those vexations as
himself. He was angry with Boswell for complaining of a headache,
with Mrs. Thrale for grumbling about the dust on the road, or the
smell of the kitchen. These were, in his phrase, "foppish
lamentations," which people ought to be ashamed to utter in a
world so full of sin and sorrow. Goldsmith crying because The
Good-natured Man had failed, inspired him with no pity. Though
his own health was not good, he detested and despised
valetudinarians. Pecuniary losses, unless they reduced the loser
absolutely to beggary, moved him very little. People whose hearts
had been softened by prosperity might weep, he said, for such
events; but all that could be expected of a plain man was not to
laugh. He was not much moved even by the spectacle of Lady
Tavistock dying of a broken heart for the loss of her lord. Such
grief he considered as a luxury reserved for the idle and the
wealthy. A washerwoman, left a widow with nine small children,
would not have sobbed herself to death.

A person who troubled himself so little about small or
sentimental grievances was not likely to be very attentive to
the feelings of others in the ordinary intercourse of society. He
could not understand how a sarcasm or a reprimand could make any
man really unhappy. "My dear doctor," said he to Goldsmith, "what
harm does it do to a man to call him Holofernes?" "Pooh, ma'am,"
he exclaimed, to Mrs. Carter, "who is the worse for being talked
of uncharitably?" Politeness has been well defined as benevolence
in small things. Johnson was impolite, not because he wanted
benevolence, but because small things appeared smaller to him
than to people who had never known what it was to live for
fourpence halfpenny a day.

The characteristic peculiarity of his intellect was the union of
great powers with low prejudices. If we judged of him by the best
parts of his mind, we should place him almost as high as he was
placed by the idolatry of Boswell; if by the worst parts of his mind, we should place him even below Boswell himself. Where he was not under the influence of some strange scruple, or some domineering passion, which prevented him from boldly and fairly investigating a subject, he was a wary and acute reasoner, a little too much inclined to scepticism, and a little too fond of paradox. No man was less likely to be imposed upon by fallacies in argument, or by exaggerated statements of fact. But if, while he was beating down sophisms and exposing false testimony, some childish prejudices, such as would excite laughter in a well-managed nursery, came across him, he was smitten as if by enchantment. His mind dwindled away under the spell from gigantic elevation to dwarfish littleness. Those who had lately been admiring its amplitude and its force were now as much astonished at its strange narrowness and feebleness as the fisherman in the Arabian tale, when he saw the Genie, whose stature had overshadowed the whole seacoast, and whose might seemed equal to a contest with armies, contract himself to the dimensions of his small prison, and lie there the helpless slave of the charm of Solomon.

Johnson was in the habit of sifting with extreme severity the evidence for all stories which were merely odd. But when they were not only odd but miraculous, his severity relaxed. He began to be credulous precisely at the point where the most credulous people begin to be sceptical. It is curious to observe, both in his writings and in his conversation, the contrast between the
disdainful manner in which he rejects unauthenticated anecdotes, even when they are consistent with the general laws of nature, and the respectful manner in which he mentions the wildest stories relating to the invisible world. A man who told him of a water-spout, or a meteoric stone, generally had the lie direct given him for his pains. A man who told him of a prediction or a dream wonderfully accomplished was sure of a courteous hearing. "Johnson," observed Hogarth, "like King David, says in his haste that all men are liars." "His incredulity," says Mrs. Thrale, "amounted almost to disease." She tells us how he browbeat a gentleman, who gave him an account of a hurricane in the West Indies, and a poor Quaker who related some strange circumstance about the red-hot balls fired at the siege of Gibraltar. "It is not so. It cannot be true. Don't tell that story again. You cannot think how poor a figure you make in telling it." He once said, half-testingly, we suppose, that for six months he refused to credit the fact of the earthquake at Lisbon, and that he still believed the extent of the calamity to be greatly exaggerated. Yet he related with a grave face how old Mr. Cave of St. John's Gate saw a ghost, and how this ghost was something of a shadowy being. He went himself on a ghost-hunt to Cock Lane, and was angry with John Wesley for not following up another scent of the same kind with proper spirit and perseverance. He rejects the Celtic genealogies and poems without the least hesitation; yet he declares himself willing to believe the stories of the second sight. If he had examined the claims of the Highland seers with half the severity with which he sifted the evidence for the genuineness of Fingal, he would, we suspect,
have come away from Scotland with a mind fully made up. In his Lives of the Poets, we find that he is unwilling to give credit to the accounts of Lord Roscommon's early proficiency in his studies: but he tells with great solemnity an absurd romance about some intelligence preternaturally impressed on the mind of that nobleman. He avows himself to be in great doubt about the truth of the story, and ends by warning his readers not wholly to slight such impressions.

Many of his sentiments on religious subjects are worthy of a liberal and enlarged mind. He could discern clearly enough the folly and meanness of all bigotry except his own. When he spoke of the scruples of the Puritans, he spoke like a person who had really obtained an insight into the divine philosophy of the New Testament, and who considered Christianity as a noble scheme of government, tending to promote the happiness and to elevate the moral nature of man. The horror which the sectaries felt for cards, Christmas ale, plum-porridge, mince-pies, and dancing-bears, excited his contempt. To the arguments urged by some very worthy people against showy dress he replied with admirable sense and spirit, "Let us not be found, when our Master calls us, stripping the lace off our waistcoats, but the spirit of contention from our souls and tongues. Alas! sir, a man who cannot get to heaven in a green coat will not find his way thither the sooner in a grey one." Yet he was himself under the tyranny of scruples as unreasonable as those of Hudibras or Ralhpo, and carried his zeal for ceremonies and for
ecclesiastical dignities to lengths altogether inconsistent with reason or with Christian charity. He has gravely noted down in his diary that he once committed the sin of drinking coffee on Good Friday. In Scotland, he thought it his duty to pass several months without joining in public worship, solely because the ministers of the kirk had not been ordained by bishops. His mode of estimating the piety of his neighbours was somewhat singular. "Campbell," said he, "is a good man, a pious man. I am afraid he has not been in the inside of a church for many years; but he never passes a church without pulling off his hat; this shows he has good principles." Spain and Sicily must surely contain many pious robbers and well-principled assassins. Johnson could easily see that a Roundhead who named all his children after Solomon's singers, and talked in the House of Commons about seeking the Lord, might be an unprincipled villain, whose religious mummeries only aggravated his guilt. But a man who took off his hat when he passed a church episcopally consecrated must be a good man, a pious man, a man of good principles. Johnson could easily see that those persons who looked on a dance or a laced waistcoat as sinful, deemed most ignobly of the attributes of God and of the ends of revelation. But with what a storm of invective he would have overwhelmed any man who had blamed him for celebrating the redemption of mankind with sugarless tea and butterless buns.

Nobody spoke more contemptuously of the cant of patriotism. Nobody saw more clearly the error of those who regarded liberty, not as a means, but as an end, and who proposed to themselves, as
the object of their pursuit, the prosperity of the State: as
distinct from the prosperity of the individuals who compose the
State. His calm and settled opinion seems to have been that forms
of government have little or no influence on the happiness of
society. This opinion, erroneous as it is, ought at least to have
preserved him from all intemperance on political questions. It
did not, however, preserve him from the lowest, fiercest, and
most absurd extravagances of party spirit, from rants which, in
everything but the diction, resembled those of Squire Western. He
was, as a politician, half ice and half fire. On the side of his
intellect he was a mere Pococurante, far too apathetic about
public affairs, far too sceptical as to the good or evil tendency
of any form of polity. His passions, on the contrary, were
violent even to slaying against all who leaned to Whiggish
principles. The well-known lines which he inserted in Goldsmith's
Traveller express what seems to have been his deliberate
judgment:

How small, of all that human hearts endure,
That part which kings or laws can cause or cure!

He had previously put expressions very similar into the mouth of
Rasselas. It is amusing to contrast these passages with the
torrents of raving abuse which he poured forth against the Long
Parliament and the American Congress. In one of the conversations
reported by Boswell this inconsistency displays itself in the
most ludicrous manner.
“Sir Adam Ferguson,” says Boswell, “suggested that luxury
corrupts a people, and destroys the spirit of liberty. JOHNSON:
‘Sir, that is all visionary. I would not give half a guinea to
live under one form of government rather than another. It is of
no moment to the happiness of an individual. Sir, the danger of
the abuse of power is nothing to a private man. What Frenchman is
prevented passing his life as he pleases?’ SIR ADAM: ‘But, sir,
in the British constitution it is surely of importance to keep up
a spirit in the people, so as to preserve a balance against the
Crown.’ JOHNSON: ‘Sir, I perceive you are a vile Whig. Why all
this childish jealousy of the power of the Crown? The Crown has
not power enough.’"

One of the old philosophers, Lord Bacon tells us, used to say
that life and death were just the same to him. "Why, then," said
an objector, "do you not kill yourself?" The philosopher
answered, "Because it is just the same." If the difference
between two forms of government be not worth half a guinea, it is
not easy to see how Whiggism can be viler than Toryism, or how
the Crown can have too little power. If the happiness of
individuals is not affected by political abuses, zeal for liberty
is doubtless ridiculous. But zeal for monarchy must he equally
so. No person could have been more quick-sighted than Johnson to
such a contradiction as this in the logic of an antagonist.
The judgments which Johnson passed on books were, in his own
time, regarded with superstitious veneration, and, in our time,
are generally treated with indiscriminate contempt. They are the
judgments of a strong but enslaved understanding. The mind of the
critic was hedged round by an uninterrupted fence of prejudices
and superstitions. Within his narrow limits, he displayed a
vigour and an activity which ought to have enabled him to clear
the barrier that confined him.

How it chanced that a man who reasoned on his premises so ably,
should assume his premises so foolishly, is one of the great
mysteries of human nature. The same inconsistency may be observed
in the schoolmen of the middle ages. Those writers show so much
acuteness and force of mind in arguing on their wretched data,
that a modern reader is perpetually at a loss to comprehend how
such minds came by such data. Not a flaw in the superstructure of
the theory which they are rearing escapes their vigilance. Yet
they are blind to the obvious unsoundness of the foundation. It
is the same with some eminent lawyers. Their legal arguments are
intellectual prodigies, abounding with the happiest analogies and
the most refined distinctions. The principles of their arbitrary
science being once admitted, the statute-book and the reports
being once assumed as the foundations of reasoning, these men
must be allowed to be perfect masters of logic. But if a question
arises as to the postulates on which their whole system rests, if
they are called upon to vindicate the fundamental maxims of that
system which they have passed their lives in studying, these very
men often talk the language of savages or of children. Those who have listened to a man of this class in his own court, and who have witnessed the skill with which he analyses and digests a vast mass of evidence, or reconciles a crowd of precedents which at first sight seem contradictory, scarcely know him again when, a few hours later, they hear him speaking on the other side of Westminster Hall in his capacity of legislator. They can scarcely believe that the paltry quirks which are faintly heard through a storm of coughing, and which do not impose on the plainest country gentleman, can proceed from the same sharp and vigorous intellect which had excited their admiration under the same roof, and on the same day.

Johnson decided literary questions like a lawyer, not like a legislator. He never examined foundations where a point was already ruled. His whole code of criticism rested on pure assumption, for which he sometimes quoted a precedent or an authority, but rarely troubled himself to give a reason drawn from the nature of things. He took it for granted that the kind of poetry which flourished in his own time, which he had been accustomed to hear praised from his childhood, and which he had himself written with success, was the best kind of poetry. In his biographical work he has repeatedly laid it down as an undeniable proposition that during the latter part of the seventeenth century, and the earlier part of the eighteenth, English poetry had been in a constant progress of improvement. Waller, Denham, Dryden, and Pope, had been, according to him, the great
reformers. He judged of all works of the imagination by the
standard established among his own contemporaries. Though he
allowed Homer to have been a greater man than Virgil, he seems to
have thought the Aeneid a greater poem than the Iliad. Indeed, he
well might have thought so; for he preferred Pope's Iliad to
Homer's. He pronounced that, after Hoole's translation of Tasso,
Fairfax's would hardly be reprinted. He could see no merit in our
fine old English ballads, and always spoke with the most
provoking contempt of Percy's fondness for them. Of the great
original works of imagination which appeared during his time,
Richardson's novels alone excited his admiration. He could see
little or no merit in Tom Jones, in Gulliver's Travels, or in
Tristram Shandy. To Thomson's Castle of Indolence he vouchsafed
only a line of cold commendation, of commendation much colder
than what he has bestowed on the Creation of that portentous
bore, Sir Richard Blackmore. Gray was, in his dialect, a barren
rascal. Churchill was a blockhead. The contempt which he felt for
the trash of Macpherson was indeed just; but it was, we suspect,
just by chance. He despised the Fingal for the very reason which
led many men of genius to admire it. He despised it, not because
it was essentially commonplace, but because it had a superficial
air of originality.

He was undoubtedly an excellent judge of compositions fashioned
on his own principles. But when a deeper philosophy was required,
when he undertook to pronounce judgment on the works of those
great minds which "yield homage only to eternal laws," his
failure was ignominious. He criticised Pope's Epitaphs excellently. But his observations on Shakspeare's plays and Milton's poems seem to us for the most part as wretched as if they had been written by Rymer himself, whom we take to have been the worst critic that ever lived.

Some of Johnson's whims on literary subjects can be compared only to that strange nervous feeling which made him uneasy if he had not touched every post between the Mitre tavern and his own lodgings. His preference of Latin epitaphs to English epitaphs is an instance. An English epitaph, he said, would disgrace Smollett. He declared that he would not pollute the walls of Westminster Abbey with an English epitaph on Goldsmith. What reason there can be for celebrating a British writer in Latin, which there was not for covering the Roman arches of triumph with Greek inscriptions, or for commemorating the deeds of the heroes of Thermopylae in Egyptian hieroglyphics, we are utterly unable to imagine.

On men and manners, at least on the men and manners of a particular place and a particular age, Johnson had certainly looked with a most observant and discriminating eye. His remarks on the education of children, on marriage, on the economy of families, on the rules of society, are always striking, and generally sound. In his writings, indeed, the knowledge of life which he possessed in an eminent degree is very imperfectly exhibited. Like those unfortunate chiefs of the middle ages who
were suffocated by their own chain-mail and cloth of gold, his
maxims perish under that load of words which was designed for
their defence and their ornament. But it is clear from the
remains of his conversation, that he had more of that homely
wisdom which nothing but experience and observation can give than
any writer since the time of Swift.

If he had been content to write as he talked, he might have left
books on the practical art of living superior to the Directions
to Servants. Yet even his remarks on society, like his remarks on
literature, indicate a mind at least as remarkable for narrowness
as for strength. He was no master of the great science of human
nature. He had studied, not the genus man, but the species
Londoner. Nobody was ever so thoroughly conversant with all the
forms of life and of all the shades of moral and intellectual
character which were to be seen from Islington to the Thames, and
from Hyde Park Corner to Mile-End Green. But his philosophy
stopped at the first turnpike-gate. Of the rural life of England
he knew nothing; and he took it for granted that everybody who
lived in the country was either stupid or miserable. "Country
gentlemen," said he, "must be unhappy; for they have not enough
to keep their lives in motion;" as if all those peculiar habits
and associations which made Fleet Street and Charing Cross the
finest views in the world to himself had been essential parts of
human nature. Of remote countries and past times he talked with
wild and ignorant presumption. "The Athenians of the age of
Demosthenes," he said to Mrs. Thrale, "were a people of brutes, a
barbarous people." In conversation with Sir Adam Ferguson he used similar language. "The boasted Athenians," he said, "were barbarians. The mass of every people must be barbarous where there is no printing." The fact was this: he saw that a Londoner who could not read was a very stupid and brutal fellow: he saw that great refinement of taste and activity of intellect were rarely found in a Londoner who had not read much; and, because it was by means of books that people acquired almost all their knowledge in the society with which he was acquainted, he concluded, in defiance of the strongest and clearest evidence, that the human mind can be cultivated by means of books alone. An Athenian citizen might possess very few volumes; and the largest library to which he had access might be much less valuable than Johnson's bookcase in Bolt Court. But the Athenian might pass every morning in conversation with Socrates, and might hear Pericles speak four or five times every month. He saw the plays of Sophocles and Aristophanes; he walked amidst the friezes of Phidias and the paintings of Zeuxis: he knew by heart the choruses of Aeschylus: he heard the rhapsodist at the corner of the streets reciting the Shield of Achilles or the Death of Argus: he was a legislator, conversant with high questions of alliance, revenue, and war: he was a soldier, trained under a liberal and generous discipline: he was a judge compelled every day to weigh the effect of opposite arguments. These things were in themselves an education, an education eminently fitted, not, indeed, to form exact or profound thinkers, but to give quickness to the perceptions, delicacy to the taste, fluency to the expression, and politeness to the manners. All this was
overlooked.

An Athenian who did not improve his mind by reading was, in
Johnson's opinion, much such a person as a Cockney who made his
mark, much such a person as black Frank before he went to school,
and far inferior to a parish clerk or a printer's devil.

Johnson's friends have allowed that he carried to a ridiculous
extreme his unjust contempt for foreigners. He pronounced the
French to be a very silly people, much behind us, stupid,
ignorant creatures. And this judgment he formed after having been
at Paris about a month, during which he would not talk French,
for fear of giving the natives an advantage over him in
conversation. He pronounced them, also, to be an indelecate
people, because a French footman touched the sugar with his
fingers. That ingenious and amusing traveller, M. Simond, has
defended his countrymen very successfully against Johnson's
accusations, and has pointed out some English practices which, to
an impartial spectator, would seem at least as inconsistent with
physical cleanliness and social decorum as those which Johnson so
bitterly reprehended. To the sage, as Boswell loves to call him,
it never occurred to doubt that there must be something eternally
and immutably good in the usages to which he had been accustomed.
In fact, Johnson's remarks on society beyond the bills of
mortality, are generally of much the same kind with those of
honest Tom Dawson, the English footman in Dr. Moore's Zeluco.
"Suppose the King of France has no sons, but only a daughter,
then, when the king dies, this here daughter, according to that
there law, cannot be made queen, but the next near relative, provided he is a man, is made king, and not the last king's daughter, which, to be sure, is very unjust. The French footguards are dressed in blue, and all the marching regiments in white, which has a very foolish appearance for soldiers; and as for blue regimentals, it is only fit for the blue horse or the artillery."

Johnson's visit to the Hebrides introduced him to a state of society completely new to him; and a salutary suspicion of his own deficiencies seems on that occasion to have crossed his mind for the first time. He confessed, in the last paragraph of his journey, that his thoughts on national manners were the thoughts of one who had seen but little, of one who had passed his time almost wholly in cities. This feeling, however, soon passed away. It is remarkable that to the last he entertained a fixed contempt for all those modes of life and those studies which tend to emancipate the mind from the prejudices of a particular age or a particular nation. Of foreign travel and of history he spoke with the fierce and boisterous contempt of ignorance. "What does a man learn by travelling? Is Beauclerk the better for travelling? What did Lord Charlemont learn in his travels, except that there was a snake in one of the pyramids of Egypt?" History was, in his opinion, to use the fine expression of Lord Plunkett, an old almanack; historians could, as he conceived, claim no higher dignity than that of almanack-makers; and his favourite historians were those who, like Lord Hailes, aspired to no higher
dignity. He always spoke with contempt of Robertson. Hume he
would not even read. He affronted one of his friends for talking
to him about Catiline's conspiracy, and declared that he never
desired to hear of the Punic war again as long as he lived.

Assuredly one fact which does not directly affect our own
interests, considered in itself, is no better worth knowing than
another fact. The fact that there is a snake in a pyramid, or the
fact that Hannibal crossed the Alps, are in themselves as
unprofitable to us as the fact that there is a green blind in a
particular house in Threadneedle Street, or the fact that a Mr.
Smith comes into the city every morning on the top of one of the
Blackwall stages. But it is certain that those who will not crack
the shell of history will never get at the kernel. Johnson, with
hasty arrogance, pronounced the kernel worthless, because he saw
no value in the shell. The real use of travelling to distant
countries and of studying the annals of past times is to preserve
men from the contraction of mind which those can hardly escape
whose whole communion is with one generation and one
neighbourhood, who arrive at conclusions by means of an induction
not sufficiently copious, and who therefore constantly confound
exceptions with rules, and accidents with essential properties.
In short, the real use of travelling and of studying history is
to keep men from being what Tom Dawson was in fiction, and Samuel
Johnson in reality.

Johnson, as Mr. Burke most justly observed, appears far greater
in Boswell's books than in his own. His conversation appears to have been quite equal to his writings in matter, and far superior to them in manners. When he talked, he clothed his wit and his sense in forcible and natural expressions. As soon as he took his pen in his hand to write for the public, his style became systematically vicious. All his books are written in a learned language, in a language which nobody hears from his mother or his nurse, in a language in which nobody ever quarrels, or drives bargains, or makes love, in a language in which nobody ever thinks. It is clear that Johnson himself did not think in the dialect in which he wrote. The expressions which came first to his tongue were simple, energetic, and picturesque. When he wrote for publication, he did his sentences out of English into Johnsonese. His letters from the Hebrides to Mrs. Thrale are the original of that work of which the Journey to the Hebrides is the translation; and it is amusing to compare the two versions. "When we were taken upstairs," says he in one of his letters, "a dirty fellow bounced out of the bed on which one of us was to lie."

This incident is recorded in the journey as follows: "Out of one of the beds on which we were to repose started up, at our entrance, a man black as a Cyclops from the forge." Sometimes Johnson translated aloud. "The Rehearsal," he said, very unjustly, "has not wit enough to keep it sweet" then, after a pause, "it has not vitality enough to preserve it from putrefaction."

Mannerism is pardonable, and is sometimes even agreeable, when
the manner, though vicious, is natural. Few readers, for example, would be willing to part with the mannerism of Milton or of Burke. But a mannerism which does not sit easy on the mannerist, which has been adopted on principle, and which can be sustained only by constant effort, is always offensive. And such is the mannerism of Johnson.

The characteristic faults of his style are so familiar to all our readers, and have been so often burlesqued, that it is almost superfluous to point them out. It is well known that he made less use than any other eminent writer of those strong plain words, Anglo-Saxon or Norman-French, of which the roots lie in the inmost depths of our language; and that he felt a vicious partiality for terms which, long after our own speech had been fixed, were borrowed from the Greek and Latin, and which, therefore, even when lawfully naturalised, must be considered as born aliens, not entitled to rank with the king's English. His constant practice of padding out a sentence with useless epithets, till it became as stiff as the bust of an exquisite, his antithetical forms of expression, constantly employed even where there is no opposition in the ideas expressed, his big words wasted on little things, his harsh inversions so widely different from those graceful and easy inversions which give variety, spirit, and sweetness to the expression of our great old writers, all these peculiarities have been imitated by his admirers and parodied by his assailants, till the public have become sick of the subject.
Goldsmith said to him, very wittily, and very justly, "If you were to write a fable about little fishes, doctor, you would make the little fishes talk like whales." No man surely ever had so little talent for personation as Johnson. Whether he wrote in the character of a disappointed legacy-hunter or an empty town fop, of a crazy virtuoso or a flippant coquette, he wrote in the same pompous and unbending style. His speech, like Sir Piercy Shafton's Euphuistic eloquence, betrayed him under every disguise. Euphelia and Rhodoclea talk as finely as Imlac the poet, or Seged, Emperor of Ethiopia. The gay Cornelia describes her reception at the country-house of her relations, in such terms as these: "I was surprised, after the civilities of my first reception, to find, instead of the leisure and tranquility which a rural life always promises, and, if well conducted, might always afford, a confused wildness of care, and a tumultuous hurry of diligence, by which every face was clouded, and every motion agitated." The gentle Tranquilla informs us, that she "had not passed the earlier part of life without the flattery of courtship, and the joys of triumph; but had danced the round of gaiety amidst the murmurs of envy and the gratulations of applause, had been attended from pleasure to pleasure by the great, the sprightly, and the vain, and had seen her regard solicited by the obsequiousness of gallantry, the gaiety of wit, and the timidity of love." Surely Sir John Falstaff himself did not wear his petticoats with a worse grace. The reader may well cry out with honest Sir Hugh Evans, "I like not when a 'oman has
a great peard: I spy a great peard under her muffler." [It is proper to observe that this passage bears a very close resemblance to a passage in the Rambler (No. 20). The resemblance may possibly be the effect of unconscious plagiarism.]

We had something more to say. But our article is already too long; and we must close it. We would fain part in good humour from the hero, from the biographer, and even from the editor, who, ill as he has performed his task, has at least this claim to our gratitude, that he has induced us to read Boswell's book again. As we close it, the club-room is before us, and the table on which stands the omelet for Nugent, and the lemons for Johnson. There are assembled those heads which live for ever on the canvas of Reynolds. There are the spectacles of Burke and the tall thin form of Langton, the courtly sneer of Beauclerk and the beaming smile of Garrick, Gibbon tapping his snuff-box and Sir Joshua with his trumpet in his ear. In the foreground is that strange figure which is as familiar to us as the figures of those among whom we have been brought up, the gigantic body, the hugh massy face, seamed with the scars of disease, the brown coat, the black worsted stockings, the grey wig with the scorched foretop, the dirty hands, the nails bitten and pared to the quick. We see the eyes and mouth moving with convulsive twitches; we see the heavy form rolling; we hear it puffing; and then comes the "Why, sir!" and "What then, sir?" and the "No, sir!" and the "You don't see your way through the question, sir!"
What a singular destiny has been that of this remarkable man! To be regarded in his own age as a classic, and in ours as a companion. To receive from his contemporaries that full homage which men of genius have in general received only from posterity! To be more intimately known to posterity than other men are known to their contemporaries! That kind of fame which is commonly the most transient is, in his case, the most durable. The reputation of those writings, which he probably expected to be immortal, is every day fading; while those peculiarities of manner and that careless table-talk the memory of which, he probably thought, would die with him, are likely to be remembered as long as the English language is spoken in any quarter of the globe.

MADAME D'ARBLAY

(January 1843)

THOUGH the world saw and heard little of Madame D'Arblay during the last forty years of her life, and though that little did not add to her fame, there were thousands, we believe, who felt a singular emotion when they learned that she was no longer among us. The news of her death carried the minds of men back at one leap over two generations, to the time when her first literary triumphs were won. All those whom we had been accustomed to
revere as intellectual patriarchs seemed children when compared
with her; for Burke had sate up all night to read her writings,
and Johnson had pronounced her superior to Fielding, when Rogers
was still a schoolboy, and Southey still in petticoats. Yet more
strange did it seem that we should just have lost one whose name
had been widely celebrated before anybody had heard of some
illustrious men, who, twenty, thirty, or forty years ago, were,
after a long and splendid career, borne with honour to the grave.
Yet so it was. Frances Burney was at the height of fame and
popularity before Cowper had published his first volume, before
Porson had gone up to college, before Pitt had taken his seat in
the House of Commons, before the voice of Erskine had been once
heard in Westminster Hall. Since the appearance of her first
work, sixty-two years had passed; and this interval had been
crowded, not only with political, but also with intellectual
revolutions. Thousands of reputations had, during that period,
sprung up, bloomed, withered, and disappeared. New kinds of
composition had come into fashion, had gone out of fashion, had
been derided, had been forgotten. The fooleries of Della Crusca,
and the fooleries of Kotzebue, had for a time bewitched the
multitude, and had left no trace behind them; nor had misdirected
genius been able to save from decay the once flourishing schools
of Godwin, of Darwin, and of Radcliffe. Many books, written for
temporary effect, had run through six or seven editions, and had
then been gathered to the novels of Afra Behn, and the epic poems
of Sir Richard Blackmore. Yet the early works of Madame D'Arblay,
in spite of the lapse of years, in spite of the change of
manners, in spite of the popularity deservedly obtained by some
of her rivals, continued to hold a high place in the public esteem. She lived to be a classic. Time set on her fame, before she went hence, that seal which is seldom set except on the fame of the departed. Like Sir Condy Rackrent in the tale, she survived her own wake, and overheard the judgment of posterity.

Having always felt a warm and sincere, though not a blind admiration for her talents, we rejoiced to learn that her Diary was about to be made public. Our hopes, it is true, were not unmixed with fears. We could not forget the fate of the Memoirs of Dr. Burney, which were published ten years ago. That unfortunate book contained much that was curious and interesting. Yet it was received with a cry of disgust, and was speedily consigned to oblivion. The truth is, that it deserved its doom. It was written in Madame D'Arblay's later style, the worst style that has ever been known among men. No genius, no information, could save from proscription a book so written. We, therefore, opened the Diary with no small anxiety, trembling lest we should light upon some of that peculiar rhetoric which deforms almost every page of the Memoirs, and which it is impossible to read without a sensation made up of mirth, shame, and loathing. We soon, however, discovered to our great delight that this Diary was kept before Madame D'Arblay became eloquent. It is, for the most part, written in her earliest and best manner, in true woman's English, clear, natural, and lively. The two works are lying side by side before us; and we never turn from the Memoirs to the Diary without a sense of relief. The difference is as
great as the difference between the atmosphere of a perfumer's shop, fetid with lavender water and jasmine soap, and the air of a heath on a fine morning in May. Both works ought to be consulted by every person who wishes to be well acquainted with the history of our literature and our manners. But to read the Diary is a pleasure; to read the Memoirs will always be a task.

We may, perhaps, afford some harmless amusement to our readers, if we attempt, with the help of these two books, to give them an account of the most important years of Madame D'Arblay's life.

She was descended from a family which bore the name of Macburney, and which, though probably of Irish origin, had been long settled in Shropshire, and was possessed of considerable estates in that county. Unhappily, many years before her birth, the Macburneys began, as if of set purpose and in a spirit of determined rivalry, to expose and ruin themselves. The heir apparent, Mr. James Macburney, offended his father by making a runaway match with an actress from Goodman's Fields. The old gentleman could devise no more judicious mode of wreaking vengeance on his undutiful boy than by marrying the cook. The cook gave birth to a son named Joseph, who succeeded to all the lands of the family, while James was cut off with a shilling. The favourite son, however, was so extravagant, that he soon became as poor as his disinherited brother. Both were forced to earn their bread by their labour. Joseph turned dancing-master, and settled in Norfolk. James struck off the Mac from the beginning of his name,
and set up as a portrait painter at Chester. Here he had a son named Charles, well known as the author of the History of Music, and as the father of two remarkable children, of a son distinguished by learning, and of a daughter still more honourably distinguished by genius.

Charles early showed a taste for that art, of which, at a later period, he became the historian. He was apprenticed to a celebrated musician in London, and applied himself to study with vigour and success. He soon found a kind and munificent patron in Fulk Greville, a highborn and highbred man, who seems to have had in large measure all the accomplishments and all the follies, all the virtues and all the vices, which, a hundred years ago, were considered as making up the character of a fine gentleman. Under such protection, the young artist had every prospect of a brilliant career in the capital. But his health failed. It became necessary for him to retreat from the smoke and river fog of London, to the pure air of the coast. He accepted the place of organist, at Lynn, and settled at that town with a young lady who had recently become his wife.

At Lynn, in June 1752, Frances Burney was born. Nothing in her childhood indicated that she would, while still a young woman, have secured for herself an honourable and permanent place among English writers. She was shy and silent. Her brothers and sisters called her a dunce, and not without some show of reason; for at eight years old she did not know her letters.
In 1760, Mr. Burney quitted Lynn for London, and took a house in Poland Street; a situation which had been fashionable in the reign of Queen Anne, but which, since that time, had been deserted by most of its wealthy and noble inhabitants. He afterwards resided in Saint Martin's Street, on the south side of Leicester Square. His house there is still well known, and will continue to be well known as long as our island retains any trace of civilisation; for it was the dwelling of Newton, and the square turret which distinguishes it from all the surrounding buildings was Newton's observatory.

Mr. Burney at once obtained as many pupils of the most respectable description as he had time to attend, and was thus enabled to support his family, modestly indeed, and frugally, but in comfort and independence. His professional merit obtained for him the degree of Doctor of Music from the University of Oxford; and his works on subjects connected with his art gained for him a place, respectable, though certainly not eminent, among men of letters.

