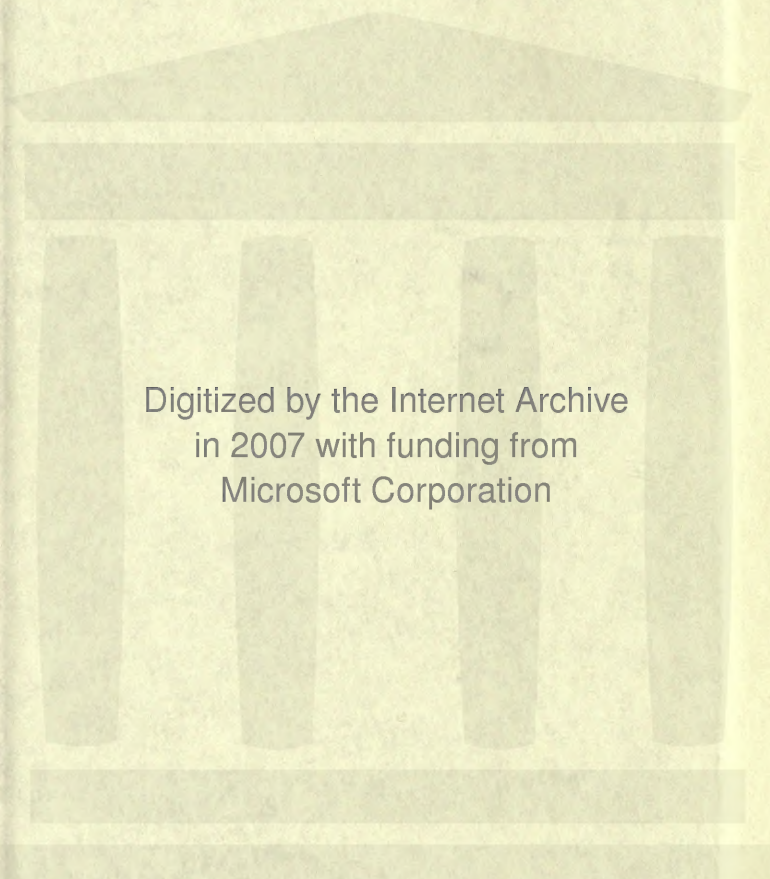


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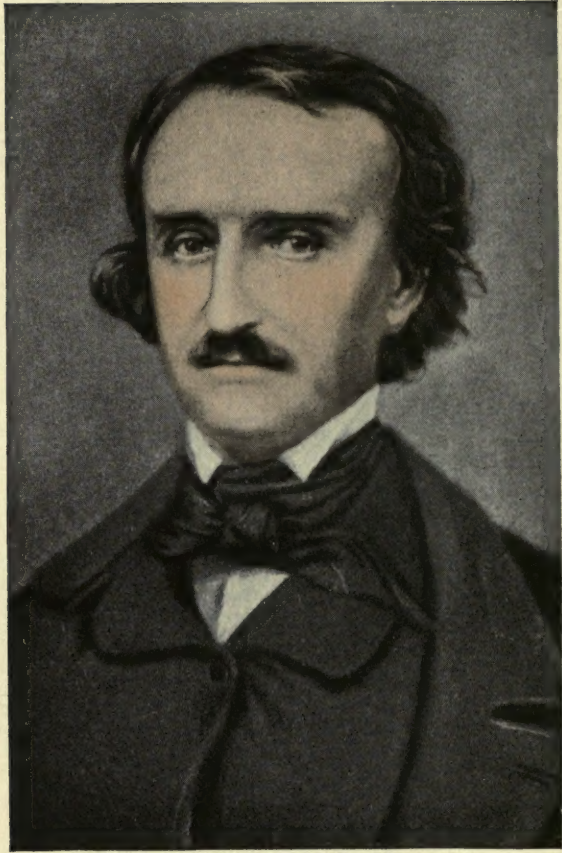


POE: A STUDY









Edgar Poe

# EDGAR A. POE

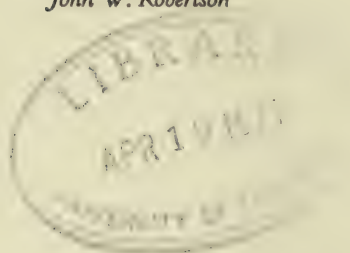
## A STUDY

*By*

JOHN W. ROBERTSON, M. D.

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PS  
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TO MY WIFE

WHO FOR THIRTY YEARS HAS ENJOYED WITH ME  
MY BOOK COLLECTING AND MY BOOK COLLECTION



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PART I.

EDGAR A. POE

*A PSYCHOPATHIC STUDY*



## EDGAR A. POE

### *A PSYCHOPATHIC STUDY*

THE struggles, the disillusionings, and the enmities of life are a part of daily experience. Either death should bring compensating oblivion, or it should throw the mantle of charity over our frailties.

Bitterly as Poe suffered while he lived, and disastrous as was the fate that overwhelmed him, it was his ill fortune to be even more harshly judged in death than while he lived and fought. Alive, he was feared: dead, a dastardly advantage was taken, and his works were sent forth containing a memoir that has been well called an "immortal infamy."

There was an audience that applauded this deed; for, while Poe left behind him but few enemies, he left very many literary enmities. His marvelously accurate estimates of his contemporaries—the "Quacks of Helicon"—as summarized in the various papers constituting "The Literati" and "Marginalia," were the basis for these attacks, and his neurosis, with its characteristic outbreaks, was the occasion of their adverse criticism.

Many other writers have sinned more grievously, and, while they have not obtained the corroborating verdict of posterity supporting their judgment, yet their mistakes have been overlooked, forgiven, or forgotten in the immortal works they have left behind them.

While the reputation of no other American writer stands so preeminent as does that of Poe, yet there is, mingled with admiration, mistrust of the man: a belief that much of

the weirdness and vividness of his stories and poems was the result of an abnormal mentality, which, of necessity, were the emanations of a brain diseased or drugged. It is difficult either to think or to write of Poe without this personal element intruding. Because of the uncanny realism of his stories, and his tendency to deal with the horrible and grotesque, it has been unjustly asserted that such creations are not compatible with a normal brain, or with intellectual sanity. Poe achieved such complete success in forcibly presenting his concepts, and in minutely and realistically detailing the ideas and sentiments which characterize his stories, that it is difficult to dissociate the Work from the Man. Yet, that we may fully understand the Man, this differentiation is an absolutely necessary premise on which to base an opinion.

Poe *was* human, with gentle and lovable qualities, and possessed the graces and refinements that, the world over, mark the gentleman. He was not the unfriended being who regarded society as "composed altogether of villains;" nor was it his habit to "walk the streets in madness or melancholy, with his lips moving in indistinct curses, or his eyes upturned in passionate prayer;" neither can it be justly said that he had "no wish for the esteem or for the love of his species;" nor that he only wished to "succeed that he might have the right to despise a world that galled his self-conceit;"—all of which his first editor asserted.

Poe's life was a tragedy. Better would it have been if the good could have been recorded and the details of his infirmity have been suppressed. This was not to be. In a memoir inserted into the first edition of Poe's collected works statements were so distorted when they had a foundation of fact, and there were many that were so false and without foundation, that succeeding biographers, attempting to refute these charges, have made

assertions not substantiated by well established contemporary evidence.

In reviewing these controversial details I shall attempt no defense of Poe except where the facts have been misrepresented, or where I believe that there have been absolute misstatements. Unfortunately, the very nature of this study makes it necessary for me to dwell on certain questionable aspects of Poe's life, and on the circumstances that led up to the legends still clustering around his name.

Without special knowledge of the causes that may produce unstable mental states, which only an alienist can possess, no biographer of Poe has been able to grasp in their entirety the essential facts which are absolutely necessary to a thorough understanding of the morbid mental conditions which periodically obsessed him and under whose spell he was at the time many questioned acts were committed.

Certain biographers who have been Poe's most active defenders have ignored the more serious charges, or have extenuated and denied them to an extent not warranted by established facts. Only those who are experienced in the study of patients thus afflicted, and who have had personal association with them, can fully understand and appreciate the nature of the neurosis from which Poe suffered, and the difficulty in overcoming such obsessions.

Heredity which, more than environment, dominates every human being, was responsible both for Poe's brilliant endowments, and for the one evil which was so woven into the web of his life that a mere statement of the evidence, without fully weighing it, might seem to justify the strictures of certain of his contemporaries, but which in no way justify the vicious assault upon Poe's memory made by his first editor.

Poe inherited a nervous temperament that was pregnant with good as well as evil. This psychoneurotic heredity may manifest itself in many ways.

There are certain unfortunates born into the world who inherit a nervous organization so unstable that the slightest strain will break their nerve resistance, and will precipitate them into some predetermined form of functional neurosis which no prophylactic measure can prevent; nor can we prognose the exact form this neurosis may take. Often it will be merely a neurasthenia developing under some nerve strain in a person predisposed, which would have no effect on a normally constituted individual. Or it may show itself in that Brahmanic form of nervous seizure which we call "megrim," more popularly known as sick-headache. It is a fact to be noted that megrim is, metaphorically speaking, a badge of intellectual royalty.

I cannot conceive a mentally dull and intellectually stupid person developing a typical megrim with its various prodromata and its lightning-like onset. Its recurrent nature can be explained only by some form of brain explosion. In this respect it is closely allied to its near relative, epilepsy, but it differs vastly in its destructive effect both on the brain and on the intellectual faculties. In some of those possessing this nervous heredity, other neuroses may develop. Not only the genius, but the morally or intellectually insane, are classed among those possessing this nervous diathesis.

Another common type is that form from which Poe suffered and from which he attempted to escape by the undue use of alcohol and, occasionally, opium. In the particular case of Poe, and because alcohol was his usual refuge, the term "dipsomania" can be properly used; for, in his seizures, this disease was typically manifested. Dipsomania necessarily has an alcoholic inheritance. It is characterized by periodical seizures in which the subject, because of changed personality, is temporarily irresponsible, and cannot, at all times, be held accountable for his conduct or his acts. Those with such an inheritance may



indulge in excesses, usually alcoholic, often immoral, and, occasionally, criminal. When these seizures pass and the patient recovers, there may be, in the severer and progressive form, complete loss of memory. During the attack there is usually loss of self-control and an abnormal ideation. It is a transmitted disease and has an alcoholic heredity. Not every alcoholic father begets a dipsomaniac child. Many children born of such parents inherit other of the functional neuroses; yet, when we find the dipsomaniac obsession, we are certain to find an alcoholic heredity which is marked, or alcohol must have been persisted in through two or three generations.

Should the parent not have inherited any alcoholic taint and yet drink to excess, the children will show a more or less marked neurosis, especially if begotten when the parent was in a condition of intoxication. In this group are to be included the defective, the criminal, and the crank, as well as those possessing an unstable nervous system that later may develop into insanity. In addition to these, and as truly a part of heredity, are the precocious, and those having that excessive development of certain faculties which we call genius. Among such individuals a tendency to alcoholic excess is frequently a complicating factor, though often slightly marked and controllable.

While this neurosis may be lessened in this second generation, and, by careful mating, may be eradicated, yet there is an inexorable law of heredity which usually dominates. Such of this second generation as do become alcoholic frequently beget the dipsomaniac, or individuals in other ways profoundly neurotic; so that the family cursed with this particular inheritance, is frequently destroyed.

Dipsomania is essentially a disease; and those suffering from it should be given the same medical consideration we give to the insane, the epileptic, and those morally defective. Dipsomaniacs drink because of hereditary compul-

sion. In no case are they convivial drinkers, in the sense that they drink by reason of good-fellowship. It is true that, in the early period, they may occasionally so indulge; but there is soon established, because of this predisposition, an uncontrollable longing, not necessarily for the taste of alcohol, but rather for the effect, although the taste be disagreeable.

There is, in the beginning of the attack, a sensation of nervousness and unrest, frequently accompanied by depression of spirits. At times this amounts to actual mental pain, which, while not seriously interfering with the normal functioning of the intellectual processes, can profoundly influence the moral faculties and may result in inability to judge rightly of their own condition. The will power of such patients, inhibited from carrying out habitual and customary acts, may unfit them for social intercourse. Occasionally this goes to the extent of actual, if slight, mental disturbance which most insistently demands some form of narcotic control, or at least immoral excitement. They will seek surroundings which in their better moods would be disgusting, and for days or weeks will disappear, to return seared by the marks of their dissipation, repentant and protesting a horror of alcohol, certain they never again will relapse. Many of the milder cases show no serious moral change and, except for these occasional outbreaks, attract but slight attention even among their intimates. Such cases are amenable to treatment and are regarded as recoverable. Usually time, with proper restorative procedures, will cure them, or at least, if not fully restored, their power of resistance may be so increased that no serious brain degeneration will follow.

When the inheritance is more pronounced, and there is marked nervous instability, very serious moral and mental deterioration occurs. When alcohol has been consumed

for a long period of time the nerve centers may become markedly diseased. Invariably there is intense congestion, often accompanied by a low grade of inflammation of the meninges—spider-like encephalic coverings composed of a network of arterioles attached to the brain convolutions by means of which the cells of the brain are supplied with blood. These arterioles become thickened, tortuous, and occasionally membranous, adhering both to the skull cap and the brain tissue. Because of temporary stimulation of the circulation, this organic change frequently results in maniacal outbreaks, often of short duration; or it may, if this change has progressed sufficiently, determine and actually produce a chronic mania.

The more serious forms of dipsomania are at times accompanied by temporary loss of memory, and one peculiarity of this condition is that the patient may, in action and appearance, speech and conduct, appear normal; yet, on recovery, there will be no memory of what happened during these lapses. Our medico-legal books detail many cases of this kind, and the law as to their irresponsibility is well established. Occasionally prolonged alcoholic debauches terminate in temporary delirium without these serious organic changes; but, when the organic stage is reached, such patients should not be held responsible.

Alienists recognize certain nervous manifestations which are due to heredity and have periodic returns as true mental diseases, and they classify them under the general term "Periodic Insanity." These do not manifest themselves by outbreaks of either excitement or depression; nevertheless they are not normal and are characterized by a weakened or perverted mental state.

One of our well known authorities on insanity, Spitzka, thus summarizes these conditions:

Almost any one of the known forms of morbid impulse may appear in periodical phases, but this is particularly the case with the

morbid craving for drink, which seizes on its subjects at certain intervals with such intensity that the ordinarily quiet, orderly, refined and sensitive patient, losing all sense of propriety and shame, gives himself up to unrestrained and ruinous debauchery. This distressing condition is known as Dipsomania. It is to be distinguished from inebriety and alcoholism: for the inebriate is not driven to his excesses so suddenly and irresistibly, nor does he cease them as abruptly as the dipsomaniac. In the inebriate the motive grows out of appetite and habit; in the dipsomaniac it is a blind craving which, if not stilled by alcoholic beverages, will seek some other outlet. Often these patients develop some morbid craving for certain narcotics, and we may thus have a periodical craving for opium analogous to the periodical craving for drink, and as distinct from the ordinary opium habit as is dipsomania from inebriety. As a consequence of his blind indulgence in drink during his diseased periods, the dipsomaniac may become the subject of acute alcoholic delirium or of chronic alcoholism, though the latter is rare; these conditions are to be looked on as results and not as essential features of dipsomania, which is to be defined as a *form of periodical insanity, manifesting itself in a blind craving for stimulant and narcotic beverages.*

In the more serious forms, such as Spitzka describes, there is often found brain degeneration; if so, the prognosis is bad and a cure cannot be expected. These periodical attacks occur with greater and greater frequency, and, unless cut off by some intercurrent disease, organic changes occur, and a brain break with mental destruction may follow.

In the less severe cases, especially those not complicated by organic brain changes, by lapse of memory with automatism, or by other mental disturbance, it is possible, with proper care and enforced seclusion during these seizures, to lessen their severity and to increase the intervals between them until, finally, complete recovery follows.

Spitzka is correct when he says that during these recurrent periods which characterize the life history of the dipsomaniac, they do not always confine themselves to alcohol. As a matter of fact, they may resort to any form of nar-

cotic; or they may seek other and more bestial ways of gratifying their morbid impulses. At times they develop sexual perversions and hide in some brothel where they may give full rein to their erotic excitement; or they retire to a gambling den where they may exercise their passions without hindrance; or they exhibit other phases of social unrestraint. I have had patients who would go from one saloon to another seeking the glitter of bar attachments, delighting in the roll of dice, listening to the clink of coin on the polished mahogany, yet they would drink nothing but effervescent waters. It was these particular forms of excitement they craved, not alcoholic beverages.

After an attack the patient will return to his home and business haunted by the bitter memory of his misdeeds; most earnest and honest in his profession of reform, and he cannot be persuaded to taste alcohol in any form. When such patients assert that they have reformed they are in earnest, and, at the time, nothing can induce them to break their pledge. Yet, when the seizure returns, the impulse becomes irresistible, although for days they may fight off the impending catastrophe. When the break occurs usually they attribute it to some trivial cause or circumstance in no way responsible—some family disagreement, business disappointment, or other minor matter. Nothing is too trivial to allege in their attempt at explanation.

A study of Poe's heredity and life work makes it plain that many of Griswold's allegations, even when true, cannot justly be charged against Poe, but rather against his morbid heredity. If this seems too fine a distinction, at least we must recognize the fact that, by reason of this heredity, Poe was not always to be held responsible either for his words or his acts, for his great accomplishments or his lapses. Heredity was as much responsible for

the one as for the other; his heritage was pregnant with both good and evil.

Precocity, of necessity, foretells early decline. I view brilliancy in the child as an inherent and abnormal heredity which must pay the price of premature decay. It is not an indication of a prime which shall be slowly attained, to be enriched by worldly experience and strengthened by that mental capacity which enables us to retain the good that is in the experience of all and to avoid the evil.

Occasionally only does it happen that the honor-child of our public schools, or the gold-medalist from the university, achieves distinction either in the professions or in public or business life. It is true that this test, alone, is most unfair. Neither money nor distinction may be regarded as the real criterion of success; yet it is certain that the quality of brain which readily commits to memory such studies as are required, and does not demand independence of thought, is not the quality which makes for the common sense and sane judgment necessary for successful competition in our highly organized professional and business life. On the other hand, plodders will never reach the heights. They can be scaled only by those who are endowed with genius.

It was of old believed that certain persons were possessed of a *daimon* or *genius*; and by these terms the Ancients designated what they believed to be the deity that possessed and buoyed up those endowed with the *afflatus divinus*. While we have adopted the word bodily, we use it in a slightly different sense:

Exalted mental power distinguished by instinctive aptitude, and independent of tuition; phenomenal capability, derived from inspiration or exaltation, for intellectual creation or expression; that constitution of the mind or perfection of faculties which enables a person to excel others in mental perception, comprehension, discrimination and expression, especially in Literature, Art, and Science.

Genius, derived from *genere* (to beget) is necessarily in-born. It develops early and is characterized by precocity. It is most dangerous for the man who possesses and is swayed by it; yet it is an inheritance for which the individual possessing it is in no way responsible, nor can we forecast the destined end to which it will lead him. Such an inheritance leads oftener to disaster than to success. All great things are conceived by the man of genius, and it has been well said, "The Crank turns the World."

Poe was a genius, and he paid the full price for his inheritance.

I do not know of any biography of Poe which, from the psychiatrist's point of view, presents the facts of his life in a manner to make clear a full comprehension of the basic evil that dominated him.

Harrison says:

Poe's case has never been scientifically diagnosed by a competent neurologist who possessed combined pathological and literary equipment and freedom from prejudice necessary to render his case—more singular than 'The Case of M. Valdemar'—intelligible to the reading world.

Though I may not possess these requisite qualifications, yet am I justified in the attempt; for the questions have so frequently been asked and so often have been mistakenly answered as to justify a further essay in this direction. Whether or not my answer shall fully cover all the facts which have been alleged by Poe's overzealous friends, and by his enemy, must be a matter of individual judgment. (I am certain that the pictures painted have not truly represented the real man; and it is entirely possible that a spirit so proud and a soul so sensitive may not be humanly judged nor accurately weighed in the scales of social justice.)

As a rule, biographers consider their work of establishing hereditary predispositions, on which later accomplish-

ments depend, completed when they have constructed a genealogy blazed with quarterings, even if marked with the *bend sinister*: or when, in tracing ancestry to some name great for mental acquirements or deeds performed, they have thrown a luster about their subject which, in some way, glorified him. They know nothing of the Mendelian law as applied to heredity. They ignore the fact that great genius, like that of Caesar or Napoleon, or such mental gifts as were bestowed on Shakespeare and Bacon, are the result of what horticulturists call a *sport*, and only occur as an abnormality; and that not only do they not breed true to their kind, but rather tend to degeneracy and extinction.

"Poor but honest" is not a bad beginning for any biography. For my own part, the fact that a father was temperate in all things, fearlessly honest in his dealings, kindly and generous in his worldly associations, and that he possessed a strong physique, free from all hereditary diseases and diatheses, is a heritage to be prized more than all the wealth of a Rockefeller or the collection of a Huntington.

It is alleged that the family of Poe traces its lineage to a Norman named De la Poer, who went to England with William the Conquerer. It is also said that certain of Poe's ancestors lived in Derbyshire and that among them was a poet, locally famous. Some evidence has been brought forward to show that his name is of German or Danish origin. Others trace his ancestry to the Poles or Poes of Tipperary. However, the most diligent searcher for the root of this genealogical tree, Sir Edmund T. Bewley, M. A., LL. D., F. R. S. A. I., has proved to my satisfaction that Poe's great-grandfather, who emigrated to America when a boy, was the combined product of the Poes of Kilkenny and Donnybrook. This fighting stock was strengthened by the marriage by this ancestor



either the sister, or the cousin, or the aunt of one Admiral MacBride—commentators differing as to the relationship; yet it is regarded as important, for all of Poe's biographers dwell on this connection, possibly for the reason that it aids in explaining the sudden rise of Poe's grandfather, David Poe, from a worker in wood to the rank of general in the Revolutionary army. In all biographies he is referred to as "General Poe of Revolutionary fame." That General Poe must have possessed a strong personality is proved by the fact that he rose from the humble occupation of wheelwright and became a deputy assistant quartermaster general; and that the occasion for this rise was the fact that he ruled and directed a patriotic mob when it rose in rebellion against tyrannical British domination. This not only proves that he inherited the fighting qualities of his ancestors but also it demonstrates the fact that Irish blood flowed in his veins.

Occasionally family pride is justified. In such a record of tradition and accomplishment as the Adams family can exhibit, I see a reason for genealogical pride in deeds performed—in spite of "The last fruit off an Old Tree", that pessimistic note which characterizes "The Education of Henry Adams". Again, the research work and scientific attainments of the family of Darwin, which for generations have made it a name of note, deserve recognition. In the case of Poe there is no foundation for any such heraldic data.

There is a study which must be made in order that we may account not only for the flower of fruition, but also for the root of the evil that afflicted Poe. What we must know for this purpose are certain details as to the mode of life and the alcoholic history of his immediate ancestors, as well as the moral code by which they were governed. That their habits were alcoholically temperate, is doubtful. William Poe, a cousin, wrote Edgar as follows:

There is one thing I am anxious to caution you against and which has been a great foe to our family—I hope in your case it will not be necessary, 'a too frequent use of the bottle.'

Such statements are introduced only by stealth and rarely. Yet, without this, knowing the result, the cause is readily deducible. Dipsomaniac compulsion, as we see exemplified in the life-history of Poe, necessarily presupposes an alcoholic heredity. David Poe, the father, while still a student of the law, developed an alcoholic syndrome which probably led to his early death. Disowned by his father for his marriage to an actress, a Miss Arnold, he not only failed to support her, but became dependent on her charity, as well as on that of others. This wife and mother seems to have been an intelligent and capable actress, though of no marked histrionic ability. We honor her because she bore her cross so bravely, and, in spite of the hardships and the strolling life she led, remained a faithful and loving wife and mother.

Eugenically it was an unfortunate marriage, even if the world of letters was so greatly the gainer. The three children, William, Edgar and Rosalie, each in some way showed specific evidence of this heredity. William died in early manhood. He probably inherited his father's instability of character, as well as his unstable constitution, although I know of no direct alcoholic history. That he was wayward and difficult to control, and had been sent to sea in an effort to reform him, is all that has been definitely established. He is said to have possessed a fascinating personality as well as a brilliant mind. Several of his poems have been published, and, apparently, they compared favorably with Edgar's productions of the same period.

The sister, Rosalie, gave stronger evidence of degeneracy. She was a *moron*, strong of body but mentally weak.

The early death of Poe's mother resulted in his greatest

misfortune. Gill thus describes the conditions under which she died:

Mr. Allan and Mr. McKenzie, both wealthy and benevolent Scotch gentlemen, having been informed that the Poes were in great distress, sought them out to afford them relief. They were found in wretched lodgings, lying upon a straw bed, and very sick, Mr. Poe with consumption, and his wife with pneumonia. There was no food in the house. They had no money or fuel and their clothes had been pawned or sold.