The progress of the mind of Frances Burney, from her ninth to her twenty-fifth year, well deserves to be recorded. When her education had proceeded no further than the hornbook, she lost her mother, and thenceforward she educated herself. Her father appears to have been as bad a father as a very honest,
affectionate, and sweet tempered man can well be. He loved his
daughter dearly; but it never seems to have occurred to him that
a parent has other duties to perform to children than that of
fondling them. It would indeed have been impossible for him to
superintend their education himself. His professional engagements
occupied him all day. At seven in the morning he began to attend
his pupils, and when London was full, was sometimes employed in
teaching till eleven at night. He was often forced to carry in
his pocket a tin box of sandwiches, and a bottle of wine and
water, on which he dined in a hackney coach, while hurrying from
one scholar to another. Two of his daughters he sent to a
seminary at Paris; but he imagined that Frances would run some
risk of being perverted from the Protestant faith if she were
educated in a Catholic country, and he therefore kept her at
home. No governess, no teacher of any art or of any language, was
provided for her. But one of her sisters showed her how to write;
and, before she was fourteen, she began to find pleasure in
reading.

It was not, however, by reading that her intellect was formed.
Indeed, when her best novels were produced, her knowledge of
books was very small. When at the height of her fame, she was
unacquainted with the most celebrated works of Voltaire and
Moliere; and, what seems still more extraordinary, had never
heard or seen a line of Churchill, who, when she was a girl, was
the most popular of living poets. It is particularly deserving of
observation that she appears to have been by no means a novel-
reader. Her father's library was large; and he had admitted into it so many books which rigid moralists generally exclude that he felt uneasy, as he afterwards owned, when Johnson began to examine the shelves. But in the whole collection there was only a single novel, Fielding's Amelia.

An education, however, which to most girls would have been useless, but which suited Fanny's mind better than elaborate culture, was in constant progress during her passage from childhood to womanhood. The great book of human nature was turned over before her. Her father's social position was very peculiar. He belonged in fortune and station to the middle class. His daughters seemed to have been suffered to mix freely with those whom butlers and waiting-maids call vulgar. We are told that they were in the habit of playing with the children of a wig-maker who lived in the adjoining house. Yet few nobles could assemble in the most stately mansions of Grosvenor Square or Saint James's Square, a society so various and so brilliant as was sometimes to be found in Dr. Burney's cabin. His mind, though not very powerful or capacious, was restlessly active; and, in the intervals of his professional pursuits, he had contrived to lay up much miscellaneous information. His attainments, the suavity of his temper, and the gentle simplicity of his manners, had obtained for him ready admission to the first literary circles. While he was still at Lynn, he had won Johnson's heart by sounding with honest zeal the praises of the English Dictionary. In London the two friends met frequently, and agreed most
harmoniously. One tie, indeed, was wanting to their mutual
attachment. Burney loved his own art passionately; and Johnson
just knew the bell of Saint Clement's church from the organ. They
had, however, many topics in common; and on winter nights their
conversations were sometimes prolonged till the fire had gone
out, and the candles had burned away to the wicks. Burney's
admiration of the powers which had produced Rasselas and The
Rambler bordered on idolatry. Johnson, on the other hand,
condescended to growl out that Burney was an honest fellow, a man
whom it was impossible not to like.

Garrick, too, was a frequent visitor in Poland Street and Saint
Martin's Street. That wonderful actor loved the society of
children, partly from good-nature, and partly from vanity. The
ecstasies of mirth and terror, which his gestures and play of
countenance never failed to produce in a nursery, flattered him
quite as much as the applause of mature critics. He often
exhibited all his powers of mimicry for the amusement of the
little Burneys, awed them by shuddering and crouching as if he
saw a ghost, scared them by raving like a maniac in Saint Luke's,
and then at once became an auctioneer, a chimney-sweeper, or an
old woman, and made them laugh till the tears ran down their
cheeks.

But it would be tedious to recount the names of all the men of
letters and artists whom Frances Burney had an opportunity of
seeing and hearing. Colman, Twining, Harris, Baretti,
Hawkesworth, Reynolds, Barry, were among those who occasionally surrounded the tea-table and supper-tray at her father's modest dwelling. This was not all. The distinction which Dr. Burney had acquired as a musician, and as the historian of music, attracted to his house the most eminent musical performers of that age. The greatest Italian singers who visited England regarded him as the dispenser of fame in their art, and exerted themselves to obtain his suffrage. Pachierotti became his intimate friend. The rapacious Agujari, who sang for nobody else under fifty pounds an air, sang her best for Dr. Burney without a fee; and in the company of Dr. Burney even the haughty and eccentric Gabrielli constrained herself to behave with civility. It was thus in his power to give, with scarcely any expense, concerts equal to those of the aristocracy. On such occasions the quiet street in which he lived was blocked up by coroneted chariots, and his little drawing-room was crowded with peers, peeresses, ministers, and ambassadors. On one evening, of which we happen to have a full account, there were present Lord Mulgrave, Lord Bruce, Lord and Lady Edgecumbe, Lord Carrington from the War Office, Lord Sandwich from the Admiralty, Lord Ashburnham, with his gold key dangling from his pocket, and the French Ambassador, M. De Guignes, renowned for his fine person and for his success in gallantry. But the great show of the night was the Russian Ambassador, Count Orloff, whose gigantic figure was all in a blaze with jewels, and in whose demeanour the untamed ferocity of the Scythian might be discerned through a thin varnish of French politeness. As he stalked about the small parlour, brushing the ceiling with his toupee, the girls whispered to each other, with
mingled admiration and horror, that he was the favoured lover of
his august mistress; that he had borne the chief part in the
revolution to which she owed her throne; and that his huge hands,
now glittering with diamond rings, had given the last squeeze to
the windpipe of her unfortunate husband.

With such illustrious guests as these were mingled all the most
remarkable specimens of the race of lions, a kind of game which
is hunted in London every spring with more than Meltonian ardour
and perseverance. Bruce, who had washed down steaks cut from
living oxen with water from the fountains of the Nile, came to
swagger and talk about his travels. Omai lisped broken English,
and made all the assembled musicians hold their ears by howling
Otaheitean love songs, such as those with which Oberea charmed
her Opano.

With the literary and fashionable society, which occasionally met
under Dr. Burney's roof, Frances can scarcely be said to have
mingled. She was not a musician, and could therefore bear no part
in the concerts. She was shy almost to awkwardness, and scarcely
ever joined in the conversation. The slightest remark from a
stranger disconcerted her; and even the old friends of her father
who tried to draw her out could seldom extract more than a Yes or
a No. Her figure was small, her face not distinguished by beauty.
She was therefore suffered to withdraw quietly to the background,
and, unobserved herself, to observe all that passed. Her nearest
relations were aware that she had good sense, but seem not to
have suspected that, under her demure and bashful deportment, were concealed a fertile invention and a keen sense of the ridiculous. She had not, it is true, an eye for the fine shades of character. But every marked peculiarity instantly caught her notice and remained engraven on her imagination. Thus, while still a girl, she had laid up such a store of materials for fiction as few of those who mix much in the world are able to accumulate during a long life. She had watched and listened to people of every class, from princes and great officers of state down to artists living in garrets, and poets familiar with subterranean cookshops. Hundreds of remarkable persons had passed in review before her, English, French, German, Italian, lords and fiddlers, deans of cathedrals and managers of theatres, travellers leading about newly caught savages, and singing women escorted by deputy husbands.

So strong was the impression made on the mind of Frances by the society which she was in the habit of seeing and hearing, that she began to write little fictitious narratives as soon as she could use her pen with ease, which, as we have said, was not very early. Her sisters were amused by her stories: but Dr. Burney knew nothing of their existence; and in another quarter her literary propensities met with serious discouragement. When she was fifteen, her father took a second wife. The new Mrs. Burney soon found out that her stepdaughter was fond of scribbling, and delivered several good-natured lectures on the subject. The advice no doubt was well meant, and might have been given by the
most judicious friend; for at that time, from causes to which we may hereafter advert, nothing could be more disadvantageous to a young lady than to be known as a novel-writer. Frances yielded, relinquished her favourite pursuit, and made a bonfire of all her manuscripts. [There is some difficulty here as to the chronology. "This sacrifice," says the editor of the Diary, "was made in the young authoress's fifteenth year." This could not be; for the sacrifice was the effect, according to the editor's own showing, of the remonstrances of the second Mrs. Burney; and Frances was in her sixteenth year when her father's second marriage took place.]

She now hemmed and stitched from breakfast to dinner with scrupulous regularity. But the dinners of that time were early; and the afternoon was her own. Though she had given up novel-writing, she was still fond of using her pen. She began to keep a diary, and she corresponded largely with a person who seems to have had the chief share in the formation of her mind. This was Samuel Crisp, an old friend of her father. His name, well known, near a century ago, in the most splendid circles of London, has long been forgotten. His history is, however, so interesting and instructive, that it tempts us to venture on a digression.

Long before Frances Burney was born, Mr. Crisp had made his entrance into the world, with every advantage. He was well connected and well educated. His face and figure were conspicuously handsome; his manners were polished; his fortune
was easy; his character was without stain; he lived in the best
society; he had read much; he talked well; his taste in
literature, music, painting, architecture, sculpture, was held in
high esteem. Nothing that the world can give seemed to be wanting
to his happiness and respectability, except that he should
understand the limits of his powers, and should not throw away
distinctions which were within his reach in the pursuit of
distinctions which were unattainable.

"It is an uncontrolled truth," says Swift," that no man ever made
an ill figure who understood his own talents, nor a good one who
mistook them." Every day brings with it fresh illustrations of
this weighty saying; but the best commentary that we remember is
the history of Samuel Crisp. Men like him have their proper
place, and it is a most important one, in the Commonwealth of
Letters. It is by the judgment of such men that the rank of
authors is finally determined. It is neither to the multitude,
nor to the few who are gifted with great creative genius, that we
are to look for sound critical decisions. The multitude,
unacquainted with the best models, are captivated by whatever
stuns and dazzles them. They deserted Mrs. Siddons to run after
Master Betty; and they now prefer, we have no doubt, Jack
Sheppard to Von Artevelde. A man of great original genius, on the
other hand, a man who has attained to mastery in some high walk
of art, is by no means to be implicitly trusted as a judge of the
performances of others. The erroneous decisions pronounced by
such men are without number. It is commonly supposed that
jealousy makes them unjust. But a more creditable explanation may
easily be found. The very excellence of a work shows that some of
the faculties of the author have been developed at the expense of
the rest; for it is not given to the human intellect to expand
itself widely in all directions at once, and to be at the same
time gigantic and well proportioned. Whoever becomes pre-eminent
in any art, in any style of art, generally does so by devoting
himself with intense and exclusive enthusiasm to the pursuit of
one kind of excellence. His perception of other kinds of
excellence is therefore too often impaired. Out of his own
department he praises and blames at random, and is far less to be
trusted than the mere connoisseur, who produces nothing, and
whose business is only to judge and enjoy. One painter is
distinguished by his exquisite finishing. He toils day after day
to bring the veins of a cabbage leaf, the folds of a lace veil,
the wrinkles of an old woman's face, nearer and nearer to
perfection. In the time which he employs on a square foot of
canvas, a master of a different order covers the walls of a
palace with gods burying giants under mountains, or makes the
cupola of a church alive with seraphim and martyrs. The more
fervent the passion of each of these artists for his art, the
higher the merit of each in his own line, the more unlikely it is
that they will justly appreciate each other. Many persons who
never handled a pencil probably do far more justice to Michael
Angelo than would have been done by Gerard Douw, and far more
justice to Gerard Douw than would have been done by Michael
Angelo.
It is the same with literature. Thousands, who have no spark of the genius of Dryden or Wordsworth, do to Dryden the justice which has never been done by Wordsworth, and to Wordsworth the justice which, we suspect, would never have been done by Dryden. Gray, Johnson, Richardson, Fielding, are all highly esteemed by the great body of intelligent and well informed men. But Gray could see no merit in Rasselas; and Johnson could see no merit in the Bard. Fielding thought Richardson a solemn prig; and Richardson perpetually expressed contempt and disgust for Fielding's lowness.

Mr. Crisp seems, as far as we can judge, to have been a man eminently qualified for the useful office of a connoisseur. His talents and knowledge fitted him to appreciate justly almost every species of intellectual superiority. As an adviser he was inestimable. Nay, he might probably have held a respectable rank as a writer, if he would have confined himself to some department of literature in which nothing more than sense, taste, and reading was required. Unhappily he set his heart on being a great poet, wrote a tragedy in five acts on the death of Virginia, and offered it to Garrick, who was his personal friend. Garrick read, shook his head, and expressed a doubt whether it would be wise in Mr. Crisp to stake a reputation, which stood high, on the success of such a piece. But the author, blinded by ambition, set in motion a machinery such as none could long resist. His intercessors were the most eloquent man and the most lovely woman
of that generation. Pitt was induced to read Virginia, and to pronounce it excellent. Lady Coventry with fingers which might have furnished a model to sculptors, forced the manuscript into the reluctant hand of the manager; and, in the year 1754, the play was brought forward.

Nothing that skill or friendship could do was omitted. Garrick wrote both prologue and epilogue. The zealous friends of the author filled every box; and, by their strenuous exertions, the life of the play was prolonged during ten nights. But, though there was no clamorous reprobation, it was universally felt that the attempt had failed. When Virginia was printed, the public disappointment was even greater than at the representation. The critics, the Monthly Reviewers in particular, fell on plot, characters, and diction without mercy, but, we fear, not without justice. We have never met with a copy of the play; but, if we may judge from the scene which is extracted in the Gentleman's Magazine, and which does not appear to have been malevolently selected, we should say that nothing but the acting of Garrick, and the partiality of the audience, could have saved so feeble and unnatural a drama from instant damnation.

The ambition of the poet was still unsubdued. When the London season closed, he applied himself vigorously to the work of removing blemishes. He does not seem to have suspected, what we are strongly inclined to suspect, that the whole piece was one blemish, and that the passages which were meant to be fine, were,
in truth, bursts of that tame extravagance into which writers fall, when they set themselves to be sublime and pathetic in spite of nature. He omitted, added, retouched, and flattered himself with hopes of a complete success in the following year; but in the following year, Garrick showed no disposition to bring the amended tragedy on the stage. Solicitation and remonstrance were tried in vain. Lady Coventry, drooping under that malady which seems ever to select what is loveliest for its prey, could render no assistance. The manager's language was civilly evasive; but his resolution was inflexible.

Crisp had committed a great error; but he had escaped with a very slight penance. His play had not been hooted from the boards. It had, on the contrary, been better received than many very estimable performances have been, than Johnson's Irene, for example, or Goldsmith's Good-natured Man. Had Crisp been wise, he would have thought himself happy in having purchased self-knowledge so cheap. He would have relinquished, without vain repinings, the hope of poetical distinction, and would have turned to the many sources of happiness which he still possessed. Had he been, on the other hand, an unfeeling and unblushing dunce, he would have gone on writing scores of bad tragedies in defiance of censure and derision. But he had too much sense to risk a second defeat, yet too little sense to bear his first defeat like a man. The fatal delusion that he was a great dramatist, had taken firm possession of his mind. His failure he attributed to every cause except the true one. He complained of
the ill-will of Garrick, who appears to have done for the play
everything that ability and zeal could do, and who, from selfish
motives, would, of course, have been well pleased if Virginia had
been as successful as the Beggar's Opera. Nay, Crisp complained
of the languor of the friends whose partiality had given him
three benefit nights to which he had no claim. He complained of
the injustice of the spectators, when, in truth, he ought to have
been grateful for their unexampled patience. He lost his temper
and spirits, and became a cynic and a hater of mankind. From
London he retired to Hampton, and from Hampton to a solitary and
long deserted mansion, built on a Common in one of the wildest
tracts of Surrey. No road, not even a sheep-walk, connected his
lonely dwelling with the abodes of men. The place of his retreat
was strictly concealed from his old associates. In the spring he
sometimes emerged, and was seen at exhibitions and concerts in
London. But he soon disappeared, and hid himself with no society
but his books, in his dreary hermitage. He survived his failure
about thirty years. A new generation sprang up around him. No
memory of his bad verses remained among men. His very name was
forgotten. How completely the world had lost sight of him, will
appear from a single circumstance. We looked for him in a copious
Dictionary of Dramatic Authors published while he was still
alive, and we found only that Mr. Henry Crisp, of the Custom
House, had written a play called Virginia, acted in 1754. To the
last, however, the unhappy man continued to brood over the
injustice of the manager and the pit, and tried to convince
himself and others that he had missed the highest literary
honours, only because he had omitted some fine passages in
compliance with Garrick's judgment. Alas for human nature, that
the wounds of vanity should smart and bleed so much longer than
the wounds of affection! Few people, we believe, whose nearest
friends and relations died in 1754, had any acute feeling of the
loss in 1782. Dear sisters, and favourite daughters, and brides
snatched away before the honeymoon was passed, had been
forgotten, or were remembered only with a tranquil regret. But
Samuel Crisp was still mourning for his tragedy, like Rachel
weeping for her children, and would not be comforted. "Never,"
such was his language twenty-eight years after his disaster,
"never give up or alter a tittle unless it perfectly coincides
with your own inward feelings. I can say this to my sorrow and my
cost. But mum!" Soon after these words were written, his life, a
life which might have been eminently useful and happy, ended in
the same gloom in which, during more than a quarter of a century,
it had been passed. We have thought it worth while to rescue from
oblivion this curious fragment of literary history. It seems to
us at once ludicrous, melancholy, and full of instruction.

Crisp was an old and very intimate friend of the Burneys. To them
alone was confided the name of the desolate old hall in which he
hid himself like a wild beast in a den. For them were reserved
such remains of his humanity as had survived the failure of his
play. Frances Burney he regarded as his daughter. He called her
his Fannikin; and she in return called him her dear Daddy. In
truth, he seems to have done much more than her real parents for
the development of her intellect; for though he was a bad poet,
he was a scholar, a thinker, and an excellent counsellor. He was particularly fond of the concerts in Poland Street. They had, indeed, been commenced at his suggestion, and when he visited London he constantly attended them. But when he grew old, and when gout, brought on partly by mental irritation, confined him to his retreat, he was desirous of having a glimpse of that gay and brilliant world from which he was exiled, and he pressed Fannikin to send him full accounts of her father's evening parties. A few of her letters to him have been published; and it is impossible to read them without discerning in them all the powers which afterwards produced Evelina and Cecilia, the quickness in catching every odd peculiarity of character and manner, the skill in grouping, the humour, often richly comic, sometimes even farcical.

Fanny's propensity to novel-writing had for a time been kept down. It now rose up stronger than ever. The heroes and heroines of the tales which had perished in the flames, were still present to the eye of her mind. One favourite story, in particular, haunted her imagination. It was about a certain Caroline Evelyn, a beautiful damsel who made an unfortunate love-match, and died, leaving an infant daughter. Frances began to image to herself the various scenes, tragic and comic, through which the poor motherless girl, highly connected on one side, meanly connected on the other, might have to pass. A crowd of unreal beings, good and bad, grave and ludicrous, surrounded the pretty, timid, young orphan; a coarse sea captain; an ugly insolent fop, blazing in a
superb court dress; another fop, as ugly and as insolent, but
lodged on Snow Hill, and tricked out in second-hand finery for
the Hampstead ball; an old woman, all wrinkles and rouge,
flirting her fan with the air of a miss of seventeen, and
screaming in a dialect made up of vulgar French and vulgar
English; a poet lean and ragged, with a broad Scotch accent. By
degrees these shadows acquired stronger and stronger consistence;
the impulse which urged Frances to write became irresistible; and
the result was the History of Evelina.

Then came, naturally enough, a wish, mingled with many fears, to
appear before the public; for, timid as Frances was, and bashful,
and altogether unaccustomed to hear her own praises, it is clear
that she wanted neither a strong passion for distinction, nor a
just confidence in her own powers. Her scheme was to become, if
possible, a candidate for fame, without running any risk of
disgrace. She had not money to bear the expense of printing. It
was therefore necessary that some bookseller should be induced to
take the risk; and such a bookseller was not readily found.
Dodsley refused even to look at the manuscript unless he were
intrusted with the name of the author. A publisher in Fleet
Street, named Lowndes, was more complaisant. Some correspondence
took place between this person and Miss Burney, who took the name
of Grafton, and desired that the letters addressed to her might
be left at the Orange Coffee-house. But, before the bargain was
finally struck, Fanny thought it her duty to obtain her father's
consent. She told him that she had written a book, that she
wished to have his permission to publish it anonymously, but that she hoped that he would not insist upon seeing it. What followed may serve to illustrate what we meant when we said that Dr. Burney was as bad a father as so good-hearted a man could possibly be. It never seems to have crossed his mind that Fanny was about to take a step on which the whole happiness of her life might depend, a step which might raise her to an honourable eminence, or cover her with ridicule and contempt. Several people had already been trusted, and strict concealment was therefore not to be expected. On so grave an occasion, it was surely his duty to give his best counsel to his daughter, to win her confidence, to prevent her from exposing herself if her book were a bad one, and, if it were a good one, to see that the terms which she had made with the publisher were likely to be beneficial to her. Instead of this, he only stared, burst out a-laughing, kissed her, gave her leave to do as she liked, and never even asked the name of her work. The contract with Lowndes was speedily concluded. Twenty pounds were given for the copyright, and were accepted by Fanny with delight. Her father's inexcusable neglect of his duty happily caused her no worse evil than the loss of twelve or fifteen hundred pounds.

After many delays Evelina appeared in January 1778. Poor Fanny was sick with terror, and durst hardly stir out of doors. Some days passed before anything was heard of the book. It had, indeed, nothing but its own merits to push it into public favour. Its author was unknown. The house by which it was published was
not, we believe, held in high estimation. No body of partisans had been engaged to applaud. The better class of readers expected little from a novel about a young lady’s entrance into the world. There was, indeed, at that time a disposition among the most respectable people to condemn novels generally: nor was this disposition by any means without excuse; for works of that sort were then almost always silly, and very frequently wicked.

Soon, however, the first faint accents of praise began to be heard. The keepers of the circulating libraries reported that everybody was asking for Evelina, and that some person had guessed Anstey to be the author. Then came a favourable notice in the London Review; then another still more favourable in the Monthly. And now the book found its way to tables which had seldom been polluted by marble-covered volumes. Scholars and statesmen, who contemptuously abandoned the crowd of romances to Miss Lydia Languish and Miss Sukey Saunter, were not ashamed to own that they could not tear themselves away from Evelina. Fine carriages and rich liveries, not often seen east of Temple Bar, were attracted to the publisher’s shop in Fleet Street. Lowndes was daily questioned about the author, but was himself as much in the dark as any of the questioners. The mystery, however, could not remain a mystery long. It was known to brothers and sisters, aunts and cousins: and they were far too proud and too happy to be discreet. Dr. Burney wept over the book in rapture. Daddy Crisp shook his fist at his Fannikin in affectionate anger at not having been admitted to her confidence. The truth was whispered
to Mrs. Thrale; and then it began to spread fast.

The book had been admired while it was ascribed to men of letters long conversant with the world, and accustomed to composition. But when it was known that a reserved, silent young woman had produced the best work of fiction that had appeared since the death of Smollett, the acclamations were redoubled. What she had done was, indeed, extraordinary. But, as usual, various reports improved the story till it became miraculous. Evelina, it was said, was the work of a girl of seventeen. Incredible as this tale was, it continued to be repeated down to our own time. Frances was too honest to confirm it. Probably she was too much a woman to contradict it; and it was long before any of her detractors thought of this mode of annoyance. Yet there was no want of low minds and bad hearts in the generation which witnessed her first appearance. There was the envious Kenrick and the savage Wolcot, the asp George Steevens, and the polecat John Williams. It did not, however, occur to them to search the parish register of Lynn, in order that they might be able to twit a lady with having concealed her age. That truly chivalrous exploit was reserved for a bad writer of our own time, whose spite she had provoked by not furnishing him with materials for a worthless edition of Boswell's Life of Johnson, some sheets of which our readers have doubtless seen round parcels of better books.

But we must return to our story. The triumph was complete. The timid and obscure girl found herself on the highest pinnacle of
fame. Great men, on whom she had gazed at a distance with humble reverence, addressed her with admiration, tempered by the tenderness due to her sex and age. Burke, Windham, Gibbon, Reynolds, Sheridan, were among her most ardent eulogists. Cumberland acknowledged her merit, after his fashion, by biting his lips and wriggling in his chair whenever her name was mentioned. But it was at Streatham that she tasted, in the highest perfection, the sweets of flattery, mingled with the sweets of friendship. Mrs. Thrale, then at the height of prosperity and popularity, with gay spirits, quick wit, showy though superficial acquirements, pleasing though not refined manners, a singularly amiable temper, and a loving heart, felt towards Fanny as towards a younger sister. With the Thrales Johnson was domesticated. He was an old friend of Dr. Burney; but he had probably taken little notice of Dr. Burney's daughters, and Fanny, we imagine, had never in her life dared to speak to him, unless to ask whether he wanted a nineteenth or a twentieth cup of tea. He was charmed by her tale, and preferred it to the novels of Fielding, to whom, indeed, he had always been grossly unjust. He did not, indeed, carry his partiality so far as to place Evelina by the side of Clarissa and Sir Charles Grandison; yet he said that his little favourite had done enough to have made even Richardson feel uneasy. With Johnson's cordial approbation of the book was mingled a fondness, half gallant half paternal, for the writer; and this fondness his age and character entitled him to show without restraint. He began by putting her hand to his lips. But he soon clasped her in his huge arms, and implored her to be a good girl. She was his pet, his dear love,
his dear little Burney, his little character-monger. At one time, he broke forth in praise of the good taste of her caps. At another time he insisted on teaching her Latin. That, with all his coarseness and irritability, he was a man of sterling benevolence, has long been acknowledged. But how gentle and endearing his deportment could be, was not known till the Recollections of Madame D'Arblay were published.

We have mentioned a few of the most eminent of those who paid their homage to the author of Evelina. The crowd of inferior admirers would require a catalogue as long as that in the second book of the Iliad. In that catalogue would be Mrs. Cholmondeley, the sayer of odd things, and Seward, much given to yawnning, and Baretti, who slew the man in the Haymarket, and Paoli, talking broken English, and Langton, taller by the head than any other member of the club, and Lady Millar, who kept a vase wherein fools were wont to put bad verses, and Jerningham who wrote verses fit to be put into the vase of Lady Millar, and Dr. Franklin, not, as some have dreamed, the great Pennsylvanian Dr. Franklin, who could not then have paid his respects to Miss Burney without much risk of being hanged, drawn and quartered, but Dr. Franklin the less.

Aias

Meion outi todos ge dsos Telamonios Aias

Alla polu meion.
It would not have been surprising if such success had turned even
a strong head, and corrupted even a generous and affectionate
nature. But, in the Diary, we can find no trace of any feeling
inconsistent with a truly modest and amiable disposition. There
is, indeed, abundant proof that Frances enjoyed with an intense,
though a troubled joy, the honours which her genius had won; but
it is equally clear that her happiness sprang from the happiness
of her father, her sister, and her dear Daddy Crisp. While
flattered by the great, the opulent, and the learned, while
followed along the Steyne at Brighton, and the Pantiles at
Tunbridge Wells, by the gaze of admiring crowds, her heart seems
to have been still with the little domestic circle in Saint
Martin's Street. If she recorded with minute diligence all the
compliments, delicate and coarse, which she heard wherever she
turned, she recorded them for the eyes of two or three persons
who had loved her from infancy, who had loved her in obscurity,
and to whom her fame gave the purest and most exquisite delight.
Nothing can be more unjust than to confound these outpourings of
a kind heart, sure of perfect sympathy, with the egotism of a
bluestocking, who prates to all who come near her about her own
novel or her own volume of sonnets.

It was natural that the triumphant issue of Miss Burney's first
venture should tempt her to try a second. Evelina, though it had
raised her fame, had added nothing to her fortune. Some of her
friends urged her to write for the stage. Johnson promised to
give her his advice as to the composition. Murphy, who was
supposed to understand the temper of the pit as well as any man
of his time, undertook to instruct her as to stage effect.
Sheridan declared that he would accept a play from her without
even reading it. Thus encouraged, she wrote a comedy named The
Witlings. Fortunately it was never acted or printed. We can, we
think, easily perceive, from the little which is said on the
subject in the Diary, that The Witlings would have been damned,
and that Murphy, and Sheridan thought so, though they were too
polite to say so. Happily Frances had a friend who was not afraid
to give her pain. Crisp, wiser for her than he had been for
himself, read the manuscript in his lonely retreat, and manfully
told her that she had failed, that to remove blemishes here and
there would be useless, that the piece had abundance of wit but
no interest, that it was bad as a whole, that it would remind
every reader of the Femmes Savantes, which, strange to say, she
had never read, and that she could not sustain so close a
comparison with Moliere. This opinion, in which Dr. Burney
concurred, was sent to Frances, in what she called "a hissing,
groaning, catcalling epistle." But she had too much sense not to
know that it was better to be hissed and cat-called by her Daddy,
than by a whole sea of heads in the pit of Drury Lane Theatre:
and she had too good a heart not to be grateful for so rare an
act of friendship. She returned an answer, which shows how well
she deserved to have a judicious, faithful, and affectionate
adviser. "I intend," she wrote, "to console myself for your
censure by this greatest proof I have ever received of the
sincerity, candour, and, let me add, esteem, of my dear daddy.
And as I happen to love myself more than my play, this
consolation is not a very trifling one. This, however, seriously
I do believe, that when my two daddies put their heads together
to concert that hissing, groaning, cat-calling epistle they sent
me, they felt as sorry for poor little Miss Bayes as she could
possibly do for herself. You see I do not attempt to repay your
frankness with an air of pretended carelessness. But, though
somewhat disconcerted just now, I will promise not to let my
vexation live out another day. Adieu, my dear daddy, I won't be
mortified, and I won't be downed, but I will be proud to find I
have, out of my own family, as well as in it, a friend who loves
me well enough to speak plain truth to me."

Frances now turned from her dramatic schemes to an undertaking
far better suited to her talents. She determined to write a new
tale, on a plan excellently contrived for the display of the
powers in which her superiority to other writers lay. It was in
truth a grand and various picture-gallery, which presented to the
eye a long series of men and women, each marked by some strong
peculiar feature. There were avarice and prodigality, the pride
of blood and the pride of money, morbid restlessness and morbid
apathy, frivolous garrulity, supercilious silence, a Democritus
to laugh at everything, and a Heraclitus to lament over
everything. The work proceeded fast, and in twelve months was
completed. It wanted something of the simplicity which had been
among the most attractive charms of Evelina; but it furnished
ample proof that the four years, which had elapsed since Evelina
appeared, had not been unprofitably spent. Those who saw Cecilia in manuscript pronounced it the best novel of the age. Mrs. Thrale laughed and wept over it. Crisp was even vehement in applause, and offered to ensure the rapid and complete success of the book for half-a-crown. What Miss Burney received for the copyright is not mentioned in the Diary; but we have observed several expressions from which we infer that the sum was considerable. That the sale would be great nobody could doubt; and Frances now had shrewd and experienced advisers, who would not suffer her to wrong herself. We have been told that the publishers gave her two thousand pounds, and we have no doubt that they might have given a still larger sum without being losers.

Cecilia was published in the summer of 1782. The curiosity of the town was intense. We have been informed by persons who remember those days that no romance of Sir Walter Scott was more impatiently awaited, or more eagerly snatched from the counters of the booksellers. High as public expectation was, it was amply satisfied; and Cecilia was placed, by general acclamation, among the classical novels of England.

Miss Burney was now thirty. Her youth had been singularly prosperous; but clouds soon began to gather over that clear and radiant dawn. Events deeply painful to a heart so kind as that of Frances followed each other in rapid succession. She was first called upon to attend the deathbed of her best friend, Samuel
Crisp. When she returned to Saint Martin’s Street, after performing this melancholy duty, she was appalled by hearing that Johnson had been struck by paralysis; and, not many months later, she parted from him for the last time with solemn tenderness. He wished to look on her once more; and on the day before his death she long remained in tears on the stairs leading to his bedroom, in the hope that she might be called in to receive his blessing. He was then sinking fast, and though he sent her an affectionate message, was unable to see her. But this was not the worst. There are separations far more cruel than those which are made by death.

She might weep with proud affection for Crisp and Johnson. She had to blush as well as to weep for Mrs. Thrale.

Life, however, still smiled upon Frances. Domestic happiness, friendship, independence, leisure, letters, all these things were hers; and she flung them all away.