Two little children were with the parents, in the care of an old Welsh woman who had come over from England with Mrs. Poe, and who was understood to be her mother. The children were half clad, half starved, and very much emaciated. The youngest was in a stupor, caused by feeding them bread steeped in gin. The old woman acknowledged that she was in the habit of so feeding them 'to keep them quiet and make them strong.'

Two weeks later Mrs. Poe died. The fate of the father is uncertain although it has been a generally accepted belief that his death preceded that of his wife. It is said that documents which had belonged to the Ellis-Allan firm and which, having been stored away, were not accessible to Poe biographers, rather point to desertion. These papers, together with other documents that had belonged to the Valentine family, of which the first Mrs. Allan was a member, contain statements relating to the Poe ancestry; but, as they also refer to other families still well known, their contents have not been made public. Poe biographers have had access to these papers and it is probable that all facts proper for publication has been, or will be set forth in a forthcoming biography.

Harrison says that Edgar was adopted by Mr. John Allan, who bestowed on him his own name. Whether or not he was really adopted, at least he was cared for by Mr. Allan. Harrison thus refers to Richmond, the future home of Poe:

At Richmond it was (and is) delightful to live, and here in 1811, having been adopted by Mr. John Allan, Poe took up his abode.

During his most impressionable years, the City was the most intellectual and the gayest city in the South. It was full of old families that had furnished statesmen, legislators, governors, generals and Congressmen to the United States. . . . Little Edgar's childhood and youth were passed in an atmosphere of sociability, open-air sports, oratory, and elocution.

Raised as the son of a rich man, and accustomed to all the luxuries that should not be given to any child, it is possible that such surroundings brought out and accentuated those hereditary evils which a different environment might have modified. As far as we know, Poe's one expressed desire and longing was for mother-love. The considerate and loving care he lavished on his wife and her mother proves to us that, in spite of his inherited paternal vices, there must have been in him some of the staunch and lovable qualities of his mother; and the yearning and affection he always exhibited for Mrs. Clemm redeems him from the charge of being the cold, repellent, and unfriended being delineated by his first biographer.

Poe early became the spoiled pet of an admiring guardian. No more pitiful picture could be drawn than this:

A pretty trick taught the boy by Mr. Allan was to drink the healths of the company in a glass of diluted wine. He would stand on a chair, raise the glass with all the ceremony of those old Dominion days, then take a sip gracefully, then with roguish laugh, reseal himself amidst the applause of the company.

We need not wonder at the peculiar form and abnormal character of his early drinking, considering his heredity, and with such environment. The gin sop could not have more evilly influenced him.

He was mentally precocious and physically well developed. Not only was he brilliant in his classes and remarkable for his mental attainments, but he was the leader in play and in all athletic exercises. No wonder the

heart of his doting guardian warmed to a being so gifted.  
But, with all these advantages,

Evil things in robes of sorrow  
Assailed the monarchs high estate.

The hereditary evil, like the precocity, was also a part of Poe's inheritance. While yet a student there came reports of moral delinquencies and alcoholic excesses which resulted in Allan forbidding his return to the university. A classmate writes:

Poe's passion for strong drink was as marked as for cards. It was not the *taste* of the beverage that influenced him; without a sip or smack of the mouth he would seize a full glass, without sugar or water, and send it home at a single gulp.

While still a youth Poe devoured his cake; but, unfortunately for him, it was made of wild oats. He had sowed them early and ever after their beards galled him; and, "in his old age," he was compelled to chew the cud of their juiceless husks.

His guardian, no longer willing to countenance his escapades, forced him to work, but, so attached was Mrs. Allan to her wayward boy, that an added unhappiness entered the Allan home.

There is an unwritten chapter in the life of Poe that has not yet been formulated. The details are so indistinct, and statements made concerning it are so conflicting, that no one has succeeded in fully unravelling the tangle of fable and fact. Primarily it deals with the Allan family skeleton, which is now a matter of court record. There was much marital unhappiness due to the fact that Allan entered into entangling alliances which later ended in a notorious will contest. During the life of the first Mrs. Allan this was probably known to her; and it is said that Poe, then a young boy, was instrumental in finding out for her such information as she required. It seems to be

established that Poe was not adopted by Allan nor was he much more than tolerated because of Mrs. Allan's very pronounced favoritism. It is said that although Allan knew of Poe's intention to run away from Richmond where, after his removal from the university, he was made to work in Allan's tobacco warehouse, the man took no steps to prevent the flight, but rather encouraged it. Certain it is that Poe did run away and take ship for England, and that when this became known to Mrs. Allan she made every effort to force his return. Certain papers found in the warehouse of Allan, now known as the "Ellis-Allan Documents," which recently have been placed in the Congressional Library, cover a period preceding the "adoption" of Poe, and also a considerable time after all Poe association had ceased. These also may contain letters that were taken from Mrs. Poe at the time of her death. So far as they relate to matters of hereditary significance regarding Poe, they are of value, but not for the purpose of further discrediting the Poe family. It is said that the undue use Allan made of these papers further embittered Poe, and this goes far to explain the active hostility that existed between them.

That Poe spent two years traveling on the continent of Europe, during which time he visited Russia, Greece, and France, is not probable. We know that it was during this time that the first *Tamerlane* was printed in Boston, but the bibliographical details remain an unsolvable puzzle. While we cannot account for this long period, and know little of the life Poe led and the influences that surrounded him, I cannot agree with Woodberry in the discovery he claims to have made, that Poe enlisted in the army under the name of Perry and served his country faithfully, with a record for sobriety and attention to the details of his appointment; and that his conduct was so admirable and his deportment so good that, at the end of two years, he

was promoted to the highest non-commissioned grade in the army and honorably discharged.

Poe's later biographers have accepted this as an established fact, in spite of existing records which show that the complexion and the color of the eyes and hair of Perry differed from those of Poe. Even this might be accounted for by careless entries. My reason for doubting Woodberry is that at no time, before or after, was Poe amenable to the slightest restraint; nor could he, even for the shortest period, brook discipline. I do not believe it possible for one of Poe's neurotic temperament to have contained himself so completely when placed under such strict discipline and in surroundings so exacting. He enlisted, but earned no discharge. A substitute released him.

Poe finally did go to West Point, although he was over age and temperamentally unfitted. In his application Poe's friends did not hesitate to falsify so as to represent his birthplace to have been Richmond and the year of his birth to have been 1811. As a matter of fact he was born in Boston in 1809, and entered West Point in July, 1830, when he was twenty-one years and six months old.

Poe always denied that he was Boston born, and, in the various statements he gave out for biographical notices, he named Baltimore as his birthplace.

I do not know that any unprejudiced person can blame Poe for denying that he was born in Boston. It was an accident due to the fact that his birth occurred while his mother was there, playing with her company. Poe cannot be held responsible for such accidental misfortunes. His heart was in Baltimore and, in feeling and later association, he was fanatically Southern.

At West Point, for the first time, we get a lifelike portrayal of Poe, the man. The picture, while illuminating, is not pleasing. It was drawn by a fellow student, apparently his closest friend.

Poe evidently had seen much of life—hard life, which had left its imprint on him. As a boy he had been admired for his personal beauty; when he entered West Point his expression was “weary, worn and discontented,” and so aged did he appear that it was jokingly said the appointment had been obtained for the son, but he had died and his father took the vacancy. Cheap wit: at least it showed that the life Poe lived before entering West Point had left its imprint.

Another report current in the corps was that he was the grandson of Benedict Arnold. Some good-natured friend told him of it, and Poe did not contradict it, but seemed rather pleased than otherwise at the mistake.

He neglected his studies and expressed the greatest contempt for the required military duties—very different from the orderly and punctilious Perry. His alcoholic habits there have been set forth in full. His friend paints his life as most irregular; as consisting of a series of broken rules, defiance of all authority, inveigling younger and less sophisticated youths into infringements of army regulations, and, above all, such utter disregard for all the canons of decency and morality, that the alienist must believe such actions were the result of an acute mental brainstorm, induced by the abuse of alcohol.

Poe apologists have explained these acts as a ruse for escaping from an irksome confinement, and as a means toward regaining his freedom. This is not an intelligible explanation and does not comport with the facts. Other means could have been adopted which more easily and more honorably would have attained this end. Rather, these acts are in line with the loose and irresponsible life that he had followed for two years before entering the Military Academy. It has been shown that during this time Poe’s life was most irregular.

A story, current at the military academy, was told by General Magruder:



He made a voyage to sea on some merchant vessel, before the mast. Finding himself in the Mediterranean, he debarked at some Eastern port and penetrated into Egypt and Arabia. Returning to the United States, he enlisted as a private in the United States Army at Fortress Monroe. After some months' service his whereabouts and position became known to Mr. Allan, who, through the mediation of General Scott (a cousin of the second Mrs. Allan), obtained his release from the army, and sent him a cadet's warrant to West Point.

It seems to be definitely established that at no time during these years did Poe live an orderly and regular life. He undoubtedly traveled much, possibly as a sailor, for he could not have afforded the transportation of a tourist, and some time must have been spent in the United States, outside the army, as his Boston connection makes evident. In whatever way the Perry record was used, it did not fully represent Poe's life during the whole of this time.

These facts of his life history would be of great pathologic value could they be traced: they might show the slow growth of the poisonous vine that later encircled and bound him, and finally crushed him in its vicious embrace. Such a disease as that from which Poe suffered is most insidious in its approach. The liberties indulged in youth and the lack of restraint, laid a foundation which later no will-power could overcome, and which exacted a price of misery, depression and suffering from its victim that passes human understanding.

The only thing to which Poe remained constant during these years of stress and storm was his love of good literature.

At about the time Poe entered West Point he began a correspondence with Neal, editor of "The Yankee." In the issue for December, 1829, and in answer to a slurring notice concerning one of his poems, referred to in the number for September, Poe thus wrote:

I am about to publish a volume of poems, the greatest part written before I was fifteen. Speaking about 'heaven' the editor of

the 'Yankee' said: 'He might write a beautiful if not a magnificent poem'—the very first words of encouragement I ever remember to have heard. I am certain that, so far, I have not written *either*, but that I *can*, I will take my oath, if they will only give me time.

Poe quotes only the concluding paragraph. What "The Yankee" really said was:

If E. A. P. of Baltimore—whose lines about heaven, though he seems to regard them as altogether superior to anything in the whole range of American poetry, save two or three trifles referred to, are, though nonsense, rather exquisite nonsense—would but do himself justice, might make a beautiful and perhaps magnificent poem.

If these are the "very first words of encouragement", then Poe's poetic genius must have budded in a literary frost. After declaring there is much to justify hope and quoting several stanzas that any Poe lover would regard as typically and Poesquely melodic, the review ends with these lines:

"The Moonlight

. . . . . falls—  
 Over hamlets, over halls,  
 Wherever they may be,  
 O'er the strange woods, o'er the sea  
 O'er the spirits on the wing,  
 O'er every drowsy thing—  
 And buried them up quite,  
 In a labyrinth of light,  
 And then how deep! *Oh deep!*  
*Is the passion of their sleep!*

He should have signed it Bah! We have no room for others.

The events of Poe's life for the two years following his expulsion from West Point are as great a mystery as those of the years preceding his admittance. Apparently these two periods have become inextricably intermixed as to details, and many events said to have occurred in the first period are certainly duplicated in the last. It seems that Poe did at one time enlist in the army, and that he could only obtain his discharge by inducing Allan to

supply a substitute. If, as seems probable, this enlistment preceded Poe's entrance to West Point, it would disprove Woodberry's contention as to the identity of Poe and Perry.

The second Mrs. Allan wrote:

As regards Edgar Poe, of my own knowledge I know nothing; I only saw him twice; but all I heard of him, from those who had lived with him, was a tissue of ingratitude, fraud and deceit. Mr. Poe had not lived under Mr. Allan's roof for two years before my marriage (1830) and no one knew his whereabouts; his letters, which were very scarce, were dated from St. Petersburg, Russia, although he had enlisted in the army at Boston.

The little that is known concerning this incident, as well as many other facts of Poe's life at that time, are held in letters contained in the archives of the Valentine Museum of Richmond. While the contents are known, and while apparently they do not reflect seriously on Poe, they are said to contain certain passages involving persons or families still in Richmond, and for that reason they have not been made public. Concealment of any kind is in all cases unfortunate: whatever may or may not be the result of future investigation, there is always a tendency to exaggerate the most ordinary and every-day events, and the smallest fact may be magnified into an unwarrantable statement.

Possibly Poe spent a part of his time in Europe, although it is improbable that the distorted account he related to Mrs. Shew, during one of his mental attacks, regarding these European experiences, is to be taken as literally true.

At least for some months Poe did live in Baltimore and Richmond, and many definite details of his residence in those two cities are known.

It is certain that Poe's mental capacity fully developed during this period, and that when he appeared before John H. Kennedy he had reached the zenith of his intellectual power.

It was the Golden Age of his literary achievement, and

that his genius and capacity had reached their full development is proved by the quality and quantity of tales that were included in the "Folio Club". It was this marvelous collection of stories that gained for him not only literary recognition, but what at that time was apparently needed more—money for the commonest necessities of life. Not only was he ill-clad, but, apparently, he had not enough food for his proper nourishment.

The cause of this destitution was undoubtedly his serious and repeated seizures by his hereditary malady. From this time on we know every important event of Poe's life, and both his misfortunes and his successes have been minutely described. We find running through these statements accounts of intercurrent attacks of sickness which incapacitated him for days or weeks, at first infrequent but slowly increasing in number and severity until we have a classical picture of typical dipsomania, with its accompanying depressions and mental abnormalities. This tells the story of the evil that pursued him and continually thwarted the best of intentions, and which made his life a series of financial struggles and failures. Whatever was the cause it is certain that Poe was in desperate need.

Poe probably was not idle, and could we obtain all the facts, or the contemporary magazines that contained these "facts," we should probably find much that could rightly be attributed to Poe. So far as I know, Poe never signed his name to an article, and only occasionally did he use even his initials. It is certain that he later republished and preserved whatever he believed to be worthy of public recognition.

The marvelous mental transformation which certainly did take place between the publication of *Al Aaraaf*, when Poe was twenty, and his appearance at the age of twenty-four, when he presented Kennedy with his *Tales*

of the *Folio Club*, cannot be accounted for by studying "The Best Hundred Authors", or that five-foot shelf so extensively and adroitly advertised. Exactly what hastened the flowering of the genius with which nature endowed him we do not know; but we must count the years between 1832 and 1840, when Poe, according to mortality tables, was still a very young man, as those of his full maturity. Other writers have developed as early and shown more pronounced maturity at the same age. *Tamerlane* can, in no way, compare with "Queen Mab," which Shelley wrote when he was eighteen; yet these crude productions were the harbingers of greater achievements. There is necessarily some smoke and sputter before the rocket bursts with its scintillating brilliants.

In spite of the aid given Poe by his guardian, and the literary position gained by his *Tales of the Folio Club*, his periodical seizures alienated many of his friends; and he was compelled to call on his literary discoverer, Kennedy, who thus writes:

It is many years ago, I think perhaps as early as 1833 or 1834, that I found him in Baltimore in a state of starvation. I gave him clothes, free access to my table, and the use of horses for exercise whenever he chose, in fact brought him up from the very edge of despair.

The many indiscretions with which Poe is charged at this time, and which had changed into enemies some of his former friends, were the result of his hereditary infirmity.

It must be remembered that dipsomania is not only periodical in its seizures, but that, even in its earliest manifestations, the patient is not responsible, and that his actions may outrage friends who assume those things to be vicious which are the result of disease.

While Woodberry has covered all the controversial life of Poe, and has fully—almost too fully—stated the acts on which Griswold based his defamatory statements,

neither Woodberry nor any other biographer has given full consideration to the heredity, the obsessions, the compulsions, the frequently recurring spells of depression, and the nervous seizures which are a part of Poe's psychology, and on which we must base the explanation of these acts.

For this reason I shall sketch Poe's literary work only as far as it exhibits mental disturbance. I must discuss the physical facts as they affected his somatic life and ended in his early death.

Undoubtedly the necessity for some form of mental excitement manifested itself early, as the records of the life Poe led at the University of Virginia and at West Point, both as to gambling and drinking, attest.

It is entirely possible that the manners and customs of those days, as well as the stimulants which, even as a child, were given Poe, early developed the appetite that was by inheritance a part of him. It is, in my judgment, certain that, even without this environment, there was a morbid predisposition which, sooner or later, would have overwhelmed him. His disappearance for two or three years, and the fact that his changed facial appearance and his striking personality could not have been recently acquired, make me believe that those years were not passed faithfully and temperately serving in the army, as we know that Perry did serve. We must believe that, during this time, Poe rapidly developed intellectually, even if he deteriorated morally; and this necessarily indicates that, although there might have been periods of nervous disturbance, they were not continuous, and, as is the rule in such cases, that this disease was slowly assuming the periodical character it usually manifests.

The first definite evidence we have of this progressive mental change is in a letter Poe wrote to Kennedy in 1835:

Excuse me, my dear Sir, if in this letter you find much incoherency. . . . My feelings at this moment are pitiable indeed. I am

suffering under a depression of spirits such as I have never before suffered. I have struggled in vain against the influence of this melancholy—you will *believe* me, when I say that I am miserable in spite of the great improvement in my circumstances. I say that you will believe me, and for this simple reason, that a man who is writing for *effect* does not write *thus*. My heart is open before you—if it be worth reading, read it. I am wretched, and know not why. Console me,—for you can. But let it be quickly or it will be too late. Convince me that it is worth one's while—that it is at all necessary to live, and you will prove yourself indeed my friend. Persuade me to do what is right. I do not mean this. I do not mean that you should consider what I now write you a jest—oh, pity me! for I feel that my words are incoherent—but I will recover myself. You will not fail to see that I am suffering under depression of spirits which will ruin me should it be long continued. Write me then and quickly. Urge me to do what is right. Fail not—as you value your peace of mind hereafter.

These cries of agony are not unusual in the writings of men of genius, and an intimate study of their lives shows that many of them suffered from periodical depression and various mental obsessions, which at times amounted to absolute disease. It is a phase in the life history of many who possess this heredity, and some cannot resist the call.

Tolstoi in his "Confessions," John Stuart Mill in his "Autobiography," George Eliot, De Quincey, Shelley and many other writers describe these critical periods.

Tolstoi tells us that his desires as to life, and his views of death, were reversed:

The thought of suicide came to me as naturally as had come before the ideas of improving life. That thought was so seductive that I had to use cunning against myself, lest I should rashly execute it. At such times, I, a happy man, hid a rope from myself, so that I should not hang myself on a cross-beam between two closets in my room, and did not go out hunting with a gun in order not to be tempted by an easy way of doing away with myself.

. . . I had a good, loving and beloved wife, good children and a large estate. I was respected by my neighbors and friends, was praised by strangers and, without any self deception, could consider my name famous. With all that, I was not deranged or mentally

unsound; on the contrary I was in the full command of my mental, and physical powers, such as I had rarely met with in men of my age, . . . and while in this condition I arrived at the conclusion that I could not live and, fearing death, I had to use cunning against myself, in order that I might not take my life. . . . Long ago has been told the Eastern Story about the traveller who in the Steppe is overtaken by an infuriated beast. Trying to save himself from this animal the traveller jumps into a waterless well but at the bottom he sees a dragon who opens his jaws in order to swallow him. And the unfortunate man does not dare climb out lest he perish from the infuriated beast, and does not dare jump down to the bottom of the well, lest he be devoured by the dragon, and so clutches the twig of a wild bush growing in the cleft of the wall and holds on to it. His hands grow weak and he feels that he must soon surrender to the peril that awaits him on either side; but he still holds on and sees two mice, one white and the other black, in even measure making a circle around the main trunk of the bush to which he is clinging, and nibbling at it on all sides. Now at any moment the bush will break and be torn off and he will fall into the dragon's jaws. The traveller sees this and knows he will inevitably perish, and while he is still clinging, he sees some drops of honey hanging on the leaves of the bush, and so reaches out to them, and with his tongue he licks the leaves. Just so I hold on to this branch of life, knowing that the dragon of death is inevitably waiting for me, ready to tear me into pieces, and I cannot understand why I have fallen on such suffering. And I try to lick that honey, which used to give me pleasure; but now it no longer gives me joy, and the white mouse and the black mouse, day and night, nibble at the branch to which I am holding. I clearly see the dragon and the honey is no longer sweet to me. I see only the inevitable dragon and the mice, and I am unable to turn my glance away from them. This is not a fable but a veritable, indisputable, comprehensible truth.

This is the cry of a lost soul, and I know nothing more pathetic, or that better describes the mental torture from which such patients suffer. This desire for death is a psychological problem and admits of many solutions. Perhaps the best is that given by one of our greatest poets:

Whatever crazy sorrow saith,  
No life that breathes with human breath  
Has ever truly long'd for death.



'Tis life, whereof our nerves are scant,  
Oh Life, not Death, for which we pant,  
More life, and fuller, that I want.

Tennyson could not have written *The Two Voices* had he not passed through some such experience. It is the cry of a soul-obsessed melancholiac.

Shelley expresses his own abnormal sensations in a somewhat different manner:

My feelings at intervals are of a deadly and torpid kind, or awakened to such a degree of unnatural and keen excitement, that only to instance the organ of sight, I find the very blades of grass and the boughs of distant trees present themselves to me with microscopic distinctness. Towards evening I sink into a state of lethargy and inanimation, and often remain for hours on the sofa between sleep and waking, a prey to the most painful irritability of thought. Such, with little intermission, is my condition.

John Stuart Mill, in his *Autobiography*, thus describes a period of mental depression:

I was in a dull state of nerves, such as everybody is occasionally liable to; . . . the state, I should think, in which converts to Methodism usually are, when smitten by their first 'conviction of sin.'

In this frame of mind it occurred to me to put the question directly to myself: 'Suppose that all your objects in life were realized; . . . would this be a great joy and happiness to you?' And an irrepressible self-consciousness distinctly answered, 'no!' At this my heart sank within me: the whole foundation on which my life was constructed fell down. . . . I seemed to have nothing left to live for.

At first I had hoped that the cloud would pass away of itself; but it did not. . . . I carried it with me into all companies, into all occupations. . . . For some months the cloud seemed to grow thicker and thicker. The lines in Coleridge's 'Dejection' exactly described my case:

'A grief without a pang, void, dark and drear,  
A drowsy, stifled, unimpassioned grief,  
Which finds no natural outlet or relief  
In word, or sigh, or tear.'

In vain I sought relief from my favorite books, . . . I read them now without feeling, or with the accustomed feeling *minus* all its

charm: . . . I was thus left stranded at the commencement of my voyage, with a well equipped ship and rudder but no sail. . . . I had had some gratification of vanity at too early an age; I had attained some distinction, and felt myself of some importance, before the desire of distinction and importance had grown into a passion. The fountains of vanity and ambitions seemed to have dried up within me, as completely as those of benevolence. These were the thoughts that mingled with the dry heavy dejection of the melancholy winter of 1826-27. . . . In all probability my case was not so peculiar as I had imagined it, and I doubt not that many others have passed through a similar state. . . . I frequently asked myself, if I could, or if I was bound to go on living, when life must be passed in this manner. I generally answered to myself, that I did not think I could possibly bear it beyond a year. When, however, not more than half that duration of time had elapsed, a small ray of light broke in upon my gloom. . . . Relieved from my ever present sense of irremediable wretchedness, I gradually found that the ordinary incidents of life could again give me some pleasure; that I could again find enjoyment, not intense, but sufficient for cheerfulness, in sunshine and sky, in books, in conversation, in public affairs; . . . thus the cloud gradually drew off, and I again enjoyed life; and though I had several relapses, some of which lasted for months, I never again was as miserable as I had been.

Mill was right in believing that many others had "passed through a similar state." But not all have the fortitude to bear it so patiently, and allow time to conquer so victoriously.

De Quincey, in a letter he wrote to Miss Mitford, attempts to make plain the mental agony from which he occasionally suffered:

No purpose could be answered by my vainly endeavouring to make intelligible for my daughters what I cannot make intelligible for myself—the undecipherable horror that night and day broods over my nervous system. One effect of this is to cause, at uncertain intervals, such whirlwinds of impatience as precipitate me violently, whether I will or not, into acts that would seem insanities, but are not such in fact, as my understanding is never under any delusion. Whatever I am writing suddenly becomes overspread with a dark frenzy of horror. I am using words, perhaps, that are tautologic; but it

is because no language can give expression to the sudden storm of frightful revelations opening upon me from an eternity not coming, but past and irrevocable. Whatever I may have been writing is suddenly wrapt, as it were, in one sheet of consuming fire—the very paper is poisoned to my eyes. I cannot endure to look at it, and I sweep it away into vast piles of unfinished letters, or inchoate essays begun and interrupted under circumstances the same in kind, though differing unaccountably in degree. . . . One inevitable suggestion at first arose to everybody consulted—viz., that it might be some horrible recoil from the long habit of using opium to excess. But this seems improbable for more reasons than one. 1st. Because previously to any *considerable* abuse of opium—viz., in the year 1812,—I suffered an unaccountable attack of nervous horror which lasted for five months, and went off in one night as unaccountably as it had first come on in one second of time. I was at that time perfectly well.