Among the distinguished persons to whom she had been introduced, none appears to have stood higher in her regard than Mrs. Delany. This lady was an interesting and venerable relic of a past age. She was the niece of George Granville, Lord Lansdowne, who, in his youth, exchanged verses and compliments with Edmund Waller, and who was among the first to applaud the opening genius of Pope. She had married Dr. Delany, a man known to his contemporaries as a profound scholar and an eloquent preacher, but remembered in our time chiefly as one of that small circle in
which the fierce spirit of Swift, tortured by disappointed ambition, by remorse, and by the approaches of madness, sought for amusement and repose. Doctor Delany had long been dead. His widow, nobly descended, eminently accomplished, and retaining, in spite of the infirmities of advanced age, the vigour of her faculties and the serenity of her temper, enjoyed and deserved the favour of the royal family. She had a pension of three hundred a year; and a house at Windsor, belonging to the Crown, had been fitted up for her accommodation. At this house the King and Queen sometimes called, and found a very natural pleasure in thus catching an occasional glimpse of the private life of English families.

In December 1785, Miss Burney was on a visit to Mrs. Delany at Windsor. The dinner was over. The old lady was taking a nap. Her grandniece, a little girl of seven, was playing at some Christmas game with the visitors, when the door opened, and a stout gentleman entered unannounced, with a star on his breast, and "What? what? what?" in his mouth. A cry of "The King!" was set up. A general scampering followed. Miss Burney owns that she could not have been more terrified if she had seen a ghost. But Mrs. Delany came forward to pay her duty to her royal friend, and the disturbance was quieted. Frances was then presented, and underwent a long examination and cross-examination about all that she had written and all that she meant to write. The Queen soon made her appearance and his Majesty repeated, for the benefit of his consort, the information which he had extracted from Miss
Burney. The good-nature of the royal pair might have softened even the authors of the Probationary Odes, and could not but be delightful to a young lady who had been brought up a Tory. In a few days the visit was repeated. Miss Burney was more at ease than before. His Majesty, instead of seeking for information, condescended to impart it, and passed sentence on many great writers, English and foreign. Voltaire he pronounced a monster. Rousseau he liked rather better. "But was there ever," he cried, "such stuff as great part of Shakspeare? Only one must not say so. But what think you? What? Is there not sad stuff? What? What?"

The next day Frances enjoyed the privilege of listening to some equally valuable criticism uttered by the Queen touching Goethe and Klopstock, and might have learned an important lesson of economy from the mode in which her Majesty's library had been formed. "I picked the book up on a stall," said the Queen. "Oh, it is amazing what good books there are on stalls!" Mrs. Delany, who seems to have understood from these words that her Majesty was in the habit of exploring the booths of Moorfields and Holywell Street in person, could not suppress an exclamation of surprise. "Why," said the Queen, "I don't pick them up myself. But I have a servant very clever; and, if they are not to be had at the booksellers, they are not for me more than for another."

Miss Burney describes this conversation as delightful; and, indeed, we cannot wonder that, with her literary tastes, she should be delighted at hearing in how magnificent a manner the
The truth is, that Frances was fascinated by the condescending kindness of the two great personages to whom she had been presented. Her father was even more infatuated than herself. The result was a step of which we cannot think with patience, but which, recorded as it is, with all its consequences, in these volumes, deserves at least this praise, that it has furnished a most impressive warning.

A German lady of the name of Haggerdorn, one of the keepers of the Queen's robes, retired about this time; and her Majesty offered the vacant post to Miss Burney. When we consider that Miss Burney was decidedly the most popular writer of fictitious narrative then living, that competence, if not opulence, was within her reach, and that she was more than usually happy in her domestic circle, and when we compare the sacrifice which she was invited to make with the remuneration which was held out to her, we are divided between laughter and indignation.

What was demanded of her was that she should consent to be almost as completely separated from her family and friends as if she had gone to Calcutta, and almost as close a prisoner as if she had been sent to gaol for a libel; that with talents which had instructed and delighted the highest living minds, she should now be employed only in mixing snuff and sticking pins; that she
should be summoned by a waiting-woman’s bell to a waiting-woman’s duties; that she should pass her whole life under the restraints of a paltry etiquette, should sometimes fast till she was ready to swoon with hunger, should sometimes stand till her knees gave way with fatigue; that she should not dare to speak or move without considering how her mistress might like her words and gestures. Instead of those distinguished men and women, the flower of all political parties, with whom she had been in the habit of mixing on terms of equal friendship, she was to have for her perpetual companion the chief keeper of the robes, an old hag from Germany, of mean understanding, of insolent manners, and of temper which, naturally savage, had now been exasperated by disease. Now and then, indeed, poor Frances might console herself for the loss of Burke’s and Windham’s society, by joining in the “celestial colloquy sublime” of his Majesty’s Equerries.

And what was the consideration for which she was to sell herself to this slavery? A peerage in her own right? A pension of two thousand a year for life? A seventy-four for her brother in the navy? A deanery for her brother in the church? Not so. The price at which she was valued was her board, her lodging, the attendance of a man-servant, and two hundred pounds a year.

The man who, even when hard pressed by hunger, sells his birthright for a mess of pottage, is unwise. But what shall we say of him who parts with his birthright, and does not get even the pottage in return? It is not necessary to inquire whether
opulence be an adequate compensation for the sacrifice of bodily and mental freedom; for Frances Burney paid for leave to be a prisoner and a menial. It was evidently understood as one of the terms of her engagement, that, while she was a member of the royal household, she was not to appear before the public as an author; and, even had there been no such understanding, her avocations were such as left her no leisure for any considerable intellectual effort. That her place was incompatible with her literary pursuits was indeed frankly acknowledged by the King when she resigned. "She has given up," he said, "five years of her pen." That during those five years she might, without painful exertion, without any exertion that would not have been a pleasure, have earned enough to buy an annuity for life much larger than the precarious salary which she received at Court, is quite certain. The same income, too, which in Saint Martin's Street would have afforded her every comfort, must have been found scanty at Saint James's. We cannot venture to speak confidently of the price of millinery and jewellery; but we are greatly deceived if a lady, who had to attend Queen Charlotte on many public occasions, could possibly save a farthing out of a salary of two hundred a year. The principle of the arrangement was, in short, simply this, that Frances Burney should become a slave, and should be rewarded by being made a beggar.

With what object their Majesties brought her to their palace, we must own ourselves unable to conceive. Their object could not be
to encourage her literary exertions; for they took her from a situation in which it was almost certain that she would write, and put her into a situation in which it was impossible for her to write. Their object could not be to promote her pecuniary interest; for they took her from a situation where she was likely to become rich, and put her into a situation in which she could not but continue poor. Their object could not be to obtain an eminently useful waiting-maid; for it is clear that, though Miss Burney was the only woman of her time who could have described the death of Harrel, thousands might have been found more expert in tying ribands and filling snuff-boxes. To grant her a pension on the civil list would have been an act of judicious liberality, honourable to the Court. If this was impracticable, the next best thing was to let her alone. That the King and Queen meant her nothing but kindness, we do not in the least doubt. But their kindness was the kindness of persons raised high above the mass of mankind, accustomed to be addressed with profound deference, accustomed to see all who approach them mortified by their coldness and elated by their smiles. They fancied that to be noticed by them, to be near them, to serve them, was in itself a kind of happiness; and that Frances Burney ought to be full of gratitude for being permitted to purchase, by the surrender of health, wealth, freedom, domestic affection, and literary fame, the privilege of standing behind a royal chair, and holding a pair of royal gloves.

And who can blame them? Who can wonder that princes should be
under such a delusion, when they are encouraged in it by the very persons who suffer from it most cruelly? Was it to be expected that George the Third and Queen Charlotte should understand the interest of Frances Burney better, or promote it with more zeal than herself and her father? No deception was practised. The conditions of the house of bondage were set forth with all simplicity. The hook was presented without a bait; the net was spread in sight of the bird: and the naked hook was greedily swallowed, and the silly bird made haste to entangle herself in the net.

It is not strange indeed that an invitation to Court should have caused a fluttering in the bosom of an inexperienced young woman. But it was the duty of the parent to watch over the child, and to show her that on one side were only infantine vanities and chimerical hopes, on the other liberty, peace of mind, affluence, social enjoyments, honourable distinctions. Strange to say, the only hesitation was on the part of Frances. Dr. Burney was transported out of himself with delight. Not such are the raptures of a Circassian father who has sold his pretty daughter well to a Turkish slave-merchant. Yet Dr. Burney was an amiable man, a man of good abilities, a man who had seen much of the world. But he seems to have thought that going to Court was like going to heaven; that to see princes and princesses was a kind of beatific vision; that the exquisite felicity enjoyed by royal persons was not confined to themselves, but was communicated by some mysterious efflux or reflection to all who were suffered to
stand at their toilettes, or to bear their trains. He overruled
all his daughter's objections, and himself escorted her to her
prison. The door closed. The key was turned. She, looking back
with tender regret on all that she had left, and forward with
anxiety and terror to the new life on which she was entering, was
unable to speak or stand; and he went on his way homeward
rejoicing in her marvellous prosperity.

And now began a slavery of five years, of five years taken from
the best part of life, and wasted in menial drudgery or in
recreations duller than even menial drudgery, under galling
restraints and amidst unfriendly or uninteresting companions. The
history of an ordinary day was this. Miss Burney had to rise and
dress herself early, that she might be ready to answer the royal
bell, which rang at half after seven. Till about eight she
attended in the Queen's dressing-room, and had the honour of
lacing her august mistress's stays, and of putting on the hoop,
gown, and neckhandkerchief. The morning was chiefly spent in
rummaging drawers and laying fine clothes in their proper places.
Then the Queen was to be powdered and
dressed for the day. Twice a week her Majesty's hair was curled
and craped; and this operation appears to have added a full hour
to the business of the toilette. It was generally three before
Miss Burney was at liberty. Then she had two hours at her own
disposal. To these hours we owe great part of her Diary. At five
she had to attend her colleague, Madame Schwellenberg, a hateful
old toadeater, as illiterate as a chambermaid, as proud as a
whole German Chapter, rude, peevish, unable to bear solitude, unable to conduct herself with common decency in society. With this delightful associate, Frances Burney had to dine, and pass the evening. The pair generally remained together from five to eleven, and often had no other company the whole time, except during the hour from eight to nine, when the equerries came to tea. If poor Frances attempted to escape to her own apartment, and to forget her wretchedness over a book, the execrable old woman railed and stormed, and complained that she was neglected. Yet, when Frances stayed, she was constantly assailed with insolent reproaches. Literary fame was, in the eyes of the German crone, a blemish, a proof that the person who enjoyed it was meanly born, and out of the pale of good society. All her scanty stock of broken English was employed to express the contempt with which she regarded the author of Evelina and Cecilia. Frances detested cards, and indeed knew nothing about them; but she soon found that the least miserable way of passing an evening with Madame Schwellenberg was at the card-table, and consented, with patient sadness, to give hours, which might have called forth the laughter and the tears of many generations, to the king of clubs and the knave of spades. Between eleven and twelve the bell rang again. Miss Burney had to pass twenty minutes or half an hour in undressing the Queen, and was then at liberty to retire, and to dream that she was chatting with her brother by the quiet hearth in Saint Martin's Street, that she was the centre of an admiring assemblage at Mrs. Crewe's, that Burke was calling her the first woman of the age, or that Dilly was giving her a cheque for two thousand guineas.
Men, we must suppose, are less patient than women; for we are utterly at a loss to conceive how any human being could endure such a life, while there remained a vacant garret in Grub Street, a crossing in want of a sweeper, a parish workhouse, or a parish vault. And it was for such a life that Frances Burney had given up liberty and peace, a happy fireside, attached friends, a wide and splendid circle of acquaintance, intellectual pursuits in which she was qualified to excel, and the sure hope of what to her would have been affluence.

There is nothing new under the sun. The last great master of Attic eloquence and Attic wit has left us a forcible and touching description of the misery of a man of letters, who, lured by hopes similar to those of Frances, had entered the service of one of the magnates of Rome. "Unhappy that I am," cries the victim of his own childish ambition: "would nothing content me but that I must leave mine old pursuits and mine old companions, and the life which was without care, and the sleep which had no limit save mine own pleasure, and the walks which I was free to take where I listed, and fling myself into the lowest pit of a dungeon like this? And, O God! for what? Was there no way by which I might have enjoyed in freedom comforts even greater than those which I now earn by servitude? Like a lion which has been made so tame that men may lead him about by a thread, I am dragged up and down, with broken and humbled spirit, at the heels of those to whom, in mine own domain, I should have been an object of awe and
wonder. And, worst of all, I feel that here I gain no credit, 
that here I give no pleasure. The talents and accomplishments, 
which charmed a far different circle, are here out of place. I am 
rude in the arts of palaces, and can ill bear comparison with 
those whose calling, from their youth up, has been to flatter and 
to sue. Have I, then, two lives, that, after I have wasted one in 
the service of others, there may yet remain to me a second, which 
I may live unto myself?"

Now and then, indeed, events occurred which disturbed the 
wretched monotony of Frances Burney's life. The Court moved from 
Kew to Windsor, and from Windsor back to Kew. One dull colonel 
got out of waiting, and another dull colonel came into waiting. 
An impertinent servant made a blunder about tea, and caused a 
misunderstanding between the gentlemen and the ladies. A half-
witted French Protestant minister talked oddly about conjugal 
fidelity. An unlucky member of the household mentioned a passage 
in the Morning Herald, reflecting on the Queen; and forthwith 
Madame Schwellenberg began to storm in bad English, and told him 
that he made her "what you call perspire!"

A more important occurrence was the King's visit to Oxford. Miss 
Burney went in the royal train to Nuneham, was utterly neglected 
there in the crowd, and could with difficulty find a servant to 
show the way to her bedroom, or a hairdresser to arrange her 
curls. She had the honour of entering Oxford in the last of a 
long string of carriages which formed the royal procession, of
walking after the Queen all day through refectories and chapels, 
and of standing, half dead with fatigue and hunger, while her 
august mistress was seated at an excellent cold collation. At 
Magdalen College, Frances was left for a moment in a parlour, 
where she sank down on a chair. A good-natured equerry saw that 
she was exhausted, and shared with her some apricots and bread, 
which he had wisely put into his pockets. At that moment the door 
opened; the Queen entered; the wearied attendants sprang up; the 
bread and fruit were hastily concealed. "I found," says poor Miss 
Burney, "that our appetites were to be supposed annihilated, at 
the same moment that our strength was to be invincible."

Yet Oxford, seen even under such disadvantages, "revived in her," 
to use her own words, "a consciousness to pleasure which had long 
lain nearly dormant." She forgot, during one moment, that she was 
a waiting-maid, and felt as a woman of true genius might be 
expected to feel amidst venerable remains of antiquity, beautiful 
works of art, vast repositories of knowledge, and memorials of 
the illustrious dead. Had she still been what she was before her 
father induced her to take the most fatal step of her life, we 
can easily imagine what pleasure she would have derived from a 
visit to the noblest of English cities. She might, indeed, have 
been forced to travel in a hack chaise, and might not have worn 
so fine a gown of Chambery gauze as that in which she tottered 
after the royal party; but with what delight would she have then 
paced the cloisters of Magdalen, compared the antique gloom of 
Merton with the splendour of Christ Church, and looked down from
the dome of the Ratcliffe Library on the magnificent sea of
turrets and battlements below! How gladly would learned men have
laid aside for a few hours Pindar's Odes and Aristotle's Ethics
to escort the author of Cecilia from college to college! What
neat little banquets would she have found set out in their
monastic cells! With what eagerness would pictures, medals, and
illuminated missals have been brought forth from the most
mysterious cabinets for her amusement! How much she would have
had to hear and to tell about Johnson, as she walked over
Pembroke, and about Reynolds, in the antechapel of New College!
But these indulgences were not for one who had sold herself into
bondage.

About eighteen months after the visit to Oxford, another event
diversified the wearisome life which Frances led at Court. Warren
Hastings was brought to the bar of the House of Peers. The Queen
and Princesses were present when the trial commenced, and Miss
Burney was permitted to attend. During the subsequent proceedings
a day rule for the same purpose was occasionally granted to her;
for the Queen took the strongest interest in the trial, and when
she could not go herself to Westminster Hall, liked to receive a
report of what had passed from a person of singular powers of
observation, and who was, moreover, acquainted with some of the
most distinguished managers. The portion of the Diary which
relates to this celebrated proceeding is lively and picturesque.
Yet we read it, we own, with pain; for it seems to us to prove
that the fine understanding of Frances Burney was beginning to
feel the pernicious influence of a mode of life which is as incompatible with health of mind as the air of the Pomptine marshes with health of body. From the first day she espouses the cause of Hastings with a presumptuous vehemence and acrimony quite inconsistent with the modesty and suavity of her ordinary deportment. She shudders when Burke enters the Hall at the head of the Commons. She pronounces him the cruel oppressor of an innocent man. She is at a loss to conceive how the managers can look at the defendant, and not blush. Windham comes to her from the manager's box, to offer her refreshment. "But," says she, "I could not break bread with him." Then, again, she exclaims, "Ah, Mr. Windham, how can you ever engage in so cruel, so unjust a cause?" "Mr. Burke saw me," she says, "and he bowed with the most marked civility of manner." This, be it observed, was just after his opening speech, a speech which had produced a mighty effect, and which, certainly, no other orator that ever lived, could have made. "My curtsy," she continues, "was the most ungrateful, distant and cold; I could not do otherwise; so hurt I felt to see him the head of such a cause." Now, not only had Burke treated her with constant kindness, but the very last act which he performed on the day on which he was turned out of the Pay Office, about four years before this trial, was to make Dr. Burney organist of Chelsea Hospital. When, at the Westminster election, Dr. Burney was divided between his gratitude for this favour and his Tory opinions, Burke in the noblest manner disclaimed all right to exact a sacrifice of principle. "You have little or no obligations to me," he wrote; "but if you had as many as I really wish it were in my power, as it is certainly in
my desire, to lay on you, I hope you do not think me capable of
conferring them, in order to subject your mind or your affairs to
a painful and mischievous servitude." Was this a man to be
uncivilly treated by a daughter of Dr. Burney, because she chose
to differ from him respecting a vast and most complicated
question, which he had studied deeply during many years, and
which she had never studied at all? It is clear, from Miss
Burney's own narrative, that when she behaved so unkindly to Mr.
Burke, she did not even know of what Hastings was accused. One
thing, however, she must have known, that Burke had been able to
convince a House of Commons, bitterly prejudiced against himself,
that the charges were well founded, and that Pitt and Dundas had
concurred with Fox and Sheridan, in supporting the impeachment.
Surely a woman of far inferior abilities to Miss Burney might
have been expected to see that this never could have happened
unless there had been a strong case against the late Governor-
General. And there was, as all reasonable men now admit, a strong
case against him. That there were great public services to be set
off against his great crimes is perfectly true. But his services
and his crimes were equally unknown to the lady who so
confidently asserted his perfect innocence, and imputed to his
accusers, that is to say, to all the greatest men of all parties
in the State, not merely error, but gross injustice and
barbarity.

She had, it is true, occasionally seen Mr. Hastings, and had
found his manners and conversation agreeable. But surely she
could not be so weak as to infer from the gentleness of his
deportment in a drawing-room, that he was incapable of committing
a great State crime, under the influence of ambition and revenge.
A silly Miss, fresh from a boarding school, might fall into such
a mistake; but the woman who had drawn the character of Mr.
Monckton should have known better.

The truth is that she had been too long at Court. She was sinking
into a slavery worse than that of the body. The iron was
beginning to enter into the soul. Accustomed during many months
to watch the eye of a mistress, to receive with boundless
gratitude the slightest mark of royal condescension, to feel
wretched at every symptom of royal displeasure, to associate only
with spirits long tamed and broken in, she was degenerating into
something fit for her place. Queen Charlotte was a violent
partisan of Hastings, had received presents from him, and had so
far departed from the severity of her virtue as to lend her
countenance to his wife, whose conduct had certainly been as
reprehensible as that of any of the frail beauties who were then
rigidly excluded from the English Court. The King, it was well
known, took the same side. To the King and Queen all the members
of the household looked submissively for guidance. The
impeachment, therefore, was an atrocious persecution; the
managers were rascals; the defendant was the most deserving and
the worst used man in the kingdom. This was the cant of the whole
palace, from Gold Stick in Waiting, down to the Table-Deckers and
Yeoman of the Silver Scullery; and Miss Burney canted like the
rest, though in livelier tones, and with less bitter feelings.

The account which she has given of the King's illness contains much excellent narrative and description, and will, we think, be as much valued by the historians of a future age as any equal portion of Pepys's or Evelyn's Diaries. That account shows also how affectionate and compassionate her nature was. But it shows also, we must say, that her way of life was rapidly impairing her powers of reasoning and her sense of justice. We do not mean to discuss, in this place, the question, whether the views of Mr. Pitt or those of Mr. Fox respecting the regency were the more correct. It is, indeed, quite needless to discuss that question: for the censure of Miss Burney falls alike on Pitt and Fox, on majority and minority. She is angry with the House of Commons for presuming to inquire whether the King was mad or not, and whether there was a chance of his recovering his senses. "A melancholy day," she writes; "news bad both at home and, abroad. At home the dear unhappy king still worse; abroad new examinations voted of the physicians. Good heavens! what an insult does this seem from Parliamentary power, to investigate and bring forth to the world every circumstance of such a malady as is ever held sacred to secrecy in the most private families! How indignant we all feel here, no words can say." It is proper to observe, that the motion which roused all this indignation at Kew was made by Mr. Pitt himself. We see, therefore, that the loyalty of the Minister, who was then generally regarded as the most heroic champion of his Prince, was lukewarm indeed when compared with the boiling zeal
which filled the pages of the backstairs and the women of the
bedchamber. Of the Regency Bill, Pitt's own bill, Miss Burney
speaks with horror. "I shuddered," she says, to hear it named."
And again, "Oh, how dreadful will be the day when that unhappy
bill takes place! I cannot approve the plan of it." The truth is
that Mr. Pitt, whether a wise and upright statesman or not, was a
statesman; and whatever motives he might have for imposing
restrictions on the regent, felt that in some way or other there
must be some provision made for the execution of some part of the
kingly office, or that no government would be left in the
country. But this was a matter of which the household never
thought. It never occurred, as far as we can see, to the Exons
and Keepers of the Robes, that it was necessary that there should
be somewhere or other a power in the State to pass laws, to
preserve order, to pardon criminals, to fill up offices, to
negotiate with foreign governments, to command the army and navy.
Nay, these enlightened politicians, and Miss Burney among the
rest, seem to have thought that any person who considered the
subject with reference to the public interest, showed himself to
be a bad-hearted man. Nobody wonders at this in a gentleman
usher; but it is melancholy to see genius sinking into such
debasement.

During more than two years after the King's recovery, Frances
dragged on a miserable existence at the palace. The consolations
which had for a time mitigated the wretchedness of servitude were
one by one withdrawn. Mrs. Delany, whose society had been a great
resource when the Court was at Windsor, was now dead. One of the
gentlemen of the royal establishment, Colonel Digby, appears to
have been a man of sense, of taste, of some reading, and of
prepossessing manners. Agreeable associates were scarce in the
prison house, and he and Miss Burney therefore naturally became
attached to each other. She owns that she valued him as a friend;
and it would not have been strange if his attentions had led her
to entertain for him a sentiment warmer than friendship. He
quit the Court, and married in a way which astonished Miss
Burney greatly, and which evidently wounded her feelings, and
lowered him in her esteem. The palace grew duller and duller;
Madame Schwellenberg became more and more savage and insolent;
and now the health of poor Frances began to give way; and all who
saw her pale face, her emaciated figure, and her feeble walk,
predicted that her sufferings would soon be over.

Frances uniformly speaks of her royal mistress, and of the
princesses, with respect and affection. The princesses seem to
have well deserved all the praise which is bestowed on them in
the Diary. They were, we doubt not, most amiable women. But "the
sweet Queen," as she is constantly called in these volumes, is
not by any means an object of admiration to us. She had
undoubtedly sense enough to know what kind of deportment suited
her high station, and self-command enough to maintain that
deportment invariably. She was, in her intercourse with Miss
Burney, generally gracious and affable, sometimes, when
disseased, cold and reserved, but never, under any
circumstances, rude, peevish, or violent. She knew how to
dispense, gracefully and skilfully, those little civilities
which, when paid by a sovereign, are prized at many times their
intrinsic value; how to pay a compliment; how to lend a book; how
to ask after a relation. But she seems to have been utterly
regardless of the comfort, the health, the life of her
attendants, when her own convenience was concerned. Weak,
feverish, hardly able to stand, Frances had still to rise before
seven, in order to dress the sweet Queen, and to sit up till
midnight, in order to undress the sweet Queen. The indisposition
of the handmaid could not, and did not, escape the notice of her
royal mistress. But the established doctrine of the Court was,
that all sickness was to be considered as a pretence until it
proved fatal. The only way in which the invalid could clear
herself from the suspicion of malingering, as it is called in the
army, was to go on lacing and unlacing till she fell down dead at
the royal feet. "This," Miss Burney wrote, when she was suffering
cruelly from sickness, watching, and labour, "is by no means from
hardness of heart; far otherwise. There is no hardness of heart
in any one of them; but it is prejudice, and want of personal
experience."

Many strangers sympathised with the bodily and mental sufferings
of this distinguished woman. All who saw her saw that her frame
was sinking, that her heart was breaking. The last, it should
seem, to observe the change was her father. At length, in spite
of himself, his eyes were opened. In May 1790, his daughter had
an interview of three hours with him, the only long interview
which they had had since he took her to Windsor in 1786. She
told him that she was miserable, that she was worn with
attendance and want of sleep, that she had no comfort in life,
nothing to love, nothing to hope, that her family and her friends
were to her as though they were not, and were remembered by her
as men remember the dead. From daybreak to midnight the same
killing labour, the same recreations, more hateful than labour
itself, followed each other without variety, without any interval
of liberty and repose.

The Doctor was greatly dejected by this news; but was too good-
natured a man not to say that, if she wished to resign, his house
and arms were open to her. Still, however, he could not bear to
remove her from the Court. His veneration for royalty amounted in
truth to idolatry. It can be compared only to the grovelling
superstition of those Syrian devotees who made their children
pass through the fire to Moloch. When he induced his daughter to
accept the place of keeper of the robes, he entertained, as she
tells us, a hope that some worldly advantage or other, not set
down in the contract of service, would be the result of her
connection with the Court. What advantage he expected we do not
know, nor did he probably know himself. But, whatever he
expected, he certainly got nothing. Miss Burney had been hired
for board, lodging, and two hundred a year. Board, lodging, and
two hundred a year, she had duly received. We have looked
carefully through the Diary, in the hope of finding some trace of
those extraordinary benefactions on which the Doctor reckoned.

But we can discover only a promise, never performed, of a gown: and for this promise Miss Burney was expected to return thanks, such as might have suited the beggar with whom Saint Martin, in the legend, divided his cloak. The experience of four years was, however, insufficient to dispel the illusion which had taken possession of the Doctor's mind; and between the dear father and the sweet Queen, there seemed to be little doubt that some day or other Frances would drop down a corpse. Six months had elapsed since the interview between the parent and the daughter. The resignation was not sent in. The sufferer grew worse and worse. She took bark; but it soon ceased to produce a beneficial effect. She was stimulated with wine; she was soothed with opium; but in vain. Her breath began to fail. The whisper that she was in a decline spread through the Court. The pains in her side became so severe that she was forced to crawl from the card-table of the old Fury to whom she was tethered, three or four times in an evening for the purpose of taking hartshorn. Had she been a negro slave, a humane planter would have excused her from work. But her Majesty showed no mercy. Thrice a day the accursed bell still rang; the Queen was still to be dressed for the morning at seven, and to be dressed for the day at noon, and to be undressed at midnight. But there had arisen, in literary and fashionable society, a general feeling of compassion for Miss Burney, and of indignation against both her father and the Queen. "Is it possible," said a great French lady to the Doctor, "that your daughter is in a situation where she is never allowed a holiday?"

Horace Walpole wrote to Frances, to express his sympathy.
Boswell, boiling over with good-natured rage, almost forced an entrance into the palace to see her. "My dear ma'am, why do you stay? It won't do, ma'am; you must resign. We can put up with it no longer. Some very violent measures, I assure you, will be taken. We shall address Dr. Burney in a body." Burke and Reynolds, though less noisy, were zealous in the same cause. Windham spoke to Dr. Burney; but found him still irresolute. "I will set the club upon him," cried Windham; "Miss Burney has some very true admirers there, and I am sure they will eagerly assist." Indeed the Burney family seem to have been apprehensive that some public affront such as the Doctor's unpardonable folly, to use the mildest term, had richly deserved, would be put upon him. The medical men spoke out, and plainly told him that his daughter must resign or die.

At last paternal affection, medical authority, and the voice of all London crying shame, triumphed over Dr. Burney's love of courts. He determined that Frances should write a letter of resignation. It was with difficulty that, though her life was at stake, she mustered spirit to put the paper into the Queen's hands. "I could not," so runs the Diary, "summon courage to present my memorial; my heart always failed me from seeing the Queen's entire freedom from such an expectation. For though I was frequently so ill in her presence that I could hardly stand, I saw she concluded me, while life remained, inevitably hers."

At last with a trembling hand the paper was delivered. Then came
the storm. Juno, as in the Aeneid, delegated the work of
vengeance to Alecto. The Queen was calm and gentle; but Madame
Schwellenberg raved like a maniac in the incurable ward of
Bedlam! Such insolence! Such ingratitude! Such folly! Would Miss
Burney bring utter destruction on herself and her family? Would
she throw away the inestimable advantage of royal protection?
Would she part with privileges which, once relinquished, could
never be regained? It was idle to talk of health and life. If
people could not live in the palace, the best thing that could
befall them was to die in it. The resignation was not accepted.
The language of the medical men became stronger and stronger. Dr.
Burney's parental fears were fully roused; and he explicitly
declared, in a letter meant to be shown to the Queen, that his
daughter must retire. The Schwellenberg raged like a wild cat. "A
scene almost horrible ensued," says Miss Burney. "She was too
much enraged for disguise, and uttered the most furious
expressions of indignant contempt at our proceedings. I am sure
she would gladly have confined us both in the Bastile, had
England such a misery, as a fit place to bring us to ourselves,
from a daring so outrageous against imperial wishes." This
passage deserves notice, as being the only one in the Diary, so
far as we have observed, which shows Miss Burney to have been
aware that she was a native of a free country, that she could not
be pressed for a waiting-maid against her will, and that she had
just as good a right to live, if she chose, in Saint Martin's
Street, as Queen Charlotte had to live at Saint James's.
The Queen promised that, after the next birthday, Miss Burney should be set at liberty. But the promise was ill kept; and her Majesty showed displeasure at being reminded of it. At length Frances was informed that in a fortnight her attendance should cease. "I heard this," she says, "with a fearful presentiment I should surely never go through another fortnight, in so weak and languishing and painful a state of health. . . . As the time of separation approached, the Queen's cordiality rather diminished, and traces of internal displeasure appeared sometimes, arising from an opinion I ought rather to have struggled on, live or die, than to quit her. Yet I am sure she saw how poor was my own chance, except by a change in the mode of life, and at least ceased to wonder, though she could not approve." Sweet Queen! What noble candour, to admit that the undutifulness of people, who did not think the honour of adjusting her tuckers worth the sacrifice of their own lives, was, though highly criminal, not altogether unnatural!

We perfectly understand her Majesty's contempt for the lives of others where her own pleasure was concerned. But what pleasure she can have found in having Miss Burney about her, it is not so easy to comprehend. That Miss Burney was an eminently skilful keeper of the robes is not very probable. Few women, indeed, had paid less attention to dress. Now and then, in the course of five years, she had been asked to read aloud or to write a copy of verses. But better readers might easily have been found: and her verses were worse than even the Poet Laureate's Birthday Odes.
Perhaps that economy, which was among her Majesty's most conspicuous virtues, had something to do with her conduct on this occasion. Miss Burney had never hinted that she expected a retiring pension; and indeed would gladly have given the little that she had for freedom. But her Majesty knew what the public thought, and what became her own dignity. She could not for very shame suffer a woman of distinguished genius, who had quitted a lucrative career to wait on her, who had served her faithfully for a pittance during five years, and whose constitution had been impaired by labour and watching, to leave the Courts without some mark of royal liberality. George the Third, who, on all occasions where Miss Burney was concerned, seems to have behaved like an honest, good-natured gentleman, felt this, and said plainly that she was entitled to a provision. At length, in return for all the misery which she had undergone, and for the health which she had sacrificed, an annuity of one hundred pounds was granted to her, dependent on the Queen's pleasure.

Then the prison was opened, and Frances was free once more. Johnson, as Burke observed, might have added a striking page to his poem on the Vanity of Human Wishes, if he had lived to see his little Burney as she went into the palace and as she came out of it.

The pleasures, so long untasted, of liberty, of friendship, of domestic affection, were almost too acute for her shattered
frame. But happy days and tranquil nights soon restored the health which the Queen's toilette and Madame Schwellenberg's card-table had impaired. Kind and anxious faces surrounded the invalid. Conversation the most polished and brilliant revived her spirits. Travelling was recommended to her; and she rambled by easy journeys from cathedral to cathedral, and from watering-place to watering-place. She crossed the New Forest, and visited Stonehenge and Wilton, the cliffs of Lyme, and the beautiful valley of Sidmouth. Thence she journeyed by Powderham Castle, and by the ruins of Glastonbury Abbey to Bath, and from Bath, when the winter was approaching, returned well and cheerful to London. There she visited her old dungeon, and found her successor already far on the way to the grave, and kept to strict duty, from morning till midnight, with a sprained ankle and a nervous fever.

At this time England swarmed with French exiles, driven from their country by the Revolution. A colony of these refugees settled at Juniper Hall, in Surrey, not far from Norbury Park, where Mr. Lock, an intimate friend of the Burney family, resided. Frances visited Norbury, and was introduced to the strangers. She had strong prejudices against them; for her Toryism was far beyond, we do not say that of Mr. Pitt, but that of Mr. Reeves; and the inmates of Juniper Hall were all attached to the constitution of 1791, and were therefore more detested by the royalists of the first emigration than Petion or Marat. But such a woman as Miss Burney could not long resist the fascination of
that remarkable society. She had lived with Johnson and Windham, with Mrs. Montague and Mrs. Thrale. Yet she was forced to own that she had never heard conversation before. The most animated eloquence, the keenest observation, the most sparkling wit, the most courtly grace, were united to charm her. For Madame de Stael was there, and M. de Talleyrand. There too was M. de Narbonne, a noble representative of French aristocracy; and with M. de Narbonne was his friend and follower General D'Arblay, an honourable and amiable man, with a handsome person, frank soldierlike manners, and some taste for letters.

The prejudices which Frances had conceived against the constitutional royalists of France rapidly vanished. She listened with rapture to Talleyrand and Madame de Stael, joined with M. D'Arblay in execrating the Jacobins and in weeping for the unhappy Bourbons, took French lessons from him, fell in love with him, and married him on no better provision than a precarious annuity of one hundred pounds.

Here the Diary stops for the present. We will, therefore, bring our narrative to a speedy close, by rapidly recounting the most important events which we know to have befallen Madame D'Arblay during the latter part of her life.

M. D'Arblay's fortune had perished in the general wreck of the French Revolution; and in a foreign country his talents, whatever
they may have been, could scarcely make him rich. The task of providing for the family devolved on his wife. In the year 1796, she published by subscription her third novel, Camilla. It was impatiently expected by the public; and the sum which she obtained for it, we believe, greater than had ever at that time been received for a novel. We have heard that she cleared more than three thousand guineas. But we give this merely as a rumour. Camilla, however, never attained popularity like that which Evelina and Cecilia had enjoyed; and it must be allowed that there was a perceptible falling off, not indeed in humour or in power of portraying character, but in grace and in purity of style.

We have heard that, about this time, a tragedy by Madame D'Arblay was performed without success. We do not know whether it was ever printed; nor indeed have we had time to make any researches into its history or merits.

During the short truce which followed the treaty of Amiens, M. D'Arblay visited France. Lauriston and La Fayette represented his claims to the French Government, and obtained a promise that he should be reinstated in his military rank. M. D'Arblay, however, insisted that he should never be required to serve against the countrymen of his wife. The First Consul, of course, would not hear of such a condition, and ordered the general's commission to be instantly revoked.
Madame D'Arblay joined her husband in Paris, a short time before the war of 1803 broke out, and remained in France ten years, cut off from almost all intercourse with the land of her birth. At length, when Napoleon was on his march to Moscow, she with great difficulty obtained from his Ministers permission to visit her own country, in company with her son, who was a native of England. She returned in time to receive the last blessing of her father, who died in his eighty-seventh year. In 1814 she published her last novel, the Wanderer, a book which no judicious friend to her memory will attempt to draw from the oblivion into which it has justly fallen. In the same year her son Alexander was sent to Cambridge. He obtained an honourable place among the wranglers of his year, and was elected a fellow of Christ's College. But his reputation at the University was higher than might be inferred from his success in academical contests. His French education had not fitted him for the examinations of the Senate House; but, in pure mathematics, we have been assured by some of his competitors that he had very few equals. He went into the Church, and it was thought likely that he would attain high eminence as a preacher; but he died before his mother. All that we have heard of him leads us to believe that he was a son as such a mother deserved to have. In 1832, Madame D'Arblay published the Memoirs of her father; and on the sixth of January, 1840, she died in her eighty-eighth year.

We now turn from the life of Madame D'Arblay to her writings.
There can, we apprehend, be little difference of opinion as to the nature of her merit, whatever differences may exist as to its degree. She was emphatically what Johnson called her, a character-monger. It was in the exhibition of human passions and whims that her strength lay; and in this department of art she had, we think, very distinguished skill.

But, in order that we may, according to our duty as kings at arms, versed in the laws of literary precedence, marshal her to the exact scat to which she is entitled, we must carry our examination somewhat further.

There is, in one respect, a remarkable analogy between the faces and the minds of men. No two faces are alike; and yet very few faces deviate very widely from the common standard. Among the eighteen hundred thousand human beings who inhabit London, there is not one who could be taken by his acquaintance for another; yet we may walk from Paddington to Mile End without seeing one person in whom any feature is so overcharged that we turn round to stare at it. An infinite number of varieties lies between limits which are not very far asunder. The specimens which pass those limits on either side, form a very small minority.

It is the same with the characters of men. Here, too, the variety passes all enumeration. But the cases in which the deviation from the common standing is striking and grotesque, are very few. In
one mind avarice predominates; in another, pride; in a third, love of pleasure; just as in one countenance the nose is the most marked feature, while in others the chief expression lies in the brow, or in the lines of the mouth. But there are very few countenances in which nose, brow, and mouth do not contribute, though in unequal degrees, to the general effect; and so there are very few characters in which one overgrown propensity makes all others utterly insignificant.

It is evident that a portrait painter, who was able only to represent faces and figures such as those which we pay money to see at fairs, would not, however spirited his execution might be, take rank among the highest artists. He must always be placed below those who have skill to seize peculiarities which do not amount to deformity. The slighter those peculiarities, the greater is the merit of the limner who can catch them and transfer them to his canvas. To paint Daniel Lambert or the living skeleton, the pig-faced lady or the Siamese twins, so that nobody can mistake them, is an exploit within the reach of a sign-painter. A third-rate artist might give us the squint of Wilkes, and the depressed nose and protuberant cheeks of Gibbon. It would require a much higher degree of skill to paint two such men as Mr. Canning and Sir Thomas Lawrence, so that nobody who had ever seen them could for a moment hesitate to assign each picture to its original. Here the mere caricaturist would be quite at fault. He would find in neither face anything on which he could lay hold for the purpose of making a distinction. Two
ample bald foreheads, two regular profiles, two full faces of the same oval form, would baffle his art; and he would be reduced to the miserable shift of writing their names at the foot of his picture. Yet there was a great difference; and a person who had seen them once would no more have mistaken one of them for the other than he would have mistaken Mr. Pitt for Mr. Fox. But the difference lay in delicate lineaments and shades, reserved for pencils of a rare order.

This distinction runs through all the imitative arts. Foote's mimicry was exquisitely ludicrous, but it was all caricature. He could take off only some strange peculiarity, a stammer or a lisp, a Northumbrian burr or an Irish brogue, a stoop or a shuffle. "If a man," said Johnson, "hops on one leg, Foote can hop on one leg." Garrick, on the other hand, could seize those differences of manner and pronunciation, which, though highly characteristic, are yet too slight to be described. Foote, we have no doubt, could have made the Haymarket theatre shake with laughter by imitating a conversation between a Scotchman and a Somersetshireman. But Garrick could have imitated a conversation between two fashionable men, both models of the best breeding, Lord Chesterfield, for example, and Lord Albemarle, so that no person could doubt which was which, although no person could say that, in any point, either Lord Chesterfield or Lord Albemarle spoke or moved otherwise than in conformity with the usages of the best society.
The same distinction is found in the drama and in fictitious narrative. Highest among those who have exhibited human nature by means of dialogue, stands Shakspeare. His variety is like the variety of nature, endless diversity, scarcely any monstrosity. The characters of which he has given us an impression, as vivid as that which we receive from the characters of our own associates, are to be reckoned by scores. Yet in all these scores hardly one character is to be found which deviates widely from the common standard, and which we should call very eccentric if we met it in real life. The silly notion that every man has one ruling passion, and that this clue, once known, unravels all the mysteries of his conduct, finds no countenance in the plays of Shakspeare. There man appears as he is, made up of a crowd of passions, which contend for the mastery over him, and govern him in turn. What is Hamlet's ruling passion? Or Othello's? Or Harry the Fifth's? Or Wolsey's? Or Lear's? Or Shylock's? Or Benedick's? Or Macbeth's? Or that of Cassius? Or that of Falconbridge? But we might go on for ever. Take a single example, Shylock. Is he so eager for money as to be indifferent to revenge? Or so eager for revenge as to be indifferent to money? Or so bent on both together as to be indifferent to the honour of his nation and the law of Moses? All his propensities are mingled with each other, so that, in trying to apportion to each its proper part, we find the same difficulty which constantly meets us in real life. A superficial critic may say, that hatred is Shylock's ruling passion. But how many passions have amalgamated to form that hatred? It is partly the result of wounded pride: Antonio has
called him dog. It is partly the result of covetousness: Antonio has hindered him of half a million; and, when Antonio is gone, there will be no limit to the gains of usury. It is partly the result of national and religious feeling: Antonio has spit on the Jewish gaberdine; and the oath of revenge has been sworn by the Jewish Sabbath. We might go through all the characters which we have mentioned, and through fifty more in the same way; for it is the constant manner of Shakspeare to represent the human mind as lying, not under the absolute dominion of one despotic propensity, but under a mixed government, in which a hundred powers balance each other. Admirable as he was in all parts of his art, we most admire him for this, that while he has left us a greater number of striking portraits than all other dramatists put together, he has scarcely left us a single caricature.

Shakspeare has had neither equal nor second. But among the writers who, in the point which we have noticed, have approached nearest to the manner of the great master, we have no hesitation in placing Jane Austen, a woman of whom England is justly proud. She has given us a multitude of characters, all, in a certain sense, commonplace, all such as we meet every day. Yet they are all as perfectly discriminated from each other as if they were the most eccentric of human beings. There are, for example, four clergymen, none of whom we should be surprised to find in any parsonage in the kingdom, Mr. Edward Ferrers, Mr. Henry Tilney, Mr. Edmund Bertram, and Mr. Elton. They are all specimens of the upper part of the middle class. They have all been liberally
educated. They all lie under the restraints of the same sacred profession. They are all young. They are all in love. Not one of them has any hobbyhorse, to use the phrase of Sterne. Not one has a ruling passion, such as we read of in Pope. Who would not have expected them to be insipid likenesses of each other? No such thing. Harpagun is not more unlike to Jourdain, Joseph Surface is not more unlike to Sir Lucius O'Trigger, than every one of Miss Austen's young divines to all his reverend brethren. And almost all this is done by touches so delicate, that they elude analysis, that they defy the powers of description, and that we know them to exist only by the general effect to which they have contributed.

A line must be drawn, we conceive, between artists of this class, and those poets and novelists whose skill lies in the exhibiting of what Ben Jonson called humours. The words of Ben are so much to the purpose that we will quote them:

"When some one peculiar quality
Doth so possess a man, that it doth draw
All his affects, his spirits, and his powers,
In their confluxions all to run one way,
This may be truly said to be a humour."

There are undoubtedly persons, in whom humours such as Ben describes have attained a complete ascendancy. The avarice of
Elwes, the insane desire of Sir Egerton Brydges for a barony to which he had no more right than to the crown of Spain, the malevolence which long meditation on imaginary wrongs generated in the gloomy mind of Bellingham, are instances. The feeling which animated Clarkson and other virtuous men against the slave-trade and slavery, is an instance of a more honourable kind.

Seeing that such humours exist, we cannot deny that they are proper subjects for the imitations of art. But we conceive that the imitation of such humours, however skilful and amusing, is not an achievement of the highest order; and, as such humours are rare in real life, they ought, we conceive, to be sparingly introduced into works which profess to be pictures of real life. Nevertheless, the writer may show so much genius in the exhibition of these humours as to be fairly entitled to a distinguished and permanent rank among classics. The chief seats of all, however, the places on the dais and under the canopy, are reserved for the few who have excelled in the difficult art of portraying characters in which no single feature is extravagantly overcharged.

If we have expounded the law soundly, we can have no difficulty in applying it to the particular case before us. Madame D'Arblay has left us scarcely anything but humours. Almost every one of her men and women has some one propensity developed to a morbid degree. In Cecilia, for example, Mr. Delvile never opens his lips without some allusion to his own birth and station; or Mr.
Briggs, without some allusion to the hoarding of money; or Mr. Hobson, without betraying the self-indulgence and self-importance of a purse-proud up start; or Mr. Simkins, without uttering some sneaking remark for the purpose of currying favour with his customers; or Mr. Meadows, without expressing apathy and weariness of life; or Mr. Albany, without declaiming about the vices of the rich and the misery of the poor; or Mrs. Belfield, without some indelicate eulogy on her son; or Lady Margaret, without indicating jealousy of her husband. Morrice is all skipping, officious impertinence, Mr. Gosport all sarcasm, Lady Honoria all lively prattle, Miss Larolles all silly prattle. If ever Madame D’Arblay aimed at more, we do not think that she succeeded well.

We are, therefore, forced to refuse to Madame D’Arblay a place in the highest rank of art; but we cannot deny that, in the rank to which she belonged, she had few equals, and scarcely any superior. The variety of humours which is to be found in her novels is immense; and though the talk of each person separately is monotonous, the general effect is not monotony, but a very lively and agreeable diversity. Her plots are rudely constructed and improbable, if we consider them in themselves. But they are admirably framed for the purpose of exhibiting striking groups of eccentric characters, each governed by his own peculiar whim, each talking his own peculiar jargon, and each bringing out by opposition the oddities of all the rest. We will give one example out of many which occur to us. All probability is violated in
order to bring Mr. Delvile, Mr. Briggs, Mr. Hobson, and Mr. Albany into a room together. But when we have them there, we soon forget probability in the exquisitely ludicrous effect which is produced by the conflict of four old fools, each raging with a monomania of his own, each talking a dialect of his own, and each inflaming all the others anew every time he opens his mouth.

Madame D'Arblay was most successful in comedy, and indeed in comedy which bordered on farce. But we are inclined to infer from some passages, both in Cecilia and Camilla, that she might have attained equal distinction in the pathetic. We have formed this judgment, less from those ambitious scenes of distress which lie near the catastrophe of each of those novels, than from some exquisite strokes of natural tenderness which take us here and there by surprise. We would mention as examples, Mrs. Hill's account of her little boy's death in Cecilia, and the parting of Sir Hugh Tyrold and Camilla, when the honest baronet thinks himself dying.

It is melancholy to think that the whole fame of Madame D'Arblay rests on what she did during the earlier half of her life, and that everything which she published during the forty-three years which preceded her death, lowered her reputation. Yet we have no reason to think that at the time when her faculties ought to have been in their maturity, they were smitten with any blight. In the Wanderer, we catch now and then a gleam of her genius. Even in the Memoirs of her father, there is no trace of dotage. They are
very bad; but they are so, as it seems to us, not from a decay of power, but from a total perversion of power.

The truth is, that Madame D'Arblay's style underwent a gradual and most pernicious change, a change which, in degree at least, we believe to be unexampled in literary history, and of which it may be useful to trace the progress.

When she wrote her letters to Mr. Crisp, her early journals, and her first novel, her style was not indeed brilliant or energetic; but it was easy, clear, and free from all offensive faults. When she wrote Cecilia she aimed higher. She had then lived much in a circle of which Johnson was the centre; and she was herself one of his most submissive worshippers. It seems never to have crossed her mind that the style even of his best writings was by no means faultless, and that even had it been faultless, it might not be wise in her to imitate it. Phraseology which is proper in a disquisition on the Unities, or in a preface to a Dictionary, may be quite out of place in a tale of fashionable life. Old gentlemen do not criticise the reigning modes, nor do young gentlemen make love, with the balanced epithets and sonorous cadences which, on occasions of great dignity, a skilful writer may use with happy effect.

In an evil hour the author of Evelina took the Rambler for her model. This would not have been wise even if she could have
imitated her pattern as well as Hawkesworth did. But such imitation was beyond her power. She had her own style. It was a tolerably good one; and might, without any violent change, have been improved into a very good one. She determined to throw it away, and to adopt a style in which she could attain excellence only by achieving an almost miraculous victory over nature and over habit. She could cease to be Fanny Burney; it was not so easy to become Samuel Johnson.

In Cecilia the change of manner began to appear. But in Cecilia the imitation of Johnson, though not always in the best taste, is sometimes eminently happy; and the passages which are so verbose as to be positively offensive, are few. There were people who whispered that Johnson had assisted his young friend, and that the novel owed all its finest passages to his hand. This was merely the fabrication of envy. Miss Burney's real excellences were as much beyond the reach of Johnson, as his real excellences were beyond her reach. He could no more have written the Masquerade scene, or the Vauxhall scene, than she could have written the Life of Cowley or the Review of Soame Jenyns. But we have not the smallest doubt that he revised Cecilia, and that he retouched the style of many passages. We know that he was in the habit of giving assistance of this kind most freely. Goldsmith, Hawkesworth, Boswell, Lord Hailes, Mrs. Williams, were among those who obtained his help. Nay, he even corrected the poetry of Mr. Crabbe, whom, we believe, he had never seen. When Miss Burney thought of writing a comedy, he promised to give her his best
counsel, though he owned that he was not particularly well qualified to advise on matters relating to the stage. We therefore think it in the highest degree improbable that his little Fanny, when living in habits of the most affectionate intercourse with him, would have brought out an important work without consulting him; and, when we look into Cecilia, we see such traces of his hand in the grave and elevated passages as it is impossible to mistake. Before we conclude this article, we will give two or three examples.

When next Madame D'Arblay appeared before the world as a writer, she was in a very different situation. She would not content herself with the simple English in which Evelina had been written. She had no longer the friend who, we are confident, had polished and strengthened the style of Cecilia. She had to write in Johnson's manner without Johnson's aid. The consequence was, that in Camilla every passage which she meant to be fine is detestable; and that the book has been saved from condemnation only by the admirable spirit and force of those scenes in which she was content to be familiar.

But there was to be a still deeper descent. After the publication of Camilla, Madame D'Arblay resided ten years at Paris. During those years there was scarcely any intercourse between France and England. It was with difficulty that a short letter could occasionally be transmitted. All Madame D'Arblay's companions were French. She must have written, spoken, thought, in French.
Ovid expressed his fear that a shorter exile might have affected the purity of his Latin. During a shorter exile, Gibbon unlearned his native English. Madame D'Arblay had carried a bad style to France. She brought back a style which we are really at a loss to describe. It is a sort of broken Johnsonese, a barbarous patois, bearing the same relation to the language of Rasselas, which the gibberish of the negroes of Jamaica bears to the English of the House of Lords. Sometimes it reminds us of the finest, that is to say, the vilest parts, of Mr. Galt's novels; sometimes of the perorations of Exeter Hall; sometimes of the leading articles of the Morning Post. But it most resembles the puffs of Mr. Rowland and Dr. Goss. It matters not what ideas are clothed in such a style. The genius of Shakspeare and Bacon united, would not save a work so written from general derision.

It is only by means of specimens that we can enable our readers to judge how widely Madame D'Arblay's three styles differed from each other.

The following passage was written before she became intimate with Johnson. It is from Evelina:

"His son seems weaker in his understanding, and more gay in his temper; but his gaiety is that of a foolish overgrown schoolboy, whose mirth consists in noise and disturbance. He disdains his father for his close attention to business and love of money,"
though he seems himself to have no talents, spirit, or generosity to make him superior to either. His chief delight appears to be in tormenting and ridiculing his sisters, who in return most cordially despise him. Miss Branghton, the eldest daughter, is by no means ugly; but looks proud, ill-tempered, and conceited. She hates the city, though without knowing why; for it is easy to discover she has lived nowhere else. Miss Polly Branghton is rather pretty, very foolish, very ignorant, very giddy, and, I believe, very good-natured."

This is not a fine style, but simple, perspicuous, and agreeable. We now come to Cecilia, written during Miss Burney's intimacy with Johnson; and we leave it to our readers to judge whether the following passage was not at least corrected by his hand:

"It is rather an imaginary than an actual evil, and though a deep wound to pride, no offence to morality. Thus have I laid open to you my whole heart, confessed my perplexities, acknowledged my vainglory, and exposed with equal sincerity the sources of my doubts, and the motives of my decision. But now, indeed, how to proceed I know not. The difficulties which are yet to encounter I fear to enumerate, and the petition I have to urge I have scarce courage to mention. My family, mistaking ambition for honour, and rank for dignity, have long planned a splendid connection for me, to which, though my invariable repugnance has stopped any advances, their wishes and their views immoveably adhere. I am but too certain they will now listen to no other. I dread,
therefore, to make a trial where I despair of success. I know not
how to risk a prayer with those who may silence me by a command."

Take now a specimen of Madame D'Arblay's later style. This is the
way in which she tells us that her father, on his journey back
from the Continent, caught the rheumatism.

"He was assaulted, during his precipitated return, by the rudest
fierceness of wintry elemental strife; through which, with bad
accommodations and innumerable accidents, he became a prey to the
merciless pangs of the acutest spasmodic rheumatism, which barely
suffered him to reach his home, ere, long and piteously, it
confined him, a tortured prisoner, to his bed. Such was the cheek
that almost instantly curbed, though it could not subdue, the
rising pleasure of his hopes of entering upon a new species of
existence--that of an approved man of letters; for it was on the
bed of sickness, exchanging the light wines of France, Italy, and
Germany, for the black and loathsome potions of the Apothecaries'
Hall, writhed by darting stitches, and burning with fiery fever,
that he felt the full force of that sublunary equipoise that
seems evermore to hang suspended over the attainment of long-
sought and uncommon felicity, just as it is ripening to burst
forth with enjoyment."

Here is a second passage from Evelina:
“Mrs. Selwyn is very kind and attentive to me. She is extremely clever. Her understanding, indeed, may be called masculine; but unfortunately her manners deserve the same epithet; for, in studying to acquire the knowledge of the other sex, she has lost all the softness of her own. In regard to myself, however, as I have neither courage nor inclination to argue with her, I have never been personally hurt at her want of gentleness, a virtue which nevertheless seems so essential a part of the female character, that I find myself more awkward and less at ease with a woman who wants it than I do with a man.”

This is a good style of its kind; and the following passage from Cecilia is also in a good style, though not in a faultless one.

We say with confidence, either Sam Johnson or the Devil:

"Even the imperious Mr. Delvile was more supportable here than in London. Secure in his own castle, he looked round him with a pride of power and possession which softened while it swelled him. His superiority was undisputed: his will was without control. He was not, as in the great capital of the kingdom, surrounded by competitors. No rivalry disturbed his peace; no equality mortified his greatness. All he saw were either vassals of his power, or guests bending to his pleasure. He abated, therefore, considerably the stern gloom of his haughtiness, and soothed his proud mind by the courtesy of condescension."
We will stake our reputation for critical sagacity on this, that no such paragraph as that which we have last quoted, can be found in any of Madame D'Arblay's works except Cecilia. Compare with it the following sample of her later style.

"If beneficence be judged by the happiness which it diffuses, whose claim, by that proof, shall stand higher than that of Mrs. Montagu, from the munificence with which she celebrated her annual festival for those hapless artificers who perform the most abject offices, of any authorised calling, in being the active guardians of our blazing hearths? Not to vainglory, then, but to kindness of heart, should be adjudged the publicity of that superb charity which made its jetty objects, for one bright morning, cease to consider themselves as degraded outcasts from all society."

We add one or two shorter samples. Sheridan refused to permit his lovely wife to sing in public, and was warmly praised on this account by Johnson.

"The last of men," says Madame D'Arblay, "was Doctor Johnson to have abetted squandering the delicacy of integrity by nullifying the labours of talents."

The Club, Johnson's Club, did itself no honour by rejecting on
political grounds two distinguished men, one a Tory, the other a Whig. Madame D'Arblay tells the story thus: "A similar ebullition of political rancour with that which so difficultly had been conquered for Mr. Canning foamed over the ballot box to the exclusion of Mr. Rogers."

An offence punishable with imprisonment is, in this language, an offence "which produces incarceration." To be starved to death is "to sink from inanition into nonentity." Sir Isaac Newton is "the developer of the skies in their embodied movements"; and Mrs. Thrale, when a party of clever people sat silent, is said to have been "provoked by the dulness of a taciturnity that, in the midst of such renowned interlocutors, produced as narcotic a torpor as could have been caused by a dearth the most barren of all human faculties." In truth, it is impossible to look at any page of Madame D'Arblay's later works without finding flowers of rhetoric like these. Nothing in the language of those jargonists at whom Mr. Gosport laughed, nothing in the language of Sir Sedley Clarendel, approaches this new Euphuism.

It is from no unfriendly feeling to Madame D'Arblay's memory that we have expressed ourselves so strongly on the subject of her style. On the contrary, we conceive that we have really rendered a service to her reputation. That her later works were complete failures, is a fact too notorious to be dissembled: and some persons, we believe, have consequently taken up a notion that she was from the first an overrated writer, and that she had not the
powers which were necessary to maintain her on the eminence on which good luck and fashion had placed her. We believe, on the contrary, that her early popularity was no more than the just reward of distinguished merit, and would never have undergone an eclipse, if she had only been content to go on writing in her mother tongue. If she failed when she quitted her own province, and attempted to occupy one in which she had neither part nor lot, this reproach is common to her with a crowd of distinguished men. Newton failed when he turned from the courses of the stars, and the ebb and flow of the ocean, to apocalyptic seals and vials. Bentley failed when he turned from Homer and Aristophanes, to edit the Paradise Lost. Inigo failed when he attempted to rival the Gothic churches of the fourteenth century. Wilkie failed when he took it into his head that the Blind Fiddler and the Rent Day were unworthy of his powers, and challenged competition with Lawrence as a portrait painter. Such failures should be noted for the instruction of posterity; but they detract little from the permanent reputation of those who have really done great things.

Yet one word more. It is not only on account of the intrinsic merit of Madame D'Arblay's early works that she is entitled to honourable mention. Her appearance is an important epoch in our literary history. Evelina was the first tale written by a woman, and purporting to be a picture of life and manners, that lived or deserved to live. The Female Quixote is no exception. That work has undoubtedly great merit, when considered as a wild satirical
harlequinade; but, if we consider it as a picture of life and
manners, we must pronounce it more absurd than any of the
romances which it was designed to ridicule.

Indeed, most of the popular novels which preceded Evelina were
such as no lady would have written; and many of them were such as
no lady could without confusion own that she had read. The very
name of novel was held in horror among religious people. In
decent families, which did not profess extraordinary sanctity,
there was a strong feeling against all such works. Sir Anthony
Absolute, two or three years before Evelina appeared, spoke the
sense of the great body of sober fathers and husbands, when he
pronounced the circulating library an evergreen tree of
diabolical knowledge. This feeling on the part of the grave and
reflecting, increased the evil from which it had sprung. The
novelist having little character to lose, and having few readers
among serious people, took without scruple liberties which in our
generation seem almost incredible.

Miss Burney did for the English novel what Jeremy Collier did for
the English drama; and she did it in a better way. She first
showed that a tale might be written in which both the
fashionable and the vulgar life of London might be exhibited with
great force, and with broad comic humour, and which yet should
not contain a single line inconsistent with rigid morality, or
even with virgin delicacy. She took away the reproach which lay
on a most useful and delightful species of composition. She
vindicated the right of her sex to an equal share in a fair and
noble province of letters. Several accomplished women have
followed in her track. At present, the novels which we owe to
English ladies form no small part of the literary glory of our
country. No class of works is more honourably distinguished by
fine observation, by grace, by delicate wit, by pure moral
feeling. Several among the successors of Madame D'Arblay have
equalled her; two, we think, have surpassed her. But the fact
that she has been surpassed gives her an additional claim to our
respect and gratitude for, in truth, we owe to her not only
Evelina, Cecilia, and Camilla, but also Mansfield Park and the
Absentee.

MOORE'S LIFE OF LORD BYRON

(June 1831)

Letters and Journals of Lord Byron; with Notices of his Life. By
THOMAS MOORE, Esq. 2 vols. 4to. London: 1830.

WE have read this book with the greatest pleasure. Considered
merely as a composition, it deserves to be classed among the best
specimens of English prose which our age has produced. It
contains, indeed, no single passage equal to two or three which
we could select from the Life of Sheridan. But, as a whole, it is
immeasurably superior to that work. The style is agreeable,
clear, and manly, and when it rises into eloquence, rises without
effort or ostentation. Nor is the matter inferior to the manner.

It would be difficult to name a book which exhibits more
kindness, fairness, and modesty. It has evidently been written,
not for the purpose of showing, what, however, it often shows,
how well its author can write, but for the purpose of
vindicating, as far as truth will permit, the memory of a
celebrated man who can no longer vindicate himself. Mr. Moore
never thrusts himself between Lord Byron and the public. With the
strongest temptations to egotism, he has said no more about
himself than the subject absolutely required.

A great part, indeed the greater part, of these volumes, consists
of extracts from the letters and journals of Lord Byron; and it
is difficult to speak too highly of the skill which has been
shown in the selection and arrangement. We will not say that we
have not occasionally remarked in these two large quartos an
anecdote which should have been omitted, a letter which should
have been suppressed, a name which should have been concealed by
asterisks, or asterisks which do not answer the purpose of
concealing the name. But it is impossible, on a general survey,
to deny that the task has been executed with great judgment and
great humanity. When we consider the life which Lord Byron had
led, his petulance, his irritability, and his communicativeness,
we cannot but admire the dexterity with which Mr. Moore has
contrived to exhibit so much of the character and opinions of his
friend, with so little pain to the feelings of the living.
The extracts from the journals and correspondence of Lord Byron are in the highest degree valuable, not merely on account of the information which they contain respecting the distinguished man by whom they were written, but on account also of their rare merit as compositions. The letters, at least those which were sent from Italy, are among the best in our language. They are less affected than those of Pope and Walpole; they have more matter in them than those of Cowper. Knowing that many of them were not written merely for the person to whom they were directed, but were general epistles, meant to be read by a large circle, we expected to find them clever and spirited, but deficient in ease. We looked with vigilance for instances of stiffness in the language and awkwardness in the transitions. We have been agreeably disappointed; and we must confess that, if the epistolary style of Lord Byron was artificial, it was a rare and admirable instance of that highest art which cannot be distinguished from nature.

Of the deep and painful interest which this book excites no abstract can give a just notion. So sad and dark a story is scarcely to be found in any work of fiction; and we are little disposed to envy the moralist who can read it without being softened.