DeQuincey, Coleridge, Lamb, Swinburne, and others did not hesitate to use opium and other narcotizing drugs as well as stimulants to ease these prenatally induced pains.

Are there not mortals suffering from morbid mental states who inhabit a Kingdom undiscovered to most of us: those sensitive of soul and endowed with an abnormal perception and a spirit of unrest?—a coterie of Sensitives who wear the fetters of heredity, and who can neither be measured by man-made standards, nor judged by prevailing customs, nor bound by our moral laws; who worship at a shrine more earthy natures can not perceive? It is possible that they are presided over by a priestess whose arch-votary thus describes her:

Hush! whisper whilst we talk of *her!*

Her kingdom is not large, or else no flesh should live; but within that kingdom all power is hers. Her head, turreted like that of Cybèle, rises almost beyond the reach of sight. She droops not; and her eyes rising so high *might* be hidden by distance. But, being what they are, they cannot be hidden; through the treble veil of crape which she wears, the fierce light of a blazing misery, that rests not for matins or vespers, for noon of day or noon of night, for ebbing or for flowing tide, may be read from the very ground. She is the defier of God. She

also is the mother of lunacies, and the suggestress of suicides. Deep lie the roots of her power; but narrow is the nation that she rules. For she can approach only those in whom a profound nature has been upheaved by central convulsions; in whom the heart trembles and the brain rocks under conspiracies of tempest from without and tempest from within. She moves with incalculable motions, bounding, and with a tiger's leaps. She carries no key; for, though coming rarely amongst men, she storms all doors at which she is permitted to enter at all. And *her* name is *Mater Tenebrarum*,—Our Lady of Darkness.

Was it this same Kingdom that Poe glimpsed in his *Vision: Siobe*?\*

'Listen to *me*', said the Demon, as he placed his hand upon my head. 'There is a spot upon this accursed earth which thou hast never yet beheld. And if by any chance thou *hast* beheld it, it must have been in one of those vigorous dreams which come like the Simoon upon the brain of the sleeper who hath lain down to sleep among the forbidden sunbeams—among the sunbeams, I say, which slide from off the solemn columns of the melancholy temples in the wilderness. The region of which I speak is a dreary region in Lybia, by the borders of the river Zaire. And there is no quiet there, nor silence.

'The waters of the river have a saffron and sickly hue—and they flow not onwards to the sea, but palpitate forever and forever beneath the red eye of the sun with a tumultuous and convulsive motion. For many miles on either side of the river's oozy bed is a pale desert of gigantic water-lilies. They sigh one unto the other in that solitude, and stretch towards the heaven their long ghastly necks, and nod to and fro their everlasting heads. And there is an indistinct murmur which cometh out from among them like the rushing of subterrene water. And they sigh one unto the other. . . . And the tall primoeval trees rock eternally hither and thither with a crashing and mighty sound. And from their high summits, one by one, drop everlasting dews. And at their roots strange poisonous flowers lie writhing in perturbed slumber. And overhead, with a rustling and loud noise the grey clouds rush westwardly forever, until they roll, a cataract, over the fiery wall of the horizon. But there is no wind throughout the heaven. And by the shores of the river Zaire there is neither quiet nor silence.

\*First Version Baltimore Book 1838. Compare page 265.

'It was night, and the rain fell; and, falling, it was rain, but, having fallen, it was blood. . . .

'And, all at once, the moon arose through the thin ghastly mist, and was crimson in color. And mine eyes fell upon a huge grey rock which stood by the shore of the river, and was litten by the light of the moon. And the rock was grey, and ghastly, and tall,—and the rock was grey. Upon its front were characters engraven in the stone; . . . and the characters were DESOLATION.

'And I looked upwards, and there stood a man upon the summit of the rock. . . . And the outlines of his figure were indistinct—but his features were the features of a Deity; for the mantle of the night, and of the mist, and of the moon, and of the dew, had left uncovered the features of his face. And his brow was lofty with thought, and his eye wild with care; and in the few furrows upon his cheek, I read the fables of sorrow, and weariness, and disgust with mankind, and a longing after solitude. . . . He looked down into the low unquiet shrubbery, and up into the tall primoeval trees, and up higher at the rustling heaven, and into the crimson moon. . . .

'And the man turned his attention from the heaven, and looked out upon the dreary river Zaire, and upon the yellow ghastly waters, and upon the pale legions of the water-lilies.

'Then I cursed the elements with the curse of tumult; and a frightful tempest gathered in the heaven where before there had been no wind, and the heaven became livid with the violence of the tempest—and the rain beat upon the head of the man—and the floods of the river came down—and the river was tormented into foam—and the water-lilies shrieked within their beds—and the forest crumbled before the wind—and the thunder rolled,—and the lightning fell—and the rock rocked to its foundation. . . .

'Then I grew angry and cursed, with the curse of silence, the river, and the lilies, and the wind, and the forest, and the heaven, and the thunder, and the sighs of the water-lilies. And they became accursed and *were still*. And the moon ceased to totter in its pathway up the heaven—and the thunder died away—and the lightnings did not flash—and the clouds hung motionless—and the waters sunk to their level and remained—and the trees ceased to rock—and the water-lilies sighed no more—and the murmur was heard no longer from among them, nor any shadow of sound throughout the vast illimitable desert. And I looked upon the characters of the rock, and they were changed—and the characters were SILENCE.

'And mine eyes fell upon the countenance of the man, and his countenance was wan with terror. And, hurriedly, he raised his head from his hand, and stood forth upon the rock, and listened. But there was no voice throughout the vast illimitable desert, and the characters upon the rock were SILENCE. And the man shuddered, and turned his face away, and fled afar off, and I beheld him no more.' . . .

Visions such as these are not for normal eyes, but may be viewed, though dimly, by those super-mortally hypermetropic, and who must pay the price for their genius-gifted inheritance. Many are overcome by these hereditary states of mental depressions and compulsions, and suicide ends their mental struggle.

Can we blame Poe if he did resort to alcohol and narcotics that he might numb such morbid mental anguish? This attack which he described was probably a characteristic seizure, and others followed with increasing frequency. We know that they occurred periodically and, occasionally, interrupted his work.

In 1835 Poe was made acting editor of the "Southern Literary Messenger," owned and managed by T. W. White. These lapses apparently interfered with his duties. They seriously discommoded White, and at times prevented the prompt issuance of the magazine. As early as 1835 White wrote him:

Would that it were in my power to unbosom myself to you in language such as I could, on the present occasion, wish myself master of. I cannot do it—and therefore must be content to speak to you in my plain way. That you are sincere in all your promises I firmly believe. But, Edgar, when you once again tread these streets, I have my fears that your resolves would fall through, and that you would again sip the juice, even till it stole away your senses. You have fine talents, Edgar,—and you ought to have them respected as well as yourself. Learn to respect yourself, and you will soon find that you are respected. Separate yourself from the bottle, and bottle companions, forever!

Apparently all went well for several months. In 1836 Poe wrote to his friend Kennedy, evidently with his former letter in mind:

Mr. White is very liberal, and besides my salary of \$520 pays me liberally for extra work, so that I receive nearly \$800. Next year, that is at the commencement of the second volume, I am to get \$1,000. Besides this I receive, from Publishers, nearly all new publications. My friends in Richmond have received me with open arms, and my reputation is extending—especially in the South. Contrast all this with those circumstances of absolute despair in which you found me, and you will see how great reason I have to feel grateful to God—and to yourself.

Nothing definite is known as to the exact cause that led to Poe's expulsion from this little paradise. Until January, 1837, he acted as editor; and during all this time the "Messenger" increased in circulation and became recognized as one of the well edited magazines. White probably would have kept his promises, and would have continued the association indefinitely, had not some serious inter-current seizure prevented. While this cause is not on record, we know Poe's infirmity, and so it is not difficult to deduce the reason. Poe during this time again suffered from depressive seizures and probably resorted to stimulants. White, in several letters he wrote to Lucian Minor, the later editor, thus refers to Poe:

Poe is now in my employ—not as editor. He is unfortunately rather dissipated—and therefore I can place very little reliance upon him. His disposition is quite amiable. He will be of some assistance to me in proofreading—at least I hope so.

A few days later he again wrote:

Poe has flew the track already. His habits were not good. He is in addition a victim of melancholy. I should not be at all astonished to hear that he had been guilty of suicide.

From these letters it is certain that Poe was unfitted for work, but whether this was due to the fact that "Poe has flew the track," or to his depression, which might in time cause him to be "guilty of suicide," or to a combination of these conditions which were the result of his morbid inheritance, is an immaterial matter. The evil predisposition was slowly asserting sway and Poe was no longer entirely

master of his actions; he was swayed by his compelling neurosis.

Kennedy states:

Poe was irregular, eccentric and querulous and soon gave up his place.

Poe in writing to Snodgrass as to his habits at this time said:

For a brief period, while I resided at Richmond and edited the 'Messenger' I certainly did give way, at long intervals, to the temptation held out by the spirit of Southern conviviality.

My sensitive temperament could not stand an excitement which was an everyday matter to my companions. In short, it sometimes happened that I was completely intoxicated. For some days after each excess I was completely prostrated and invariably confined to my bed.

It is not probable that this separation was voluntary on Poe's part, inasmuch as he accepted articles for the "Messenger" several days after his connection had ceased, without referring to the fact that he was no longer in editorial charge. He merely said that his delay in answering was due to "ill health and a weight of varying and harassing business." Apparently Poe still hoped to resume his former connection. Though there was no one to take his position, and he certainly had no plans for the future, he resigned from the "Messenger" in January, 1837, leaving one of his stories unfinished, and issued this farewell note:

Mr. Poe's attention being called in another direction, he will decline, with this present number, the editorial duties of the 'Messenger.' . . . With the best wishes to the magazine and to its few foes as well as to its many friends, he is now desirous of bidding all parties a peaceable farewell.

Apparently White recognized and sympathized with the disease from which Poe suffered. At the same time he must have realized the impossibility of holding Poe to routine work.

There was developed during this time that marvelous



critical faculty which gave the "Messenger" the right to be ranked with the metropolitan journals of New York and Philadelphia, and which established Poe as a literary critic of the very highest authority. Time has fully vindicated his criticisms of the great and the near-great; and many names are known to us, not because Griswold and Duyckinck included them in their anthologies and the "Encyclopedia of American Literature," but because they have been pilloried by Poe in his "Marginalia" and "Literati." It is true that many times these criticisms were unnecessarily caustic.

Possibly at times Poe did go beyond legitimate criticism in his use of these dissertations as a conveyance by which he imparted his own theories of composition, and his rejection of the prevailing *modes* that disfigured our early literature. Fully to appreciate the enormity of these literary crimes one must read the "Lady Book," the "Gentleman's Magazine," the "Burton's" and the "Graham's" of those days; "The Mirror" with Willis' "Pencilings by the Way," as well as less known publications, such as "Snowdon's Lady's Companion," "The Union Magazine," "The American Museum," and other contemporary publications with their reviews and trashy stories and sketches. They are, of all *Americana*, the most difficult to collect and, when found, least repay the search.

Even the "Southern Literary Messenger" and "The Broadway Journal," to which Poe gave a distinct value, are rarely to be found. Most of these periodicals have been dead and buried these many years; and the stones marking their graves are so overgrown with the moss of oblivion that soon it will be impossible to find their resting place. Except as "curiosities of American literature," it is proper that they should be forgotten, save only when they contain the Poe contributions.

Poe's critical faculty was such that, whatever the

cost, however hard he tried to soften his literary judgments (at times Poe did fawn when the wolf pressed him too ferociously) sooner or later his real opinions must have utterance.

For this reason many of Poe's contemporaries held him in bitter memory and were easily persuaded to believe the evil reports that were circulated, although their basis was never investigated nor properly understood.

We know nothing of Poe's alcoholic habits between his departure from Richmond and the commencement of his association with Burton in the conduct of the "Gentleman's Magazine," in July, 1839. This is probably due to the fact that he occupied no editorial or other responsible position, and was only accountable to a loving and forgiving wife and mother. That there were long periods of sobriety, and that his conduct caused no remark, is established by contemporary evidence, although it is probable that his periodical seizures continued.

Within a few months after his association with Burton we find letters showing that these attacks again were interfering with his editorial duties. The methodical, practical Burton could not sympathize with what he believed to be Poe's melancholy and irritable temperament; and, even when justified, he did not approve of Poe's critical severity.

I am not trammelled by any vulgar consideration of expediency; I would rather lose money than by such undue severity to wound the feelings of a kind hearted and honorable man.

This was in a letter of expostulation Burton wrote to Poe, occasioned apparently by some serious misunderstanding, the exact nature of which is not known. Poe, on the other hand, held Burton in the supremest contempt; not because he was an actor, but because of his literary pretensions.

Evidently Burton had made some statement, possibly

using the word "drunkard" in describing Poe's alcoholic excesses; for, in a letter which Poe wrote Dr. Snodgrass, soon after this time, and from which I have already quoted, he says:

I would institute a suit, forthwith, for his personal defamation of myself. He would be unable to prove the truth of his allegations. I could prove their falsity and their malicious intent by witnesses who, seeing me at all hours of every day, would have the best right to speak—I mean Burton's own clerk, Morell, and the compositors of the printing office. I should obtain damages. But, on the other hand, I have never been scrupulous as to what I have said of him. I have always told *him* to his face, and everybody else, that I looked upon him as a blackguard and a villain. This is notorious. If I sue, he sues; you see how it is. . . . I would take it as an act of kindness—not to say *justice* on your part, if you would see the gentleman to whom you spoke and ascertain with accuracy all that may legally avail me, what and when were the words he used. . . .

You are a physician, and I presume no physician can have difficulty in detecting a *drunkard* at a glance. You are, moreover, a literary man well read in morals. You will never be led to believe that I could write what I daily write as I write it, were I what this villain would induce those who know me not, to believe. In fine, I pledge you before God, the solemn word of a gentleman, that I am temperate even to rigor.

The statement which follows, that "nothing stronger than water ever passed my lips," could only refer to his period of sobriety during the time that he was editor of Burton's magazine.

This passage bears evidence of having been written immediately after one of Poe's attacks, while his brain was still sore from congestion due to over-indulgence, and when he was not altogether responsible for his actions or his speech, as is frequently the case following such seizures.

Between these attacks the best of resolutions are made, and nothing can induce such patients to drink; nor have they the slightest realization of their true condition or the danger of relapse. In addition they hotly resent criticism

of any kind, and any reference to their habits only angers them. Their one cry is that they have completely reformed, so why discuss a matter that is definitely and unalterably settled? In their own opinion their cure is complete and permanent.

In no sense can Poe be considered either a drunkard or a toper: for the disease is periodical in its seizures and, between the attacks, such unfortunates are most abstemious, the avoidance of alcohol being as characteristic as is the uncontrollable desire for some form of stimulant or narcotic when their *nerve-storm* does break. Poe, in denying the allegations, was self-deceived. It is a peculiarity of such persons not only to believe that they have completely recovered, but also to resent any question as to permanency. A marked example of this was the functional heart disturbance Poe at times exhibited, which was the basis for Mrs. Shew's "diagnosis," on which she based her prognosis of Poe's early death. After the tenth beat of Poe's heart there was an intermission, and the discovery of this intermittent action caused her profound worry. Evidently these fears were communicated to Poe, for the doggerel that he wrote, which his eager commentators have offered as a new poem, was evidently based on this fact. Nature is a curious old mother, and seems to have the art of concealing from her victims the most hopeless and incurable of her diseased manifestations. On the other hand she magnifies and exaggerates many of the purely hysterical symptoms.

It is possible for the wise physician to base his diagnosis on the psychology of such patients. When one comes complaining of heart disease, counting his pulse, and fearing death from heart failure, I feel certain that I have to deal with a neurasthenic whose heart is organically sound, but whose pneumogastric nervous system is deranged, and that a disturbed stomach is the organ involved. The best

evidence I can have that persons are not insane is their fear that insanity is developing; or that they have not consumption, when they magnify the slightest bronchitis into this dread disease. On the other hand, when it is apparent to all that day by day they are wasting away, such patients cannot be made to realize the gravity of their condition, and frequently buoy the hopes of their friends by this courageous attitude. *Spes Phthisici* is a medical truism. I rarely or never converse with an insane person who believes he is insane. It is pitiful to watch a paretic who builds his aircastles, dreams his dreams of untold wealth and supreme power, yet never realizes his loss of reflex control which makes him a source of disgust and loathing to all who must meet him and minister to his necessities.

In spite of the fact that Poe resented what he believed to be the unjust treatment he had received, Burton did actively interest himself in securing for Poe a continuance of the editorial duties connected with a new magazine. This had resulted from combining the "Gentleman's" with the "Casket," and it was to be issued under the title, "Graham's Magazine." Poe, however, had reached that period in his morbid mental life when he was not, at all times, responsible for his utterances, and there were periods when he no longer possessed the ability to discriminate between criticism kindly meant and utterances really slanderous.

Although Poe had left Burton voluntarily, and for the purpose of establishing a magazine of his own, this intention was abandoned probably because there was an intercurrent attack of his old malady. Apparently he was incapacitated for several weeks, and, on his recovery, was employed by Graham as associate editor of the new magazine. Necessarily, there must have been long periods of sobriety, for much good work in the way of stories,

poems, and critical reviews by Poe now appeared, and Graham's own testimony fully establishes the kindly relations that existed between them.

Undoubtedly there were lapses that caused Poe occasionally to neglect his editorial duties. Once, on returning to his office after several days' absence, he found Griswold occupying his chair. Although it is probable Graham intended this to be only a temporary arrangement, Poe bitterly resented it, as, in these later years, he did most things when crossed, and refused all further editorial association. Yet he and Graham remained on friendly terms. Poe's whole ambition and effort was now centered on establishing a new magazine to be known as the "Stylus," and this idea became an obsession.

About this same time he had under consideration a government position in Philadelphia, where he expected to publish his magazine. He went to Washington with the purpose of securing subscribers for his new journal, and also of obtaining the President's sanction for this appointment, hoping to exert influence through Tyler's literary sons.

Probably he would have succeeded in this had there not been a return of his old "evil possession." A friend who became alarmed at his condition because he feared Poe might injure his political prospects, wrote:

He arrived here a few days since. On the first evening he seemed somewhat excited, having been overpersuaded to take some port wine. On the second day he kept pretty steady, but since then he has been, at intervals, quite unreliable. He exposes himself here to those who may injure him very much with the President, and thus prevent us from doing for him what we wish to do and what we can do if he is himself again in Philadelphia.

. . . Under all circumstances of the case, I think it advisable for you to come and see him safely back to his home.

Poe's own explanation is as follows:

I arrived here in perfect safety, and *sober*, about half past four . . .

I went immediately home, took a warm bath and supper, and then went to Clarke's. He thought by Dow's epistle that I must not only be dead but buried. . . . I told him what had been agreed on—that I was a little sick, and that Dow, knowing I had been, in times past, given to spreeing upon an extensive scale, had become unduly alarmed, etc., etc.,—that when I found that he had written, I thought it best to come home.

Thomas, who was an office holder in Washington, and who had suggested to Poe that he make this application, gives some interesting details as to certain phases of Poe's sickness:

If he took but one glass of weak wine, or beer, or cider, the Rubicon of the cup had been passed with him, and it almost always ended in excess and sickness. But he fought against the propensity as hard as ever Coleridge fought against it and I am inclined to believe after his experience and suffering, if he could have gotten office with a fixed salary that he would have redeemed himself, at least at this time. The accounts of his derelictions in this respect after I knew him were very much exaggerated. I have seen men who drank bottles of wine to Poe's wine glass, who yet escaped all imputation of intemperance. His was one of those temperaments whose only safety is in total abstinence. He suffered terribly after any indiscretion.

For several years no one was associated more closely with Poe than Dr. English. His statement is:

His offenses against sobriety were committed at irregular intervals. He had not that physical constitution that would permit him to be a regular drinker. He was not even a frequent drinker when I knew him.

Another friend writes:

I, the most innocent of divinity students, at that time (1847) while walking with Poe, and feeling thirsty, pressed him to take a glass of wine with me. He declined but finally compromised by taking a glass of ale with me. Almost instantly a great change came over him. Previously engaged in an indescribably eloquent conversation he became as if paralyzed, and, with compressed lips and fixed glassy eyes, returned, without uttering a word, to the house which we were visiting. For hours the strange spell hung over him. He seemed a changed being, as if stricken by some peculiar phase of insanity.'

Poe in a letter to Eleveth (February, 1848,) makes the following explanation, which appears to have been written in good faith, and at the time it was written represented his own estimate of his physical health:

My habits are rigorously abstemious, and I omit nothing of the natural regimen necessary for health: i. e. I rise early, eat moderately, drink nothing but water, and take abundant and regular exercise in the air. But this is my private life—my studious and literary life—and, of course, escapes the eye of the world. The desire for society comes upon me only when I have become excited by drink. Then *only* I go—that is, at these times only I *have been* in the practice of going among my friends; who seldom, or, in fact, never having seen me unless excited, take it for granted I am always so. . . . But enough of this; the causes which maddened me to the drinking point are no more, and I am done drinking forever.

The same old cry!

Occasionally one of Poe's biographers confuses the term "drunk," by which usually is meant a condition of physical paralysis accompanied by mental confusion, with that more serious condition of forgetfulness or mental alienation, which occasionally the mildest stimulant will produce, or that still more subtle and less easily explained condition manifested by a complete change of personality. There is much evidence that Poe could take large quantities of stimulants without producing physical drunkenness.

After dipsomania has reached that stage where organic changes have taken place in the coverings of the brain, the slightest alcoholic stimulation may produce profound disturbance, morally and mentally. One drink may change the whole moral atmosphere and produce a state of mental irresponsibility, even where there is no corresponding physical change apparent. Occasionally, even without any stimulant, there may develop an abnormal mental condition, the so-called change in personality which we so freely discuss without any real knowledge as to how it does occur,



further than there is a changed mental life. Things are said and done while in this condition that are totally opposed to the acts and conduct ordinarily characterizing these patients, and, on recovery, they may have no memory of what has occurred.

After this failure to establish either himself or his journal, Poe left Philadelphia and took up his residence in New York. There he was employed by Willis for detail work on the "Mirror." For the next eighteen months, he led an abstemious life; although there is a record of at least two relapses.

Poe's reputation was now fully established and he was received, and was visited, by literary New York. For this reason we have many intimate details of his life and surroundings, both from visitors at Fordham and from those who met him in the *salons* of those days.

Although Poe's employment on the "Mirror" was of but three months' duration, its petty details, and necessarily regular hours were most trying. With all its requirements, however, Poe most faithfully complied. This connection gave Willis a first hand and intimate acquaintance with Poe which he later used in refutation of the memoir Griswold published.

Poe's connection with the "Mirror" ceased in February, 1845, at which time there was published, both in the "Mirror" and the "American Whig Review," Poe's most famous poem, *The Raven*. This single poem is probably better known to the world than any other in English literature. While it is possible, that had it not been for *The Raven*, Poe's name would have meant no more than that of Willis, Paulding, or others of the early American writers, except that he was an unusually vicious and dissolute man, this poem has been his redemption and finally his vindication.

We must judge Poe by his works rather than by the hasty and ill-natured conclusions of certain of his con-

temporaries. He cannot be held responsible for his hereditary seizures and ought to be judged leniently. He should have been classed with those equally unfortunate because of heredity or habit. Lamb, Shelley, Swinburne, Coleridge and De Quincey, as associates, would have constituted a literary Aidenn which even Poe, solitary that he was, might have welcomed. Surely his life will bear a far fuller investigation than will certain of those I have mentioned.

It has been to me a cause of wonder how a single poem or story has not only established a literary reputation, but has transmitted the writer's name to posterity in some definite way. The name of Gray is known to us, not by reason of his heavy and dull poetical essays, but by the "Elegy," which, in a peculiar way, appeals to the public understanding and heart. Shelley's name would have attracted the attention of the *literati* even without *The Skylark* or *The Cloud*—to me the most beloved of all poems: few would have had the patience to search for the beauties of his long poems. Coleridge might have ranked as an essayist or monologist, but suppress the *Ancient Mariner* and his name would have been unknown to the great majority of readers.

A single line,

And what is so rare as a day in June?

would have changed an essayist into a poet, had it not been that the succeeding couplet,

Then Heaven tries the earth if it be in tune,  
And over it softly her warm ear lays,"

together with certain other lines, effectually and completely disproved this assumption.