The pretty fable by which the Duchess of Orleans illustrated the
character of her son the Regent might, with little change, be applied to Byron. All the fairies, save one, had been bidden to his cradle. All the gossips had been profuse of their gifts. One had bestowed nobility, another genius, a third beauty. The malignant elf who had been uninvited came last, and, unable to reverse what her sisters had done for their favourite, had mixed up a curse with every blessing. In the rank of Lord Byron, in his understanding, in his character, in his very person, there was a strange union of opposite extremes. He was born to all that men covet and admire. But in every one of those eminent advantages which he possessed over others was mingled something of misery and debasement. He was sprung from a house, ancient indeed and noble, but degraded and impoverished by a series of crimes and follies which had attained a scandalous publicity. The kinsman whom he succeeded had died poor, and, but for merciful judges, would have died upon the gallows. The young peer had great intellectual powers; yet there was an unsound part in his mind. He had naturally a generous and feeling heart: but his temper was wayward and irritable. He had a head which statuaries loved to copy, and a foot the deformity of which the beggars in the streets mimicked. Distinguished at once by the strength and by the weakness of his intellect, affectionate yet perverse, a poor lord, and a handsome cripple, he required, if ever man required, the firmest and the most judicious training. But, capriciously as nature had dealt with him, the parent to whom the office of forming his character was intrusted was more capricious still. She passed from paroxysms of rage to paroxysms of tenderness. At one time she stifled him with her caresses; at another time she
insulted his deformity. He came into the world; and the world
treated him as his mother had treated him, sometimes with
fondness, sometimes with cruelty, never with justice. It indulged
him without discrimination, and punished him without
discrimination. He was truly a spoiled child, not merely the
spoiled child of his parent, but the spoiled child of nature, the
spoiled child of fortune, the spoiled child of fame, the spoiled
child of society. His first poems were received with a contempt
which, feeble as they were, they did not absolutely deserve. The
poem which he published on his return from his travels was, on
the other hand, extolled far above its merit. At twenty-four, he
found himself on the highest pinnacle of literary fame, with
Scott, Wordsworth, Southey, and a crowd of other distinguished
writers beneath his feet. There is scarcely an instance in
history of so sudden a rise to so dizzy an eminence.

Everything that could stimulate, and everything that could
gratify the strongest propensities of our nature, the gaze of a
hundred drawing-rooms, the acclamations of the whole nation, the
applause of applauded men, the love of lovely women, all this
world and all the glory of it were at once offered to a youth to
whom nature had given violent passions, and whom education had
never taught to control them. He lived as many men live who have
no similar excuse to plead for their faults. But his countrymen
and his countrywomen would love him and admire him. They were
resolved to see in his excesses only the flash and outbreak of
that same fiery mind which glowed in his poetry. He attacked
religion; yet in religious circles his name was mentioned with fondness, and in many religious publications his works were censured with singular tenderness. He lampooned the Prince Regent; yet he could not alienate the Tories. Everything, it seemed, was to be forgiven to youth, rank, and genius.

Then came the reaction. Society, capricious in its indignation as it had been capricious in its fondness, flew into a rage with its froward and petted darling. He had been worshipped with an irrational idolatry. He was persecuted with an irrational fury. Much has been written about those unhappy domestic occurrences which decided the fate of his life. Yet nothing is, nothing ever was, positively known to the public, but this, that he quarrelled with his lady, and that she refused to live with him. There have been hints in abundance, and shrugs and shakings of the head, and "Well, well, we know," and "We could an if we would," and "If we list to speak," and "There be that might an they list." But we are not aware that there is before the world substantiated by credible, or even by tangible evidence, a single fact indicating that Lord Byron was more to blame than any other man who is on bad terms with his wife. The professional men whom Lady Byron consulted were undoubtedly of opinion that she ought not to live with her husband. But it is to be remembered that they formed that opinion without hearing both sides. We do not say, we do not mean to insinuate, that Lady Byron was in any respect to blame. We think that those who condemn her on
the evidence which is now before the public are as rash as those who condemn her husband. We will not pronounce any judgment, we cannot, even in our own minds, form any judgment, on a transaction which is so imperfectly known to us. It would have been well if, at the time of the separation, all those who knew as little about the matter then as we know about it now, had shown that forbearance which, under such circumstances, is but common justice.

We know no spectacle so ridiculous as the British public in one of its periodical fits of morality. In general, elopements, divorces, and family quarrels, pass with little notice. We read the scandal, talk about it for a day, and forget it. But once in six or seven years our virtue becomes outrageous. We cannot suffer the laws of religion and decency to be violated. We must make a stand against vice. We must teach libertines that the English people appreciate the importance of domestic ties. Accordingly some unfortunate man, in no respect more depraved than hundreds whose offences have been treated with lenity, is singled out as an expiatory sacrifice. If he has children, they are to be taken from him. If he has a profession, he is to be driven from it. He is cut by the higher orders, and hissed by the lower. He is, in truth, a sort of whipping-boy, by whose vicarious agonies all the other transgressors of the same class are, it is supposed, sufficiently chastised. We reflect very complacently on our own severity, and compare with great pride the high standard of morals established in England with the
Parisian laxity. At length our anger is satiated. Our victim is
ruined and heart-broken. And our virtue goes quietly to sleep for
seven years more.

It is clear that those vices which destroy domestic happiness
ought to be as much as possible repressed. It is equally clear
that they cannot be repressed by penal legislation. It is
therefore right and desirable that public opinion should be
directed against them. But it should be directed against them
uniformly, steadily, and temperately, not by sudden fits and
starts. There should be one weight and one measure. Decimation is
always an objectionable mode of punishment. It is the resource of
judges too indolent and hasty to investigate facts and to
discriminate nicely between shades of guilt. It is an irrational
practice, even when adopted by military tribunals. When adopted
by the tribunal of public opinion, it is infinitely more
irrational. It is good that a certain portion of disgrace should
constantly attend on certain bad actions. But it is not good that
the offenders should merely have to stand the risks of a lottery
of infamy, that ninety-nine out of every hundred should escape,
and that the hundredth, perhaps the most innocent of the hundred,
should pay for all. We remember to have seen a mob assembled in
Lincoln's Inn to hoot a gentleman against whom the most
oppressive proceeding known to the English law was then in
progress. He was hooted because he had been an unfaithful
husband, as if some of the most popular men of the age, Lord
Nelson for example, had not been unfaithful husbands. We remember
a still stronger case. Will posterity believe that, in an age in
which men whose gallantries were universally known, and had been
legally proved, filled some of the highest offices in the State
and in the army, presided at the meetings of religions and
benevolent institutions, were the delight of every society, and
the favourites of the multitude, a crowd of moralists went to the
theatre, in order to pelt a poor actor for disturbing the
conjugal felicity of an alderman? What there was in the
circumstances either of the offender or of the sufferer to
vindicate the zeal of the audience, we could never conceive. It
has never been supposed that the situation of an actor is
peculiarly favourable to the rigid virtues, or that an alderman
enjoys any special immunity from injuries such as that which on
this occasion roused the anger of the public. But such is the
justice of mankind.

In these cases the punishment was excessive; but the offence was
known and proved. The case of Lord Byron was harder. True Jedwood
justice was dealt out to him. First came the execution, then the
investigation, and last of all, or rather not at all, the
accusation. The public, without knowing anything whatever about
the transactions in his family, flew into a violent passion with
him, and proceeded to invent stories which might justify its
anger. Ten or twenty different accounts of the separation,
inconsistent with each other, with themselves, and with common
sense, circulated at the same time. What evidence there might be
for any one of these, the virtuous people who repeated them
neither knew nor cared. For in fact these stories were not the causes, but the effects of the public indignation. They resembled those loathsome slanders which Lewis Goldsmith, and other abject libellers of the same class, were in the habit of publishing about Bonaparte; such as that he poisoned a girl with arsenic when he was at the military school, that he hired a grenadier to shoot Dessaix at Marengo, that he filled St. Cloud with all the pollutions of Capreae. There was a time when anecdotes like these obtained some credence from persons who, hating the French emperor without knowing why, were eager to believe anything which might justify their hatred. Lord Byron fared in the same way. His countrymen were in a bad humour with him. His writings and his character had lost the charm of novelty. He had been guilty of the offence which, of all offences, is punished most severely; he had been over-praised; he had excited too warm an interest; and the public, with its usual justice, chastised him for its own folly. The attachments of the multitude bear no small resemblance to those of the wanton enchantress in the Arabian Tales, who, when the forty days of her fondness were over, was not content with dismissing her lovers, but condemned them to expiate, in loathsome shapes, and under cruel penances, the crime of having once pleased her too well.

The obloquy which Byron had to endure was such as might well have shaken a more constant mind. The newspapers were filled with lampoons. The theatres shook with execrations. He was excluded from circles where he had lately been the observed of all
observers. All those creeping things that riot in the decay of
nobler natures hastened to their repast; and they were right;
they did after their kind. It is not every day that the savage
envy of aspiring dunces is gratified by the agonies of such a
spirit, and the degradation of such a name.

The unhappy man left his country for ever. The howl of contumely
followed him across the sea, up the Rhine, over the Alps; it
gradually waxed fainter; it died away; those who had raised it
began to ask each other, what, after all, was the matter about
which they had been so clamorous, and wished to invite back the
criminal whom they had just chased from them. His poetry became
more popular than it had ever been; and his complaints were read
with tears by thousands and tens of thousands who had never seen
his face.

He had fixed his home on the shores of the Adriatic, in the most
picturesque and interesting of cities, beneath the brightest of
skies, and by the brightest of seas. Censoriousness was not the
vice of the neighbours whom he had chosen. They were a race
corrupted by a bad government and a bad religion, long renowned
for skill in the arts of voluptuousness, and tolerant of all the
caprices of sensuality. From the public opinion of the country of
his adoption, he had nothing to dread. With the public opinion of
the country of his birth, he was at open war. He plunged into
wild and desperate excesses, ennobled by no generous or tender
sentiment. From his Venetian haram, he sent forth volume after
volume, full of eloquence, of wit, of pathos, of ribaldry, and of bitter disdain. His health sank under the effects of his intemperance. His hair turned grey. His food ceased to nourish him. A hectic fever withered him up. It seemed that his body and mind were about to perish together.

From this wretched degradation he was in some measure rescued by a connection, culpable indeed, yet such as, if it were judged by the standard of morality established in the country where he lived, might be called virtuous. But an imagination polluted by vice, a temper embittered by misfortune, and a frame habituated to the fatal excitement of intoxication, prevented him from fully enjoying the happiness which he might have derived from the purest and most tranquil of his many attachments. Midnight draughts of ardent spirits and Rhenish wines had begun to work the ruin of his fine intellect. His verse lost much of the energy and condensation which had distinguished it. But he would not resign, without a struggle, the empire which he had exercised over the men of his generation. A new dream of ambition arose before him; to be the chief of a literary party; to be the great mover of an intellectual revolution; to guide the public mind of England from his Italian retreat, as Voltaire had guided the public mind of France from the villa of Ferney. With this hope, as it should seem, he established The Liberal. But, powerfully as he had affected the imaginations of his contemporaries, he mistook his own powers if he hoped to direct their opinions; and he still more grossly mistook his own disposition, if he thought
that he could long act in concert with other men of letters. The plan failed, and failed ignominiously. Angry with himself, angry with his coadjutors, he relinquished it, and turned to another project, the last and noblest of his life.

A nation, once the first among the nations, pre-eminent in knowledge, pre-eminent in military glory, the cradle of philosophy, of eloquence, and of the fine arts, had been for ages bowed down under a cruel yoke. All the vices which oppression generates, the abject vices which it generates in those who submit to it, the ferocious vices which it generates in those who struggle against it, had deformed the character of that miserable race. The valour which had won the great battle of human civilisation, which had saved Europe, which had subjugated Asia, lingered only among pirates and robbers. The ingenuity, once so conspicuously displayed in every department of physical and moral science, had been depraved into a timid and servile cunning. On a sudden this degraded people had risen on their oppressors. Discountenanced or betrayed by the surrounding potentates, they had found in themselves something of that which might well supply the place of all foreign assistance, something of the energy of their fathers.

As a man of letters, Lord Byron could not but be interested in the event of this contest. His political opinions, though, like all his opinions, unsettled, leaned strongly towards the side of liberty. He had assisted the Italian insurgents with his purse,
and, if their struggle against the Austrian Government had been prolonged, would probably have assisted them with his sword. But to Greece he was attached by peculiar ties. He had when young resided in that country. Much of his most splendid and popular poetry had been inspired by its scenery and by its history. Sick of inaction, degraded in his own eyes by his private vices and by his literary failures, pining for untried excitement and honourable distinction, he carried his exhausted body and his wounded spirit to the Grecian camp.

His conduct in his new situation showed so much vigour and good sense as to justify us in believing that, if his life had been prolonged, he might have distinguished himself as a soldier and a politician. But pleasure and sorrow had done the work of seventy years upon his delicate frame. The hand of death was upon him: he knew it; and the only wish which he uttered was that he might die sword in hand.

This was denied to him. Anxiety, exertion, exposure, and those fatal stimulants which had become indispensable to him, soon stretched him on a sick-bed, in a strange land, amidst strange faces, without one human being that he loved near him. There, at thirty-six, the most celebrated Englishman of the nineteenth century closed his brilliant and miserable career.

We cannot even now retrace those events without feeling something
of what was felt by the nation, when it was first known that the
grave had closed over so much sorrow and so much glory; something
of what was felt by those who saw the hearse, with its long train
of coaches, turn slowly northward, leaving behind it that
cemetery which had been consecrated by the dust of so many great
poets, but of which the doors were closed against all that
remained of Byron. We well remember that on that day, rigid
moralists could not refrain from weeping for one so young, so
illustrious, so unhappy, gifted with such rare gifts, and tried
by such strong temptations. It is unnecessary to make any
reflections. The history carries its moral with it. Our age has
indeed been fruitful of warnings to the eminent and of
consolations to the obscure. Two men have died within our
recolletion, who, at the time of life at which many people have
hardly completed their education, had raised themselves, each in
his own department, to the height of glory. One of them died at
Longwood; the other at Missolonghi.

It is always difficult to separate the literary character of a
man who lives in our own time from his personal character. It is
peculiarly difficult to make this separation in the case of Lord
Byron. For it is scarcely too much to say, that Lord Byron never
wrote without some reference, direct or indirect, to himself. The
interest excited by the events of his life mingles itself in our
minds, and probably in the minds of almost all our readers, with
the interest which properly belongs to his works. A generation
must pass away before it will be possible to form a fair judgment
of his books, considered merely as books. At present they are not only books but relics. We will however venture, though with unfeigned diffidence, to offer some desultory remarks on his poetry.

His lot was cast in the time of a great literary revolution. That poetical dynasty which had dethroned the successors of Shakspeare and Spenser was, in its turn, dethroned by a race who represented themselves as heirs of the ancient line, so long dispossessed by usurpers. The real nature of this revolution has not, we think, been comprehended by the great majority of those who concurred in it.

Wherein especially does the poetry of our times differ from that of the last century? Ninety-nine persons out of a hundred would answer that the poetry of the last century was correct, but cold and mechanical, and that the poetry of our time, though wild and irregular, presented far more vivid images, and excited the passions far more strongly than that of Parnell, of Addison, or of Pope. In the same manner we constantly hear it said, that the poets of the age of Elizabeth had far more genius, but far less correctness, than those of the age of Anne. It seems to be taken for granted, that there is some incompatibility, some antithesis between correctness and creative power. We rather suspect that this notion arises merely from an abuse of words, and that it has been the parent of many of the fallacies which perplex the science of criticism.
What is meant by correctness in poetry? If by correctness he meant the conforming to rules which have their foundation in truth and in the principles of human nature, then correctness is only another name for excellence. If by correctness be meant the conforming to rules purely arbitrary, correctness may be another name for dulness and absurdity.

A writer who describes visible objects falsely and violates the propriety of character, a writer who makes the mountains "nod their drowsy heads" at night, or a dying man take leave of the world with a rant like that of Maximin, may be said, in the high and just sense of the phrase, to write incorrectly. He violates the first great law of his art. His imitation is altogether unlike the thing imitated. The four poets who are most eminently free from incorrectness of this description are Homer, Dante, Shakspeare, and Milton. They are, therefore, in one sense, and that the best sense, the most correct of poets.

When it is said that Virgil, though he had less genius than Homer, was a more correct writer, what sense is attached to the word correctness? Is it meant that the story of the Aeneid is developed more skilfully than that of the Odyssey? that the Roman describes the face of the external world, or the emotions of the mind, more accurately than the Greek? that the characters of Achates and Mnestheus are more nicely discriminated, and more
consistently supported, than those of Achilles, of Nestor, and of Ulysses? The fact incontestably is that, for every violation of the fundamental laws of poetry which can be found in Homer, it would be easy to find twenty in Virgil.

Troilus and Cressida is perhaps of all the plays of Shakspeare that which is commonly considered as the most incorrect. Yet it seems to us infinitely more correct, in the sound sense of the term, than what are called the most correct plays of the most correct dramatists. Compare it, for example, with the Iphigenie of Racine. We are sure that the Greeks of Shakspeare bear a far greater resemblance than the Greeks of Racine to the real Greeks who besieged Troy; and for this reason, that the Greeks of Shakspeare are human beings, and the Greeks of Racine mere names, mere words printed in capitals at the head of paragraphs of declamation. Racine, it is true, would have shuddered at the thought of making a warrior at the siege of Troy quote Aristotle. But of what use is it to avoid a single anachronism, when the whole play is one anachronism, the sentiments and phrases of Versailles in the camp of Aulis?

In the sense in which we are now using the word correctness, we think that Sir Walter Scott, Mr. Wordsworth, Mr. Coleridge, are far more correct poets than those who are commonly extolled as the models of correctness, Pope, for example, and Addison. The single description of a moonlight night in Pope's Iliad contains more inaccuracies than can be found in all the Excursion. There
is not a single scene in Cato, in which all that conduces to 
poetical illusion, all the propriety of character, of language, 
of situation, is not more grossly violated than in any part of 
the Lay of the Last Minstrel. No man can possibly think that the 
Romans of Addison resemble the real Romans so closely as the 
moss-troopers of Scott resemble the real moss-troopers. Wat 
Tinlinn and William of Deloraine are not, it is true, persons of 
so much dignity as Cato. But the dignity of the persons 
represented has as little to do with the correctness of poetry as 
with the correctness of painting. We prefer a gipsy by Reynolds 
to his Majesty's head on a signpost, and a Borderer by Scott to a 
Senator by Addison.

In what sense, then, is the word correctness used by those who 
say, with the author of the Pursuits of Literature, that Pope was 
the most correct of English Poets, and that next to Pope came the 
late Mr. Gifford? What is the nature and value of that 
correctness, the praise of which is denied to Macbeth, to Lear, 
and to Othello, and given to Hoole's translations and to all the 
Seatonian prize-poems? We can discover no eternal rule, no rule 
founded in reason and in the nature of things, which Shakspeare 
does not observe much more strictly than Pope. But if by 
correctness be meant the conforming to a narrow legislation 
which, while lenient to the mala in se, multiplies, without a 
shadow of a reason, the mala prohibita, if by correctness be 
meant a strict attention to certain ceremonious observances, 
which are no more essential to poetry than etiquette to good
government, or than the washings of a Pharisee to devotion, then, assuredly, Pope may be a more correct poet than Shakspeare; and, if the code were a little altered, Colley Cibber might be a more correct poet than Pope. But it may well be doubted whether this kind of correctness be a merit, nay, whether it be not an absolute fault.

It would be amusing to make a digest of the irrational laws which bad critics have framed for the government of poets. First in celebrity and in absurdity stand the dramatic unities of place and time. No human being has ever been able to find anything that could, even by courtesy, be called an argument for these unities, except that they have been deduced from the general practice of the Greeks. It requires no very profound examination to discover that the Greek dramas, often admirable as compositions, are, as exhibitions of human character and human life, far inferior to the English plays of the age of Elizabeth. Every scholar knows that the dramatic part of the Athenian tragedies was at first subordinate to the lyrical part. It would, therefore, have been little less than a miracle if the laws of the Athenian stage had been found to suit plays in which there was no chorus. All the greatest masterpieces of the dramatic art have been composed in direct violation of the unities, and could never have been composed if the unities had not been violated. It is clear, for example, that such a character as that of Hamlet could never have been developed within the limits to which Alfieri confined himself. Yet such was the reverence of literary men during the
last century for these unities that Johnson who, much to his
honour, took the opposite side, was, as he says, "frightened at
his own temerity," and "afraid to stand against the authorities
which might be produced against him."

There are other rules of the same kind without end. "Shakspeare,"
says Rymer, "ought not to have made Othello black; for the hero
of a tragedy ought always to be white." "Milton," says another
critic, "ought not to have taken Adam for his hero; for the hero
of an epic poem ought always to be victorious." "Milton," says
another, "ought not to have put so many similes into his first
book; for the first book of an epic poem ought always to be the
most unadorned. There are no similes in the first book of the
Iliad." "Milton," says another, "ought not to have placed in an
epic poem such lines as these:

'While thus I called, and strayed I knew not whither.'"

And why not? The critic is ready with a reason, a lady's reason.
"Such lines," says he, "are not, it must be allowed, unpleasing
to the ear; but the redundant syllable ought to be confined to
the drama, and not admitted into epic poetry." As to the
redundant syllable in heroic rhyme on serious subjects, it has
been, from the time of Pope downward, proscribed by the general
consent of all the correct school. No magazine would have
admitted so incorrect a couplet as that of Drayton.
“As when we lived untouch’d with these disgraces,
When as our kingdom was our dear embraces.”

Another law of heroic rhyme, which, fifty years ago, was considered as fundamental, was, that there should be a pause, a comma at least, at the end of every couplet. It was also provided that there should never be a full stop except at the end of a line. Well do we remember to have heard a most correct judge of poetry revile Mr. Rogers for the incorrectness of that most sweet and graceful passage,

"Such grief was ours,—it seems but yesterday,—
When in thy prime, wishing so much to stay,
’Twas thine, Maria, thine without a sigh
At midnight in a sister’s arms to die.
Oh thou wert lovely; lovely was thy frame,
And pure thy spirit as from heaven it came:
And when recall’d to join the blest above
Thou diedst a victim to exceeding love,
Nursing the young to health. In happier hours,
When idle Fancy wove luxuriant flowers,
Once in thy mirth thou badst me write on thee
And now I write what thou shalt never see."

Sir Roger Newdigate is fairly entitled, we think, to be ranked
among the great critics of this school. He made a law that none of the poems written for the prize which he established at Oxford should exceed fifty lines. This law seems to us to have at least as much foundation in reason as any of those which we have mentioned; nay, much more, for the world, we believe, is pretty well agreed in thinking that the shorter a prize-poem is, the better.

We do not see why we should not make a few more rules of the same kind; why we should not enact that the number of scenes in every act shall be three or some multiple of three, that the number of lines in every scene shall be an exact square, that the dramatis personae shall never be more or fewer than sixteen, and that, in heroic rhymes, every thirty-sixth line shall have twelve syllables. If we were to lay down these canons, and to call Pope, Goldsmith, and Addison incorrect writers for not having complied with our whims, we should act precisely as those critics act who find incorrectness in the magnificent imagery and the varied music of Coleridge and Shelley.

The correctness which the last century prized so much resembles the correctness of those pictures of the garden of Eden which we see in old Bibles. We have an exact square enclosed by the rivers Pison, Gihon, Hiddekel, and Euphrates, each with a convenient bridge in the centre, rectangular beds of flowers, a long canal, neatly bricked and railed in, the tree of knowledge clipped like one of the limes behind the Tuilleries, standing in the centre of
the grand alley, the snake twined round it, the man on the right hand, the woman on the left, and the beasts drawn up in an exact circle round them. In one sense the picture is correct enough. That is to say, the squares are correct; the circles are correct; the man and the woman are in a most correct line with the tree; and the snake forms a most correct spiral.

But if there were a painter so gifted that he could place on the canvas that glorious paradise, seen by the interior eye of him whose outward sight had failed with long watching and labouring for liberty and truth, if there were a painter who could set before us the mazes of the sapphire brook, the lake with its fringe of myrtles, the flowery meadows, the grottoes overhung by vines, the forests shining with Hesperian fruit and with the plumage of gorgeous birds, the massy shade of that nuptial bower which showered down roses on the sleeping lovers, what should we think of a connoisseur, who should tell us that this painting, though finer than the absurd picture in the old Bible, was not so correct. Surely we should answer, it is both finer and more correct; and it is finer because it is more correct. It is not made up of correctly drawn diagrams; but it is a correct painting, a worthy representation of that which it is intended to represent.

It is not in the fine arts alone that this false correctness is prized by narrow-minded men, by men who cannot distinguish means from ends, or what is accidental from what is essential. M.
Jourdain admired correctness in fencing. "You had no business to hit me then. You must never thrust in quart till you have thrust in tierce." M. Tomes liked correctness in medical practice. "I stand up for Artemius. That he killed his patient is plain enough. But still he acted quite according to rule. A man dead is a man dead; and there is an end of the matter. But if rules are to be broken, there is no saying what consequences may follow."

We have heard of an old German officer, who was a great admirer of correctness in military operations. He used to revile Bonaparte for spoiling the science of war, which had been carried to such exquisite perfection by Marshal Daun. "In my youth we used to march and countermarch all the summer without gaining or losing a square league, and then we went into winter quarters. And now comes an ignorant, hot-headed young man, who flies about from Boulogne to Ulm, and from Ulm to the middle of Moravia, and fights battles in December. The whole system of his tactics is monstrously incorrect." The world is of opinion in spite of critics like these, that the end of fencing is to hit, that the end of medicine is to cure, that the end of war is to conquer, and that those means are the most correct which best accomplish the ends.

And has poetry no end, no eternal and immutable principles? Is poetry, like heraldry, mere matter of arbitrary regulation? The heralds tell us that certain scutcheons and bearings denote certain conditions, and that to put colours on colours, or metals on metals, is false blazonry. If all this were reversed, if every
coat of arms in Europe were new fashioned, if it were decreed
that or should never be placed but on argent, or argent but on
or, that illegitimacy should be denoted by a lozenge, and
widowhood by a bend, the new science would be just as good as the
old science, because both the new and the old would be good for
nothing. The mummery of Portcullis and Rouge Dragon, as it has no
other value than that which caprice has assigned to it, may well
submit to any laws which caprice may impose on it. But it is not
so with that great imitative art, to the power of which all ages,
the rudest and the most enlightened, bear witness. Since its
first great masterpieces were produced, everything that is
changeable in this world has been changed. Civilisation has been
gained, lost, gained again. Religions, and languages, and forms
of government, and usages of private life, and modes of thinking,
all have undergone a succession of revolutions. Everything has
passed away but the great features of nature, and the heart of
man, and the miracles of that art of which it is the office to
reflect back the heart of man and the features of nature. Those
two strange old poems, the wonder of ninety generations, still
retain all their freshness. They still command the veneration of
minds enriched by the literature of many nations and ages. They
are still, even in wretched translations, the delight of school-
boys. Having survived ten thousand capricious fashions, having
seen successive codes of criticism become obsolete, they still
remain to us, immortal with the immortality of truth, the same
when perused in the study of an English scholar, as when they
were first chanted at the banquets of the Ionian princes.
Poetry is, as was said more than two thousand years ago, imitation. It is an art analogous in many respects to the art of painting, sculpture, and acting. The imitations of the painter, the sculptor, and the actor, are indeed, within certain limits, more perfect than those of the poet. The machinery which the poet employs consists merely of words; and words cannot, even when employed by such an artist as Homer or Dante, present to the mind images of visible objects quite so lively and exact as those which we carry away from looking on the works of the brush and the chisel. But, on the other hand, the range of poetry is infinitely wider than that of any other imitative art, or than that of all the other imitative arts together. The sculptor can imitate only form; the painter only form and colour; the actor, until the poet supplies him with words, only form, colour, and motion. Poetry holds the outer world in common with the other arts. The heart of man is the province of poetry, and of poetry alone. The painter, the sculptor, and the actor can exhibit no more of human passion and character than that small portion which overflows into the gesture and the face, always an imperfect, often a deceitful, sign of that which is within. The deeper and more complex parts of human nature can be exhibited by means of words alone. Thus the objects of the imitation of poetry are the whole external and the whole internal universe, the face of nature, the vicissitudes of fortune, man as he is in himself, man as he appears in society, all things which really exist, all things of which we can form an image in our minds by combining together parts of things which really exist. The domain of this
imperial art is commensurate with the imaginative faculty.

An art essentially imitative ought not surely to be subjected to rules which tend to make its imitations less perfect than they otherwise would be; and those who obey such rules ought to be called, not correct, but incorrect artists. The true way to judge of the rules by which English poetry was governed during the last century is to look at the effects which they produced.

It was in 1780 that Johnson completed his Lives of the Poets. He tells us in that work that, since the time of Dryden, English poetry had shown no tendency to relapse into its original savageness, that its language had been refined, its numbers tuned, and its sentiments improved. It may perhaps be doubted whether the nation had any great reason to exult in the refinements and improvements which gave it Douglas for Othello, and the Triumphs of Temper for the Fairy Queen.

It was during the thirty years which preceded the appearance of Johnson's Lives that the diction and versification of English poetry were, in the sense in which the word is commonly used, most correct. Those thirty years are, as respects poetry, the most deplorable part of our literary history. They have indeed bequeathed to us scarcely any poetry which deserves to be remembered. Two or three hundred lines of Gray, twice as many of Goldsmith, a few stanzas of Beattie and Collins, a few strophes
of Mason, and a few clever prologues and satires, were the masterpieces of this age of consummate excellence. They may all be printed in one volume, and that volume would be by no means a volume of extraordinary merit. It would contain no poetry of the very highest class, and little which could be placed very high in the second class. The Paradise Regained or Comus would outweigh it all.

At last, when poetry had fallen into such utter decay that Mr. Hayley was thought a great poet, it began to appear that the excess of the evil was about to work the cure. Men became tired of an insipid conformity to a standard which derived no authority from nature or reason. A shallow criticism had taught them to ascribe a superstitious value to the spurious correctness of poetasters. A deeper criticism brought them back to the true correctness of the first great masters. The eternal laws of poetry regained their power, and the temporary fashions which had superseded those laws went after the wig of Lovelace and the hoop of Clarissa.

It was in a cold and barren season that the seeds of that rich harvest which we have reaped were first sown. While poetry was every year becoming more feeble and more mechanical, while the monotonous versification which Pope had introduced, no longer redeemed by his brilliant wit and his compactness of expression, palled on the ear of the public, the great works of the old masters were every day attracting more and more of the admiration
which they deserved. The plays of Shakspeare were better acted, better edited, and better known than they had ever been. Our fine ancient ballads were again read with pleasure, and it became a fashion to imitate them. Many of the imitations were altogether contemptible. But they showed that men had at least begun to admire the excellence which they could not rival. A literary revolution was evidently at hand. There was a ferment in the minds of men, a vague craving for something new, a disposition to hail with delight anything which might at first sight wear the appearance of originality. A reforming age is always fertile of impostors. The same excited state of public feeling which produced the great separation from the see of Rome produced also the excesses of the Anabaptists. The same stir in the public mind of Europe which overthrew the abuses of the old French Government, produced the Jacobins and Theophilanthropists. Macpherson and Della Crusca were to the true reformers of English poetry what Knipperdoling was to Luther, or Clootz to Turgot. The success of Chatterton's forgeries and of the far more contemptible forgeries of Ireland showed that people had begun to love the old poetry well, though not wisely. The public was never more disposed to believe stories without evidence, and to admire books without merit. Anything which could break the dull monotony of the correct school was acceptable.

The forerunner of the great restoration of our literature was Cowper. His literary career began and ended at nearly the same time with that of Alfieri. A comparison between Alfieri and
Cowper may, at first sight, appear as strange as that which a loyal Presbyterian minister is said to have made in 1745 between George the Second and Enoch. It may seem that the gentle, shy, melancholy Calvinist, whose spirit had been broken by fagging at school, who had not courage to earn a livelihood by reading the titles of bills in the House of Lords, and whose favourite associates were a blind old lady and an evangelical divine, could have nothing in common with the haughty, ardent, and voluptuous nobleman, the horse-jockey, the libertine, who fought Lord Ligonier in Hyde Park, and robbed the Pretender of his queen. But though the private lives of these remarkable men present scarcely any points of resemblance, their literary lives bear a close analogy to each other. They both found poetry in its lowest state of degradation, feeble, artificial, and altogether nerveless. They both possessed precisely the talents which fitted them for the task of raising it from that deep abasement. They cannot, in strictness, be called great poets. They had not in any very high degree the creative power,

"The vision and the faculty divine":

but they had great vigour of thought, great warmth of feeling, and what, in their circumstances, was above all things important, a manliness of taste which approached to roughness. They did not deal in mechanical versification and conventional phrases. They wrote concerning things the thought of which set their hearts on fire; and thus what they wrote, even when it wanted every other
grace, had that inimitable grace which sincerity and strong
passion impart to the rudest and most homely compositions. Each
of them sought for inspiration in a noble and affecting subject,
fertile of images which had not yet been hackneyed. Liberty was
the muse of Alfieri, Religion was the muse of Cowper. The same
truth is found in their lighter pieces. They were not among those
who deprecated the severity, or deplored the absence, of an
unreal mistress in melodious commonplaces. Instead of raving
about imaginary Chloes and Sylvias, Cowper wrote of Mrs. Unwin's
knitting-needles. The only love-verses of Alfieri were addressed
to one whom he truly and passionately loved. "Tutte le rime
amorose che seguono," says he, "tutte sono per essa, e ben sue,
e di lei solamente; poiche mai d'altra donna per certo con
cantero."

These great men were not free from affectation. But their
affectation was directly opposed to the affectation which
generally prevailed. Each of them expressed, in strong and bitter
language, the contempt which he felt for the effeminate
poetasters who were in fashion both in England and in Italy.
Cowper complains that

"Manner is all in all, whate'er is writ,
The substitute for genius, taste, and wit."

He praised Pope; yet he regretted that Pope had
"Made poetry a mere mechanic art,
And every warbler had his tune by heart."

Alfieri speaks with similar scorn of the tragedies of his predecessors. "Mi cadevano dalle mani per la languidezza, trivialità e prolißità dei modi e dei verso, senza parlare poi della snervatezza dei pensieri. Or perché mai questa nostra divina lingua, si maschia anco, ed energica, e feroce, in bocca di Dante, dovra ella farsi casi sbiadata ed eunuca nel dialogo tragico?"

To men thus sick of the languid manner of their contemporaries ruggedness seemed a venial fault, or rather a positive merit. In their hatred of meretricious ornament, and of what Cowper calls "creamy smoothness," they erred on the opposite side. Their style was too austere, their versification too harsh. It is not easy, however, to overrate the service which they rendered to literature. The intrinsic value of their poems is considerable. But the example which they set of mutiny against an absurd system was invaluable. The part which they performed was rather that of Moses than that of Joshua. They opened the house of bondage; but they did not enter the promised land.

During the twenty years which followed the death of Cowper, the revolution in English poetry was fully consummated. None of the
writers of this period, not even Sir Walter Scott, contributed so much to the consummation as Lord Byron. Yet Lord Byron contributed to it unwillingly, and with constant self-reproach and shame. All his tastes and inclinations led him to take part with the school of poetry which was going out against the school which was coming in. Of Pope himself he spoke with extravagant admiration. He did not venture directly to say that the little man of Twickenham was a greater poet than Shakspeare or Milton; but he hinted pretty clearly that he thought so. Of his contemporaries, scarcely any had so much of his admiration as Mr. Gifford, who, considered as a poet, was merely Pope, without Pope's wit and fancy, and whose satires are decidedly inferior in vigour and poignancy to the very imperfect juvenile performance of Lord Byron himself. He now and then praised Mr. Wordsworth and Mr. Coleridge, but ungraciously and without cordiality. When he attacked them, he brought his whole soul to the work. Of the most elaborate of Mr. Wordsworth's poems he could find nothing to say, but that it was "clumsy, and frowsy, and his aversion." Peter Bell excited his spleen to such a degree that he evoked the shades of Pope and Dryden, and demanded of them whether it were possible that such trash could evade contempt? In his heart he thought his own Pilgrimage of Harold inferior to his Imitation of Horace's Art of Poetry, a feeble echo of Pope and Johnson. This insipid performance he repeatedly designed to publish, and was withheld only by the solicitations of his friends. He has distinctly declared his approbation of the unities, the most absurd laws by which genius was ever held in servitude. In one of his works, we think in his letter to Mr. Bowles, he compares the
poetry of the eighteenth century to the Parthenon, and that of
the nineteenth to a Turkish mosque, and boasts that, though he
had assisted his contemporaries in building their grotesque
and barbarous edifice, he had never joined them in defacing
the remains of a chaster and more graceful architecture. In
another letter he compares the change which had recently
passed on English poetry to the decay of Latin poetry after
the Augustan age. In the time of Pope, he tells his friend,
it was all Horace with us. It is all Claudian now.

For the great old masters of the art he had no very enthusiastic
veneration. In his letter to Mr. Bowles he uses expressions
which clearly indicate that he preferred Pope's Iliad to the
original. Mr. Moore confesses that his friend was no very fervent
admirer of Shakspeare. Of all the poets of the first class Lord
Byron seems to have admired Dante and Milton most. Yet in the
fourth canto of Childe Harold, he places Tasso, a writer not
merely inferior to them, but of quite a different order of mind,
on at least a footing of equality with them. Mr. Hunt is, we
suspect, quite correct in saying that Lord Byron could see little
or no merit in Spenser.

But Byron the critic and Byron the poet were two very different
men. The effects of the noble writer's theory may indeed often be
traced in his practice. But his disposition led him to
accommodate himself to the literary taste of the age in which he
lived; and his talents would have enabled him to accommodate
himself to the taste of any age. Though he said much of his contempt for mankind, and though he boasted that amidst the inconstancy of fortune and of fame he was all-sufficient to himself, his literary career indicated nothing of that lonely and unsocial pride which he affected. We cannot conceive him, like Milton or Wordsworth, defying the criticism of his contemporaries, retorting their scorn, and labouring on a poem in the full assurance that it would be unpopular, and in the full assurance that it would be immortal. He has said, by the mouth of one of his heroes, in speaking of political greatness, that “he must serve who fain would sway”; and this he assigns as a reason for not entering into political life. He did not consider that the sway which he had exercised in literature had been purchased by servitude, by the sacrifice of his own taste to the taste of the public.

He was the creature of his age; and whenever he had lived he would have been the creature of his age. Under Charles the First Byron would have been more quaint than Donne. Under Charles the Second the rants of Byron's rhyming plays would have pitted it, boxed it, and galleried it, with those of any Bayes or Bilboa. Under George the First, the monotonous smoothness of Byron's versification and the terseness of his expression would have made Pope himself envious.

As it was, he was the man of the last thirteen years of the eighteenth century, and of the first twenty-three years of the
nineteenth century. He belonged half to the old, and half to the new school of poetry. His personal taste led him to the former; his thirst of praise to the latter; his talents were equally suited to both. His fame was a common ground on which the zealots on both sides, Gifford for example, and Shelley, might meet. He was the representative, not of either literary party, but of both at once, and of their conflict, and of the victory by which that conflict was terminated. His poetry fills and measures the whole of the vast interval through which our literature has moved since the time of Johnson. It touches the Essay on Man at the one extremity, and the Excursion at the other.

There are several parallel instances in literary history. Voltaire, for example, was the connecting link between the France of Lewis the Fourteenth and the France of Lewis the Sixteenth, between Racine and Boileau on the one side, and Condorcet and Beaumarchais on the other. He, like Lord Byron, put himself at the head of an intellectual revolution, dreading it all the time, murmuring at it, sneering at it, yet choosing rather to move before his age in any direction than to be left behind and forgotten. Dryden was the connecting link between the literature of the age of James the First, and the literature of the age of Anne. Oromasdes and Arimanes fought for him. Arimanes carried him off. But his heart was to the last with Oromasdes. Lord Byron was, in the same manner, the mediator between two generations, between two hostile poetical sects. Though always sneering at Mr. Wordsworth, he was yet, though perhaps unconsciously, the
interpreter between Mr. Wordsworth and the multitude. In the Lyrical Ballads and the Excursion Mr. Wordsworth appeared as the high priest of a worship, of which nature was the idol. No poems have ever indicated a more exquisite perception of the beauty of the outer world or a more passionate love and reverence for that beauty. Yet they were not popular; and it is not likely that they ever will be popular as the poetry of Sir Walter Scott is popular. The feeling which pervaded them was too deep for general sympathy. Their style was often too mysterious for general comprehension. They made a few esoteric disciples, and many scoffers. Lord Byron founded what may be called an exoteric Lake school; and all the readers of verse in England, we might say in Europe, hastened to sit at his feet. What Mr. Wordsworth had said like a recluse, Lord Byron said like a man of the world, with less profound feeling, but with more perspicuity, energy, and conciseness. We would refer our readers to the last two cantos of Childe Harold and to Manfred, in proof of these observations.

Lord Byron, like Mr. Wordsworth, had nothing dramatic in his genius. He was indeed the reverse of a great dramatist, the very antithesis to a great dramatist. All his characters, Harold looking on the sky, from which his country and the sun are disappearing together, the Giaour standing apart in the gloom of the side aisle, and casting a haggard scowl from under his long hood at the crucifix and the censer, Conrad leaning on his sword by the watch-tower, Lara smiling on the dancers, Alp gazing steadily on the fatal cloud as it passes before the moon, Manfred
wandering among the precipices of Berne, Azzo on the judgment-seat, Ugo at the bar, Lambro frowning on the siesta of his daughter and Juan, Cain presenting his unacceptable offering, are essentially the same. The varieties are varieties merely of age, situation, and outward show. If ever Lord Byron attempted to exhibit men of a different kind, he always made them either insipid or unnatural. Selim is nothing. Bonnivart is nothing. Don Juan, in the first and best cantos, is a feeble copy of the Page in the Marriage of Figaro. Johnson, the man whom Juan meets in the slave-market, is a most striking failure. How differently would Sir Walter Scott have drawn a bluff, fearless Englishman, in such a situation! The portrait would have seemed to walk out of the canvas.

Sardanapalus is more closely drawn than any dramatic personage that we can remember. His heroism and his effeminacy, his contempt of death and his dread of a weighty helmet, his kingly resolution to be seen in the foremost ranks, and the anxiety with which he calls for a looking-glass that he may be seen to advantage, are contrasted, it is true, with all the point of Juvenal. Indeed the hint of the character seems to have been taken from what Juvenal says of Otho:

"Speculum civilis sarcina belli.
Nimirum summi ducis est occidere Galbam,
Et curare cutem summi constantia civis,
Bedriaci in campo spolium affectare Palati
These are excellent lines in a satire. But it is not the business of the dramatist to exhibit characters in this sharp antithetical way. It is not thus that Shakspeare makes Prince Hal rise from the rake of Eastcheap into the hero of Shrewsbury, and sink again into the rake of Eastcheap. It is not thus that Shakspeare has exhibited the union of effeminacy and valour in Antony. A dramatist cannot commit a greater error than that of following those pointed descriptions of character in which satirists and historians indulge so much. It is by rejecting what is natural that satirists and historians produce these striking characters. Their great object generally is to ascribe to every man as many contradictory qualities as possible: and this is an object easily attained. By judicious selection and judicious exaggeration, the intellect and the disposition of any human being might be described as being made up of nothing but startling contrasts. If the dramatist attempts to create a being answering to one of these descriptions, he fails, because he reverses an imperfect analytical process. He produces, not a man, but a personified epigram. Very eminent writers have fallen into this snare. Ben Jonson has given us a Hermogenes, taken from the lively lines of Horace; but the inconsistency which is so amusing in the satire appears unnatural and disgusts us in the play. Sir Walter Scott has committed a far more glaring error of the same kind in the novel of Peveril. Admiring, as every judicious reader must admire, the keen and vigorous lines in which Dryden satirised the
Duke of Buckingham, Sir Walter attempted to make a Duke of Buckingham to suit them, a real living Zimri; and he made, not a man, but the most grotesque of all monsters. A writer who should attempt to introduce into a play or a novel such a Wharton as the Wharton of Pope, or a Lord Hervey answering to Sporus, would fail in the same manner.

But to return to Lord Byron; his women, like his men, are all of one breed. Haidee is a half-savage and girlish Julia; Julia is a civilised and matronly Haidee. Leila is a wedded Zuleika, Zuleika a virgin Leila. Gulnare and Medora appear to have been intentionally opposed to each other. Yet the difference is a difference of situation only. A slight change of circumstances would, it should seem, have sent Gulnare to the lute of Medora, and armed Medora with the dagger of Gulnare.

It is hardly too much to say, that Lord Byron could exhibit only one man and only one woman, a man, proud, moody, cynical, with defiance on his brow, and misery in his heart, a scorn of his kind, implacable in revenge, yet capable of deep and strong affection: a woman all softness and gentleness, loving to caress and to be caressed, but capable of being transformed by passion into a tigress.

Even these two characters, his only two characters, he could not exhibit dramatically. He exhibited them in the manner, not of
Shakspeare, but of Clarendon. He analysed them; he made them analyse themselves; but he did not make them show themselves. We are told, for example, in many lines of great force and spirit, that the speech of Lara was bitterly sarcastic, that he talked little of his travels, that if he was much questioned about them, his answers became short, and his brow gloomy. But we have none of Lara's sarcastic speeches or short answers. It is not thus that the great masters of human nature have portrayed human beings. Homer never tells us that Nestor loved to relate long stories about his youth. Shakspeare never tells us that in the mind of Iago everything that is beautiful and endearing was associated with some filthy and debasing idea.

It is curious to observe the tendency which the dialogue of Lord Byron always has to lose its character of a dialogue, and to become soliloquy. The scenes between Manfred and the Chamois-hunter, between Manfred and the Witch of the Alps, between Manfred and the Abbot, are instances of this tendency. Manfred, after a few unimportant speeches, has all the talk to himself. The other interlocutors are nothing more than good listeners. They drop an occasional question or ejaculation which sets Manfred off again on the inexhaustible topic of his personal feelings. If we examine the fine passages in Lord Byron's dramas, the description of Rome, for example, in Manfred, the description of a Venetian revel in Marino Faliero, the concluding invective which the old doge pronounces against Venice, we shall find that there is nothing dramatic in these speeches, that they derive
none of their effect from the character or situation of the
speaker, and that they would have been as fine, or finer, if they
had been published as fragments of blank verse by Lord Byron.
There is scarcely a speech in Shakspeare of which the same could
be said. No skilful reader of the plays of Shakspeare can endure
to see what are called the fine things taken out, under the name
of "Beauties," or of "Elegant Extracts," or to hear any
single passage, "To be or not to be," for example, quoted as a
sample of the great poet. "To be or not to be" has merit
undoubtedly as a composition. It would have merit if put into the
mouth of a chorus. But its merit as a composition vanishes when
compared with its merit as belonging to Hamlet. It is not too
much to say that the great plays of Shakspeare would lose less by
being deprived of all the passages which are commonly called the
fine passages, than those passages lose by being read separately
from the play. This is perhaps the highest praise which can be
given to a dramatist.

On the other hand, it may be doubted whether there is, in all
Lord Byron's plays, a single remarkable passage which owes any
portion of its interest or effect to its connection with the
characters or the action. He has written only one scene, as far
as we can recollect, which is dramatic even in manner--the scene
between Lucifer and Cain. The conference is animated, and each of
the interlocutors has a fair share of it. But this scene, when
examined, will be found to be a confirmation of our remarks. It
is a dialogue only in form. It is a soliloquy in essence. It is
in reality a debate carried on within one single unquiet and sceptical mind. The questions and the answers, the objections and the solutions, all belong to the same character.

A writer who showed so little dramatic skill in works professedly dramatic, was not likely to write narrative with dramatic effect. Nothing could indeed be more rude and careless than the structure of his narrative poems. He seems to have thought, with the hero of the Rehearsal, that the plot was good for nothing but to bring in fine things. His two longest works, Childe Harold and Don Juan, have no plan whatever. Either of them might have been extended to any length, or cut short at any point. The state in which the Giaour appears illustrates the manner in which all Byron's poems were constructed. They are all, like the Giaour, collections of fragments; and, though there may be no empty spaces marked by asterisks, it is still easy to perceive, by the clumsiness of the joining, where the parts for the sake of which the whole was composed end and begin.

It was in description and meditation that Byron excelled. "Description," as he said in Don Juan, "was his forte." His manner is indeed peculiar, and is almost unequalled; rapid, sketchy, full of vigour; the selection happy, the strokes few and bold. In spite of the reverence which we feel for the genius of Mr. Wordsworth we cannot but think that the minuteness of his descriptions often diminishes their effect. He has accustomed himself to gaze on nature with the eye of a lover, to dwell on
every feature, and to mark every change of aspect. Those beauties which strike the most negligent observer, and those which only a close attention discovers, are equally familiar to him and are equally prominent in his poetry. The proverb of old Hesiod, that half is often more than the whole, is eminently applicable to description. The policy of the Dutch, who cut down most of the precious trees in the Spice Islands, in order to raise the value of what remained, was a policy which poets would do well to imitate. It was a policy which no poet understood better than Lord Byron. Whatever his faults might be, he was never, while his mind retained its vigour, accused of prolixity.

His descriptions, great as was their intrinsic merit, derived their principal interest from the feeling which always mingled with them. He was himself the beginning, the middle, and the end, of all his own poetry, the hero of every tale, the chief object in every landscape. Harold, Lara, Manfred, and a crowd of other characters, were universally considered merely as loose incognitos of Byron; and there is every reason to believe that he meant them to be so considered. The wonders of the outer world, the Tagus, with the mighty fleets of England riding on its bosom, the towers of Cintra overhanging the shaggy forest of cork-trees and willows, the glaring marble of Pentelicus, the banks of the Rhine, the glaciers of Clarens, the sweet Lake of Leman, the dell of Egeria with its summer-birds and rustling lizards, the shapeless ruins of Rome overgrown with ivy and wall-flowers, the, stars, the sea, the mountains, all were mere accessories, the
background to one dark and melancholy figure.

Never had any writer so vast a command of the whole eloquence of scorn, misanthropy, and despair. That Marah was never dry. No art could sweeten, no draughts could exhaust, its perennial waters of bitterness. Never was there such variety in monotony as that of Byron. From maniac laughter to piercing lamentation, there was not a single note of human anguish of which he was not master. Year after year, and month after month, he continued to repeat that to be wretched is the destiny of all; that to be eminently wretched is the destiny of the eminent; that all the desires by which we are cursed lead alike to misery, if they are not gratified, to the misery of disappointment; if they are gratified, to the misery of satiety. His heroes are men who have arrived by different roads at the same goal of despair, who are sick of life, who are at war with society, who are supported in their anguish only by an unconquerable pride resembling that of Prometheus on the rock or of Satan in the burning marl, who can master their agonies by the force of their will, and who to the last defy the whole power of earth and heaven. He always described himself as a man of the same kind with his favourite creations, as a man whose heart had been withered, whose capacity for happiness was gone and could not be restored, but whose invincible spirit dared the worst that could befall him here or hereafter.

How much of this morbid feeling sprang from an original disease
of the mind, how much from real misfortune, how much from the nervousness of dissipation, how much was fanciful, how much was merely affected, it is impossible for us, and would probably have been impossible for the most intimate friends of Lord Byron, to decide. Whether there ever existed, or can ever exist, a person answering to the description which he gave of himself may be doubted; but that he was not such a person is beyond all doubt. It is ridiculous to imagine that a man whose mind was really imbued with scorn of his fellow-creatures would have published three or four books every year in order to tell them so; or that a man who could say with truth that he neither sought sympathy nor needed it would have admitted all Europe to hear his farewell to his wife, and his blessings on his child. In the second canto of Childe Harold, he tells us that he is insensible to fame and obloquy:

"Ill may such contest now the spirit move,
Which heeds nor keen reproof nor partial praise."

Yet we know on the best evidence that, a day or two before he published these lines, he was greatly, indeed childishly, elated by the compliments paid to his maiden speech in the House of Lords.

We are far, however, from thinking that his sadness was altogether feigned. He was naturally a man of great sensibility;
he had been ill-educated; his feelings had been early exposed to sharp trials; he had been crossed in his boyish love; he had been mortified by the failure of his first literary efforts; he was straitened in pecuniary circumstances; he was unfortunate in his domestic relations; the public treated him with cruel injustice; his health and spirits suffered from his dissipated habits of life; he was, on the whole, an unhappy man. He early discovered that, by parading his unhappiness before the multitude, he produced an immense sensation. The world gave him every encouragement to talk about his mental sufferings. The interest which his first confessions excited induced him to affect much that he did not feel; and the affectation probably reacted on his feelings. How far the character in which he exhibited himself was genuine, and how far theatrical, it would probably have puzzled himself to say.

There can be no doubt that this remarkable man owed the vast influence which he exercised over his contemporaries at least as much to his gloomy egotism as to the real power of his poetry. We never could very clearly understand how it is that egotism, so unpopular in conversation, should be so popular in writing; or how it is that men who affect in their compositions qualities and feelings which they have not, impose so much more easily on their contemporaries than on posterity. The interest which the loves of Petrarch excited in his own time, and the pitying fondness with which half Europe looked upon Rousseau, are well known. To readers of our age, the love of Petrarch seems to have been love
of that kind which breaks no hearts, and the sufferings of
Rousseau to have deserved laughter rather than pity, to have been
partly counterfeited, and partly the consequences of his own
perverseness and vanity.

What our grandchildren may think of the character of Lord Byron,
as exhibited in his poetry, we will not pretend to guess. It is
certain, that the interest which he excited during his life is
without a parallel in literary history. The feeling with which
young readers of poetry regarded him can be conceived only by
those who have experienced it. To people who are unacquainted
with real calamity, "nothing is so dainty sweet as lovely
melancholy." This faint image of sorrow has in all ages been
considered by young gentlemen as an agreeable excitement. Old
gentlemen and middle-aged gentlemen have so many real causes of
sadness that they are rarely inclined "to be as sad as night only
for wantonness." Indeed they want the power almost as much as the
inclination. We know very few persons engaged in active life,
who, even if they were to procure stools to be melancholy upon,
and were to sit down with all the premeditation of Master
Stephen, would be able to enjoy much of what somebody calls the
"ecstasy of woe."

Among that large class of young persons whose reading is almost
entirely confined to works of imagination, the popularity of Lord
Byron was unbounded. They bought pictures of him; they treasured
up the smallest relics of him; they learned his poems by heart,
and did their best to write like him, and to look like him. Many
of them practised at the glass in the hope of catching the curl
of the upper lip, and the scowl of the brow, which appear in some
of his portraits. A few discarded their neck-cloths in imitation
of their great leader. For some years the Minerva press sent
forth no novel without a mysterious, unhappy, Lara-like peer. The
number of hopeful undergraduates and medical students who became
things of dark imaginings, on whom the freshness of the heart
ceased to fall like dew, whose passions had consumed themselves
to dust, and to whom the relief of tears was denied, passes all
calculation. This was not the worst. There was created in the
minds of many of these enthusiasts a pernicious and absurd
association between intellectual power and moral depravity. From
the poetry of Lord Byron they drew a system of ethics, compounded
of misanthropy and voluptuousness, a system in which the two
great commandments were, to hate your neighbour, and to love your
neighbour's wife.

This affectation has passed away; and a few more years will
destroy whatever yet remains of that magical potency which once
belonged to the name of Byron. To us he is still a man, young,
noble, and unhappy. To our children he will be merely a writer;
and their impartial judgment will appoint his place among
writers; without regard to his rank or to his private history.
That his poetry will undergo a severe sifting, that much of what
has been admired by his contemporaries will be rejected as
worthless, we have little doubt. But we have as little doubt
that, after the closest scrutiny, there will still remain much
that can only perish with the English language.

MR. ROBERT MONTGOMERY

(April 1830)

1. The Omnipresence of the Deity: a Poem By ROBERT MONTGOMERY.

1830.

THE wise men of antiquity loved to convey instruction under the
covering of apologue; and though this practice is generally
thought childish, we shall make no apology for adopting it on the
present occasion. A generation which has bought eleven editions
of a poem by Mr. Robert Montgomery may well condescend to listen
to a fable of Pilpay.

A pious Brahmin, it is written, made a vow that on a certain day
he would sacrifice a sheep, and on the appointed morning he went
forth to buy one. There lived in his neighbourhood three rogues
who knew of his vow, and laid a scheme for profiting by it. The
first met him and said, "Oh Brahmin, wilt thou buy a sheep? I
have one fit for sacrifice." "It is for that very purpose," said the holy man, "that I came forth this day." Then the impostor opened a bag, and brought out of it an unclean beast, an ugly dog, lame and blind. Thereon the Brahmin cried out, "Wretch, who touchest things impure, and utterest things untrue; callest thou that cur a sheep?" "Truly," answered the other, "it is a sheep of the finest fleece, and of the sweetest flesh. Oh Brahmin, it will be an offering most acceptable to the gods." "Friend," said the Brahmin, either thou or I must be blind."

Just then one of the accomplices came up. "Praised be the gods," said the second rogue, "that I have been saved the trouble of going to the market for a sheep! This is such a sheep as I wanted. For how much wilt thou sell it?" When the Brahmin heard this, his mind waved to and fro, like one swinging in the air at a holy festival. "Sir," said he to the new comer, "take heed what thou dost; this is no sheep, but an unclean cur." "Oh Brahmin," said the new comer, "thou art drunk or mad!"

At this time the third confederate drew near. "Let us ask this man," said the Brahmin, "what the creature is, and I will stand by what he shall say." To this the others agreed; and the Brahmin called out, "Oh stranger, what dost thou call this beast?"

"Surely, oh Brahmin," said the knave, "it is a fine sheep." Then the Brahmin said, "Surely the gods have taken away my senses"; and he asked pardon of him who carried the dog, and bought it for a measure of rice and a pot of ghee, and offered it up to the
gods, who, being wroth at this unclean sacrifice, smote him with a sore disease in all his joints.

Thus, or nearly thus, if we remember rightly, runs the story of the Sanscrit Aesop. The moral, like the moral of every fable that is worth the telling, lies on the surface. The writer evidently means to caution us against the practices of puffers, a class of people who have more than once talked the public into the most absurd errors, but who surely never played a more curious or a more difficult trick than when they passed Mr. Robert Montgomery off upon the world as a great poet.

In an age in which there are so few readers that a writer cannot subsist on the sum arising from the sale of his works, no man who has not an independent fortune can devote himself to literary pursuits, unless he is assisted by patronage. In such an age, accordingly, men of letters too often pass their lives in dangling at the heels of the wealthy and powerful; and all the faults which dependence tends to produce, pass into their character. They become the parasites and slaves of the great. It is melancholy to think how many of the highest and most exquisitely formed of human intellects have been condemned to the ignominious labour of disposing the commonplaces of adulation in new forms and brightening them into new splendour. Horace invoking Augustus in the most enthusiastic language of religious veneration; Statius flattering a tyrant, and the minion of a tyrant, for a morsel of bread; Ariosto versifying the whole
genealogy of a niggardly patron; Tasso extolling the heroic
virtues of the wretched creature who locked him up in a madhouse:
these are but a few of the instances which might easily be given
of the degradation to which those must submit who, not possessing
a competent fortune, are resolved to write when there are
scarcely any who read.

This evil the progress of the human mind tends to remove. As a
taste for books becomes more and more common, the patronage of
individuals becomes less and less necessary. In the middle of the
last century a marked change took place. The tone of literary
men, both in this country and in France, became higher and more
independent. Pope boasted that he was the "one poet" who had
"pleased by manly ways"; he derided the soft dedications with
which Halifax had been fed, asserted his own superiority over the
pensioned Boileau, and gloried in being not the follower, but the
friend, of nobles and princes. The explanation of all this is
very simple. Pope was the first Englishman who, by the mere sale
of his writings, realised a sum which enabled him to live in
comfort and in perfect independence. Johnson extols him for the
magnanimity which he showed in inscribing his Iliad, not to a
minister or a peer, but to Congreve. In our time this would
scarcely be a subject for praise. Nobody is astonished when Mr.
Moore pays a compliment of this kind to Sir Walter Scott, or Sir
Walter Scott to Mr. Moore. The idea of either of those gentlemen
looking out for some lord who would be likely to give him a few
guineas in return for a fulsome dedication seems laughably
incongruous. Yet this is exactly what Dryden or Otway would have
done; and it would be hard to blame them for it. Otway is said to
have been choked with a piece of bread which he devoured in the
rage of hunger; and, whether this story be true or false, he was
beyond all question miserably poor. Dryden, at near seventy, when
at the head of the literary men of England, without equal or
second, received three hundred pounds for his Fables, a
collection of ten thousand verses, and of such verses as no man
then living, except himself, could have produced, Pope, at
thirty, had laid up between six and seven thousand pounds, the
fruits of his poetry. It was not, we suspect, because he had a
higher spirit or a more scrupulous conscience than his
predecessors, but because he had a larger income, that he kept up
the dignity of the literary character so much better than they
had done.

From the time of Pope to the present day the readers have been
constantly becoming more and more numerous, and the writers,
consequently, more and more independent. It is assuredly a great
evil that men, fitted by their talents and acquirements to
enlighten and charm the world, should be reduced to the necessity
of flattering wicked and foolish patrons in return for the
sustenance of life. But, though we heartily rejoice that this
evil is removed, we cannot but see with concern that another evil
has succeeded to it. The public is now the patron, and a most
liberal patron. All that the rich and powerful bestowed on
authors from the time of Maecenas to that of Harley would not, we
apprehend, make up a sum equal to that which has been paid by
English booksellers to authors during the last fifty years. Men
of letters have accordingly ceased to court individuals, and have
begun to court the public. They formerly used flattery. They now
use puffing.

Whether the old or the new vice be the worse, whether those who
formerly lavished insincere praise on others, or those who now
contrive by every art of beggary and bribery to stun the public
with praises of themselves, disgrace their vocation the more
deeply, we shall not attempt to decide. But of this we are sure,
that it is high time to make a stand against the new trickery.
The puffing of books is now so shamefully and so successfully
carried on that it is the duty of all who are anxious for the
purity of the national taste, or for the honour of the literary
character, to join in discountenancing the practice. All the pens
that ever were employed in magnifying Bish's lucky office,
Romanis's fleecy hosiery, Packwood's razor strops, and Rowland's
Kalydor, all the placard-bearers of Dr. Eady, all the wall-
chalkers of Day and Martin, seem to have taken service with the
poets and novelists of this generation. Devices which in the
lowest trades are considered as disreputable are adopted without
scruple, and improved upon with a despicable ingenuity, by people
engaged in a pursuit which never was and never will be considered
as a mere trade by any man of honour and virtue. A butcher of the
higher class disdains to ticket his meat. A mercer of the higher
class would be ashamed to hang up papers in his window inviting
the passers-by to look at the stock of a bankrupt, all of the
first quality, and going for half the value. We expect some
reserve, some decent pride, in our hatter and our bootmaker. But
no artifice by which notoriety can be obtained is thought too
abject for a man of letters.

It is amusing to think over the history of most of the
publications which have had a run during the last few years. The
publisher is often the publisher of some periodical work. In this
periodical work the first flourish of trumpets is sounded. The
peal is then echoed and re-echoed by all the other periodical
works over which the publisher, or the author, or the author's
coterie, may have any influence. The newspapers are for a
fortnight filled with puffs of all the various kinds which
Sheridan enumerated, direct, oblique, and collusive. Sometimes
the praise is laid on thick for simple-minded people. "Pathetic,"
"sublime," "splendid," "graceful," "brilliant wit," "exquisite
humour," and other phrases equally flattering, fall in a shower
as thick and as sweet as the sugarplums at a Roman carnival.
Sometimes greater art is used. A sinecure has been offered to the
writer if he would suppress his work, or if he would even soften
down a few of his incomparable portraits. A distinguished
military and political character has challenged the inimitable
satirist of the vices of the great; and the puffer is glad to
learn that the parties have been bound over to keep the peace.
Sometimes it is thought expedient that the puffer should put on a
grave face, and utter his panegyric in the form of admonition.
"Such attacks on private character cannot be too much condemned. Even the exuberant wit of our author, and the irresistible power of his withering sarcasm, are no excuses for that utter disregard which he manifests for the feelings of others. We cannot but wonder that a writer of such transcendent talents, a writer who is evidently no stranger to the kindly charities and sensibilities of our nature, should show so little tenderness to the foibles of noble and distinguished individuals, with whom it is clear, from every page of his work, that he must have been constantly mingling in society." These are but tame and feeble imitations of the paragraphs with which the daily papers are filled whenever an attorney's clerk or an apothecary's assistant undertakes to tell the public in bad English and worse French, how people tie their neckcloths and eat their dinners in Grosvenor Square. The editors of the higher and more respectable newspapers usually prefix the words "Advertisement," or "From a Correspondent," to such paragraphs. But this makes little difference. The panegyric is extracted, and the significant heading omitted. The fulsome eulogy makes its appearance on the covers of all the Reviews and Magazines, with Times or Globe affixed, though the editors of the Times and the Globe have no more to do with it than with Mr. Goss's way of making old rakes young again.

That people who live by personal slander should practise these arts is not surprising. Those who stoop to write calumnious books may well stoop to puff them; and that the basest of all trades
should be carried on in the basest of all manners is quite proper and as it should be. But how any man who has the least self-respect, the least regard for his own personal dignity, can condescend to persecute the public with this Ragfair importunity, we do not understand. Extreme poverty may, indeed, in some degree, be an excuse for employing these shifts, as it may be an excuse for stealing a leg of mutton. But we really think that a man of spirit and delicacy would quite as soon satisfy his wants in the one way as in the other.