That stanza:

Westward the course of empire takes its way;  
The four first acts already past,  
A fifth shall close the drama with the day;  
Time's noblest offspring is the last.

even though it referred to a college Berkeley was attempting to establish in Bermuda, has given a substance that is real, and a reputation to a transcendental philosopher; for we have adopted it as the name of our own Berkeley, than which no greater monument could be erected to the memory of any man. Yet Berkeley ill earned it. As a scientist his only contribution was his elaborate study of "Tar Water" as a cure for all ills, ranking in scientific value with the "Weapon Salve" of Digby, and the "Metallic Tractors" of Perkins; nor can we recognize him as a poet, for these lines were his only effusion and, bad as they are in construction, meter, and prosody, the stanzas preceding it are worse. Nor does he deserve a reputation as a philosopher, for his "Dialogues," and his "Principles of Human Knowledge," have become a part of

That dust of Systems and of Creeds

which clog and cumber the world with worthless theories.

It was about this time, through their mutual friend, Lowell, that Briggs and Poe met. Briggs thus records his first impression of Poe:

I like Poe exceedingly well. Mr. Griswold has told me shocking bad stories about him, which his whole demeanor contradicts. . . . I have always strangely misunderstood Poe, from thinking him one of the Graham and Godey species, but I find him as different as possible.

Soon after this Briggs, who had established "The Broadway Journal," associated Poe as joint editor. In the beginning all was harmonious and Briggs again wrote:

The Rev. Mr. Griswold of Philadelphia told me some damnable lies about him, but a personal acquaintance has induced me to think highly of him.

That Poe possessed a most pleasing personality when he was normal and responsible for his actions, there is much evidence; but there were times, and these periods were now recurring more frequently, when his mental obsession dominated.

From this time on Poe's creative work practically ceased; in its place there appeared a spirit of carping criticism, and an intolerance of the work of others.

To this period belongs "The Longfellow War," which reflects Poe's abnormal mental state. While contributing to the "Mirror" Poe passed the following criticism on Longfellow's "Waif":

Is it infected with a moral taint—or is this a mere freak of our fancy? We shall be pleased if it be so; but there does appear in this little volume a very careful avoidance of all American poets who may be supposed to interfere with the claims of Mr. Longfellow. These men Mr. Longfellow can continuously *imitate* (is that the word?) and never yet incidentally commend.

Poe—a normal Poe—could not have insinuated what this passage evidently does imply, viz: that Longfellow was making use of Poe's work as a model for the poems contained in this volume; for, to Poe's ego, there was no other "American poet." This criticism gave great offense to Longfellow's friends; yet Longfellow did not resent it, and thus dismisses the matter:

The harshness of his criticisms I have never attributed to anything but the irritation of a sensitive nature, chafed by some indefinite sense of wrong.

A recent commentator has suggested that, by indirection, Longfellow did attempt to answer Poe's personal criticisms, by putting into the mouth of Hathaway, one of the characters of "Kavanagh," sentiments such as Poe might have entertained; then, as Churchill, actively controverting them. The known opinions of Poe as to long or didactic poems give no possible reason for such an identification. Who could attribute to Poe a sentiment such as this:

We want a national epic that shall correspond to the size of the country; that shall be to all other epics what Banvard's 'Panorama of the Mississippi' is to all other paintings,—the largest in the world! This and many other bombastic suggestions were actively controverted by another character, Churchill, whom this

acute commentator believes Longfellow intended to be merely a spokesman of his own ideas. The many suggestions advanced by Hathaway, and their refutation by Churchill, are trite and stilted, and could not possibly have been intended to represent any known theory which Poe at any time held as to long or didactic poems, or could refer to his often-repeated definition of poetry.

We who love Longfellow can only regret that he should have indulged in so prosy an argument or, for that matter, that he should have *indulged* in a "Tale" of any kind. He was not fitted for such work, and an apology is due for resurrecting this long dead story and associating with it the name of Longfellow.

Poe formerly had declared that he regarded Longfellow as the greatest of our poets; and, while posterity has not placed him among the first, certainly he ranks high, and deserves the recognition he has received.

One, "Outis," answered Poe's criticism in a style equally bitter, and the war was on—one that delighted Poe, for, partly owing to the morbid state which was developing, he enjoyed the fight. His excited brain took fire, and, what possibly was at first a passing thought, became a deep conviction. Poe seriously attempted to prove that Longfellow was a plagiarist and an imitator.

I do not love Longfellow the less for his adaptations and his translations, or even his adoption of the hexameter in "The Children of the Lord's Supper", which Poe adversely criticised. Possibly he has written no single poem that stands out preeminently, and he may not be always original, for he did translate, and make his own, many of the finest selections from other languages. Longfellow had a marvelous facility both in choosing and versifying those subjects which, above all others, delight me. He is always near me, and, whatever my mood, I find in his poetry a pleasure, and a solace that no other gives me.

This "war" was continued in the "Broadway Journal": Briggs, while not approving, wrote:

Poe is a monomaniac on the subject of Plagiarism, and I thought it best to allow him to ride his hobby to death at the outset and be done with it.

It was not the general charge of plagiarism that makes me believe that the line of sane criticism had been passed, for Poe always posed as an authority in detecting similarities. That he could have believed, as he appeared to believe, that Longfellow was imitating him,—and evidently the grievance was a personal one,—is not consonant with Poe's known literary acumen.

Another equally strange vagary was a judgment, on a poet and a poem, which is so singularly absurd that it could not have emanated from a rational brain. Neither the poem nor the poet ever would have been resurrected had it not been for Poe's eloquent and sincere eulogium. The poet's name was Horne, and the poem was called "Orion." Poe wrote a criticism containing the following appreciation:

It is our deliberate opinion that, in all that regards the loftiest and holiest attributes of true poetry, Orion has never been excelled. Indeed we feel strongly inclined to say that it has never been equalled.

Comparing it with Milton's description of hell, Poe says that Milton is:

Altogether inferior in graphic effect, in originality, in expression, in the true imagination. 'Orion' will be admitted by every man of genius to be one of the noblest, if not the very noblest poetical work of the age.

Spurred to investigation by so ardent and so laudatory a critique, and possibly abashed by the fact that I never even had heard of, much less read, this poem that out-Miltoned Milton,—supposing that nothing more dull had ever been written,—I eagerly searched for some trace either of the book or the author, but they seemed to be equally dead. Only Captain Brown's Conchology furnished me with a keener chase. Finally the book-hunt was

successful, and I found the long-sought item:—not only found it, but in its original state autographed and inscribed to Douglas Jerrold; and, as an added indication of the author's capacity and literary acumen, there was printed, above the title page, the announcement "(PRICE ONE FARTHING)". Evidently Horne was no profiteer, yet he probably asked all that it was worth. The volume was uncut and apparently unopened; certainly it remains unread. From the few passages which I scanned, I am certain that in one sense Poe's comparison was just, in spite of his mistaken judgment. It is said that this price of one farthing was placed on it, by Horne, in derision of the slight value in which epic poetry was held, and the low public estimate of its worth. The price, not the value, has greatly increased.

Possibly the particular passage selected by Poe that rivaled the God-like fight between the Devils and Angels is this:

Them, quickly joined  
 Their head in this destruction, and ere night,  
 Huge forms, ferocious, mighty in the dawn,  
 When hoar rime glistened on each hairy shape,  
 Nought fearing, swift, brimfull of raging life,  
 Lay stiffening in black pools of jellied gore.  
 Nor with the day ceased their tremendous task,  
 But all night long Orion led the way  
 Through moonless passes to most secret lairs,  
 Where in their deep abodes fierce monsters crouched,—  
 Dragons and sea-beasts and compounded forms,—  
 And in the pitchy blackness madly huddling,  
 Midst deafening yells and hisses they were slain.

This is not by any means the worst. I select at random:

Never renew thy vision, passionate lover—  
 Heart-rifled maiden—nor the hope pursue,  
 If once it vanish from thee; but believe,  
 'Tis better thou should'st rue this sweet loss ever  
 Than newly grieve, or risk another chill

On false love's icy river, which betraying  
 With mirrors bright to see, and voids beneath,  
 Its broken spell should find no faith in thee.

Evidently Horne also was cursed with the germ of genius, and at one time contemplated ending his life—not fearfully, but in a loving embrace which out-Ellas Ella Wheeler's celebrated couplet:

Close, close in my arms I would fold you,  
 And drop with you down to sweet Hell!

but does not make him a rival to Milton.

Why not at once, with thee enfolded, whirl  
 Deep down the abyss of ecstasy, to melt  
 All brain and being where no reason is,  
 Or else the source of all reason? But the roaring  
 Of time's great wings which ne'er had driven me,  
 By dread events nor broken-down old age,  
 Back on myself, the close experience  
 Of false mankind, with whispers close and dry  
 As snake-songs midst stone hollows, thus has taught me—  
 The giant hunter, laughed at by the world—  
 Not to forget the substance in the dream  
 Which breeds it. Both must merge in one.  
 Now shall I overcome thee, body and soul,  
 And like a new made element brood o'er thee  
 With all devouring murmurs! Come, thou storm,  
 And clasp the rigid pine—this mortal frame  
 Wrap with thy whirlwinds, rend and wrestle down,  
 And let my being solve its destiny,  
 Defying, seeking, thine extremest power,  
 Famished and thirsty for the absorbing doom  
 Of that immortal death which leads to life,  
 And gives a glimpse of heaven's parental scheme.

A normal Poe was too capable a critic to have passed this judgment. He had no reason for giving this favorable opinion had he not believed that it was deserved. His judgment must have been perverted.

The relationship, begun so happily, between Poe and Briggs lasted only a few months. There were disagreements



between Briggs and his publishers, probably owing to the circumstance that the "Journal" did not pay expenses, and Poe assumed the editorship.

According to Briggs:

Poe got on a drunken spree, and conceived the idea that I had not treated him well, for which he had no other grounds than my having loaned him money and persuaded Brisco to carry on 'The Journal' himself.

While this may be true, as between Briggs and Poe, Brisco preferred Poe. After a week's suspension, "The Broadway Journal" reappeared with Poe as sole editor. It was thus that Poe's life-time ambition was realized, and the goal was reached for which so long he had striven. Unfortunately it came too late.

Although Poe tried hard for his ideal, and attempted to fashion "The Broadway Journal" into the arbiter of matters literary, and make it the critical authority of which he was at one time capable, his mental deterioration had progressed to such an extent that he was no longer able either to produce original work or to judge fairly of the work of others. "The Journal," under his management, reproduced many of his stories and a few of his poems, but his reviews apparently had lost much of their critical value; as in the case of the Longfellow war, which he continued as long as he could find anyone to reply to him, they showed bias.

Apparently the capacity for production was lost not because Poe did not, by request, compose a poem worthy of his Boston audience—for things inspired, as most of his poems were, cannot be made to order—but because, in the following four years, there was little worthy of his great genius that can be justly said to rank with his early work. One poem, *The Bells*, was slowly elaborated, and two others, *Ulalume* and *Annabel Lee*, each in its way "weird" and without "reason," were published; but when

they were written, or how long they had remained unpublished, we do not know.

It is apparent that Poe's poetic faculty remained, and his mastery of words and rhythm lasted beyond his logical faculties. In writing to Duyckinck in November, 1845, he said:

For the first time during two months, I find myself entirely myself—dreadfully sick and depressed but still myself. I seem to have wakened from some horrible dream, in which all was confusion and suffering. I really believe I have been mad—but indeed I had abundant reason to be so.

It was during this time that Poe had the memorable interview with Lowell, and, in spite of the kindly feeling their long correspondence had engendered, each seems to have been disappointed in the other. Lowell later wrote:

I saw Poe only once . . . I suppose there are many descriptions of him. He was small: his complexion of what I should call a clammy white; fine, dark eyes, and fine head, very broad at the temples, but receding sharply from the brows backwards. His manner was rather formal, even pompous, but I have the impression that he was rather soggy with drink—not tipsy—but as if he had been holding his head under a pump to cool it.

This interview is further discussed in a letter Mrs. Clemm wrote Lowell after Poe's death:

How much I wish I could see you! how quickly I could remove your wrong impression of my darling Eddie! The day you saw him in New York, *he was not himself*. Do you not remember that I never left the room? Oh! if you only knew his bitter sorrow when I told him how unlike himself he was while you were here, you would have pitied him! He always felt particularly anxious to possess your approbation. If he spoke unkindly of you (as you say he did) rely on it, he did not know what he was talking.

And Poe's own impression of Lowell was not by any means flattering:

He called to see me the other day, but I was very much disappointed in his appearance as an intellectual man. He was not half the noble looking man that I expected to see."

It is probable that Poe's facial appearance, under the influence of alcohol, had changed, and that he was not, at that time, possessed of the expression of nobility which had impressed many who attempted descriptions of him.

Willis thus pictures him:

He becomes a desk,—his beautiful head showing like a statuary embodiment of Discrimination; his accent drops like a knife through water, and his style is so much purer and clearer than the pulpit commonly gets or requires that the effect of what he says, besides other things, pampers the ears.

While Willis mixes his metaphors and his similes are crude, what he means to express is a remarkable tribute for one writer to pay another, especially when that other is a close acquaintance.

Another familiar thus describes him:

The exquisitely chiseled features, the habitual but intellectual melancholy, the clear pallor of the complexion, and the calm eye like the molten stillness of a slumbering volcano, composed a countenance of which this portrait is but the skeleton.

There must have been some ground for these eulogies.

In October, 1845, Poe assumed full charge of "The Broadway Journal", and it was in November of the same year that he wrote the letter to Duyckinck just quoted.

In January, 1846, the following notice announced the close of his last effort. It was the end.

#### VALEDICTORY

Unexpected engagements demanding my whole attention, and the objects being fulfilled, so far as regards myself personally, for which "The Broadway Journal" was established, I now, as its editor, bid farewell—as cordially to foes as to friends.

EDGAR A. POE.

Only those who, in their old age, have experienced failure, knowing that their last opportunity as well as

their capacity for work has passed, can comprehend to the full the heartbreak in these stereotyped phrases.

This was Poe's last attempt to do serious work worthy of his genius. For the next four years, till death mercifully freed him, his life was one unbroken series of disasters. It was at this time that his wife's sickness gave evidence of her fast approaching end, and penury pinched him so hard that even his poor mother was compelled to ask for assistance. That there was abject poverty—want beyond human endurance—is evident from the reports of those who visited Fordham at that time.

The cottage had an air of gentility and neatness that must have been lent to it by the presence of its inmates. So neat, so poor, so unfurnished, and yet so charming a dwelling I never saw. The floor of the kitchen was white as wheaten flour. A table, a chair, and a little stove that it contained seemed to furnish it completely.

Another visitor, describing this home, thus pictures Mrs. Poe:

I saw her in her bed-chamber. Everything here was so neat, so purely clean, so scant and poverty stricken, that I saw the poor sufferer with such a heartache as the poor feel for the poor. There was no clothing on the bed, which was of straw, but a snow-white counterpane and sheets. The weather was cold and the sick lady had the dreadful chills that accompany the hectic fever of consumption. She lay on her straw bed, wrapped in her husband's great-coat, with a large tortoise cat in her bosom. The wonderful cat seemed conscious of her great usefulness. The coat and the cat were the only means of warmth of the poor sufferer, except as the husband held her hands, and her mother her feet.

Later, friends made a public appeal and money was raised to tide over the threatened starvation. Only a knowledge of Poe's sensitive nature and high-strung soul, could make us know the humiliation he must have suffered because of this public appeal; yet it was to this Griswold sneeringly alluded when, quoting a letter Poe wrote Willis in which he protested against "the concerns of my family

being thus pitilessly thrust before the public," he says in his memoir:

This was written for effect. He had not been ill a great while nor dangerously at all.

Fortunately Poe was for many weeks too sick to protest, and his friends were allowed to care for him.

It is certain that there were a few occasions when Poe gave striking evidence of his disturbed mental state, which was plain to all his intimate associates. His friend Willis says:

He left us—"The Mirror"—by his own wish alone, and it was one day soon after, that we saw him in the condition to which we refer. He came into our office with his usual gait and manner, and, with no symptom of ordinary intoxication, he talked like a man insane. Perfectly self-possessed in all other respects, his brain and tongue were evidently beyond his control. We learned afterward that the least stimulus—a single glass of wine—would produce this effect on Mr. Poe and that rarely as these instances of easy aberration of caution and mind occurred, he was liable to them, and while under their influence, voluble and personally self-possessed but neither sane nor responsible.

This change in Poe, the so-called double personality, is variously explained, for it does not necessarily have alcohol as a basis. In some unknown way, the subconscious self is involved and, by reason of a morbid change, dominates. Beyond a certain point it becomes a pathological change, and one suffering from it cannot be held responsible. The nervous diathesis is usually present as the basis of this mental complex.

Mrs. Shew, his friend and his nurse, kept a diary from which Ingram made the following extract:

I made my diagnosis, and went to the great Dr. Mott with it; I told him that at best, when Mr. Poe was well, his pulse beat only ten regular beats, after which it suspended, or intermitted (as doctors say). I decided that in his best health he had lesion of one side of the brain, and as he could not bear stimulants or tonics, without producing insanity, I did not feel much hope that he could be raised up from brain fever brought on by extreme suffering of mind and body.

Mrs. Shew again states that on Poe's failing to return home, they found that he had taken a room and slept for twelve hours; and that, on awakening, he had little or no memory of what had taken place during this period. Again she deduces the medical opinion:

This showed that his mind was injured, nearly gone out for the want of food and from disappointment. He had not been drinking, and had been only a few hours from home. Evidently his vitality was low and he was nearly insane. While he slept we studied his pulse, and found the same symptoms we had noticed before. I called in Dr. Francis (the old man was odd but very skillful) who was one of our neighbors. His words were, 'He has heart disease and will die early in life.'

In spite of the fact that Mrs. Shew is said to have been "the only daughter of a doctor" and that she at one time had "studied medicine", either of which incidents would have justified her in expressing an opinion, and which combined, do not lessen its relevancy, I strongly question its scientific value; and even that of Dr. Francis, and Dr. Mott, for, little as we now know, still less dependence may be placed on the pathological teachings of those days, when Dr. Rush's classical work, "Medical Inquiries and Observations on the Diseases of the Mind", remained their textbook and their neurological guide. Since those days, we have unlearned very much.

However, there can be no question of serious mental aberration and that, at times, Poe was not responsible either for his actions or his statements. It is certain that at least a few of Griswold's charges as to acts committed at that time, had a real foundation. They were of so serious a nature, and were so unlike the normal Poe, that they must be regarded as the offspring of a disordered brain. It was at this time that the association of the names of many women with that of Poe showed the abnormal trend of his mind.

These complications were of such a nature, and so unlike

Poe while in his ordinary health, that he must be held irresponsible. Griswold added blackmail and personal dishonor to his other charges, but neither of these can be proved. Griswold stated that Poe had received letters from a woman containing sentimental passages, and that he had demanded money for their return. It is not necessary to go into details, further than to say that Poe apparently received such letters and, when this woman unduly interfered and publicly criticised the good name of another, he bitterly resented it and did refer to letters that he had received which might throw some light on this woman's reason for attempting to besmirch another.

Poe not only denied that he ever demanded money, but declared that he had long ago returned all the letters he had not destroyed. When this story, among others, was published by Thomas Dunn English, Poe brought suit and obtained financial damages; yet, after Poe's death, Griswold publicly circulated the same stories in the memoir which accompanied Poe's collected writings.

It is probable that Poe, under provocation, did say things he later regretted, and that he committed other indiscretions which, in his better moments, he thus extenuates:

The errors and frailties which I deplore, it cannot at least be said that I was the coward to deny. Never even have I made the attempt at *extenuating* a weakness which is (or, by the blessing of God, *was*) a calamity, although those who did not know me intimately had little reason to regard it other than as a crime. For indeed, had the pride of my family permitted, there was much—very much—there was everything in extenuation. Perhaps even, there was a time at which it might not have been wrong to me to hint—what by the testimony of Dr. Francis and other medical men I might have demonstrated, had the public indeed cared for the demonstration—that irregularities so profoundly lamented were the *effect* of a terrible evil rather than the cause. And now let me thank God that in redemption from the physical ill, I have forever got rid of the moral.

Among other explanations advanced as possibly accounting for some of Poe's irresponsible acts, epilepsy has been alleged. The possibility of its existence could not have been suggested by anyone even remotely familiar with the manifestations of this disease. While it may exhibit itself in protean forms, no type known could have accounted for the peculiarities of Poe's sickness.

The characteristic symptom, and the one symptom that differentiates epilepsy from hysteria and all other nervous seizures, is complete loss of consciousness during the attack, and occasionally for considerable periods of time following.

We are ignorant of the causation of epilepsy, as we are of many other of the functional neuroses—including insanity—but we do definitely know its symptomatology, in spite of the many forms it may assume. As a rule, the patient falls as if he had received a blow directly upon the brain; and this is what does happen, for the blood rushes in and congests the meninges, engorging the brain and producing profound unconsciousness. What causes this nervous explosion we do not know. It may be compared to the discharge of electricity from a leyden jar. This at best is a gross comparison, for we *know* absolutely nothing of the actual manifestation of nervous energy; nor do we know how the external afferent irritations, as received by the special senses, are changed into efferent and intelligent brain conceptions and manifestations, nor how our brain cells function in flashing back their responsive conceptions. Did we know, there would not be so many theories. We do know that there is some subtle cell change, accompanied by some unknown process of stimulation of these special centers of the five special senses which signal the coming storm.

In addition to the gross manifestations described, the seizures, although of the same character, may be so slight



that they can be detected only by one who is a close observer; yet, that they belong to the same group and have the same underlying cause, is established by an abundance of incontrovertible evidence. Epilepsy may manifest itself in many forms. Occasionally a patient so afflicted will suddenly perform some unexpected or objectionable act, such as disrobing in a public place; or, to use the classical illustration frequently cited of the patient that rose from the dinner table and carefully nailed the beefsteak, which had been placed before him, to the wall of the dining room. These persons are unconscious of their acts and have no memory of anything that occurred during the seizure. This last is called "larval" epilepsy, and is the form which was said to have afflicted Poe. It is impossible to qualify him for this or any other manifestation of epilepsy.

There is, however, a characteristic seizure which often complicates chronic alcoholism, and which frequently so closely resembles the first form described, technically called *grand mal*, that only the clinical history of the individual case can differentiate it from *functional* epilepsy. In chronic alcoholism this seizure is due to an *organic* cerebral disintegration and is not held to be a true epilepsy. As far as I can determine in the morbid life history of Poe, no such attack has been described, nor is there any history that would point to any form of epilepsy. It is true that the state of *amnesia*, or blank-memory periods, characterizes both epilepsy and certain forms of chronic alcoholism, but no intelligent physician could possibly confound the two causations. Fairfield, who had read a thesis of Dr. Leblois, dealing with the *petit mal* and other larval forms of epilepsy, imagined he saw in this description a method of accounting for Poe's many lapses, but in this he was as mistaken as was Lauvrière in his attempts, as a layman, to deal with medical subjects and scientific *dicta* that are entirely beyond the comprehension of anyone who has not

specialized on so elusive and complicated a subject, where so many theories are advanced as facts, and where the inability to differentiate has resulted in absurd mistakes.\*

Only one without medical knowledge, or special acquaintance with these different disease syndromes, and who for that reason was mentally untrammelled and was unrestrained by disquieting and contradictory medical facts, relying entirely on the imagination, would have evolved such a theory.

The question as to the part opium played in producing these temporary derangements frequently has been asked and may only be answered in general terms. There is no doubt that Poe occasionally indulged in opium. It is equally certain that this use never became a "habit," or that it had to be continued in frequent and always increasing doses, such as an addict requires. It is a part of the history of dipsomania that when the unutterable depression, which is one of its phases, does supervene, opium will frequently be selected in preference to alcohol. This is only a temporary remedy and alcohol becomes the final solace.

I cannot recall a patient that was a typical dipsomaniac, who became an opium addict, although he might use opium between attacks, or as a means of warding off a threatened seizure. A cousin who visited the Poes, and who became a temporary inmate of their home, describes this period of Poe's morbid life. She is quoted:

He then frequently refused wine in her presence, and adds that at that time, his fits of intoxication were due to the excessive use of opium.

There is neither direct nor presumptive evidence that Poe was addicted to opium, though he did occasionally use this drug.

\*Poe: A Bibliographic Study. Page 364.

Dr. English, at one time Poe's friend and boon companion, but later his avowed enemy, testified:

Had Poe the opium habit when I knew him, I should both as a physician and a man of observation, have discovered it during his frequent visits to my rooms, my visits to his house, and our meetings elsewhere.

Dr. Carter, who was intimate with Poe, and at times treated him during his last Richmond visit, wrote:

He never used opium in any instance that I am aware of. Had it been habitual it would have been detected, as the poet numbered among his associates a half dozen physicians. I never heard it hinted at, and if he had contracted the habit it would have accompanied him to Richmond.