It is no excuse for an author that the praises of journalists are procured by the money or influence of his publishers, and not by his own. It is his business to take such precautions as may prevent others from doing what must degrade him. It is for his honour as a gentleman, and, if he is really a man of talents, it will eventually be for his honour and interest as a writer, that his works should come before the public recommended by their own merits alone, and should be discussed with perfect freedom. If his objects be really such as he may own without shame, he will find that they will, in the long-run, be better attained by suffering the voice of criticism to be fairly heard. At present, we too often see a writer attempting to obtain literary fame as Shakspeare's usurper obtains sovereignty. The publisher plays Buckingham to the author's Richard. Some few creatures of the conspiracy are dexterously disposed here and there in the crowd. It is the business of these hirelings to throw up their caps, and clap their hands, and utter their vivas. The rabble at first
stare and wonder, and at last join in shouting for shouting’s sake; and thus a crown is placed on a head which has no right to it, by the huzzas of a few servile dependants.

The opinion of the great body of the reading public is very materially influenced even by the unsupported assertions of those who assume a right to criticise. Nor is the public altogether to blame on this account. Most even of those who have really a great enjoyment in reading are in the same state, with respect to a book, in which a man who has never given particular attention to the art of painting is with respect to a picture. Every man who has the least sensibility or imagination derives a certain pleasure from pictures. Yet a man of the highest and finest intellect might, unless he had formed his taste by contemplating the best pictures, be easily persuaded by a knot of connoisseurs that the worst daub in Somerset House was a miracle of art. If he deserves to be laughed at, it is not for his ignorance of pictures, but for his ignorance of men. He knows that there is a delicacy of taste in painting which he does not possess, that he cannot distinguish hands, as practised judges distinguish them, that he is not familiar with the finest models, that he has never looked at them with close attention, and that, when the general effect of a piece has pleased him or displeased him, he has never troubled himself to ascertain why. When, therefore, people, whom he thinks more competent to judge than himself, and of whose sincerity he entertains no doubt, assure him that a particular work is exquisitely beautiful, he takes it for granted that they
must be in the right. He returns to the examination, resolved to
find or imagine beauties; and, if he can work himself up into
something like admiration, he exults in his own proficiency.

Just such is the manner in which nine readers out of ten judge of
a book. They are ashamed to dislike what men who speak as having
authority declare to be good. At present, however contemptible a
poem or a novel may be, there is not the least difficulty in
procuring favourable notices of it from all sorts of
publications, daily, weekly, and monthly. In the meantime, little
or nothing is said on the other side. The author and the
publisher are interested in crying up the book. Nobody has any
very strong interest in crying it down. Those who are best fitted
to guide the public opinion think it beneath them to expose mere
nonsense, and comfort themselves by reflecting that such
popularity cannot last. This contemptuous lenity has been carried
too far. It is perfectly true that reputations which have been
forced into an unnatural bloom fade almost as soon as they have
expanded; nor have we any apprehensions that puffing will ever
raise any scribbler to the rank of a classic. It is indeed
amusing to turn over some late volumes of periodical works, and
to see how many immortal productions have, within a few months,
been gathered to the poems of Blackmore and the novels of Mrs.
Behn; how many "profound views of human nature," and "exquisite
delineations of fashionable manners," and "vernal, and sunny, and
refreshing thoughts," and "high imaginings," and "young
breathings," and "embodyings," and "pinings," and "minglings with
the beauty of the universe," and "harmonies which dissolve the soul in a passionate sense of loveliness and divinity," the world has contrived to forget. The names of the books and of the writers are buried in as deep an oblivion as the name of the builder of Stonehenge. Some of the well-puffed fashionable novels of eighteen hundred and twenty-nine hold the pastry of eighteen hundred and thirty; and others, which are now extolled in language almost too high-flown for the merits of Don Quixote, will, we have no doubt, line the trunks of eighteen hundred and thirty-one. But, though we have no apprehensions that puffing will ever confer permanent reputation on the undeserving, we still think its influence most pernicious. Men of real merit will, if they persevere, at last reach the station to which they are entitled, and intruders will be ejected with contempt and derision. But it is no small evil that the avenues to fame should be blocked up by a swarm of noisy, pushing, elbowing pretenders, who, though they will not ultimately be able to make good their own entrance, hinder, in the mean time, those who have a right to enter. All who will not disgrace themselves by joining in the unseemly scuffle must expect to be at first hustled and shouldered back. Some men of talents, accordingly, turn away in dejection from pursuits in which success appears to bear no proportion to desert. Others employ in self-defence the means by which competitors, far inferior to themselves, appear for a time to obtain a decided advantage. There are few who have sufficient confidence in their own powers and sufficient elevation of mind, to wait with secure and contemptuous patience, while dunce after dunce presses before them. Those who will not stoop to the
baseness of the modern fashion are too often discouraged. Those
who do stoop to it are always degraded.

We have of late observed with great pleasure some symptoms which
lead us to hope that respectable literary men of all parties are
beginning to be impatient of this insufferable nuisance. And we
purpose to do what in us lies for the abating of it. We do not
think that we can more usefully assist in this good work than by
showing our honest countrymen what that sort of poetry is which
puffing can drive through eleven editions, and how easily any
bellman might, if a bellman would stoop to the necessary degree
of meanness, become a "master-spirit of the age." We have no
enmity to Mr. Robert Montgomery. We know nothing whatever about
him, except what we have learned from his books, and from the
portrait prefixed to one of them, in which he appears to be doing
his very best to look like a man of genius and sensibility,
though with less success than his strenuous exertions deserve. We
select him, because his works have received more enthusiastic
praise, and have deserved more unmixed contempt, than any which,
as far as our knowledge extends, have appeared within the last
three or four years. His writing bears the same relation to
poetry which a Turkey carpet bears to a picture. There are
colours in the Turkey carpet out of which a picture might be
made. There are words in Mr. Montgomery's writing which, when
disposed in certain orders and combinations, have made, and will
again make, good poetry. But, as they now stand, they seem to be
put together on principle in such a manner as to give no image of
anything "in the heavens above, or in the earth beneath, or in the waters under the earth."

The poem on the Omnipresence of the Deity commences with a description of the creation, in which we can find only one thought which has the least pretension to ingenuity, and that one thought is stolen from Dryden, and marred in the stealing:

"Last, softly beautiful, as music's close,
Angelic woman into being rose."

The all-pervading influence of the Supreme Being is then described in a few tolerable lines borrowed from Pope, and a great many intolerable lines of Mr. Robert Montgomery's own. The following may stand as a specimen:

"But who could trace Thine unrestricted course,
Though Fancy followed with immortal force?
There's not a blossom fondled by the breeze,
There's not a fruit that beautifies the trees,
There's not a particle in sea or air,
But nature owns thy plastic influence there!
With fearful gaze, still be it mine to see
How all is fill'd and vivified by Thee;
Upon thy mirror, earth's majestic view,
To paint Thy Presence, and to feel it too."
The last two lines contain an excellent specimen of Mr. Robert Montgomery's Turkey carpet style of writing. The majestic view of earth is the mirror of God's presence; and on this mirror Mr. Robert Montgomery paints God's presence. The use of a mirror, we submit, is not to be painted upon.

A few more lines, as bad as those which we have quoted, bring us to one of the most amusing instances of literary pilfering which we remember. It might be of use to plagiarists to know, as a general rule, that what they steal is, to employ a phrase common in advertisements, of no use to any but the right owner. We never fell in, however, with any plunderer who so little understood how to turn his booty to good account as Mr. Montgomery. Lord Byron, in a passage which everybody knows by heart, has said, addressing the sea,

"Time writes no wrinkle on thine azure brow."

Mr. Robert Montgomery very coolly appropriates the image and reproduces the stolen goods in the following form:

"And thou vast Ocean, on whose awful face
Time's iron feet can print no ruin-trace."
So may such ill-got gains ever prosper!

The effect which the Ocean produces on Atheists is then described in the following lofty lines:

"Oh! never did the dark-soul'd ATHEIST stand,
And watch the breakers boiling on the strand,
And, while Creation stagger'd at his nod,
Mock the dread presence of the mighty God!
We hear Him in the wind-heaved ocean's roar,
Hurling her billowy crags upon the shore
We hear Him in the riot of the blast,
And shake, while rush the raving whirlwinds past!"

If Mr. Robert Montgomery's genius were not far too free and aspiring to be shackled by the rules of syntax, we should suppose that it is at the nod of the Atheist that creation staggers. But Mr. Robert Montgomery's readers must take such grammar as they can get, and be thankful.

A few more lines bring us to another instance of unprofitable theft. Sir Walter Scott has these lines in the Lord of the Isles:

"The dew that on the violet lies,
Mocks the dark lustre of thine eyes."
This is pretty taken separately, and, as is always the case with 
the good things of good writers, much prettier in its place than 
can even be conceived by those who see it only detached from the 
context. Now for Mr. Montgomery:

"And the bright dew-bead on the bramble lies, 
Like liquid rapture upon beauty's eyes."

The comparison of a violet, bright with the dew, to a woman's 
eyes, is as perfect as a comparison can be. Sir Walter's lines 
are part of a song addressed to a woman at daybreak, when the 
violets are bathed in dew; and the comparison is therefore 
peculiarly natural and graceful. Dew on a bramble is no more like 
a woman's eyes than dew anywhere else. There is a very pretty 
Eastern tale of which the fate of plagiarists often reminds us. 
The slave of a magician saw his master wave his wand, and heard 
him give orders to the spirits who arose at the summons. The 
slave stole the wand, and waved it himself in the air; but he had 
not observed that his master used the left hand for that purpose. 
The spirits thus irregularly summoned tore the thief to pieces 
instead of obeying his orders. There are very few who can safely 
venture to conjure with the rod of Sir Walter; and Mr. Robert 
Montgomery is not one of them.

Mr. Campbell, in one of his most pleasing pieces, has this line,
"The sentinel stars set their watch in the sky."

The thought is good, and has a very striking propriety where Mr. Campbell has placed it, in the mouth of a soldier telling his dream. But, though Shakspeare assures us that "every true man's apparel fits your thief," it is by no means the case, as we have already seen, that every true poet's similitude fits your plagiarist. Let us see how Mr. Robert Montgomery uses the image.

"Ye quenchless stars! so eloquently bright,
Untroubled sentries of the shadowy night,
While half the world is lapp'd in downy dreams,
And round the lattice creep your midnight beams,
How sweet to gaze upon your placid eyes,
In lambent beauty looking from the skies."

Certainly the ideas of eloquence, of untroubled repose, of placid eyes, of the lambent beauty on which it is sweet to gaze, harmonise admirably with the idea of a sentry.

We would not be understood, however, to say, that Mr. Robert Montgomery cannot make similitudes for himself. A very few lines further on, we find one which has every mark of originality, and on which, we will be bound, none of the poets whom he has
plundered will ever think of making reprisals

"The soul, aspiring, pants its source to mount,
As streams meander level with their fount."

We take this to be, on the whole, the worst similitude in the world. In the first place, no stream meanders, or can possibly meander, level with its fount. In the next place, if streams did meander level with their founts, no two motions can be less like each other than that of meandering level and that of mounting upwards.

We have then an apostrophe to the Deity, couched in terms which, in any writer who dealt in meanings, we should call profane, but to which we suppose Mr. Robert Montgomery attaches no idea whatever:

"Yes I pause and think, within one fleeting hour,
How vast a universe obeys Thy power;
Unseen, but felt, Thine interfused control
Works in each atom, and pervades the whole;
Expands the blossom, and erects the tree,
Conducts each vapour, and commands each sea,
Beams in each ray, bids whirlwinds be unfurl'd,
Unrolls the thunder, and upheaves a world!"
No field-preacher surely ever carried his irreverent familiarity so far as to bid the Supreme Being stop and think on the importance of the interests which are under His care. The grotesque indecency of such an address throws into shade the subordinate absurdities of the passage, the unfurling of whirlwinds, the unrolling of thunder, and the upheaving of worlds.

Then comes a curious specimen of our poet's English:

"Yet not alone created realms engage
Thy faultless wisdom, grand, primeval sage!
For all the thronging woes to life allied
Thy mercy tempers, and thy cares provide."

We should be glad to know what the word "For" means here. If it is a preposition, it makes nonsense of the words, "Thy mercy tempers." If it is an adverb, it makes nonsense of the words, "Thy cares provide."

These beauties we have taken, almost at random, from the first part of the poem. The second part is a series of descriptions of various events, a battle, a murder, an execution, a marriage, a funeral, and so forth. Mr. Robert Montgomery terminates each of these descriptions by assuring us that the Deity was present at
the battle, murder, execution, marriage or funeral in question.

And this proposition which might be safely predicated of every
event that ever happened or ever will happen, forms the only link
which connects these descriptions with the subject or with each
other.

How the descriptions are executed our readers are probably by
this time able to conjecture. The battle is made up of the
battles of all ages and nations: "red-mouthed cannons, uproaring
to the clouds," and "hands grasping firm the glittering shield."
The only military operations of which this part of the poem
reminds us, are those which reduced the Abbey of Quedlinburgh to
submission, the Templar with his cross, the Austrian and Prussian
grenadiers in full uniform, and Curtius and Dentatus with their
battering-ram. We ought not to pass unnoticed the slain war-
horse, who will no more

"Roll his red eye, and rally for the fight";

or the slain warrior who, while "lying on his bleeding breast,"
contrives to "stare ghastly and grimly on the skies." As to this
last exploit, we can only say, as Dante did on a similar
occasion,

"Forse per forza gia di' parlasia
Si stravolse cosi alcun del tutto"
Ma io nol vidi, ne credo che sia."

The tempest is thus described:

"But lo! around the marsh’ling clouds unite,
Like thick battalions halting for the fight;
The sun sinks back, the tempest spirits sweep
Fierce through the air and flutter on the deep.
Till from their caverns rush the maniac blasts,
Tear the loose sails, and split the creaking masts,
And the lash’d billows, rolling in a train,
Rear their white heads, and race along the main"

What, we should like to know, is the difference between the two operations which Mr. Robert Montgomery so accurately distinguishes from each other, the fierce sweeping of the tempest-spirits through the air, and the rushing of the maniac blasts from their caverns? And why does the former operation end exactly when the latter commences?

We cannot stop over each of Mr. Robert Montgomery's descriptions.
We have a shipwrecked sailor, who "visions a viewless temple in the air"; a murderer who stands on a heath, "with ashy lips, in cold convulsion spread"; a pious man, to whom, as he lies in bed at night,
"The panorama of past life appears,
Warms his pure mind, and melts it into tears":

a traveller, who loses his way, owing to the thickness of the
"cloud-battalion," and the want of "heaven-lamps, to beam their
holy light." We have a description of a convicted felon, stolen
from that incomparable passage in Crabbe's Borough, which has
made many a rough and cynical reader cry like a child. We can,
however, conscientiously declare that persons of the most
excitable sensibility may safely venture upon Mr. Robert
Montgomery's version. Then we have the "poor, mindless, pale-
faceted maniac boy," who

"Rolls his vacant eye
To greet the glowing fancies of the sky."

What are the glowing fancies of the sky? And what is the meaning
of the two lines which almost immediately follow?

"A soulless thing, a spirit of the woods,
He loves to commune with the fields and floods."

How can a soulless thing be a spirit? Then comes a panegyric on
the Sunday. A baptism follows; after that a marriage: and we then
proceed, in due course, to the visitation of the sick, and the
burial of the dead.

Often as Death has been personified, Mr. Montgomery has found
something new to say about him:

"0 Death! thou dreadless vanquisher of earth,
The Elements shrank blasted at thy birth!
Career round the world like tempest wind,
Martyrs before, and victims strew'd behind
Ages on ages cannot grapple thee,
Dragging the world into eternity!"

If there be any one line in this passage about which we are more
in the dark than about the rest, it is the fourth. What the
difference may be between the victims and the martyrs, and why
the martyrs are to lie before Death, and the victims behind him,
are to us great mysteries.

We now come to the third part, of which we may say with honest
Cassio, "Why, this is a more excellent song than the other." Mr.
Robert Montgomery is very severe on the infidels, and undertakes
to prove, that, as he elegantly expresses it,

"One great Enchanter helm'd the harmonious whole."
What an enchanter has to do with helming, or what a helm has to
do with harmony, he does not explain. He proceeds with his
argument thus:

"And dare men dream that dismal Chance has framed
All that the eye perceives, or tongue has named
The spacious world, and all its wonders, born
Designless, self-created, and forlorn;
Like to the flashing bubbles on a stream,
Fire from the cloud, or phantom in a dream?"

We should be sorry to stake our faith in a higher Power on Mr.
Robert Montgomery's logic. He informs us that lightning is
designless and self-created. If he can believe this, we cannot
conceive why he may not believe that the whole universe is
designless and self-created. A few lines before, he tells us that
it is the Deity who bids "thunder rattle from the skiey deep."
His theory is therefore this, that God made the thunder, but that
the lightning made itself.

But Mr. Robert Montgomery's metaphysics are not at present our
game. He proceeds to set forth the fearful effects of Atheism

"Then, blood-stain`d Murder, bare thy hideous arm
And thou, Rebellion, welter in thy storm:
Awake, ye spirits of avenging crime;
Burst from your bonds, and battle with the time!"

Mr. Robert Montgomery is fond of personification, and belongs, we need not say, to that school of poets who hold that nothing more is necessary to a personification in poetry than to begin a word with a capital letter. Murder may, without impropriety, bare her arm, as she did long ago, in Mr. Campbell's Pleasures of Hope. But what possible motive Rebellion can have for weltering in her storm, what avenging crime may be, who its spirits may be, why they should be burst from their bonds, what their bonds may be, why they should battle with the time, what the time may be, and what a battle between the time and the spirits of avenging crime would resemble, we must confess ourselves quite unable to understand.

"And here let Memory turn her tearful glance
On the dark horrors of tumultuous France,
When blood and blasphemy defiled her land,
And fierce Rebellion shook her savage hand."

Whether Rebellion shakes her own hand, shakes the hand of Memory, or shakes the hand of France, or what any one of these three metaphors would mean, we, know no more than we know what is the sense of the following passage
"Let the foul orgies of infuriate crime
Picture the raging havoc of that time,
When leagued Rebellion march'd to kindle man,
Fright in her rear, and Murder in her van.
And thou, sweet flower of Austria, slaughter'd Queen,
Who dropp'd no tear upon the dreadful scene,
When gush'd the life-blood from thine angel form,
And martyr'd beauty perish'd in the storm,
Once worshipp'd paragon of all who saw,
Thy look obedience, and thy smile a law."

What is the distinction between the foul orgies and the raging
havoc which the foul orgies are to picture? Why does Fright go
behind Rebellion, and Murder before? Why should not Murder fall
behind Fright? Or why should not all the three walk abreast? We
have read of a hero who had

"Amazement in his van, with flight combined,
And Sorrow's faded form, and Solitude behind."

Gray, we suspect, could have given a reason for disposing the
allegorical attendants of Edward thus. But to proceed, "Flower of
Austria" is stolen from Byron. "Dropp'd" is false English.
"Perish'd in the storm" means nothing at all; and "thy look
obedience" means the very reverse of what Mr. Robert Montgomery
Our poet then proceeds to demonstrate the immortality of the soul:

"And shall the soul, the fount of reason, die,
When dust and darkness round its temple lie?
Did God breathe in it no ethereal fire.
Dimless and quenchless, though the breath expire?"

The soul is a fountain; and therefore it is not to die, though dust and darkness lie round its temple, because an ethereal fire has been breathed into it, which cannot be quenched though its breath expire. Is it the fountain, or the temple, that breathes, and has fire breathed into it?

Mr. Montgomery apostrophises the

"Immortal beacons,—spirits of the just,"

and describes their employments in another world, which are to be, it seems, bathing in light, hearing fiery streams flow, and riding on living cars of lightning. The deathbed of the sceptic is described with what we suppose is meant for energy. We then have the deathbed of a Christian made as ridiculous as false
imagery and false English can make it. But this is not enough.
The Day of Judgment is to be described, and a roaring cataract of
nonsense is poured forth upon this tremendous subject. Earth, we
are told, is dashed into Eternity. Furnace blazes wheel round the
horizon, and burst into bright wizard phantoms. Racing hurricanes
unroll and whirl quivering fire-clouds. The white waves gallop.
Shadowy worlds career around. The red and raging eye of
Imagination is then forbidden to pry further. But further Mr.
Robert Montgomery persists in prying. The stars bound through the
airy roar. The unbosomed deep yawns on the ruin. The billows of
Eternity then begin to advance. The world glares in fiery
slumber. A car comes forward driven by living thunder,

"Creation shudders with sublime dismay,
And in a blazing tempest whirls away."

And this is fine poetry! This is what ranks its writer with the
master-spirits of the age! This is what has been described, over
and over again, in terms which would require some qualification
if used respecting Paradise Lost! It is too much that this
patchwork, made by stitching together old odds and ends of what,
when new, was but tawdry frippery, is to be picked off the
dunghill on which it ought to rot, and to be held up to
admiration as an inestimable specimen of art. And what must we
think of a system by means of which verses like those which we
have quoted, verses fit only for the poet's corner of the Morning
Post, can produce emolument and fame? The circulation of this
writer's poetry has been greater than that of Southey's Roderick, and beyond all comparison greater than that of Cary's Dante or of the best works of Coleridge. Thus encouraged, Mr. Robert Montgomery has favoured the public with volume after volume. We have given so much space to the examination of his first and most popular performance that we have none to spare for his Universal Prayer, and his smaller poems, which, as the puffing journals tell us, would alone constitute a sufficient title to literary immortality. We shall pass at once to his last publication, entitled Satan.

This poem was ushered into the world with the usual roar of acclamation. But the thing was now past a joke. Pretensions so unfounded, so impudent, and so successful, had aroused a spirit of resistance. In several magazines and reviews, accordingly, Satan has been handled somewhat roughly, and the arts of the puffers have been exposed with good sense and spirit. We shall, therefore, be very concise.

Of the two poems we rather prefer that on the Omnipresence of the Deity, for the same reason which induced Sir Thomas More to rank one bad book above another. "Marry, this is somewhat. This is rhyme. But the other is neither rhyme nor reason." Satan is a long soliloquy, which the Devil pronounces in five or six thousand lines of bad blank verse, concerning geography, politics, newspapers, fashionable society, theatrical amusements, Sir Walter Scott's novels, Lord Byron's poetry, and Mr. Martin's
pictures. The new designs for Milton have, as was natural, particularly attracted the attention of a personage who occupies so conspicuous a place in them. Mr. Martin must be pleased to learn that, whatever may be thought of those performances on earth, they give full satisfaction in Pandaemonium, and that he is there thought to have hit off the likenesses of the various Thrones and Dominations very happily.

The motto to the poem of Satan is taken from the Book of Job: "Whence comest thou? From going to and fro in the earth, and walking up and down in it." And certainly Mr. Robert Montgomery has not failed to make his hero go to and fro, and walk up and down. With the exception, however, of this propensity to locomotion, Satan has not one Satanic quality. Mad Tom had told us that "the prince of darkness is a gentleman"; but we had yet to learn that he is a respectable and pious gentleman, whose principal fault is that he is something of a twaddle and far too liberal of his good advice. That happy change in his character which Origen anticipated, and of which Tillotson did not despair, seems to be rapidly taking place. Bad habits are not eradicated in a moment. It is not strange, therefore, that so old an offender should now and then relapse for a short time into wrong dispositions. But to give him his due, as the proverb recommends, we must say that he always returns, after two or three lines of impiety, to his preaching style. We would seriously advise Mr. Montgomery to omit or alter about a hundred lines in different parts of this large volume, and to republish it under the name of
Gabriel. The reflections of which it consists would come less absurdly, as far as there is a more and a less in extreme absurdity, from a good than from a bad angel.

We can afford room only for a single quotation. We give one taken at random, neither worse nor better, as far as we can perceive, than any other equal number of lines in the book. The Devil goes to the play, and moralises thereon as follows:

"Music and Pomp their mingling spirit shed
Around me: beauties in their cloud-like robes
Shine forth,—a scenic paradise, it glares
Intoxication through the reeling sense
Of flush'd enjoyment. In the motley host
Three prime gradations may be rank'd: the first,
To mount upon the wings of Shakspeare's mind,
And win a flash of his Promethean thought,
To smile and weep, to shudder, and achieve
A round of passionate omnipotence,
Attend: the second, are a sensual tribe,
Convened to hear romantic harlots sing,
On forms to banquet a lascivious gaze,
While the bright perfidy of wanton eyes
Through brain and spirit darts delicious fire
The last, a throng most pitiful! who seem,
With their corroded figures, rayless glance,
And death-like struggle of decaying age,
Like painted skeletons in charnel pomp
Set forth to satirise the human kind!
How fine a prospect for demoniac view!
'Creatures whose souls outbalance worlds awake!'
Methinks I hear a pitying angel cry."

Here we conclude. If our remarks give pain to Mr. Robert Montgomery, we are sorry for it. But, at whatever cost of pain to individuals, literature must be purified from this taint. And, to show that we are not actuated by any feeling of personal enmity towards him, we hereby give notice that, as soon as any book shall, by means of puffing, reach a second edition, our intention is to do unto the writer of it as we have done unto Mr. Robert Montgomery.

INDEX AND GLOSSARY OF ALLUSIONS

ABSOLUTE, Sir Anthony, a leading character in Sheridan's play of The Rivals

A darker and fiercer spirit, Jonathan Swift, the great Tory writer (1667-1745)

Agbarus or Abgarus, the alleged author of a spurious letter to Jesus Christ. Edessa is in Mesopotamia.
Alboin, King of the Lombards, 561-573, he invaded Italy as far as the Tiber

Alcina, the personification of carnal pleasure in the Orlando Furioso

Aldus, the famous Venetian printer (1447-1515), who issued the Aldine editions of the classics and invented italic type

Alfieri, Italian dramatist, and one of the pioneers of the revolt against eighteenth-century literary and society models (1749-1803)

Algarotti, Francesco, a litterateur, friend of Voltaire. Frederic made him a count (1764)

Alnaschar, see "The History of the Barber's Fifth Brother," in the Arabian Nights

Alva, Duke of, the infamous governor of the Netherlands (1508-82)
Amadeus, Victor, "the faithless ruler of Savoy," who for a bribe
left Austria, whose troops he was commander-in-chief of for
France, in 1692

Arbuthnot, Dr., author of the History of John Bull, friend of
Swift and Pope (1679-1735)

Arminius, a German who, as a hostage, entered the Roman army, but
afterwards revolted and led his countrymen against Rome (d. 23
A.D.)

Armorica, France between the Seine and the Loire, Brittany

Artevelde, Von., Jacob v. A. and Philip, his son, led the people
of Flanders in their revolt against Count Louis and his French
supporters (fourteenth century)

Ascham, Roger, and Aylmer, John, tutors of Queen Elizabeth and
Lady Jane Grey respectively

Athalie, Saul, Cinna, dramas by Racine, Alfieri, and Corneille
respectively

Atticus, Sporus, i.e. Addison and Lord John Hervey, satirized in
Pope's Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot

Attila, King of the Huns, the "Scourge of God" who overrun the
Roman Empire but was finally beaten by the allied Goths and
Romans (d. 453)

Aubrey, John, an eminent antiquary who lost a number of inherited
estates by lawsuits and bad management (1624-97)

BADAJOZ and St. Sebastian, towns in Spain captured from the
French during the Peninsular War

Bastiani, was at first one of the big Potsdam grenadiers;
Frederic made him Abbot of Silesia

Bayes, Miss, with reference to the name used in The Rehearsal, by
George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, to satirize Dryden, the
poet-laureate

Bayle, Pierre, author of the famous Dictionnaire Historique et
Critique; professor of philosophy at Padua and at Rotterdam
(1647-1706)

Beauclerk, Topham, Johnson's friend, "the chivalrous T. B., with
his sharp wit and gallant, courtly ways” (Carlyle), (1739-80)

Beaumarchais, see Carlyle's French Revolution. As a comic
dramatist he ranks second only to Moliere. He supported the
Revolution with his money and his versatile powers of speech and
writing. He edited an edition de luxe of Voltaire's works (1732-
99)

Behn, Afra, the licentious novelist and mistress of Charles 11.
(1640-89), who, as a spy in Holland, discovered the Dutch plans
for burning the Thames shipping

Belle-Isle, French marshal; fought in the Austrian campaign of
1740 and repelled the Austrian invasion of 1744 (d. 1761)

Beloe William, a miscellaneous writer, whose version of
Herodotus, so far from being flat, is, while “infinitely below
the modern standard in point of accuracy, much above modern
performance in point of readableness” (Dr. Garnett), (1756-1817)

Bender, 80 miles N.W. from Odessa, in S. Russia

Bentley, Richard, master of Trinity College, Cambridge, and an
eminent philologist (1662-1742)
Bettesworth, an Irishman, lampooned in Swift's Miscellanies

Betty Careless, one of Macaulay's inventions which sufficiently explains itself

Betty, Master, a boy-actor, known as the Infant Roscius. Having acquired a fortune he lived in retirement (1791-1874)

Black Frank, Johnson's negro servant, Frank Barber

Blackmore, Sir Richard, a wordy poetaster (d. 1729), who was the butt of all contemporary wits

Blair, Dr. Hugh, Scotch divine an critic, encouraged Macpherson to publish the Ossian poetry (1718-1800)

Blatant cast, the, does not really die. See the end of Faery Queen vi.

Bobadil and Beseus, Pistol and Parolles, braggart characters in Jonson's Every Man in His Humour, Beaumont and Fletcher's King and no King, Shakespeare's Henry V., and All's Well that Ends Well, respectively
Boileau, Nicholas, the great French critic, whose Art of Poetry long constituted the canons of French and English literary art (1636-1711)

Bolt Court, on the N. side of Fleet Street. Johnson lived at No. 8 from 1777 till his death in 1784

Borodino, 70 miles west from Moscow, where the Russians made a stand against Napoleon, 1812

Boscan, a Spanish imitator of Petrarch Alva's tutor; served in Italy (1485-1533)

Bourne, Vincent, an usher at Westminster School, mentioned early in the "Essay on Warren Hastings,"

Boyle, Hon. Charles, edited the Letters of Phalaris which gave rise to the famous controversy with Bentley, for which, see the essay on Sir William Temple (vol. iii. of this edition)

Bradamante, in Ariosto's Orlando Furioso, a Christian lady who loves the Saracen knight, Ruggiero
Brothers, Richard, a fanatic who held that the English were the lost ten tribes of Israel (1757-1824)

Brownrigg, Mrs., executed at Tyburn (1767) for abusing and murdering her apprentices

Bruhl, Count, the favourite of Augustus III. of Saxony who enriched himself at the risk of ruining his master and his country.

Bucer, Martin, a German reformer who mediated between Luther and Zwingli, and became Professor of Divinity at Cambridge (1491-1551)

Buchanan, George, Scottish scholar and humanist; tutor to Mary Queen of Scots and James VI. (1506-82)

Burn, Richard, an English vicar compiled several law digests among them the Justice of the Peace, (1709-85)

Burnet, Gilbert, bishop of Salisbury, supported the claims of William of Orange to the English throne, and wrote the History of my Own Times (1643-1715)
Button's, on the south side of Russell Street, Covert Garden
succeeded Will's as the wits' resort

Butts, Dr. physician-in-ordinary to Henry VIII. (d. 1545) and one
of the characters in Shakespeare's Henry VIII.