Poe, in a letter he wrote to "Annie," gives a picture of the mental torture from which he suffered, and his method of obtaining relief:

You saw, you *felt* the agony of grief with which I bade you farewell—you remember my expression of gloom—of a dreadful horrible foreboding of Ill. Indeed—*indeed* it seemed to me that Death approached me even then, and that I was involved in the shadow that went before him. . . . I remember nothing distinctly from that moment till I found myself in Providence. I went to bed and wept through a long, long, hideous night of despair. When the day broke I arose and endeavored to quiet my mind by a rapid walk in the cold keen air, but all *would* not do—the Demon tortured me still. Finally I procured two ounces of laudanum, and without returning to my hotel, took the cars back to Boston. . . . I implored you to come *then*, mentioning the place where I should be found in Boston. Having written this letter I swallowed about half the laudanum, and hurried to the post office, intending not to take the rest till I saw you—for I did not doubt for one moment that Annie would keep her sacred promise. But I had not calculated on the strength of the laudanum for before I reached the post-office my reason was entirely gone and the letter was never put in. Let me pass over—my darling *sister*—the awful horrors which succeeded. A friend was at hand who aided me (if it can be called saving) saved me, but it is only the last three days that I have been able to remember what occurred in that dreary interval. It appears that after the laudanum was rejected from the stomach I became calm, to the

casual observer, sane—so that I was suffered to go back to Providence. . . . I am so *ill*—so terribly, hopelessly ill in body and in mind, that I feel I cannot live. . . . Until I subdue this fearful agitation, which if continued will destroy my life or drive me hopelessly mad.

Farewell—here and *hereafter*.

This letter was written on November 16, 1848, a year before Poe's death. It is the best evidence of the mental torture that overcame Poe during these frequently-repeated seizures, and it also shows that, when so afflicted, he would resort to any drug he believed would give him relief. In this particular case, it is to be presumed that Poe, believing that he could no longer bear the mental pain from which he suffered, selected opium with lethal intent: that he was not accustomed to its use, and was not familiar with its effect is made evident by its action on him.

Had he been a confirmed user of this drug, such as DeQuincey described himself to be when he "sipped a *glass of laudanum negus warm and without sugar*," it would not have affected him so seriously: yet any statement made either by DeQuincey, or any other drug addict, must be taken with many "grains" of allowance. DeQuincey, for example, in his "Confessions," states that he ordinarily took 8000 minims of laudanum daily—an amount which he estimates to contain 320 grains of opium—and prides himself on his ability to decrease to 1000.

An ordinary sized tumbler holds about 8 ounces: and, as druggists estimate 450 minims to the ounce of laudanum, nearly 18 ounces would have constituted this daily consumption.

According to the present English pharmacopoeia the amount of opium that is contained in laudanum is calculated on a 10% basis: in an ounce, there are 45 grains, or in 8000 minims, 800 grains. It is entirely possible that at the time DeQuincey was in the habit of using this drug,

the opium content might have been somewhat smaller; but, as far as I can ascertain, this was never so low as 4%. The fact not realized by DeQuincey, certainly one that has not been mentioned by him or others, was the enormous dosage of alcohol daily consumed. Possibly he did not know the constituents of laudanum and, for this reason, could not have estimated the result. To manufacture laudanum it is necessary that the opium be infused in an alcoholic mixture, known as proof spirits. This varies in strength, from 50% to 65%, or 70%. Necessarily, with the enormous dosage of opium, 18 ounces of proof spirits were consumed.

While neither of these amounts is impossible, it is extremely improbable that any man, especially with DeQuincey's known feeble physique, could have long endured this enormous dosage of alcohol and opium;

Many other statements made by DeQuincey as to the effect opium had on him, must be taken with equal distrust. His "visions," instead of having had their origin in the use of opium, were the result of an overworked imagination. They could not have been a part of the drug-life of such a patient. A careful reading of his autobiography shows that he had visions long preceding his use of opium.

Possibly DeQuincey did not intend that all of his statements should be taken literally. He had many visionary dream-children and he might have magnified his statements as to dosage, as is frequently the case with addicts. He was given visions vouchsafed to no other mortal.

Poe occasionally used opium for the relief of mental pain. He was not an addict, and he did not use opium to induce visions.

When the opium habit becomes established, its usage is *necessarily* continuous; and the dosage in all cases is slowly increased, though the patient, recognizing the danger, makes determined and intelligent attempts to discontinue.

Even with medical aid, recovery is difficult. Patients usually resort to this drug to relieve some morbid condition or affliction. DeQuincey to the contrary, I have never known a patient to use opium habitually for the purpose of producing hallucinatory visions, or clearer and keener mental concepts, or more lucid thought. It is usually used for the purpose of inducing what, in other and normal individuals, is a sense of well-being. It is not possible that any of Poe's work, whether prose or poetry, was the product of either opium or alcohol; nor could he have written his masterpieces while under the influence of drugs. No man can perform as well under an intoxicant as when the brain is clear. This conclusion is the result of elaborate and well-attested experiments, conducted on men following all vocations in life without varying the well established law that while under alcohol they may do things more boldly and more recklessly, they cannot do them so intelligently or accurately, or even so rapidly as when they are free from stimulants.

To say that many brilliant men have indulged to excess and in spite of this have accomplished wonderful things, is simply to confuse the morbid ills, which frequently accompany the neurosis of hereditary capacity, with that which constitutes their excellence. The vision of *Kubla Khan* may have come in sleep as Coleridge describes, but this does not mean that the vision was the result of an opium dream. Very curious things occur in the dream state, and the result of the brain's unconscious cerebration is one of the most interesting of psychological problems.

Occasionally it happens that one, seduced by the anticipated pleasure he will derive from the use of opium, or urged by curiosity to explore and to experience the effect of this forbidden drug, or forced into its use because of some neurosis, will dare its dangers. At first the experience is pleasurable, whatever the ultimate pain and

regret. Because of this our poets still sing the pleasures of opium:

I am engulfed, and drown deliciously.  
Soft music like a perfume, and sweet light,  
Golden with audible odours exquisite,  
Swathe me with cerements for eternity.  
Time is no more. I pause and yet I flee.  
A million ages wrap me round with night.  
I drain a million ages of delight.  
I hold the future in my memory.

Also I have this garret which I rent,  
This bed of straw, and this that was a chair,  
This worn-out body, like a tattered tent,  
This crust, of which the rats have eaten part,  
This pipe of opium; rage, remorse, despair;  
This soul at pawn and this delirious heart.

Poe's power of analysis and ability to decipher the most difficult cryptograms, although casually mentioned as a curious mental recreation, have never received the full consideration that the possession of such a faculty deserves.

There is a class of defectives medically called "Idiot Savant," who, although they may show evidence of weak-mindedness in certain directions, in others exhibit a marvelous development of brain capacity. Blind Tom, the musician, who could at will recall and play any musical selection he had heard, in spite of the fact that he was mentally so feeble that he could not receive a musical education, is an excellent example of this mental disorder. Occasionally there are children, known as lightning calculators, who can solve the most complicated sums in addition, subtraction, root extraction, or other arithmetical examples, yet who in other directions show mental feebleness. It is an accompaniment of either precocity or subnormality. An interesting illustration occurred some years ago when a boy of twelve was admitted to one of our great universities as a mental phenomenon. It was an-

nounced that this marked intellectual superiority was the result of judicious parental effort, and that any child, mentally normal, could be equally rapidly developed provided wise and efficient methods were adopted in early mental training. Apparently no one recognized this as a beginning intellectual abnormality which was probably an early symptom of *Dementia Praecox*.

Only very occasionally is this particular faculty retained, and, as the brain is developed and age opens up new fields for its occupation, the power is gradually lost. At least, such a development is a fortunate termination. Very rarely do they flower and fruit. Macauley, Pope, and a few other eminent men possessed this faculty, and retained it without developing other manifestations of psychoneuroses. To this same category belong the child poets—if rhythm and meter constitute poetry apart from substance—as well as other manifestations of abnormal mental development. These aptitudes, as a rule, affect the memory, and are exhibited by a possession of the higher intellectual powers, especially of artistic capacity rather than of the logical faculties. For this reason, I do not believe that the precocious inheritance of Poe was altogether responsible for this unusual mental gift; nor can I comprehend in what way or by what means Poe did accomplish what to him was a very simple solution, but which, to the ordinary mind, is impossible of accomplishment. It is difficult for the race horse to explain to the dray horse in just what way he does excel, or why he can so greatly outdistance the other. We also are dumb when we attempt to explain such "gifts."

It is possible that this logical faculty, which Poe did possess to such an unusual extent, was more or less connected with his marked ability to select, and so place his words as to embody an idea and picture an image after the method of the untaught artist, who occasionally may ac-



comply with what no school can teach. Yet no man dare assert as a fact what "the highest mounted mind" has been unable to grasp, and we can only suggest some hopeful solution of this Oedipean riddle of abnormal as well as of normal psychology.

Some of Poe's writings could not have been evolved except by the use of a reasoning brain at its highest point of efficiency. Had it not been clear, it could no more have discerned the images it did reflect than could a distorted mirror accurately reproduce the image of one looking into it. I refer especially to Poe's tales of *Ratiocination* and a certain few of his poems, among which *The Raven* must be mentioned; although it may not have been written by that process of deduction and calculation, and in the manner in which Poe claimed that he conceived and built it up. And possibly it was composed as he described. On the other hand, such a poem as *Ulalume* might have been formulated in a brain which was somewhat diseased, but whose capacity for rhythm and euphony remained unimpaired.

It is not possible that a brain disordered by alcohol could have been attuned to such harmony. Like an inspired song, it may burst forth, unpremeditated and fully matured, but such inspiration is not the result of alcohol.

We know the genesis of one of these poems. We have a version of *The Bells* while it was still *in embryo*. In its beginning, it was but dimly conceived, and it was painfully gestated and reached its present state of perfection only by painstaking elaboration. While it is true that Poe had the sense of rhythm, and the ability so to arrange euphonic words and phrases as to produce the tintinabulation of *The Bells*, this poem did not come forth full grown and perfect at birth, as was the case with *The Raven*.

Probably many others of Poe's poems required equal nurture and painstaking gestation. In this diseased condition, his brain was not so resilient, nor did it respond to the

demands made on it so readily; yet his sense of euphony remained with him to the end.

Poe was now rapidly approaching the "old age" to which he had jokingly alluded in his preface to *Tamerlane*. He was thirty-five; yet, because of the degeneration in the brain cells and the congested and thickened meninges, as well as by reason of the law of early decay which always accompanies precocity, production, such as had characterized his early manhood, was no longer possible.

While *The Raven* had been published early in this period of mental decadence, and still later there had appeared *Ulalume*, *The Bells*, and *Annabel Lee*, Poe's real capacity for discriminating and sustained work was passing. To a certain extent "Graham's," and noticeably the "Broadway Journal", were padded with twice and thrice told tales, not because Poe did not wish to furnish fresh material, but because he could not. From this time, his work showed his mental abnormalities. I refer especially to his discussion of the cosmogony of the universe, which he dedicated to Alexander Von Humboldt, and which he called "Eureka," in the belief that he had found the solution and had solved the riddle of the universe.

Poe's neurosis has been so exploited, and so marvelous and many sided was his genius, that it has been a difficult matter for his critical biographers to classify him.

Was he the Jekyll of Gill or the Hyde of Griswold?

Biography is as much a matter of skillful delineation as is the profession of an artist, and it can be successfully pursued only by one who is an impressionist—not by one who copies too closely from nature. If it be necessary to make a photographic reproduction, this delineation must be made by one who is a master of that art. The resulting portrait will never satisfy unless its subject has been fully retouched and the blemishes, which are a part of every human countenance, have been removed. The aging wrinkle

that creases the forehead, the converging "crow's feet" which accusingly point to the *arcus senilis*, the wart that is slowly displacing the beauty-giving mole, even the statuesque pose we assume, and our attempt to look pleasant when the iron tongs grip our cranium—all these, as a rule, are painstakingly removed; or should the artist be no artist, are so modified that one may lose his individuality. Occasionally the photographer is compelled to take a side view because of some hideous deformity.

Should the photographer whom we have trusted to make our likeness be so careless as to finish and to mount the photograph as it comes from the camera, without retouching or in any way attempting to disguise time's ravages or nature's handicap, we have a right to criticise the careless workmanship that was content to represent us with the disfiguring yet characteristic facial blemishes.

The biographer occasionally minimizes faults, explains away defects, and, in time, may so apotheosize his subject, that we, who once knew him and loved him in spite of his frailties, who knew by experience his shortcomings and the human side of him, may be pardoned if we do not at first glance recognize the unfamiliar pose and the retouched presentment. For this reason no biographer can satisfy who does not attempt, while giving the essential facts, to so Boswellize his subject as to transform him into his own mental image, freed from petty faults and minor weaknesses.

Friendly biographers have committed serious errors. I do not care for Froude who enumerated the dyspeptic foibles of Carlyle, nor do I uphold Trelawney who exhibited the antics of the half-mad Byron, nor do I love Griswold who so unkindly defamed the man whom he should have honored and who, for this reason, shall be known as the "*unfaithful servant who abused his trust.*"

I want no literary anatomist to dissect my inmost

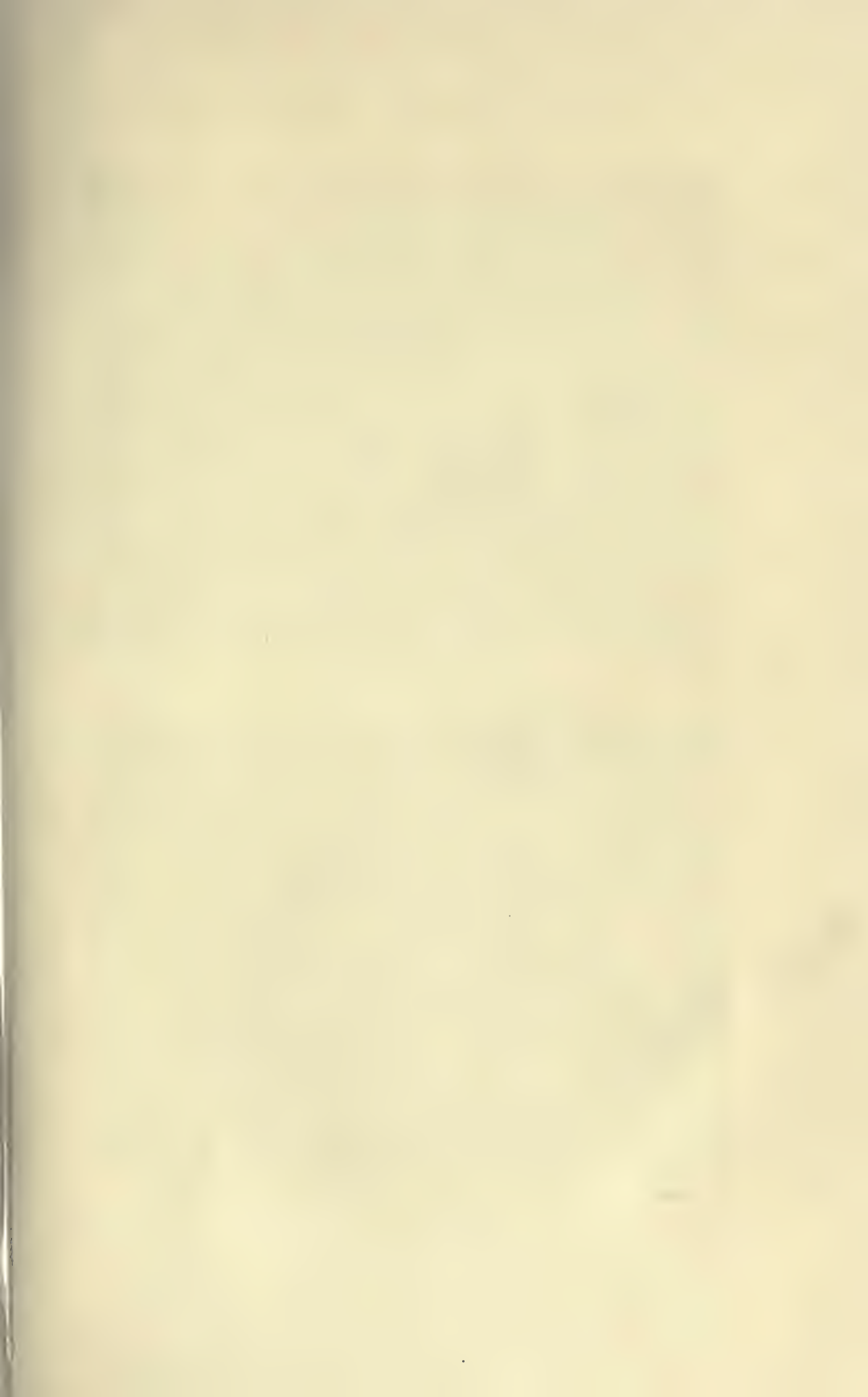
thoughts, nor to explore my secret places—hidden even from myself—nor to speculate on their untried possibilities, nor to exhibit my organs as specimens of dextrous carving. If Nirvana be denied the spirit that animates me, and if my remains be refused the right of cremation, and if they must still cumber the earth and be pointed to as anatomical specimens for exhibition, at least let my body be filled with spices and my skin be softened with the balm of Gilead, and let me be wrapped in spikenard and myrrh as the kindly Egyptians embalmed those whom they loved.

Should the biographer deliberately pose his subject from the scar side, exhibiting all deformities, and magnifying blemishes, at the same time touching out the features that do give individuality and the right to posterity's remembrance, he may no longer claim authority to represent, or to be associated with one he has so foully wronged, nor to be quoted when such a life is discussed.

Such an one was the Reverend Rufus Wilmot Griswold, who, by artifice and fraud, has so firmly and indissolubly connected his name with that of Poe, and in the preface to Poe's own works has made statements of such a character, so distorted when they bear the slightest semblance of truth, when not absolutely false so perverted as to be unrecognizable, that I cannot pass him over without full discussion.

Griswold was a man of Poe's own age, who had no hereditary weaknesses, no compulsions, no obsessions—no genius. He was a very moral man. He was a preacher.

I imagine him to have been a man strongly built, with a squat figure; square, flat, stubby fingers, attached to a markedly prehensile, hairy hand; jutting brows surmounting small, close set eyes that looked out boldly and self-confidently; a long, flat nose with spreading alae, and a prognathous jaw covered with a heavy beard which descended and became a part of his hairy chest. I cannot say





that this picture, in outward form, more resembles Griswold's real features than that distorted moral picture he drew resembled Poe; yet God marks all of us. Beyond question there should have been some such physique to have contained the strong, sterling qualities that sometimes do disfigure man. His face must have differed from that of Poe as the Ass into which Bottom was transformed differed from that of a blue-blooded Arabian. His countenance assuredly bore that expression of sanctity, which, in olden time, Hogarth gave to the Puritan. It must have been characterized by that sanctimonious smirk of the man who never has, in public, committed a wrong action or thought a wrong thought. Such men we had when the inquisition flourished, when puritanism ruled our land and witches were burned, while old Cotton Mather from his pulpit urged on his flock to further deeds of righteousness.

Mrs. Whitman, recalling Poe's picture in the first volume of his collected works, says:

The reader who has this volume in his hands, turns back musingly to look upon the features of the poet in whom resided such inspiration. But though well engraved, and useful as recalling his features to those who knew him with the angel shining through, the picture is from a daguerreotype and gives no idea of the beauty of Edgar Poe.

As to whether Poe was responsible when he requested Griswold to edit his works or, as a matter of fact, whether this request was ever made, will be discussed later. It is certain that at no time did Poe ask or expect Griswold to write a memoir to be published as an introduction to his completed work.

This final tribute, which should properly introduce Poe to the world, if he required such introduction, had been assigned to Willis. At best it was to be perfunctory, as is usually the case when some Personage addresses a small town audience, and its leading citizen is asked to take a

seat upon the stage and make a few "introductory remarks." Should this introductory speech be filled with scathing denunciation reflecting on the speaker's past history, his morals, his manners, and branding him a felon, surely the introducer hardly would be thought to have carried out honorably his part of the contract. But should the janitor, whose business it is to sweep the hall, to arrange the chairs, to light the gas, and to see that the room is properly heated and aired, come upon the stage after the Personage had been properly introduced, and volunteer his billingsgate, surely the audience would regard it as a trespass and they would demand that this caretaker return to the sweeping of dirt, and to the dusting of the statuary that adorns this "Hall of Fantasy".

Griswold was a man experienced in literary criticism, with some pretension to the role of arbiter as to those things that should be preserved, and that should constitute contemporary American literature; yet he was possessed of no originality or capacity further than that second-rate capacity for collecting and annotating the work of others. He had published a few sermons and had written some poetry, but his great literary activity had consisted in collecting, incubating, and associating his own name with the work of his contemporaries. He had edited anthologies of the American poets, and had compiled books. To him we must credit "Poetry and Prose Writers of America," together with "Washington and His Generals," "Napoleon and His Marshals," "The Female Poets of America," and other publications of like caliber. He was also responsible for "The Cypress Wreath: A Book of Consolation for Those Who Mourn," and a "Biographical Annual, Consisting of Memoirs of Eminent Persons Recently Deceased". Certainly none of these works, either by title or contents, gave any evidence of the powers of vituperation which dwelt in the reverend gentleman. It is certain he would not



not have dared write of Poe, living, as he did of Poe, dead. It was impossible for Poe, in discussing an author, to tell a literary lie, and, sooner or later when he warmed to his subject, not to express himself freely and fully, and to write as his literary conscience dictated; even while occasionally he did try to modify his opinion.

Poe's mind was elementary and only saw that which was essentially true. It was not the retort of the chemist which transforms the atoms of the elements into the molecule, completely changing form, color, and substance. It was rather the primitive alembic of the alchemist and, with all his effort, Poe could not change the zinc and copper atoms into a new chemical combination. It remained brass and he detected and so described it. He could not make dross into gold, but he almost succeeded where the alchemist failed—changing the leaden weights which held him down into a glorious Aureola. However hard he tried to dissolve and render homogenous the incongruous mass, sooner or later, as he warmed to his work, the dregs and impurities of the mixture sank, and out of the *capital* of his alembic poured the liquid essence of Truth.

He could only reproduce what, to his mind, actually existed, and it came forth so surcharged with literary wrath that only the scorched victim could dissent.

Griswold had proposed to insert some of Poe's work in one of his anthologies—in fact it was in this way that Poe had made his acquaintance. Poe did not hesitate to criticize, fully and freely, "The Poets and Poetry of America," and seriously to differ with Griswold in his estimate of certain authors. It is also true that because Griswold occupied the position vacated by Poe on "Graham's Magazine," as well as for other reasons, there had resulted a personal enmity. After Poe's death Griswold exhibited marked interest in the welfare of Mrs. Clemm, and sympathized with her in her bereavement, and expressed friendship for Poe.

Had there been no reconciliation, it is impossible for me to conceive the innate vindictiveness of a man who would deliberately take such revenge on a dead foe. I prefer to believe that the man's mental caliber was so narrow and his moral fiber so coarse, that he did not appreciate the nature and quality of his act, nor the enormity of this breach of trust, simply because he had none of the instincts that would have restrained a more gentle man. That there was some foundation for this personal assault and these distorted statements, makes it the more unforgivable. Had Griswold felt it necessary to go into such details, he should have gone further and sought their source. Certain it is that many of Poe's literary acquaintances, although they had received over-severe criticism at his hands, or had suffered in a business way to a far greater extent than had Griswold, came to the defense of the memory of Poe, and forgot small antagonisms and personal misunderstandings in rehabilitating the good name of the man whom they regarded as their literary master.

If any of Poe's business associates had the right to complain, or to criticize certain acts and statements of Poe during his periods of irresponsibility, it was Graham of the "Gentleman's Magazine;" yet he, supported by Willis and other literary friends and associates, so bitterly denounced the death notice written by Griswold for the "New York Tribune," as to precipitate a controversy the echoes of which have not yet ceased to reverberate. Griswold exculpated himself by asserting that, at the time he wrote the "Tribune" sketch, he did not know he had been appointed Poe's literary executor. Nor is it certain that he was selected. He had "heard" that Poe "had long been in the habit of expressing a desire that in the event of his death I should be his editor." But it is not for this preliminary sketch that Griswold's name is *anathema*. As

a reviewer or compiler he had the right to express his opinion of Poe; although it might have been a more friendly act and one more in consonance with the dictates of decency and humanity had he foregone this right, considering their past differences and association. After accepting the editorship of Poe's writings, Griswold was under no misconception as to the duties it entailed.

I did not suppose I was debarred from the expression of any feelings or opinions in the case of the acceptance of this office, the duties of which I regarded as simply the collection of his works and their publication for the benefit of the rightful inheritors of his property, in a form and manner that would have probably been most agreeable to his own wishes.

In the "Tribune" article published a few days after Poe's death, Griswold made certain statements which seriously reflected on Poe's moral character, and detailed incidents which, to him, seemed to justify the statement that while it might surprise many to learn of Poe's death, "but few would be grieved by it." Had this statement been the only offense no further notice would have been taken of it, especially as Griswold did not sign his own name but, for a good reason, chose "Ludwig" as a fit pseudonym to accompany this denunciatory obituary. The article brought forth several active rejoinders and, in time, Griswold stood unmasked. To defend himself, he attempted to prove that Poe was all that he had originally asserted, and that he had not told the half of his victim's misdeeds.

If, when Griswold wrote this first article he did not know he was to preside over Poe's literary remains, he certainly did know, as editor and in complete control of Poe's collected works, that by reproducing his original charges and amplifying them, he was holding up to obloquy for future generations a literary artist the latchet of whose shoe he was not worthy to touch.

He took advantage of this accidental relationship to be-

smirch the memory of one whom by all the codes of decency he was under obligations to shield. He attempted to prove that Poe was as evil and as morally corrupt as he had described him in the Ludwig article. The unforgivable act was his insertion of this as a memoir prefacing Poe's collected works, so that they became the vehicle for carrying his contentious and defamatory statements; and, worse than this, it necessitated all who read the writings of Poe to be tempted to believe these scurrilous accusations, for, unfortunately, they bore the imprint of authority.

It would have been better for the memory of both Poe and Griswold had Poe died somewhat earlier and been included in the "Memoirs of Eminent Persons Recently Deceased," or even in "The Cypress Wreath: The Book of Consolation for Those Who Mourn". Certainly it would have been better for Griswold, who did not confine himself to the villification of the dead but bitterly assailed those who had a good word for Poe, and who were better acquainted with him through intimate business and personal relations. Quoting from Griswold's preface:

My unconsidered and imperfect, but, as every one who knew its subject readily perceived, very kind article, was now vehemently attacked. A writer under the signature of 'George R. Graham' in a sophomorical and trashy but widely circulated Letter, denounced it as 'the fancy sketch of a jaundiced vision,' and 'an immortal infamy' and its composition 'a breach of trust.' . . . And Mr. John Neal, too, who had never had even the slightest personal acquaintance with Poe in his life, rushes from a sleep which the public had trusted was eternal, to declare that my characterization of Poe is false and malicious, and that I am a 'caluminator,' a 'Rhadamanthus' etc., etc.

All this is contained in a sketch, preliminary to the memoir, which Griswold inserted, and proves that he did what he did deliberately, calculatingly, and in cold blood. He freely and fully conceded Poe's genius and did not deny to him primacy as the greatest of American writers. This was an unnecessary concession, inasmuch as the volumes

in which it was to appear spoke in Poe's own behalf. While unnecessary, a literary estimate with propriety could have been inserted. It was Poe's writings and not his morals that should have been a matter for discussion. Placed among these encomiums was a most malignant attack on Poe's moral life, and a determined attempt to blacken his character by introducing hostile statements—some apparently true, but in no way proper to be related if true; others absolutely false and malicious.

What Griswold did not dare to state definitely—and there was little he failed to allege—he introduced by insinuation and innuendo. In describing the final rupture between Poe and Allan he referred to some act which,

If true, throws a dark shade upon the quarrel, and a very ugly light upon Poe's character. We shall not insert it because it is one of those relations we think with Sir Thomas Browne, should never be recorded,—being 'verities whose truth we fear and heartily wish there were no truth therein . . . whose relations honest minds do deprecate. For of sins heteroclital, and such as want name or such precedent, there is oftentimes a sin even in their history. We desire no record of enormities; sins should be accounted new. They omit of their monstrosity as they fall from their rarity; for men count it venial to err with their forefathers and foolishly conceive they divide a sin in its society. . . . In things of this nature, silence commendeth history; 'tis the veniable part of things lost; wherein there must never arise a Pancirollus, nor remain any register but that of hell.

Such rumors, even if they can be authenticated, should have no place in a memoir where their mere presence breeds contagion. Many statements in which Griswold reflects on Poe have been proved to be without foundation. In this particular case Poe, at worst, was under the influence of alcohol when he made some slighting remark to Mrs. Allan regarding this second marriage.

Griswold minimized nothing. In every instance where an immoral, or even an indiscreet action, was alleged, he made no allowance for the fact that Poe might not have

been responsible. Many of his statements relate to incidents that occurred during the period of Poe's life when we know his intellect was failing. It was not necessary that Griswold should have assumed an attitude toward the memory of Poe which did not fully represent his own judgment. Having undertaken the position of a literary executor, it was not his duty and should not have been his pleasure to exhibit in the worst light all the weaknesses and evil compulsions that exist in all of us. He certainly had no right to accept as a fact, and to include in this memoir, anything of a discreditable nature without the fullest investigation, and then only as an elucidation of the text. His own explanation does not render the matter, nor the manner of his memoir, less offensive.

*De mortuis nil nisi bonum* is a common and an honorable sentiment, but its proper application would lead to the suppression of the histories of half of the most conspicuous of mankind; in this case it is impossible on account of the notoriety of Mr. Poe's faults; and it would be unjust to the living against whom his hands were always raised and who had no resort but in his outlawry from their sympathies. Moreover, his career is full of instruction and warning, and it has always been made a portion of the penalty of wrong that its anatomy should be displayed for the common study and advantage.

Few had more experience in biography and in the personal study of authors than this Griswold, but in the case of no other writer did he find it necessary to demonstrate anatomy or to preach a lesson to our youth. Even this pious intention does not justify the demonstration. He sums up the whole matter as follows:‘

His harsh experience had deprived him of all faith, in man or woman. He had made up his mind upon the numberless complexities of the social world, and the whole system with him was an imposture. This conviction gave a direction to his shrewd and naturally unamiable character. Still, though he regarded society as composed altogether of villains, the sharpness of his intellect was not of the kind which enabled him to cope with villainy, while it continually caused him by overshots to fail of the success of honesty. He was in many

respects like Francis Vivian, in Bulwer's novel of 'The Caxtons.' Passion, in him, comprehended many of the worst emotions which militate against human happiness. You could not contradict him, but you raised quick choler; you could not speak of wealth but his cheek paled with gnawing envy. The astonishing natural advantages of this poor boy—his beauty, his readiness, the daring spirit that breathed around him like a fiery atmosphere—had raised his constitutional self-confidence into arrogance that turned his very claims to admiration into prejudices against him. Irascible, envious—bad enough, but not the worst, for these salient angles were all varnished over with a cold repellent cynicism [sic], his passions vented themselves in sneers. There seemed to him no moral susceptibility; and, what was more remarkable in a proud nature, little or nothing of the true point of honor. He had, to a morbid excess, that desire to rise which is vulgarly called ambition, but no wish for the esteem or the love of his species; only the hard wish to succeed—not shine, not serve—succeed, that he might have the right to despise a world which galled his self conceit.

In these words does Griswold close his self appointed task of writing a memoir of Edgar A. Poe!

Years after Poe's death his name remained a reproach and a byword, the synonym of all that was vicious: it was used to point a moral and to teach the younger generation the danger of unbridled passions and immoral practices. Even the greatest of his poems and the most marvelous of his tales were said to be merely the outpourings of a brain poisoned by alcohol and drugs.

Ten years after his death "The Edinburgh Review" thus discusses him:

Edgar Allan Poe was incontestably one of the most worthless persons of whom we have any record in the world of letters. Many authors have been as idle; many as improvident; some as drunken and dissipated and a few, perhaps, as treacherous and ungrateful; but *he* seems to have succeeded in attracting and combining, in his own person, all the floating vices which genius had hitherto shown itself capable of grasping in its widest and most eccentric orbit. Yet his chances of success at the outset of life were great and manifold. Nature was bountiful to him; bestowing upon him pleasing powers and excellent

talent. He defied his good genius. There was a perpetual strife between him and virtue, in which virtue never triumphed. . . . He outraged his benefactor, he deceived his friends, he sacrificed his love, he became a beggar, a vagabond, the slanderer of a woman, the delirious drunken pauper of a common hospital—hated by some, despised by others, and avoided by all respectable men.

This foul and garbled statement was approvingly copied by the editor of "The Ladies' Repository" a monthly periodical devoted to literature and religion, also edited by a preacher, the Rev. D. W. Clark, D. D.

Griswold had won his case and had fully established the facts on which he had based his "unconsidered and imperfect but, as everyone who knew its subject readily perceived, very kind article."

The reverend gentleman had found the one method by which his prejudiced, untrue, and vicious statements could be disseminated equally with Poe's immortal works—possibly the only method, for none could read without seeing them. Unfortunately, they bore the imprint of authority.

It was in this same year, 1859, and in answer to this article, that Mrs. Whitman forced herself to lay bare her own story and to publish a defense of Poe, the main facts of which bear intrinsic evidence of truth. While it was dictated by the heart rather than by the head—for the old love dominated her—yet her personal plea, supported by those of many at that time living who knew the facts, brought forth numerous defenders whose investigations have gone far in elucidating controversial statements and in disproving the most serious of Griswold's allegations. Among these, Hannay and Ingram in England, and Gill in America, have been Poe's most earnest defenders. Certain of his biographers, such as Stedman, frankly ignore the personal details and confine themselves to a discussion of his writings. Others, like Harrison, imbued with the love



of their subject because of association of locality, and a great personal sympathy, while detailing the facts, yet minimize and explain. On the whole Harrison's is, as all biographies should be, an ample appreciation of all that could magnify the accomplishments and lend glory to his subject; and, although indirectly, he associates the name of our greatest writer with the state of Virginia and her Queen City, Richmond, "The Virginia Poe" is the correct characterization even if, by accident, Poe was born in Boston.

Woodberry, that excellent workman on whom I have depended for many of my facts, is the only other authority whom it is necessary to discuss. He did not select his subject, nor was he drawn to it by any personal or literary inclination; his architect set him the task and, like a master carpenter, he builded as well as he knew. Selecting sound material where strength was needed, he often left knot-holes as peepsights, and made no effort to conceal or throw aside inferior and occasionally rotten material. Neither the situation nor the plan inspired him.

I was asked by my friend, the late Charles Dudley Warner, in 1883, to write the life of Poe for the 'American Men of Letters Series,' which he was then editing. My attention had never been drawn to Poe, nor my interest specially excited by his works; so that I entered upon my task, my first important literary commission, with a fresh mind; and, though contact with the subject may have bred prejudice, I had none at the outset.

This from a literary man who proposed dispassionately to discuss and anatomize a genius, not as a surgeon would perform some merciful operation on a patient he loved, but as a vivisectionist would dissect some unfriended animal in order to demonstrate the circulation of the blood, and would run his scalpel into all the heart's compartments, and play with its fibers. No pity, no love, swayed the hand; only the deliberate purpose to demonstrate a fact, however cruelly it hurt, however wildly the heart palpitated.

To write biography successfully one must love one's subject. Had not Boswell loved, as well as revered, his Johnson, how easily could he have dwelt on the foibles, the vanities, the contradictions, and the absurdities which necessarily are a part of the lives of the wisest and sanest, and which, in the case of Johnson, come with almost irresistible compulsion,—and have spoiled his biography.

Woodberry's statement, "contact with the subject may have bred prejudice," is explained by the fact that this early study led to his later association with the Poe MSS., which Griswold had "assumed." Woodberry had been asked to edit these papers and, later, had similarly edited the Poe-Chivers correspondence.

Through these years information naturally came to me, also, from other sources, though I have never engaged in personal investigation since writing the former biography . . . I have aimed also to present in the text the facts of Poe's career as they lie in my own mind, in the notes I have allowed others to speak freely, for praise or dispraise, in order that all may have a fair field where there is so great a controversy. In the former biography I excluded much and suppressed much, of what I thought the world would willingly let die; but this proved a fruitless attempt to assist oblivion, and I have, in the present work, at least noticed all that had been said or alleged on this subject.

By what right Griswold claimed and held Poe's private papers and MSS. is not clear. Gill, basing his statement on letters and direct communications personally made to him by Mrs. Clemm says:

It was simply the act of a designing and unscrupulous man, prompted by hatred and greed of gain, taking advantage of a helpless woman, unaccustomed to business, to defraud her of her rights, and gratify his malice and his avarice at her expense. A small sum of money having been given to Mrs. Clemm in exchange for Poe's private papers, Dr. Griswold draws up a paper for Mrs. Clemm to sign, announcing his appointment as Poe's literary executor. This is duly signed by Mrs. Clemm and printed over her signature in the published edition of Poe's works. . . . Mrs. Clemm, at the time she signed the paper which she scarcely understood, had no idea that Dr. Griswold

had any intention of supplementing Mr. Willis' obituary with any memoir by his own pen.

This refers to a preface, "To The Reader," signed by Mrs. Clemm, which was inserted in the first volume, "Tales", and which, in addition, contained a short biography entitled "Edgar A. Poe," written by James Russell Lowell. This had been published in "Graham's Magazine" in 1845, and was here republished with slight variations. With this was a most appreciative review of Poe and his work by Willis, under the title "Death of Edgar A. Poe."

It was in the third volume of the "Literati" that the immortal infamy" was committed. A noticeable thing is that Woodberry, who edited these papers, possibly because he was a classmate of the younger Griswold, had full information of all known facts. He does not refer to the acquirement of these MSS., although he definitely states that Griswold's editorship of Poe's works brought no financial reward. As a rule, Woodberry defends Griswold and, as far as facts allow, upholds all charges made against Poe. Certain it is that this association "may have bred prejudice."

Nor did this publication bring any financial gain to Mrs. Clemm, although she was made to say:

In this edition of my son's works, published for my benefit, it is a great pleasure for me to thank Mr. Griswold and Mr. Willis . . . for labors . . . which they performed without any other recompense than the happiness which rewards acts of duty and kindness.

Mrs. Clemm was definitely promised not only that she should participate in the profits of the sale of Poe's works, but was made to believe that these would amount to a sum so large as to make her independent of charity. Apparently she thought that Willis was to be associated with Griswold in this editorship. She wrote to "Annie":

They say I am to have the *entire* proceeds so you see, Annie, I will not be entirely destitute. . . . [1] have been very much engaged with Mr. Griswold in looking over his [Poe's] papers. . . . He must

have them *all* until the work is published. He thinks I will realize from two to three thousand dollars from the sale of these books. . . . How nobly they [Griswold and Willis] have acted! all done gratis, and you know to literary people that is a great deal. . . . Those gentlemen who have so kindly undertaken the publication of his works say that I will have a very comfortable income from them.

That her only recompense was as sales agent is shown by the following letter she wrote to Washington Poe, dated 1851, two years after Poe's death:

The publisher of my poor Eddie's works can only allow me as many copies of the work as I choose to dispose of amongst my friends; but a continued state of ill health, and a delicacy of feeling prevents my availing myself of this privilege, except through the kindness of a few friends who have disposed of a few copies for me.

Mrs. Clemm lived an object of charity and she died in a pauper's home.

By what means Griswold succeeded in gaining possession of all of Poe's papers, and for what reason he wished to edit them and to be held responsible for their preservation when past differences were so notorious and his expressed views had been so forcibly presented, deserves a much fuller discussion than this question has received.

Woodberry barely refers to the matter, simply stating:

Before leaving Fordham he [Poe] wrote requests that Griswold should superintend the collection of his works, and that Willis should write such a biographical notice as should be deemed necessary.

If Poe wrote such a note, Griswold did not receive it. Griswold's own statement is explicit and definite:

I was told by several of Mr. Poe's intimate friends—among others by the family of S. D. Lewis, Esq.,—that he had long been in the habit of expressing a desire that in the event of his death I should be his editor. I yielded to the apparent necessity.

Griswold never stated that he had been directly asked to officiate in this capacity, nor that he received such request by letter. Had he been directly approached he would not apologetically have published a number of irrelevant business letters, not always dated, which he

prefixed to his memoir in order to prove that he was on friendly terms with Poe.

That Griswold believed he could in this way associate his name with one who would be regarded as our greatest writer is a possible but not a probable explanation, for he was myopic when long vision was necessary, and astigmatic when breadth of vision was required, and his estimates of "authorial" merit—if they were honest—were characterized by a pronounced strabismus.

Yet there *was* some compelling reason. As we can hardly read our own mind, much less that of another, the answer, at best, is a surmise and possibly would only approximate the truth, even if given by one unprejudiced. I can not qualify in this class, for which reason I doubt my own interpretation of the facts.

Whatever be the reason, the result, in Woodberry's opinion, reflects much credit on Griswold:

The one distinguishing tribute paid to Rufus Wilmot Griswold, one that establishes his characteristic excellences, was his selection by Poe to be his literary executor just before his death. Poe was a good judge of editorial capacity, notwithstanding a history of personal relations that would seem to exclude the possibility of such a choice.

Nowhere does Woodberry, either directly or by implication, express other than admiration for Griswold in all that relates to his connection with Poe. Others have not dealt so kindly with this relationship. It has been asserted that Poe, at the time of his death, had almost if not quite completed a book which was to be entitled "The Authors of America", publication of which was announced in the "Home Journal" as of immediate issuance. It has never appeared. It is possible that it contained criticisms which Griswold believed were not creditable to Poe: yet it is not fair to Griswold to make so direct a charge of double dealing, for no one positively knows what was contained in the papers and books which Mrs. Clemm passed to Griswold because of his

direct request. It is also known that Poe had collected material for a "Critical History of American Literature"; at least he so wrote Lowell. Nothing issued therefrom except a fragment called *The Lighthouse*. Had not *Annabel Lee* been in other hands, and *The Bells* already in type, one cannot but fear for their fate at the critical hands of Griswold.

Why was Griswold willing to undertake this editorship? He explained in the preface to his "Memoir:"

I would gladly have declined a trust imposing so much labor, for I had been compelled by ill health to solicit the indulgence of my publishers, who had many thousand dollars in an unfinished work under my direction; but when I was told by several of his intimate friends that he had long been in the habit of expressing a desire that in the event of his death I should be his editor, I yielded to the apparent necessity.

Who did receive the money earned by this publication? Woodberry says:

He [Griswold] finally persuaded Mr. Redfield to try the experiment of issuing two volumes first, which were published and had a fair sale—then the third and finally the fourth were added to complete the works. The sale reached about 1500 sets each year.

It has been stated that over 20,000 sets of this edition were sold and it is certain that Mrs. Clemm received none of the promised royalties.

Neilson Poe transmitted to Griswold all the books and MSS. which he found in the trunk that Edgar Poe had with him at the time of his death, and, together with those things taken from Mrs. Clemm, these must have constituted Poe's entire literary remains. At the same time Neilson Poe wrote Griswold:

I have opened his trunk and find it to contain very few manuscripts of value. The chief of them is a lecture on the poetic principle and some paragraphs prepared, apparently, for some literary journal. There are, however, a number of books, his own works, which are full of corrections in his own hand. These ought, undoubtedly, to be placed in your hands.

Woodberry in commenting on this letter describes certain of these books:

These volumes were the copies of the *Tales* and *Poems*, now known as the Lorimer-Graham copies, the copy of *Eureka*, now known as Hurst's copy, and possibly others, all afterwards sold with Griswold's library.

Nor were any of Poe's books or MSS. returned by Griswold to Mrs. Clemm. These he had especially demanded as a preparation for their proper publication, and they included not only all of the books, many of them specially annotated by Poe, but all his notes and private memoranda. All these were either destroyed or retained. A few remained and were auctioned off when Griswold's library was sold.

It is probable, as Gill states, that Griswold actually bought all Mrs. Clemm's rights to these manuscripts. Why he preferred to keep or destroy them may be variously interpreted. Had he not bought, he certainly would have returned them.

It is possible that Griswold, because of his literary acumen, and knowing the value, had no objection to associating his name with the work of Poe. It is more probable that, having had experience with Poe's criticisms, he was willing to "edit" at least one of these, and felt it wise to suppress or modify others. It is certain that he did rewrite, or at least "emend," those referring to English and Briggs. Another article was suppressed. I cannot believe, with Gill, that the assumption of this editorship was "prompted by hatred," and that the insertion of the memoir in order to damn a dead enemy was a deciding factor; possibly, when Griswold saw the opportunity, he could not resist.

There was a reason which did deeply concern Griswold, and which might have induced him to purchase the manuscripts and thus obtain permanent control. Soon after "Poets and Poetry of America" was published Griswold and Poe discussed it, and Poe gave the following version of the conversation:

I said that I had thought of reviewing it in full . . . and that I knew no other work in which a notice would be readily admissable. Griswold said in reply: 'You need not trouble yourself about the *publication* of the review, should you decide on writing it, for I will attend to all that. I will get it in some reputable work, and look to it for the usual pay in the meantime handing you whatever the charge would be.' This you see was an ingenious insinuation of a bribe to puff his book. I accepted his offer forthwith, and wrote the review, handed it to him, and received from him the compensation; he never daring to look over the manuscript in my presence, and taking it for granted it was all right. But that review has not yet appeared, and I am doubtful if it ever will. I wrote it precisely as I would have written under ordinary circumstances, and be sure there was no predominance of praise.

One cannot be certain that this review, as written, was ever published. Apparently Poe did not make an extended criticism at that time, although there is an article reproduced in Poe's collected works under the title, *Mr. Griswold and the Poets*. While not altogether flattering, it does contain pleasant personal references, and occasionally there is a tone of decided approval.

In this preface, which is remarkably well written and strictly to the purpose, the author thus evinces a just comprehension of the nature and objects of true poesy, 'He who looks on Lake George, or sees the sun rise on the Mackinaw, or listens to the grand music of a storm, is divested, certainly for a time, of a portion of the alloy of his nature . . . *The creation of beauty, the manifestation of the real by the ideal, 'in words that move in metrical array'* is poetry. The italics are our own; and we quote the passage because it embodies the *sole true* definition of what has been a thousand times erroneously defined.

This, and other equally complimentary references, does not correspond with Poe's description of his review nor does it express Poe's real opinion of the work.

By the way, if you have not seen Mr. Griswold's 'American Series of the Curiosities of Literature' then look at it, for God's sake—or for mine. I wish you to say upon your word of honor, whether it is, or is not, *per se*, the greatest of all the curiosities of Literature, or whether it is as great a curiosity as the compiler himself.

Again Poe wrote:



He is a pretty fellow to set himself up for an *honest* judge, or even as a capable one. I shall make war to the knife against the New England assumption of 'All the decency and all the talent' which has been so disgustingly manifested by the Rev. Rufus Griswold's 'Poets and Poetry of America.'

is another of his expressed criticisms.

Poe, in his lecture on "The Poets and Poetry of America," severely criticized Griswold's volume. However, the crowning offense was his review in the "Saturday Museum," of the third edition of Griswold's "Poets."

Poe began this review with a discussion of Griswold's capacity for such work. He questions Griswold's pretension to having established either a literary or a critical reputation that would give him the right to pass on the qualifications and the literary performances of his contemporaries whom he proposed to discuss. He asks:

Did the 'Jonathan' or the 'Notion' attain any higher position than before, during Mr. G.'s connection with them; or have the 'Post' or 'Graham's' improved under his supervision? The 'Standard' we leave out of the question as it expired under his management. Certainly not the former; and the brilliant career of 'Graham's Magazine' under Mr. Poe's care, and its subsequent trashy literary character since his retirement, is a sufficient response. . . . As a critic his judgment is worthless, for a critic should possess sufficient independence and honesty to mete out justice to all men, without fear, favor or partiality. . . . Are Dana and Hoffman the superiors of N. P. Willis? . . . Is Bryant a better poet than Longfellow? Certainly not, for in Longfellow's pages the spirit of poetry—ideality—walks abroad, while Bryant's sole merit is tolerable versification and fine marches of description. Longfellow is undoubtedly the best poet in America.

After discussing versification and the art of poetry, and after specifying certain necessary standards which must guide a poet in his selection and treatment of a subject, illustrating it with various happy selections, Poe took up and critically dissected Griswold's poem, "The Storm Cloud," and bitterly criticized its underlying idea, its versification and its grammatical construction, comparing

it; to its very great disadvantage, with the "Charmed Sleeper."

Did any one ever read such nonsense? We *never* did, and, shall hereafter eschew everything that bears the name of Rufus Wilmot Griswold, as strongly as the Moslemite the forbidden wine, or the Jew the 'unmentionable flesh.' . . . We shall quote some few passages from one of his latest reviews, and that on the author of the 'Charmed Sleeper'—Alfred Tennyson, whose genius and originality have excited the imitative faculties of the principal poets of America. 'His chief characteristics pertaining to style, *they* will not long attract regard.' Here we have a gross grammatical error—*two* nominatives to *one* verb, 'characteristics' and 'they' to 'will.' 'He tricks out common thoughts in dresses so unique it is not always easy to identify them.' (Is this not originality? Yet in the next portion of the sentence we hear this sapient critic say) 'but we have not seen in his works proofs of an original mind.' (*O tempore! O mores!* This *Griswold* says of *Tennyson!*) Again, 'as a versifier, Holmes is equal to Tennyson, and with the same patient effort would in every way surpass him. We desire none of his companionship.' (Don't you hope you may get it?) 'Him who *stole* at first hand from Keats.' Well, if this is not the height of assurance we do not know what is, coming as it does from one of the most clumsy of literary thieves, and who in his wildest aspirations, never even dreamed of an original thought. A man who does not understand the first principles of versification, the author of the 'Sunset Storm,' and thus to speak of Tennyson, the author of the 'Sleeping Beauty' we have just quoted! We can only say to Mr. Griswold, 'Jove protect *us* from his reviewing and the public from what he deems exquisite. . . . Let us proceed. Ah! what have we here? '*The creation of beauty, the manifestation of the real by the ideal, in words that move in metrical array, is poetry!*' Now what is this but a direct amplification of our poet of the definition of poetry—'*the rhythmical creation of beauty*'—which appeared in Mr. Poe's critique on Professor Longfellow's ballads, from which *we* know, and *he* knows, he stole it.