CACUS, the mythological giant who stole the oxen of Hercules

Camaldoli, Order of, founded by St. Romauld, a Benedictine
(eleventh century) in the Vale of Camaldoli among the Tuscan
Apennines

Cambray, Confederates of, the pope, the emperor. France and Spain
who by the League of Cambray combined to attack Venice

Campbell, Dr. John, a miscellaneous political and historical
writer (1708–75)

Capreae, or Capri, a small island nineteen miles south from
Naples, the favourite residence of Augustus and Tiberius, and the
scene of the latter's licentious orgies

Capuchins, a branch of the monastic order of the Franciscans
Carlile, Richard, a disciple of Tom Paine's who was repeatedly
imprisoned for his radicalism. He worked especially for the
freedom of the Press (1790-1843)

Carter, Mrs., a distinguished linguist and translator of
Epictetus

Casaubon, Isaac, Professor of Greek at Geneva Curator of the
Royal Library at Paris, Prebendary of Canterbury: a famous
sixteenth-century scholar (1559-1614),

Catinat, French marshal in charge of the 1701 Italian campaign
against Marlborough's ally, Prince Eugene of Savoy

Cave, Edward, printer, editor, publisher, and proprietor of the
Gentleman's Magazine (1691-1754)

Chatelet, Madame du, Voltaire's mistress, c 1733-47 (d. 1749)

Chaulieu, Guillaume, a witty but negligent poetaster (1639-1720)

Chaumette, Pierre, a violent extremist in the French Revolution
who provoked even Robespierre's disgust; guillotined, 1794
Childs, the clergy coffee-house in St. Paul's. St. James's (ib.)

in the street of that name, was the resort of beaux and statesmen

and a notorious gambling house

Chillingworth, William, an able English controversial divine;
suffered at the hands of the Puritans as an adherent of Charles
I. (1602-43)

Churchill, Charles, a clergyman and satirical Poet who attacked

Johnson in The Ghost (1731-64)

Clootz, a French Revolutionary and one of the founders of the

"Worship of Reason:" guillotined 1794

Colburn, (Zerah), b. at Vermont, U.S.A., in 1804, and noted in

youth for his extraordinary powers of calculation (d. 1840)

Coligni, Gaspard de, French admiral and leader of the Huguenots;

massacred on St. Bartholomew's Eve, 1572

Colle, Charles, dramatist and song-writer (d. 1777); young

Crebillon (d. 1777) wrote fiction
Condorcet, a French Marquis (1743-94) of moderate Revolutionary
tendencies, who fell a victim to the Extremists He wrote
extensively and clearly, but without
genius

Constituent Assembly, the National Assembly of France from 1789
to 1792

Corderius, a famous sixteenth-century teacher--Calvin was a pupil
of his--in France and Switzerland (d. 1564) who published several
school-books

Cortes, conqueror of Mexico (1485-1547); the Spanish Parliament

Cotta, Caius, a famous Roman orator, partly contemporary with
Cicero, who mentions him with honour

Courland, a province on the Baltic once belonging to Poland
since 1795 to Russia

Coventry, Solicitor-General of England in 1616, Attorney-General
in 1620 and Lord Keeper in 1625

Cradock, Joseph, a versatile writer and actor whose rambling
Literary and Miscellaneous Memoirs contain several anecdotes of
Johnson and his circle (1742-1826)

Curl and Osborne, two notorious booksellers who owe their
immortality to Pope's Dunciad

Curtius, the noble Roman youth who leaped into the chasm in the
Forum and so closed it by the sacrifice of Rome's most precious
possession--a good citizen

DACIER, Andrew, a French scholar who edited the "Delphin" edition
of the classics for the Dauphin, and translated many of them
(1651-1722)

Dangerfield, Thomas, Popish plot discoverer and false witness
(1650?-1685)

Davies, Tom, the actor-bookseller who wrote the Memoirs of David
Garrick, and was one of Johnson's circle (1712-85). "The famous
dogma of the old physiologists" is "corruptio unius generatio est
alterius" (Notes and Queries, Ser. 8, vol. ix., p. 56)

Davila, a famous French soldier and historian who served under
Henry of Navarre; wrote the famous History of the Civil War in
France (1576-1631)
Della Crusca, the signature of Robert Merry (1755-98), the leader of a mutual-admiration band of poetasters, who had their headquarters at Florence, and hence called themselves the Della Cruscans. Gifford (q.v.) pulverised them in his Baviad and Merviad

Dentatus, the old-type Roman who, after many victories and taking immense booty, retired to a small farm which he himself tilled

Desfontaines, a Jesuit who put out a pirated edition of Voltaire's La Ligue

Dessaix, a distinguished, upright, and chivalrous French general under Napoleon, who fell at Marengo (1800)

Diafoirus, the name of two pedantic characters in Moliere's Malade Imaginaire

Diatessaron, a harmony of the gospels, the earliest example being that compiled by Tatian c.170 A.D.

Digby, Lord, one of the Royalist leaders and a typical Cavalier
Diodorus author of a universal history of which fifteen books still remain (50 B.C.-13 A.D.)

Distressed Mother, by Ambrose Phillipps, modelled on Racine's Andromaque

Domdaniel, a hall under the roots of the ocean, where gnomes magicians, and evil spirits hold council (see Southey's Thalaba)

Domenichino, a celebrated Italian painter of sacred subjects; persecuted and possibly poisoned by his rivals (1581-1641)

Douw, Gerard, distinguished Dutch painter, one of Rembrandt's pupils; his works are famed for their perfect finish and delicacy (1613-75)

Dubois, Guillaume, cardinal and prime minister of France, noted for his ability and his debauchery (1656-1723)

D'Urfey, Tom, a facetious comedian and song-writer, favoured by Charles II. Known for his collection of sonnets, Pills to Purge Melancholy (1628-1703)

ECLIPSE, a famous chestnut race-horse who between 3rd May, 1769
and 4th October, 1770, had a most successful record

Encyclopaedia, the famous work which, edited by D'Alembert and Diderot, and contributed to by the most eminent savants of France, was issued 1751-77, and contributed not a little to fan the flame of Revolution. The Philosophical Dictionary was a similar production

Essex, Queen Elizabeth's favourite courtier who took Cadiz in 1596

Euphelia and Rhodoclea...Comelia...Tranquilla, signatures to letters in the Rambler (Nos. 42, 46; 62; 51; 10,119)

Exons, i. e. "Exempts of the Guards," "officers who commanded when the lieutenant or ensign was absent, and who had charge of the night watch,"

Eylau, 20 miles south from Konigsberg victory of Napoleon, 1807

FAIRFAX, Edward, one of the "improvers" of English versification. Translated Tasso in the same stanzas as the original, and wrote on Demonology (d. c. 1632)
Farnese, Alexander, Duke of Parma, Governor of the Netherlands under Philip II. and the first commander of his age

Faunus, grandson of Saturn and god of fields and shepherds, later identified with the Greek Pan

Faustina, Empress, (i) wife of Antoninus Pius; (ii) daughter of (i)

and wife of Marcus Aurelius. Both were equally licentious

Favorinus, a rhetorician and sophist, who flourished in Gaul, c. 125 A.D.

Felton, John, who assassinated the Duke of Buckingham in 1628

Ferguson, Sir Adam, M.P. for Ayrshire, 1774-80

Filmer, Sir Robert, advocated the doctrine of absolute regal power in his Patriarcha, 1680,

Flecknoe and Settle, synonyms for vileness in poetry (cp. Moevius and Bairus among the Romans). Flecknoe was an Irish priest who printed a host of worthless matter. Settle was a playwright, who degenerated into a "city-poet and a puppet-show" keeper; both
were satirized by Dryden

Fleury, French cardinal and statesman, tutor and adviser of Louis XV. (1653-1743)

Florimel. (see Spenser's Faery Queen, books iii. and iv.)

Fox, George, and Naylor, James, contemporaries of Bunyan, and early leaders of the Society of Friends or "Quakers;"

Fracastorius, Italian philosopher, mathematician, and poet ranked by Scaliger as next to Virgil

Fraguier, Pere, an eminent man of letters, sometime a Jesuit. An elegant Latin versifier, especially on philosophical themes (1666-1728)

Franc de Pompignan, Advocate-General of France, an Academician and an opponent of Encyclopaedists, in consequence of which Voltaire lampooned him (1709-84)

Franche Comte, that part of France which lies south of Lorraine and west of Switzerland
Freron, took sides with the Church against the attacks of Voltaire; had some reputation as a critic (d. 1776)

GALLIENUS and Honorius, late Roman emperors who suffered from barbaric invasions

Galt, John Scotch custom-house officer and novelist, wrote The Ayrshire Legatees, The Provost, Sir Andrew Wylie, etc.

Galway, Lord (Macaulay is not quite so severe on him in his History of England)

Ganganelli, who as Clement XIV. held the papacy, 1769-74, and suppressed the Jesuits

George of Trebizond, a celebrated humanist (1396-1486), professor of Greek at Venice in 1428 and papal secretary at Rome, C. 1450

Gibby, Sir, Sir Gilbert Heathcote

Gifford, editor of the Anti-Jacobin and afterwards of the Quarterly Review, in which he attacked Wordsworth, Shelley, and Keats. His satires, the Baviad and the Maviad, had some reputation
in their day (1757-1826)

Gilpin, Rev. Joshua G., rector of Wrockwardine, whose new and corrected edition of the Pilgrim's Progress appeared in 1811

Godfrey of Bouillon, a leader of the First Crusade; he took Jerusalem in 1099

Goldoni, "the founder of Italian Comedy" (1707-93), whose pieces supplanted the older Italian farces and burlesques

Gondomar, Count of, the Spanish ambassador at the court of James I. who ruined Raleigh, and negotiated the proposed marriage of Charles I. with the Infanta

Gonsalvo de Cordova, the great captain who took Granada from the Moors, Zante from the Turks, and Naples from the French (1443-1515)

Grecian, the, the resort of the learned in Devereux Street

Strand

Grotius, a celebrated Dutch scholar, equally famed for his knowledge of theology, history, and law (d. 1645)
Gwynn, Nell, an orange girl who became mistress of Charles II.
and the ancestress of the Dukes of St. Albans

HAILES, Lord, David Dalrymple, author of the Annals of Scotland
(1726-92)

Hale, Sir Matthew, Chief Justice of the King's Bench under
Charles II, and author of several religious and moral works

Halford, Sir Henry, one of the leading physicians in Macaulay's
day (1766-1844)

Hamilton, Gerard, M.P. for Petersfield, and of a somewhat
despicable character. The nickname was "Single-speech Hamilton,"

Harpagon, the miser in Moliere's L'Avare

Hawkins, Sir John. a club companion of Johnson's (d. 1780), whose
Life and Works of Johnson (II vols., 1787-89) was a careless
piece of work, soon superseded by Boswell's

Hayley, William, Cowper's friend and biographer (1745-1820).
Byron ridiculed his Triumphs of Temper and Triumphs of Music, and
Southey said everything was good about him except his poetry.

Henriade, Voltaire's La Ligue, ou Henri le Grand

Hierocles, a neo-Platonic philosopher (c. 450 A.D.), who after long labour collected a book of twenty-eight jests, a translation of which (Gentleman's Magazine, 1741) has been attributed to Johnson.


Hippocrene, "the fountain of the Muses, formed by the hoof of Pegasus"

Holbach, Baron, a French "philosophe" who entertained at his hospitable board in Paris all the Encyclopaedia (q.v.) writers; a materialist, but a philanthropist (1723-89)

Holofernes, the pedantic school-master in Love's Labour's Last

Home, John, a minister of the Scottish Church (1724-1808), whose tragedy of Douglas was produced in Edinburgh in 1756.
Hoole, John, a clerk in the India House, who worked at translations, e.g. of Tasso and Ariosto, and original literature in his spare hours

Hotel of Rambouillet, the intellectual salon which centred round the Italian Marquise de R.(1588-1665), and degenerated into the pedantry which Moliere satirized in Les Preceiuses Ridicules

Hughes, John, a poet and essayist, who contributed frequently to the Tatler, and Guardian (1677-1720)

Hume, Mr. Joseph, English politician, reformer, and philanthropist (1777-1855)

Hurd, Richard, Bishop in succession of Lichfield, Coventry, and Worcester; edited in 1798 with fulsome praise the works of his fellow bishop Warburton of Gloucester

Hutchinson, Mrs., wife of Colonel Hutchinson, the governor of Nottingham Castle in the Civil War, whose Memoirs (published 1806) she wrote

Hutten, Ulrich von, German humanist and reformer (1488-1523)
IMLAC (see Johnson’s Rasselas, Ch. viii xii.)

Ireland’s Vortigern, a play represented by W. H. Ireland as Shakespeare’s autograph; failed when Sheridan produced it in 1796, and afterwards admitted a forgery

Ivimey, Mr., Baptist divine and historian of the early nineteenth century, who compiled a life of Bunyan

JANSENIAN CONTROVERSY, arose early in the seventeenth century over the Augustinian principle of the sovereign and the irresistible nature of divine grace, denied by the Jesuits. In connection with this controversy Pascal wrote his Provincial Letters

Jeanie Deans (see Scott’s The Heart Of Midlothian)

Jedwood justice; the little town of Jedburgh was prominent in border-warfare, and its justice was proverbially summary, the execution of the accused usually preceding his trial

Jonathan’s and Garraway’s, Coffee-houses in Cornhill and Exchange Alley respectively, specially resorted to by brokers and merchants
Jortin, John, an eminent and scholarly divine, who wrote on the Truth, Christian Religion and on History (1698-1770)

Julius, the second pope (1502-13) of that name, whose military zeal outran his priestly inclination. He fought against the Venetians, and the French

Justiza, M Mayor, "a magistrate appointed by King and the Cortes who acted as mediator between the King and the people." Philip II. abolished the office)

KENRICK, William, a hack writer, who in the Monthly Review in 1765, attacked Johnson's Shakespeare with "a certain coarse smartness" (1725?-79)

Kitcat Club, founded c. 1700 by thirty-nine Hanoverian statesmen and authors on the basis of an earlier society (see Spectator No. 9)

LA BRUYERE, John de, tutor to the Duke of Burgundy and a member of the Academy; author of Characters after the manner of Theophrastus (1644~96)
La Clos, author of Liaisons Dangereuses, a masterpiece of immorality (1741-1803)

Lambert, Daniel, weighed 739 lbs., and measured 3 yds. 4 ins. round the waist (1770-1809)

Langton, Bennet, a classical scholar and contributor to The Idler. Entered Johnson's circle in 1752 (1737-1801)

League of Cambray, the union in 1508 of Austria, France, Spain and the Papacy against Venice

League of Pilnitz, between Austria, Prussia, and others (1791) for the restoration of Louis XVI.

Lee, Nathaniel, a play-writer who helped Dryden in his Duke of Guise (1655-92)

Leman Lake, Lake of Geneva

Lope de Vega, Spain's greatest, and the world's most prolific dramatist. Secretary to the Inquisition (1562-1635)

Lunsford, a notorious bully and profligate; a specimen of the
worst type of the royalist captains

MACLEOD, Colonel (see Tour to the Hebrides, Sept. 23)

Mainwaring, Arthur, editor of the Medley, and Whig pamphleteer
(1668-1712)

Malbranche, Nicholas, tried to adopt and explain the philosophy
of Descartes in the interests of theology (d. 1715)

Mallet, David, a literary adventurer who collaborated with
Thomson in writing the masque Alfred in which the song "Rule
Britannia" was produced (1703-65)

Malone, Edmund, an eminent Shakesperian scholar, who also wrote a
Life of Reynolds and a Life of Dryden (1741-1812)

Manfred, King of the Two Sicilies who struggled for his
birthright against three popes, who excommunicated him and gave
his kingdom to Charles of Anjou, fighting against whom he fell in
1266

Manichees, the sect founded by Mani (who declared himself to be
the Paraclete) which held a blend of Magian, Buddhist, and
Christian principles

Manlius, the Roman hero who in B.C. 390 saved Rome from the Gauls, and who was later put to death on a charge of treason

Marat, Jean Paul, a fanatical democrat whose one fixed idea was wholesale slaughter of the aristocracy; assassinated by Charlotte Corday (1743-93)

Markland, Jeremiah a famous classical scholar and critic (1693-1776)

Marli, a royal (now presidential) country-house ten miles west from Paris

Marsilio Ficino, an eminent Italian Platonist, noted for his purity of life and for his aid to the Renaissance (1433-99)

Mason William, friend and biographer of Gray; wrote Caractacus and some odes (1725-97)

Massillon, Jean Baptiste, famous French preacher, Bishop of Clermont, a master of style and persuasive eloquence. (1663-1742)
Master of the Sentences, Peter Lombard, a disciple of Abelard and one of the most famous of the "Schoolmen" of the twelfth century

Maximin, surnamed Thrax--"the Tracian." Roman Emperor, 235-38. His cruel tyranny led to a revolt in which he was murdered by his own soldiers

Meillerie, on the Lake of Geneva, immortalised by J. J. Rousseau

Merovingians, a dynasty of Frankish kings in the sixth and seventh centuries A.D.

Metastasio, Pietro Trapassi, an Italian poet (1698-1782)

Mina, a famous guerilla chief in the Peninsular war, and (in 1834) against Don Carlo (1781-1834). Empecinado (="covered with pitch") a nick-name given to Juan Matin Diaz, an early comrade of Mina

Mirabel and Millamont, the Benedick and Beatrice of Beaumont and Fletcher's Wildgoose Chase

Mithridates, king of Pontus (B.C. 120-63), famous for his
struggle against Rome, and the general vigour and ability of his intellect.

Moliere's doctors (see L'Amour Medecin (II. iii.), Le Malade Imaginaire, and Le Medicin malgre lui)

Mompesson, Sir Giles, one of the Commissioners for the granting of monopoly licenses

Monks and Giants, "These stanzas are from a poem by Hookham Frere, really entitled Prospectus and specimen of an intended national Work . . . relating to King Arthur and his Round Table,"

Monmouth Street, now called Dudley Street

Morgante Maggiore, a serio-comic romance in verse, by Pulci of Florence (1494)

Morone, an Italian cardinal and diplomatist (1509-80)

Murillo, Spain's greatest painter (1618-82)

Murphy, Arthur, an actor-author, who, besides writing some plays, edited Fielding, and published an Essay on the Life and
Genius of Samuel Johnson (1727-1815)

Murray, Lindley, the Pennsylvania grammarian (1745-1826), who settled near York, and there produced his Grammar of the English Language

NARSES the Roman general (d. 573) who drove the Goths out of Rome. In his youth he had been a slave

Nephelococcygia, i.e. "Cuckoo town in the cloud"--a fictitious city referred to in the Birds of Aristophanes,

Newdigate and Seatonian poetry, verse written in competition for prizes founded by Sir R. Newdigate and Rev. Thos. Seaton at Oxford and Cambridge respectively, Dodsley (ib.) was an honest publisher and author who brought out Poems by Several Hands in 1748,

Nugent, Dr., one of the original members and a regular attendant at the meetings of the Literary Club

OCTOBER CLUB, a High Church Tory Club of Queen Anne's time, which met at the Bell Tavern, Westminster
Daphnis K. T. L., "Daphnis went into the waters; the eddies swirled over the man whom the Muses loved and the nymphs held dear" (Theocritus, Idyls, i.). An allusion to Shelley's death

Odoacer, a Hun, who became emperor, and was assassinated by his colleague Theodoric the Ostrogoth in 493

Oldmixon, John, a dull and insipid historian (1673-1742), roughly handled by Pope in the Dunciad (ii. 283)

Orlando Furioso, Ariosto's (1471-1533) great poem of chivalry suggested by the Orlando Innamorato of Boiardo (c. 1430-94). Alcina is a kind of Circe in the Orlando Furioso

Ortiz, eighteenth-century historian, author of Compendio de la Historia de Espana

Osborn, John, a notorious bookseller who "sweated" Pope and Johnson among other authors (d. 1767)

Otho, Roman emperor (69 A.D.) The only brass coins bearing his name were struck in the provinces, and are very rare

PADALON, the Hindu abode of departed Spirits
Paestum, ancient Posidonia, mod. Pesto, 22 miles S.E. from Salerno, 471

Pantheon, a circular temple in Rome, erected by Agrippa, son-in-law of Augustus, and dedicated to the gods in general: now a church and place of burial for the illustrious Italian dead

Paoli, the Corsican general (1796-1807) who, failing against the might of France, made his home in England, and was chaperoned by Boswell

Parnell, Thomas, Archdeacon of Clogher, satirist and translator. He was a sweet and easy poet with a high moral tone; friend of Addison and Swift (1679-1718)

Parson Barnabas, Parson Trulliber (see Fielding's Joseph Andrews)

Pasquin, Antony, a fifteenth-century Italian tailor, noted for his caustic wit

Paulician Theology originated in Armenia, and flourished c.660-970 A.D. Besides certain Manichee elements it denied the deity of
Jesus and abjured Mariolatry and the sacraments

Pescara, Marquis of, an Italian general who betrayed to the emperor, Charles V., the plot of Francesco Sforza for driving the Spaniards and Germans out of Italy

Peter Martyr, a name borne by three personages. The reference here is to the Italian Protestant reformer who made his home successively in Switzerland, England, Strasburg, and Zurich (d. 1562)

Phidias, Athens's greatest sculptor. A contemporary of Pericles (d. 432 B.C.)

Philips, John, best remembered by The Splendid Shilling, a good burlesque in imitation of Milton (1676-1708)

Pilpay, the Indian Aesop. For the pedigree of the Pilpay literature, see Jacobs: Fables of Bidpai (1888), 641

Pisistratus and Gelon, two able Grecian tyrants who ruled beneficially at Athens (541-527 B.C.), and at Syracuse (484-473 B.C.), respectively
Pococurante, one who cares little and knows less: a dabbler

Porridge Island, the slang name of an alley near St. Martin's-in-the-Fields, which was pulled down c. 1830

Politian, a distinguished poet and scholar in the time of the Italian Renaissance; professor of Greek and Latin at Florence (1454-94)

Pompadour, Madame de, mistress of Louis XV., and virtually ruler of France from 1745 till her death in 1764

Prior, Matthew, a wit and poet of the early eighteenth century whose lyrics were pronounced by Thackeray to be "amongst the easiest, the richest, the most charmingly humorous" in the English language,

Pudding, Jack, a clown who swallows black puddings, etc. Cp. Germ. Hans Worst, Fr. Jean-pottage

Pulci, a Florentine poet (noted for his humorous Sonnets), and friend of Lorenzo de' Medici (1432-84)

Pye--the immediate--Cibber--more remote--predecessor of Southey
in the Laureateship

Pyrgopolynices, a braggart character in Plautus's Miles Gloriosus

Pyrrho, "the father of the Greek sceptics," contemporary with Aristotle. Like, Carneades (ib.), he denied that there was any criterion of certainty in the natural or the moral world

QUEDLINBURGH, an old town in Saxony at the foot of the Harz, long a favourite residence of the mediaeval emperors

RALPHO, the clerk and squire of Hudibras in Samuel Butler's satire of that name

Rambouillet, the marchioness of this name was a wealthy patron of art and literature, and gathered round her a select salon of intellectual people, which degenerated into pedantry, was ridiculed, and dissolved at her death in 1665

Ramus, Peter French, philosopher and humanist; attacked Aristotle and Scholasticism; massacred on the eve of St, Bartholomew, 1572

Rehearsal, The, a burlesque based on Beaumont's Knight of the Burning Pestle, produced in 1671 by George Clifford, Duke of
Buckingham, and Samuel Butler

Relapse, a comedy by Sir John Vanbrugh (d. 1726), who also achieved some distinction as a soldier and an architect

Richard Roe, nominal defendant in ejectment suits. CP. the "M. Or N." of the Prayer-Book

Richelieu . . Torcy, Richelieu and Mazarin were cardinals and statesmen in the seventeenth century, whose power exceeded that of the king; Colbert Louvis, and Torcy were influential and able men of the same time, but dependent upon the royal pleasure

Robertson, William, wrote History of Scotland, History of the Reign of Charles V., etc. A friend of Hume's (1721-93)

Rochelle and Auvergne, head-quarters of the Huguenots

Rowe, Nicholas, dramatist and poet laureate (1715), editor of a monumental edition of Shakespeare

Rymer, Thomas, Historiographer-royal, and the compiler Of Foedera--a collection of historical documents concerning the relations of England and foreign powers (1639-1714)
Ryswick, Peace Of, by this treaty (in 1697) Louis XIV. recognised William as King of England, and yielded certain towns to Spain and the Empire

SALVATOR ROSA, a Neapolitan author and artist (1615-73); "the initiator of romantic landscape,"

Satirist . . . Age, small, libellous, and short-lived weekly papers in the year 1838

Saxe, led the invading Austrian army into Bohemia, and afterward became a marshal of the French army, defeating the Duke of Cumberland at Fontenoy, 1745

Scamander, a river of Troas, in Asia Minor

Scapin, the title-character of one of Molière's comedies; a knavish valet who fools his master

Scott, Michael, a twelfth-century sage who gained a large reputation as a wizard and magician

Scriblerus Club a literary coterie, founded in 1714, which had
only a short life, but produced Swift's Gulliver

Scroggs, Chief-justice in 1678--the year of Titus Oates and the "Popish Plot." A worthy successor to Jeffreys

Scudert, George de, French poet and novelist (1601-67)

Scudery, Madeleine, a woman of good qualities, but as a novelist exceedingly tedious (1607-1701)

Scythians, i. e. Russians. Scythia proper is the steppe-land between the Carpathian Mountains and the river Don in South-East Russia

Seged (see The Rambler, Nos. 204, 205)

Shafton, Sir Piercie (see Scott's The Monastery)

Shaw, prize-fighter of immense strength and size, who enlisted in the Life Guards, and was killed at Waterloo

Sieyes, Abbe, one of the leaders of the Revolution, who retired on discovering that his colleagues were using him for their own end (d. 1836)
Simond, M. (the reference is to his Journal of a Tour and Residence in Great Britain during the years 1810 and 1811, PP. 48-50)

Simonides, lived at Athens and Syracuse, and besides being a philosopher, was one of Greece's most famous lyric poets (556-467 B.C.).

Smalridge, George, one of Queen Anne's chaplains, and a good preacher; became Bishop of Bristol in 1714 (d. 1719)

Sobiesky, John, King of Poland, who defended his country against Russians and Turks. In 1683 he fought a Turkish army which was besieging Vienna, and so delivered that city

Solis, Antonio de, dramatist and historian (Conquest of Mexico) (1610-86)

Somers, the counsel for the Seven Bishops, 1688. He filled many high legal offices, and from 1708 to 1710 was President of the Council

Southcote, Joanna, a Methodist "prophetess" who, suffering from
religious mania, gave herself out to be the woman of Revelation ch. xii., and sold passports to heaven which she called "seals" (1750-1814)

Spectator (the reference is to No. 7)

Spinola, Spanish marquis and general who served his country with all his genius for naught (1571-1630)

Squire Sullen (see Farquhar’s The Beaux Stratagem)

Squire Western, the genial fox-hunting Squire of Fielding’s Tom Jones

Statius, a Latin poet (61-96 A.D.), author of the Thebais, who lived at the Court of Domitian

Steenkirk, a neckcloth of black silk, said to have been first worn at the battle of Steenkirk, 1692

Stepney, George, a smart but somewhat licentious minor poet who translated Juvenal (1663-1707)

Sternholds, metrical translators of the Psalms, so called from
Thomas Sternhold, whose version of 1562 held the field for 200 years

St James's, the London residence of the Georges; Leicester Square, the residence of the Princes of Wales

Stowell, Lord, Advocate-General, judge of the High Court of Admiralty, etc., etc., the greatest English authority on International Law (1745-1836)

Strahan, Dr., vicar of Islington and friend of Johnson, whose Prayers and Meditations he edited

Streatham Park, the home of the Thrales. At St. John's Gate in Clerkenwell, the Gentleman's Magazine was long printed

Simon, Duc de, ambassador to Spain and the writer of amusing and Valuable memoirs. An uncompromising aristocrat

Sweden gained Western Pomerania

Swerga, the Hindu Olympus an the summit of Mount Meru

TAMERLANE, the great Asiatic conqueror (1336-1405), whose empire
reached from the Levant to the Ganges

Tanais, the river Don in Eastern Russia

Tate, Nahum, succeeded Shadwell in 1690 as poet-laureate; mainly remembered by his collaboration with Nicholas Brady in a metrical version of the Psalms

Telemachus, the son of Ulysses, whose search for his father was only successful when he returned home. Fenelon, the great French divine (1651-1715), wrote of his adventures

Thales, flourished c. 600 B.C., and held that water was the primal and universal principle,

Thalia, the muse of Comedy and one of the three Graces

Theobalds, a Hertfordshire hamlet where James I. had a beautiful residence, originally built by Burleigh

Thiebault, Professor of Grammar at Frederic's military school

Thirby, Styant, Fellow of Jesus Colleges Cambridge. He edited Justin Martyr's Works and contributed to Theobald's Shakespeare
with acumen and ingenuity (c. 1692-1753)

Thraso, a braggart captain in Terence's Eunuch

Three Bishoprics, those of Lorraine, Metz, and Verdun taken from the Germans by Henry II. of France in 1554 and recovered in 1871

Thundering Legion, the Roman legion which overcame Marcomanni in 179 A.D., their extreme thirst having been relieved by a thunderstorm sent in answer to the prayers of Christian soldiers in its ranks

Thurtell, John, a notorious boxer and gambler (b. 1794) who was hanged at Hertford on Jan. 9, 1824, for the brutal murder of William Weare, one of his boon companions

Tickell, Thomas, a politician, minor poet, and occasional contributor to the Spectator and the Guardian (1686-1740)

Tillotson, John Robert. Trained as a Puritan, he conformed to the Episcopal Church at the Restoration and ultimately became Archbishop of Canterbury a man of tolerant and moderate views like Baxter and Burnet, and unlike Collier
Tilly, Johann Tserklaes, Count of, the great Catholic general of the Thirty Years War; mortally wounded at Rain in 1632

Tiresias, in Greek mythology a soothsayer on whom Zeus conferred the gift of prophecy in compensation for the blindness with which Athens had struck him

Treatise on the Bathos, “The Art of Sinking in Poetry,” a work projected by Arbuthnot, Swift, and Pope, and mainly written by the last-named

Treaty of the Pyrenees, between France and Spain, 1659

Trissotin, simpering literary dabbler in Moliere's Les Femmes Savantes

Turgot, a French statesman 727-81) who held the doctrines of the philosophé party and was for nearly two years manager of the national finances under Louis XVI.

Two Sicilies, the kingdoms of Sicily and Naples

Tyers, Tom, author of a Biographical Sketch of Doctor Johnson. It was a remark of Johnson's that Tyers described him the best
VAUCLUSE, a village in S.E. France, twenty miles from Avignon where Petrarch lived for sixteen years

Verres, the Roman governor of Sicily (73-71 B.C.), for plundering which island he was brought to trial and prosecuted by Cicero

Vico, John Baptist, Professor of Rhetoric at Naples and author of Principles of a New Science, a work on the philosophy of history (d. 1744)

Victor Amadeus of Savoy, soldier and statesman (1655-1732) His sons-in-law were Philip V. and the Duke of Burgundy

Vida, an Italian Latin poet (c. 1480-1566)

Vida et Sannazar, eminent modern Latin poets of the early sixteenth century

Villars, Louis, Duc de, French marshal, defeated at Ramillies and Malplaquet (d. 1734),

Vinegar Bible, published at Oxford in 1717; in it the headline

Vision of Theodore, set Johnson’s Miscellaneous Works (for the "Genealogy of Wit," see Special", NO. 35; for the "Contest between Rest and Labour," Rambler, No. 33)

Vitruvius, contemporary with Julius Caesar and author of a famous work on Architecture

Vossius, Gerard, Dutch philologist and friend of Grotius; the historian of Pelagianism (1577-1649)

WARBURTON, William, Bishop of Gloucester, friend of Pope, and author of the Divine Legation of Moses and other theological and legal works (1698-1779)

Wild, Jonathan, a detective who turned villain and was executed for burglary in 1725; the hero of one of Fielding’s stories

Williams, Archbishop of York (and opponent of Laud) in the time of Charles I.; Vernon, Archbishop of York, 1807. The tenure of the See of York seems to be the only parallel
Williams, Sir Charles Hanbury, Ambassador to Berlin (1746-49).
His satires against Walpole's opponents are easy and humorous (d. 1759)

Will's. See Button's

Windham, Rt. Hon. William, Secretary of War under Pitt and again in 1806. In his Diary is an account of Johnson's last days (1750-1810)

Windsor, poor Knights of, a body of military pensioners who reside within the precincts of Windsor Castle

Witwould, Sir Wilful. Set Congreve's The Way of the World

Wronghead, Sir Francis, Vanbrugh and Cibber's The Provoked Husband

XIMENES, Cardinal, statesman, and regent (1436-1517)

ZADIG, the title-character of a novel by Voltaire, dealing with the fatalistic aspect of human life

Zephon, the cherub sent with Ithuriel by Gabriel to find out the
whereabouts of Satan after his flight from hell

Zimri in Dryden's Absalom and Achitophel stands for the second Duke of Buckingham (for the original see 3 Kings xvi. 9)