Compare this with *Mr. Griswold and the Poets* as published in "The Literati," or with his reference to a definition of poetry previously quoted.

Well, we have looked over the book, and we find it just such a result as might be anticipated. The biographies are miserably written, and as to the criticisms on style, they certainly are not *critiques*

*raisonnes*, and that simply because reasoning and thinking are entirely out of Mr. G.'s sphere. As to the different degrees of merit allotted to each author, we cannot help thinking it possible, but we will not say it, that *sub rosa* arrangements were made, and a proportionable quantity of fame allotted, in consideration of the *quid pro quo* received. Besides the whole work is not even a specimen of the 'Poets and Poetry of America'; and in giving it our unqualified condemnation, we only cite the opinion of all, even to the poets who have been so unfortunate as to figure in its pages.

So Poe continues, excoriating and vitriolic in his denunciations. He finishes his review with the following remarkable passage:

Had Mr. Griswold the genius of Shakespeare, the powers of a Milton, or the critical learning of a Macaulay, he could not stem the torrent of animadversion this book has raised; but must be overwhelmed by the tide of public disapprobation which has set in so strongly upon him; but as he has neither the one nor the other, what will be his fate? Forgotten, save only by those whom he has injured and insulted, he will sink into oblivion, without leaving a landmark to tell he once existed; or if he is spoken of hereafter he will be quoted as *the unfaithful servant who abused his trust*.

The italics are Poe's. Could words more prophetic have been written?

After reading this criticism, which bears evidence of sincerity—all criticism is necessarily harsh, although it may be kindly meant—and a full comprehension of Griswold's real capacity as a critic, it is hard to believe that Poe did request Griswold to become his literary executor. It will be remembered that Poe spoke in the same way to others during the time of his failing mentality. As he was leaving New York on his last journey, in bidding farewell to Mrs. Lewis at whose house he had spent the night, she reports that Poe said:

You truly understand and appreciate me—I have a presentiment that I shall never see you again. I must leave today for Richmond. If I never return, write my life. You can and will do me justice.

Griswold based his claim to appointment on the au-

thority of "the family of S. D. Lewis, Esq.," declaring that he had heard from them that such was Poe's request. I quote from Woodberry whose account is noticeable because of his remarkable industry in gathering up all that concerns this controversy, and who states most of the facts whether alleged by Poe's detractors or defenders, although the latter are found principally in his "Notes." Nor does Woodberry make any mention of the criticism on the third edition of Griswold's "Poets of America", as published in the "Saturday Museum," and which had caused Griswold's hostility to Poe, in spite of the former's attempt to make Mrs. Clemm believe that his "assuming" the literary executorship was an "act of duty and kindness."

Griswold in the preface to his "Memoir" denies enmity.

Both these writers—John Neal following the author of the letter signed 'George R. Graham'—not only assume what I have shown to be false (that the remarks on Poe's character were written by me *as his executor*), but that there was a long, intense, and implacable enmity betwixt Poe and myself, which disqualified me for the office of his biographer. This scarcely needs an answer after the poet's dying request that I should be his editor; but the manner in which it has been urged, will, I trust, be a sufficient excuse for the following demonstration of its absurdity.

Griswold quotes various letters, all referring to Poe's literary work, which he had proposed to include in his "Poets and Poetry of America," but the dates do not show that these were written after the "Museum" article, and Gill says that they were "emended."

Woodberry says:

Of these letters two originals only were among the Griswold Mss. and both varied materially from the printed text; but however garbled the letters, the relation of the two men are plain. . . . These business communications contain expressions of regard for Griswold's work and apologetic expressions for censure, which may or may not be garbled or interpolated.

Griswold made no attempt to conceal his real attitude

both to the memory of Poe and to Mrs. Clemm. In a letter written to Mrs. Whitman soon after Poe's death, Griswold does not hesitate to express himself fully:

I wrote, as you suppose, the notice of Poe in 'The Tribune', but very hastily. *I was not his friend, nor was he mine* [italics are Griswold's] as I remember to have told you. I undertook to edit his writings to oblige Mrs. Clemm. . . . I saw very little of Poe in his last years. . . . I cannot refrain from begging you to be very careful what you say or write to Mrs. Clemm, who is not your friend, nor anybody's friend, and who has no element of goodness or kindness in her nature, but whose heart and understanding are full of malice and wickedness.

It was "to oblige Mrs. Clemm" that Griswold undertook the editorship, when, by so doing, he had "to solicit the indulgence of my publishers, who had many thousand dollars invested in an unfinished work under my direction." It is noticeable that Woodberry does not refer to the personal hostility existing at that time; neither does he more than mention the "Museum" article, nor does he publish the letter which Griswold wrote Mrs. Whitman, though all other recent biographers have quoted it.

It must have been some powerful reason that induced Griswold to neglect his own work "involving thousands of dollars," with whose safe keeping he was intrusted, and to undertake this work of editing the writings of an avowed enemy who had so bitterly excoriated him. It was not for gain and it was not for love; nor was it "an act of duty and kindness." It did result in Griswold "editing" some of Poe's criticisms, even after they had been published, in the emending of others, and in the suppression of his lecture on the "Poets and Poetry of America," as well as in the omission of the article which had appeared in the "Saturday Museum" and from which I have just quoted. After reading that closing sentence, I cannot believe that Poe "had long been in the habit of expressing a desire in the event of his death that I should be his editor." To avoid being pilloried for future generations, a less vain

and self-seeking author would have desired the control and ownership of such a publication.

Griswold's effort would have met with success had he been able, when so fair an opportunity presented itself, to have refrained from besmirching the memory of one of whom he should have been considerate; at least he might have been forgotten, rather than have been placed in the position of one who, "if he is spoken of hereafter, will be quoted as *the unfaithful servant who abused his trust.*" Beyond all question, Poe's criticism warped the judgment of Griswold. He was a Reverend, and possibly that kind of a Christian who will receive an insult without openly resenting it, and will "turn the other cheek" when assaulted. A man who thus accepts an insult is to be feared more than one who bravely stands forth, and hits back with all the strength that is in him. A gentle answer never turned away honest wrath and righteous indignation. I am as fearful of such association as I was when, sleeping in a cave of the Lava Beds, I found that a rattlesnake was warming itself in my blankets.

Christian though Griswold was, and meek and lowly as he may have appeared, he was not reputed to have been forbearing or honest. Ingram states that he was discharged from Graham's for "dishonesty", and that Thackeray "detected him in deliberate lying."

Woodberry in his "Appendix" quotes Leland, an intimate friend and admirer of Griswold, who wrote of him:

To the end of his life I was always with him a privileged character and could take, if I chose, the most extraordinary liberties, though he was one of the most irritable and vindictive men I ever met if he fancied he was in any way too familiarly treated.

Another probable reference to Griswold is found in the "Six-penny Magazine," quoted by Woodberry. It referred to an "excursion to Fordham to visit Poe."

Some sixteen years ago, I went on a little excursion with two others—one a reviewer, since dead, and the other a person who wrote laudatory notices of books, and borrowed money or favours from their flattered authors afterwards. He was called unscrupulous by some, but he probably considered his method a delicate way of conferring favour upon an author or of doing him justice without the disagreeable conditions of bargain and sale. It is certain that he lived better and held his head higher than many who did more and better work.

Yet, in judging the man, we must understand the times. It was not a period characterized by literary honesty, and Poe's "*quid pro quo*," applied to Griswold, could have with equal truth described the literary morals of many others. It is known that Greeley used Griswold for "unholy" purposes. "Get a right notice in the 'Ledger' if you can. But pay for it rather than not get a good one." Another wrote: "If you can get the accompanying notices published, one in the 'North American' and the other in the 'Evening Journal' without betraying it, do so. I shall cheerfully reciprocate the favor." Woodberry adds:

Greeley's characterizations are the shrewdest in the volume [referring to the papers Woodberry had been employed to edit] often only hints, but effective, and to Griswold himself he sometimes uses a tell-tale frankness: 'Now write me a few racy, spicy—not personal, far less malignant' [evidently Greeley knew his capacity and recognized his ability] 'depicting society and life in Philadelphia.' . . . Again, 'The only principle I ever found you tenacious of is that of having your pay at least as fast as you can earn it.' There are several other *obiter dicta* from different persons with regard to Griswold, who certainly had unamiable traits and grave defects.

After all, it is possible that, in the beginning, Griswold was only the *good dog*, the spaniel that fetched and carried for Greeley. It is known that Greeley bore no love for Poe and that, because Poe borrowed a small sum of money and had not been able to return it, Greeley did not hesitate to publicly brand him. Poe bitterly protested:

In the printed matter, I have underscored two passages. As regards the first:—it alone would have sufficed to assure me that *you* did

not write this article. I owe you money—I have been ill, unfortunate, no doubt weak, and yet am not able to refund the money—but on this ground *you*, Mr. Greeley, could never have accused me of being habitually unscrupulous in the fulfillment of my pecuniary obligations. The charge is *horribly false*—I have a hundred times left myself destitute of bread, for myself and family, that I might discharge my debts. . . . The second passage embodies a falsehood—and *therefore you* did not write it. I did *not* 'throw away the quill.' I arose from a sick-bed (although scarcely able to stand or see) and wrote.

It was Greeley who, according to his own report, ordered Griswold to write the Ludwig article, and while he does not specify the exact instructions he gave, it is entirely possible, judging from his method of personal supervision as detailed by Woodberry, that he fully indicated the character of the obituary he desired for publication. It is certain that he did not instruct Griswold to write one "not personal—far less malignant."

We learned by telegraph the fact of Poe's death at Baltimore, in the afternoon following its occurrence and soon after, meeting Dr. Griswold, and knowing his acquaintance with Poe, asked him to prepare some account of the deceased for the next morning's paper. He *immediately and hastily wrote in our presence* his two columns or more.

This article, so written (the italics are Greeley's), might have been a joint production, and over some of its passages they might have chortled with glee. Zoologists tell us that hyenas do utter sounds that resemble the human laugh.

Possibly undue space has been given to the personal relations existing between Poe and Griswold, and perhaps I have exhibited excessive warmth and have dwelt on this controversy unjustifiably.

One cannot thoroughly investigate the facts as they relate both to the genesis of this obituary and as to its later elaboration into a memoir, knowing that many of these assertions have as a foundation statements that are fabrications, and that others, if true, have as a basis a diseased brain and a disordered intellect, without some



manifestation of disgust; true or false they should not have been inserted into a memoir prefacing Poe's works

. . . and which we think with Sir Thomas Browne should never be recorded,—being 'verities whose truth we fear and heartily wish there was no truth therein . . . whose relations honest minds deprecate.'

I do not believe that Poe, either at that time or later, was *insane* in the usually accepted sense. It is true that by heredity he was abnormal. It is certain that he did not, in the ordinary relations of life, always view things as the normal individual does; but just who is *normal* is a matter difficult to decide. I have, in my time, met many men. I have read the biographies and autobiographies of many and know of some others by tradition. I have found no man who ever freely confessed to evil doing, except possibly poor Pepys; or who would analyze himself, his daily acts or the motives which underlie those acts, and tabulate them as they should be tabulated in the moral code. Even to themselves they misstate and hide, extenuate or actually do not realize, as was the case with Rousseau, the abnormalities which deform their inner lives.

Γνωθὶ σ' αὐτόν is a Utopian concept impossible of literal realization.

No man can know himself, nor can he fairly judge of his own actions. Compulsions seem, at times, to be excellent reasons: like the convex mirror the mind can not reflect the image in its true proportions. Occasionally, Narcissus-like, it becomes enamored of the picture reflected in its depths.

I know of but one man, and of him only by legend, who led an unblemished and an absolutely moral life, pure in thought and with no remembrance of any evil act, and therefore without a *realizing conscience*.

There is one other man whom, for some sixty years, I have known intimately, and whom for that reason, perhaps, I judge leniently, who is under the conviction that his every action is dominated by the highest principles only,

and that the golden rule is his guide—provided a few occasional deviations are allowed proper explanation. Nevertheless, even he finds that there are unplumbed depths in the recesses of his secret soul that remain uncharted, and that unexpected mental reservations at times deflect the pure ray of justice and righteousness so that it does not always make luminous the hidden heart-spring of action; and that possibly certain inherited prejudices cling to and distort a judgment otherwise absolutely free, unwarped, and untrammled. I also know very many men, some in San Quentin and others who should be there, equally convinced of the honesty of their motives and the righteousness of their lives; only some circumstance over which they had no control, or a carping world and an over-severe moral code, prevented them from being properly understood and caused them to be misjudged. The fault is with the world and not with themselves. Nature has inoculated us with a moral serum which prevents us from being poisoned by our own virus. The world is full of Holy Willies: if we could see ourselves as other people sometimes see us, it would be an unlivable world. Years of study and observation have made me lenient in judging the faults of those I know. Heredity is as responsible for our good qualities and our successes as it is for the evil that is in us, and our failures.

The world is a most uncharitable judge in awarding punishments and rewards; it builds jails, poorhouses and asylums for those who fail because nature has handicapped them in their life-race, while it praises and honors those who succeed because they are bountifully endowed. We know, further, that great genius such as Poe inherited is always accompanied and can be seriously modified by a neurosis that may end in moral or mental degeneration.

In recent years many books have been written on the relation existing between genius and insanity, and "The

Insanity of Genius" has become a familiar theme because so many "psychologists" and pseudo-scientists have endeavored to point out a close relationship. In the popular estimation, their claims seem to have established genius and insanity as mental states almost identical.

Alienists resent this loose classification and, while they recognize a pathological basis for both insanity and genius, which bear some relation to each other because they both belong to the same great family group, in the practical application of this theoretical association there is, separating them, a chasm as deep as our Grand Canyon and as broad as the Painted Desert. We differentiate them as distinctly as we do the cerulean water of Tahoe or the Dolomite lakes from the muddy streams that mark the workings of our placer mines. Neither is crystal clear.

Insanity chooses for its victims not the highly intelligent, nor the genius, but rather the subnormal and "the unwashed." Overstudy is the most frequently alleged yet the most infrequent cause of insanity. I have examined, studied and "psychologized" many thousands of insane persons and I have access to the records of a hundred thousand, but nowhere have I found even a normal proportion between the educated and the uneducated. Personally I know a few men of genius whom I denominate cranks, but I surely do not regard them as insane. Only rarely do they pass this line of demarkation and develop such delusions as constitute insanity. I have studied the life histories of the many great writers and artists who have been recklessly included in this classification. Only occasionally can the charge of insanity be justly made: there are found very many eccentricities, abnormalities, compulsions and obsessions which, to the psychologist, are exceedingly interesting as exhibiting mental greatness, as well as mental weakness. Often do we find the two combined so wonderfully as to excite our comment—even to the extent of insisting that

they are unsound—but this charge of unsoundness by no means can be considered tantamount to insanity.

Genius rarely runs amuck.

The assertion has been made that alienists regard all the world as insane. This is true in the sense that there is no individual without peculiarities. While this does not mean that the whole world is insane, it does mean that no human being lives who, when weighed, will not be found wanting in some normal quality or attribute; and who will not show a mental peculiarity in some special thing or way. Emeralds that are without flaw are regarded by lapidaries with suspicion, for none are found in nature: they can only appear perfect when synthetically manufactured. It must be understood that mental peculiarities and moral idiosyncrasies, do not constitute insanity: only because we regard these deviations from the normal as hereditary and often impossible to overcome, are they classed in the group of the Unsound. In other words we are willing to regard these peculiarities as abnormalities with which nature has afflicted us; not as crimes for which its possessor should be held responsible.

In the case of Poe, not only were the degenerative changes that time brings added to hereditary peculiarities, but alcohol had hastened this degeneration until a time came when, even without its use, abnormal mental states were of frequent occurrence. Poe realized the fate that awaited him, and saw the "dragon at the bottom of the well." Mrs. Whitman repeats a confession of his which gives us the key:

I have absolutely no pleasure in the stimulants in which I sometimes so madly indulge. It has not been in the pursuit of pleasure that I have periled life and reputation and reason. It has been a desperate attempt to escape from torturing memories.

If there were "memories," they were of pre-natal inheritance. Poe was not an alienist who could make a differen-

tial diagnosis between melancholy and melancholia. He suffered, he knew not why. That he could not overcome his morbid inheritance is not a matter for blame. He made repeated and heroic struggles against the evil that obsessed him. He manfully resisted the alcoholic craving and it left him for long periods of time, as is the law of this disease; when it did overwhelm him, there was no denying the demand it made.

It must be remembered that in the life history of those who suffer from dipsomania, in addition to the craving for alcohol there are periods both of elation and depression. Often visionary schemes are undertaken without corresponding capacity or understanding of their real difficulties or impracticabilities. This is probably the explanation of Poe's determination to found a journal for the utterance of his individual opinions. He had failed in every journalistic attempt that required concentrated and long-continued effort. He had found by many bitter experiences that he could not continue for any long period of time without an intercurrent attack of his hereditary malady which would incapacitate him for weeks or months; yet, to the very last, this idea of founding a magazine "for freer expression"—and on what magazine did he work that he did not express his individual opinions?—haunted him. After editing the leading journals of Philadelphia and New York, it was tempting the risibilities to attempt the establishment of a "Literary Arbiter" at Oquakwa, in the then unsettled state of Illinois.

Other, and the best, evidences of the abnormal mental condition that was developing, were the facts that led to the composition and publication of his last work, "Eureka, A Prose Poem." Let us study the matter of this work as well as the manner. He prefaces it:

To the few who love me and whom I love—to those who feel rather than to those who think—to the dreamers and those who put

faith in dreams as in the only realities—I offer this Book of Truths, not in its character of Truth-Teller, but for the Beauty that abounds in its Truth; constituting it true. To these I present the composition as an Art-Product alone:—let us say as a Romance; or, if I be not urging too lofty a claim, as a Poem. *What I here propound is true*:—therefore it cannot die:—or if by any means it be now trodden down so that it die, it will 'rise again to the Life Everlasting.' Nevertheless it is as a Poem only I wish this work to be judged after I am dead.

E. A. P.

It is related of him:

During the last years of his unhappy life, whenever he yielded to the temptation that was drawing him to the fathomless abyss, as with the resistless swirl of the maelstrom, he always lost himself in sublime rhapsodies of the evolution of the universe, speaking as if from some imaginary platform to a vast audience of rapt and attentive listeners.

Harrison considers it:

an astounding circumstance that a mind so apparently wrecked as Poe's was all through the weary months of 1847—months hyphenated together by unalterable gloom from the death of Virginia, in January, to the apparition on the December horizon of the fantastic flame of *Ulalume*—could have recovered vitality or even vivacity enough to meditate on the deep themes of *Eureka*, of the cosmogony of the Universe, of the destiny of the human soul and the fate of the circumambient matter; but so it was.

Poe's argumentative faculty attained perhaps its highest expression in *Eureka*; the theme, in itself so abstract, so transcendental, burns and glows with a concrete radiance that *seems* to convince the reader that it is the true light, and not quagmire phosphorescence; the suppleness of the Poet's tongue never abandons him as he climbs the empyrean in his *Excelsior* flights and forces one stronghold after another of retreating Deity, talking volubly of Newton, Kepler, and La Place the while, until at last *Eureka!* bursts from his lips and he fancies he has found the Eternal.

Having worked the book out through the long and hollow hours of 1847—he was ready with it as a lecture in the early months of 1848. His hope was to rent a hall and secure an audience of three or four hundred persons who would pay him sufficiently to start on a lecturing tour in the interests of the 'Stylus'—which now again sweeps up to the surface like the drowned face of Delacroix's maiden. Instead of three or four hundred, sixty persons assembled in the hall of the Society Li-

brary, New York, and shivered through three hours of a bleak February night, listening, as one of them reported, 'to a rhapsody of the most intense brilliancy.' Poe appeared inspired, and his inspiration affected the scant audience almost painfully. His eyes seemed to glow like those of his own *Raven*. . . . Not disheartened at his poor success nor at the absurdly caricatured accounts of the lecture in the public prints, Poe went bravely to work and wrote out the theory in book form, offering it, with flashing eyes and exuberant enthusiasm to Mr. Putnam. . . . He suggested an edition of 50,000; Mr. Putnam listened attentively, and ventured on an edition of 500.

The mere fact that Poe left the field of literature to undertake scientific researches, or that he believed he had established a new theory of the universe does not, of itself, evidence an unsound mind; nor do extravagant and ill understood deductions necessarily indicate a developing mental disease. It is a matter often experienced that, among normal men, dissatisfaction arises with their occupation or profession, even when success has attended their efforts, and that many literary and scientific men reach forth into new and strange domains. Goethe was not satisfied with his great poetical reputation but insisted on being regarded as a man of science: he wrote a book—"Farbenlehre"—in his effort to disprove Newton's "Theory of Colors." This book demonstrated that he was not familiar with the elementary principles of light, and because of this theory he was derided for his scientific pretensions, although his researches in comparative anatomy, in conjunction with Oken, had demonstrated that the cranium was composed of consolidated vertebrae, and thus scientifically established brain evolution from original spinal centers.

Cruikshank, in his old age, was vociferous in asserting his right to be considered the author of "Oliver Twist," because he had suggested to Dickens certain illustrations for that work: his great reputation as a caricaturist did not satisfy him. Even Tennyson made a failure of "Queen Mary," and other attempts at dramatic composition, a

thing in which, it is said, he believed that he excelled; while Longfellow committed the unpardonable sin of writing "Kavanagh."

George Eliot's, Emerson's and Lowell's essays in the field of poetry are sad commentaries on their capacity to judge of their limitations. None of these should be harshly criticized because they failed to estimate properly their own powers.

Nor can all enthusiasts be classed among the abnormal, even if they go to the extent of unduly dwelling on some abstruse problem, or attempt to solve some riddle that is regarded as unsolvable. Men perfectly sane have attempted to square a circle, and many perpetual motion machines are now attic ornaments. Men, such as were those who sought the secret that would give them everlasting life, are now devoting their superabundant energy to newer fads, and are devotees of some recent cult. There are too many Christian Scientists, and Oliver Lodgists, and others of the Religionists, for us to be able to draw a distinct line between those merely credulous and the mentally unsound; and there are too many pretenders in medical, astronomical and the physical sciences for us to say who is the Great Discoverer and who is the self-deceived. Knowledge is, at best, a chimera: and all who seek must base their findings on a theory that future investigators are sure to question. Some Einstein may yet upset our most definitely established natural laws.

That we may only approximate knowledge of the Supreme Cause need not make us reject all guesses; nor, with Bacon, put the jeering question in the mouth of the smiling Pilate. Philosophers have long sought the key-stone of some definite *Truth* by which to support their contentions; but, so far, not one has been found. The most plausible theories have a weakest link.

While such speculations as engaged the attention of Poe



need not arouse suspicion as to the soundness of his mind, they were the forerunner of other and more serious vagaries. Had he, even in these last few years when he seemed most normal, been aroused by an inquiry as to cosmogony, again would his eyes have flashed, his congested brain would have become turgid with blood, and there might have come a morbid mental reaction as pronounced as the "single glass" could have produced. Poe's power of definitely expressing his thoughts might have been swept away by the vehemence of his utterance; appearing confused only because the ideas gushed forth so teemingly. For this reason, the apparent incoherence would have been only an evidence of over-active brain functioning. Woodberry, in his "Notes," gives several examples of this condition occurring in the last few months of Poe's life, when he recited for bar-room roysterers his own and other notable poems. It was not a hectoring drunkard engaged in saloon brawls, haranguing a throng of grinning auditors: it was an organically brain-diseased patient, whose friends did not realize the necessity of permanently secluding him. Most emphatically it was not a moral lapse, nor the result of vicious living: nor should his life be cited as "full of instruction and warning," nor should he pay "the penalty of wrong doing that its anatomy should be displayed for the common study and advantage."

Poe was not a man of scientific training, nor was he a classical scholar, in spite of the display of both scientific and classical knowledge in much that he wrote.

When he fathered Brown's "Conchology" it was not for scientific reasons, but in the preparation of "Eureka" he was in deadly earnest; and while neither the matter nor the effort arouses suspicion, yet the manner and the circumstances under which it was produced are the best evidence that it was the result of his failing intellect. It was at this time Harrison describes his condition such:

He found it impossible to sleep without the presence of some friend by his bedside. Mrs. Clemm, his ever devoted friend and comforter, more frequently fulfilled the office of watcher. The poet, after retiring, would summon her, and while she stroked his broad brow, he would indulge his wild flights of fancy to the Aidenn of his dreams. He never spoke nor moved in these moments, unless the hand was withdrawn from his forehead; then he would say, with childish naivete, 'No, no, not yet!'—while he lay with half-closed eyes.

Woodberry reports a statement of Mrs. Clemm:

He never liked to be alone, and I used to sit up with him, often till four o'clock in the morning, he at his desk, writing, and I dozing in my chair. When he was composing *Eureka*, we used to walk up and down the garden, his arm around me, mine around him, until I was so tired I could not walk. He would stop every few minutes and explain his ideas to me, and ask if I understood him.

In the preparation of "Eureka," and in the earnestness with which Poe advanced the most abstruse and incomprehensible theories, as if they were axioms and in themselves bore irrefutable evidence of truth; in his belief that his reputation would be founded, not on his tales, nor on his poetry which, to the last, he affected to regard as trifles, but on the demonstrated facts contained in this epoch making book, lie the proofs of his morbid state. Apparently he believed that this discovery would be the foundation on which the world would erect his cenotaph, and that the subject "was of momentous interest," and that the truths which he disclosed "were of more consequence than the theory of gravitation." Later he wrote a letter in answer to a criticism of *Eureka*, in which he stated:

The ground covered by La Place compares with that covered by my own theory, as a bubble with the ocean on which it floats.

Poe believed that he had solved the riddle of the universe. He criticized Kepler, La Place and Newton; at the same time his statements showed that he possessed only a smattering of their theories.

Woodberry concludes his full review:

*Eureka* affords one of the most striking instances in literature of a naturally strong intellect tempted by overweening pride, to an Icarian flight, and betrayed into an ignoble exposure of its own presumption and ignorance.

He further states:

Nor, were *Eureka* to be judged as a poem, that is to say as a fictitious cosmogony, would the decision be more favorable; even then so far as it is obscure to the reader it must be pronounced defective; so far as it is understood, involving as it does in its primary conceptions incessant contradictions of the necessary laws of thought, it must be pronounced meaningless. Poe believed himself to be that extinct being, a universal genius of the highest order; and he wrote this essay to prove his powers in philosophy and in science. To the correspondent to whom he sent the *addenda* he declared 'As to the lecture, I am very quiet about it—but if you have dealt with such topics, you will recognize the novelty and *moment* of my views. What I have propounded will (in good time) revolutionize the world of Physical and Metaphysical science. I say this calmly, but I say it.'

None of his biographers saw in this book a pitiful exhibition of a decaying intellect no longer under the domination of a strong and directing intelligence.

And travelers now within that valley,  
Through the red-litened windows, see  
Vast forms that move fantastically  
To a discordant melody.

And we find him a paranoid vociferously voicing unintelligible hypotheses based on misconception and ignorance of natural laws.

Poe's abnormality consisted not in theorizing and attempting to explain things unexplainable, for this is a matter of daily occurrence even among the normal, but in his inability to understand the basic absurdities and false reasoning on which his beliefs were founded. An insane man may be the most logical of all logicians, provided you grant his premises. The untenableness of these, out of which he cannot be reasoned, constitutes his insanity.

It was during this time that Poe described himself:

I became insane, with long periods of horrible sanity. During these fits of absolute unconsciousness I drank. God only knows how much or how long. As a matter of course my enemies referred the insanity to the drink rather than the drink to the insanity.

Poe produced nothing after the year 1845, when he was thirty-four years of age, which materially added to his literary reputation; yet one contributor to his Baltimore Memorial, naively lamenting his death, said:

But the tragedy of Poe's death is too deep for words of mine. He was only thirty-nine years old. His best work ought to have been before him. Who can compute the loss to our literature by his untimely death?

We know that, as the cells that line the leaves, and that boil down and prepare for absorption the raw juices extracted from the ground by the roots, slowly fill with calcareous incrustations, so do the arteries of the human brain harden, and the cells cease actively to function, or are absorbed. We call this process arterio-sclerosis and its result is old age which, in some, is delayed; to others it comes comparatively early in life. For this reason it is difficult to judge a man's age by the number of years he has lived. From this comes the axiomatic deduction, "a man is only as old as his arteries." This so-called "hardening of the arteries" begins, in all of us, soon after reaching middle life: it becomes a disease only when unduly hastened.

Another manifestation of Poe's abnormal mental state during the last few years of his life was the platonic love he exhibited for the women with whom he associated. Though it is certain that Poe did love his wife, it was not after the manner of the cave man. She was an invalid, slowly dying of consumption and, for many years, Poe attended her, nursed her, and was not only a devoted, but a faithful husband. Mrs. Weiss has strongly dwelt on the nature of the relation that existed between Poe and his wife. She insists that the marriage was one of convenience, not love, and that it

was to Mrs. Clemm rather than to the daughter that Poe turned for intellectual sympathy. Apparently neither could greatly have aided him by literary companionship. Mrs. Phelps, in an article quoted by Woodberry, amplifies Mrs. Weiss' suggestion:

Mrs. Clemm, his aunt, was my mother's dear friend. I know something about that [this marriage], having heard my mother and Mrs. Clemm discuss it. He did not love his cousin, except as a dear cousin, when he married her, but she was very fondly attached to him and was frail and consumptive. While she lived he devoted himself to her with all the ardor of a lover.

In all the years of their married life and until a short time preceding her death, no breath of scandal ever touched Poe's name, in spite of the uncanny attraction it is known that he exercised over women, and which later resulted in so many complications. Had there been, even secretly, a history of this kind there could have been no such devotion and tender solicitude for him as was shown by his wife's mother; a bond that death itself could not sever.

Yet, even before his wife died, at least platonic love in which few men believe and which nevertheless may salve the conscience of trusting woman, asserted itself.

Early in 1845 he had formed such an attachment with Mrs. Frances Sargent Osgood, a poetess of thirty and the wife of an American artist. . . . Poe had noticed her verses with great favor, and in his New York lecture, in February, especially eulogized her in warm terms. Shortly after this latter incident Willis one day handed her *The Raven*, with the author's request for her judgment on it, and for an introduction to herself.

Mrs. Osgood's own impression of Poe is given as follows:

I shall never forget the morning I was summoned to the drawing room to receive him. With his proud and beautiful head erect, his dark eyes flashing with the electric light of feeling and of thought, a peculiar, an inimitable blending of sweetness and hauteur in his manner and expression, he greeted me, calmly, gravely, almost coldly, yet with so marked an earnestness that I could not help being impressed by it.

Again she says:

I never thought of him till he sent me his *Raven*, and asked Willis to introduce him to me, and immediately after I went to Albany, and afterwards to Boston and Providence to avoid him, and he followed me to each of those places and wrote to me, imploring me to love him, many a letter which I did not reply to till his *wife* added her entreaties to his and said that I might save him from infamy, and her from death, by showing an affectionate interest in him.

These and other statements were made by Mrs. Osgood in an account of Poe written after his death. She sums up her review as follows:

But it was in his conversations and his letters, far more than in his published poetry and prose writings, that the genius of Poe was most gloriously revealed. His letters were divinely beautiful, and for hours I have listened to him, entranced by strains of such pure and almost celestial eloquence as I have never read or heard elsewhere. Alas! in the thrilling words of Stoddard,

He might have soared in the morning light,  
But he built his nest with the birds of night!  
But he lies in dust, and the stone is rolled  
Over the sepulchre dim and cold;  
He has cancelled all he has done or said,  
And gone to the dear and holy dead.  
Let us forget the path he trod,  
And leave him now, to his Maker, God.

It was this most cherished friendship that induced a delegation of women, headed by Margaret Fuller, to make a formal protest. A letter was found by a woman who was visiting the Poe household and, in a jealous rage, she circulated stories that seriously reflected on Mrs. Osgood. Apparently she also had written Poe compromising letters and, when he knew of her activities, he threatened, in revenge, to make these letters public. It was on this woman's assertions that English and Griswold based their charge of blackmail, for which Poe brought and won a suit for defamation of character. Undoubtedly Poe's abnormal condition, even at that time, was known

and understood by his immediate family—otherwise it is not possible for such association to have been carried on with the knowledge and consent of his wife and, necessarily, of Mrs. Clemm.

Soon after Mrs. Poe's death, and while Poe was convalescing from a long and serious illness which had mentally incapacitated him, there was another platonic adventure. This time it was with Mrs. Shew, a family friend older than himself, who was nursing him and had been most considerate in looking after the financial needs of the family. His irresponsible condition was realized and, therefore, no particular attention was paid to the matter further than that it necessitated a severance of personal intercourse.

Mrs. Shew finding that her protege was too irresponsible and romantic to be allowed freedom as he had been accustomed to, broke off the acquaintance. The consequence which, although he had foreseen it, must in his state of health have been the sudden and complete cessation of intercourse between the two families.

It is certain that both Mrs. Clemm and Mrs. Shew regarded this merely as a manifestation of Poe's mental state; the mother-love was not abated and Mrs. Shew continued her friendly ministrations—from a distance.

Poe wrote her a long and rambling letter, maudlin and incoherent, and not such as a normal Poe would have written:

Are you to vanish like all that I love, or desire, from my darkened and 'lost soul'? I have read over your letter again and again, and cannot make it possible with any degree of certainty, that you wrote it in your right mind. . . .

Your ingenuous and sympathetic nature will be constantly wounded by its contact with the hollow, heartless world; and for me, alas! unless some true and tender, and pure womanly love saves me, I shall hardly last a year longer alive. . . . Why turn your soul from its true work for the desolate to the thankless and miserly world? . . . I felt my heart stop, and I was sure I was then to die before your eyes.

Louise, it is well—it is fortunate—you looked up with a tear in your dear eyes, and raised the window, and talked of the guava jelly you had brought for my sore throat.

Almost as absurd was the passion Poe developed for Mrs. Whitman, the poetess, a widow some six years older than himself. This passion was taken far more seriously, for she responded to the call. Griswold related, with great detail, many things that bore on this courtship; but, as usual, the facts were distorted and his conclusions were absolutely denied by Mrs. Whitman. It is impossible to doubt the truth either of Mrs. Whitman's statements or her knowledge of the facts which Griswold alleged occurred in her own home; and, inasmuch as they were true, nothing could more seriously reflect on Griswold's honor or the veracity of his memoir.

That Poe was at times abnormal Mrs. Whitman does not deny, and it was her realization of this fact that prevented the marriage. His actions were simply the result of an unbalanced mind, craving love and sympathy, yet unable to control and govern itself; drifting into dangerous waters without pilot or rudder.

Poe again fell in love and proposed marriage, this time to a boyhood friend; but her picture, as reproduced by Woodberry, renders further proof unnecessary that, when Poe proposed marriage, he was irresponsible. With still another he was more sinned against than sinning.

All commentators on the writings of Poe have called special attention to the small part love plays in any of his stories, and to the fact that nowhere, and on no occasion does he mention *woman* without due reverence: as if she belonged to a separate and special class—which she does—entirely separate from the *Genus Homo*, with his vigorous strength, his dominating personality, and his rude and overpowering passions. May it be long before the two sexes do reach the plane of equality on such a basis!



Apparently there was only one woman outside his wife to whom Poe was attracted or on whom he leaned. It was of her he thought in the dark days when his desolate and hungry heart demanded "surcease from sorrow." This was neither Mrs. Shew, nor was it Mrs. Osgood; it was not Mrs. Whitman nor yet was it Mrs. Shelton. It was Annie, "my beloved sister" as he was pleased to call her, and I believe that his other infatuations, as well as his peculiar treatment of Mrs. Whitman, were merely the result of his disordered fancy.

If Poe ever loved any woman, as contradistinguished from *women*, it was "Annie." She appealed to him in the only way a woman can properly appeal to a man. Love, with a foundation of respect, can never be destroyed.

It was to "Annie" Poe's heart turned in his darkest days and, when the melancholy night forced on him the urge of death as the only release from his overpowering depression, it was of "Annie" he thought, and to whom in his agony he wrote the farewell letter.

He described her in Landor's cottage which, in one of his letters, he said, contained "something about Annie":

Instantly a figure advanced to the threshold—that of a young woman, slender, or rather slight, and somewhat above the medium height. As she approached, with a certain *modest decision* of step altogether indescribable, I said to myself, 'Surely here I have found the perfection of natural in contradistinction from artificial grace.' The second impression which she made on me, but by far the more vivid of the two, was that of *enthusiasm*. So intense an expression of *romance*, perhaps I should call it, or of unworldliness, as that which gleamed from her deep-set eyes, had never so sunk into my heart of hearts before. I know not how it is, but this peculiar expression of the eye, wreathing itself occasionally into the lips, is the most powerful, if not absolutely the *sole* spell, which rivets my interest in woman. 'Romance,' provided my readers fully comprehend what I would here imply by the word—'romance' and 'womanliness' seem to me convertible terms: and, after all, what man truly *loves* in woman, is, simply, her *womanhood*. The eyes of Annie (I heard someone from the interior

call her 'Annie, darling!') were 'spiritual gray'; her hair, a light chestnut: this is all I had time to observe of her.

It was "For Annie" that one of his most remarkable—Stedman names it the finest, and I know no better Poe authority—poems was written and to her he consecrates his eternal love:

And so it lies happily,  
 Bathing in many  
 A dream of the truth  
 And the beauty of Annie—  
 Drowned in a bath  
 Of the tresses of Annie.

She tenderly kissed me,  
 She fondly caressed,  
 And then I fell gently  
 To sleep on her breast.  
 Deeply to sleep  
 From the heaven of her breast.

And I rest so contentedly,  
 Now in my bed  
 (With her love at my breast)  
 That you fancy me dead—  
 That you shudder to look at me,  
 Thinking me dead:—

But my heart it is brighter  
 Than all of the many  
 Stars in the sky,  
 For it sparkles with Annie  
 It glows with the light  
 Of the love of my Annie—  
 With the thought of the light  
 Of the eyes of my Annie.

Although Poe's reputation had so greatly grown that all magazines and periodicals were opened to him at remunerative prices, he delayed publishing his *magnum opus*, and was contented with a few reviews and descriptive stories. He wrote:

'I am so busy now, and feel so full of energy. Engagements to write are pouring in upon me every day. I had two proposals last week from *Boston*. I sent yesterday a contribution to the 'American Review'

about *Critics and Criticism*. Not long ago I sent one to the 'Metropolitan' called *Landor's Cottage*: it has something about Annie in it, and will appear, I suppose, in the March number. To the 'So. Lit. Messenger' I have sent fifty pages of *Marginalia*, five pages to appear each month of the current year. I have also made permanent engagements with every magazine in America (except 'Peterson's National') including a Cincinnati magazine, called the 'Gentleman's'.

While these statements may in a way be regarded as "expansive," and are characteristic of those alternating states of exaltation and depression from which Poe suffered, there was truth in them.

Poe did not realize that his opportunity had come too late, and that he no longer had the capacity to deliver. The *Landor Cottage* and its near relation, *The Domain of Arnheim*, are the best works of this period. Poe, mentally diseased, was more capable of such descriptive work than any of his contemporaries, normal.

Poe's apparent return to health and his prospect of coming independence were not of long duration. Early in 1849 he relapsed.

Mrs. Clemm wrote:

I thought he would die several times. God knows I wish we were both dead and in our graves. It would I am sure be far better.

Poe wrote to Mrs. Whitman:

My sadness is *unaccountable*, and this makes me the more sad. I am full of forebodings. *Nothing* cheers or comforts me. My life seems wasted—the future looks a dreary blank.

This letter contains a possible key to the "solution" of Poe's personal equation. It is as typical as the one quoted just before it of his abnormal mental state.

Poe again had visions of a new magazine and, this time, it was with a man from Oquawka. Actual business arrangements were entered into and money was advanced for its publication. In an effort to raise funds for his share

in this enterprise, Poe undertook a lecture tour; but his departure from Fordham was delayed by a serious attack of depression which temporarily unfitted him for all attempts of a literary character. Either he had a presentiment, or his own condition was such that he believed death was near.

It was at this time that Poe is said to have asked Mrs. Lewis to write his memoir. In his morbid, and occasionally maudlin, condition, he might have made this request many times and of many people.

Although Mrs. Lewis is named as one of Poe's friends who gave him aid and comfort in his time of trouble, I seriously question whether or not it was a *pose*. There is reason to believe that her friendship was rather due to Poe's literary standing, the favors she had received from him and the assistance that she expected in furthering her literary pretensions, than to any genuine friendship.

There are certain letters on record which give me the right to make this deduction. The first was written by Poe to Griswold and is a plea for a more lenient, or a more liberal judgment of Mrs. Lewis, in his "Female Poets of America."

Since I have more critically examined your 'Female Poets,' it occurs to me that you have not *quite* done justice to our common friend, Mrs. Lewis; and if you would oblige me so far as to substitute, for your no doubt hurried notice, a somewhat longer one prepared by myself, I would reciprocate the favor when, where, and as you please.

The italicised *as* makes it evident that Poe was prepared to pay in whatever coin Griswold might demand. Poe had no money but he did have a remarkably vigorous pen. Those were queer times and we cannot always believe everything we read: in the case of Poe the remarkable thing was that sooner or later his critical judgment asserted itself, and he made plain his genuine estimate. Both Poe

and Griswold were worth cultivating by any lady with literary aspirations.

It is on record that Poe wrote Thomas:

You would oblige me very especially if you would squeeze in what follows, editorially. The lady (Mrs. Lewis) spoken of, is a most particular friend of mine, and deserves *all* I have said of her. I will reciprocate the favor I ask, whenever you say the word and show me how.

It has been said that it was of this lady's poems that Poe, when asked to review them, "simply remarked that if he reviewed her rubbish it would kill him."

This, like many other alleged side-remarks attributed to Poe, is apocryphal. Harrison quotes Poe as writing:

Mrs. Lewis is, perhaps, the best educated, if not the most accomplished of American authoresses. . . . She is not only cultivated as respects the usual ornaments of her sex, but excels as a modern linguist, and very especially as a classical scholar; while her scientific acquisitions are of no common order.

After Poe's death and the appearance of the Ludwig article with the "Memoir" containing a letter Poe had written to Griswold in which this lady's name was mentioned—not a *nice* thing for Griswold to have done—Mrs. Lewis wrote Griswold:

Nothing has ever given me so much insight into Mr. Poe's real character as his letters to you, which are published in this third volume. They will not fail to convince the public of the injustice of Graham and Neal's articles. I was astonished at the part of P.'s Note, where he says—'*But I have promised Mrs. L. this.*' I will explain. Mrs. C[lemm] said to me on one of her visits, 'Dr. G[riswold] has been at Fordham. He came to see Eddie about you. Something about the new edition of "The Female Poets." But you are not to know anything about it.' Mr. P. never mentioned the subject to me, or I to him. He only sent to me for my latest poems, saying that you were going to increase or rewrite the Sketch for a new edition of 'The Female Poets.'

*Such* a return for *such* a kindly meant act of Poe by *such* a woman! It is to be hoped that she so placated Griswold that he did amplify her "Sketch," even though she comes

down to us not because she appeared among the "Female Poets," but because all biographers have included her as one of Poe's friends and as his benefactress. This letter has not been commented on by any of Poe's biographers, although Woodbury refers to it in his "Notes".

Poe abandoned his home at Fordham and spent his last night in New York at the home of Mrs. Lewis. She thus describes his condition:

He seemed very sad and retired early. On leaving next morning, he took my hands in his and, looking into my face said, 'Dear Stella, my much beloved friend, you truly understand and appreciate me. I have a presentiment that I never shall see you again. I must leave today for Richmond. If I never return write my life. You can and will do me justice.'

From New York Poe took a boat for Philadelphia, and, for the last time, saw Mrs. Clemm. She thus registers his farewell promise:

God bless you, my own darling mother. Do not fear for your Eddy. See how good I will be while I am away from you, and will come back to love and comfort you.

Two days later Poe appeared in Sartain's office in Philadelphia, suffering from a pronounced mental disturbance. He had delusions of persecution and believed that he was being followed by enemies who were attempting his destruction. Woodberry, quoting Sartain, thus describes his condition:

Poe went to Philadelphia, and, apparently after a day or two, entered the office of John Sartain, proprietor of 'Sartain's Magazine,' his friend for the past nine years, and exclaimed excitedly, 'I have come to you for refuge.' He was delirious and suffering from what seems to have been an habitual delusion in such attacks, a fear of a conspiracy against him. Sartain, who long remembered the visions about which Poe raved and the persistence with which he besought him for laudanum, reassured him, and cared for him some days, accompanied him when he went out, and brought him back; once Poe escaped and seems to have passed that night in an open field, but Sar-

tain told the story with variations at different times; toward the end two other old friends assisted in caring for him.

Just how long a period elapsed after leaving Fordham before Poe was found in this condition, is uncertain; yet it is a matter of medical importance in diagnosing his disease. If Poe was normal when he left New York, and his mother, who watched over him so carefully, believed that he was in condition to start on a lecturing tour, this delirium could not have been the result of only two days use of alcohol. There must have been an organic brain change for alcohol to have acted so quickly; even without the use of any stimulant, this condition occasionally develops. We could possibly dignify it by the name of Melancholia, the preceding state having been a Melancholy. Whatever name we use, the indisputable fact remains that there was an organic congestion of the meninges of the brain. This condition could not have been altogether due to alcohol. It often does happen, after a prolonged debauch, that *delirium tremens* results, characterized by all the symptoms Poe's condition presented, but this comes only after an extended period of acute alcoholism, save in those cases only where there has developed an organic cerebral degeneration. The opinion that it was due to an organic lesion is strengthened by a communication made by Poe's cousin, Neilson Poe, who was present at Poe's death. He wrote:

The history of the last few days of his life is known to no one so well as to myself. . . . I trust that I can demonstrate that he passed, by a *single indulgence*, from a condition of perfect sobriety to one bordering on the madness usually occasioned by long continued intoxication, and that he is entitled to a far more favorable judgment upon his last hours than he has received.

No matter what term we use in diagnosing Poe's mental disease, it is not difficult to deduce the facts. It is extremely probable, but not necessarily true, that Poe took some form of alcoholic stimulant. An opiate could not

have produced this condition, for it would have rather tended to soothe a patient thus afflicted. We know of no better drug in melancholia—no matter how produced—than cumulative doses of opium. It is also a fact that, in these diseased brain cells, there is set up an abnormal brain psychology, the exact mechanism of which is still a matter of guesswork amongst psycho-pathologists.

At all events this changed mentality is accompanied, and I believe is caused, by excessive circulation of the blood in the brain, exciting both the centers of the special senses and the cells presiding over ideation. These technical explanations have no value further than they aid in clearing up the condition of Poe at the time of his death, a subject which ever since has been controversial.

Letters of Poe, written about this time, throw further light upon his mental condition:

My dear, dear Mother—I have been so ill—have had the cholera, or spasms quite as bad, and can now hardly hold the pen.

The very instant you get this come to me. The joy of seeing you will almost compensate for our sorrows. We can but die together. It is no use to reason with me now; I must die. I have no desire to live since I have done *Eureka*. I could accomplish nothing more. For your sake it would be sweet to live, but we must die together. You have been all in all to me, darling, ever beloved Mother, and dearest truest friend.

I was never really insane, except on occasions where my heart was touched. I have been taken to prison once since I came here for getting drunk. But then I was not, it was about Virginia.

Fortunately, Mrs. Clemm was far away at the time these thoughts, as here expressed, dominated Poe. Possibly many times before, while Mrs. Clemm was in active attendance upon him, these same ideas came to him. If so, she was in real danger. Homicidal mania such as this, especially when due to alcoholism, has not infrequently cost the lives not only of the patient but of those he loved and who most tenderly ministered to his necessities.

It is possible that a much longer period elapsed than has



been estimated between Poe's leaving New York and his call upon Sartain. Woodberry puts it at a "day or two." Sartain says:

He said that he had been thrown in Moyamensing Prison for forging a check and while there a white female figure had appeared on the battlements and had addressed him in whispers. 'If I had not heard what she said,' he declared, 'it would have been the end of me.'

Such hallucinations are most frequent; undoubtedly the memory of the prison was as much a delusion as the hearing of a voice and the sight of a "white female figure" were hallucinations. Poe recovered from this attack, and spent some weeks in Richmond among his friends, who received him kindly, and extensively entertained him. His letters, however, show that he had not yet recovered.

Oh, my darling mother, it is now three weeks since I saw you, and in all that time, your poor Eddy has scarcely drawn a breath except of intense agony. Perhaps you are sick or gone from Fordham in despair, or dead. . . . Oh, Mother, I am so ill while I write— . . . My valise was lost for ten days. At last I found it at the depot in Philadelphia, but they had opened it and stolen both lectures. All my object here is over unless I can recover them or rewrite one of them.

In another letter, written to Mrs. Clemm shortly after this, he says:

You will see at once by the handwriting of this letter, that I am better—much better—in health and spirits. Oh if you knew how your dear letter comforted me! It acted like magic. Most of my sufferings arose from that terrible idea which I could not get rid of—the idea that you were dead. For more than ten days I was totally deranged, although I was not drinking one drop; and during this interval I imagined the most horrible calamities.

It is probably true, in spite of Poe's denials, that alcohol precipitated this attack. But alcohol alone could not have produced such hallucinations and delusions unless it had been continued at least two or three weeks, or had there not been, as a basis, a diseased cerebrum.

It was during these Richmond days that he again met,

wooed and won Mrs. Shelton. At this same time he was arranging with Patterson for the *Oquawka* magazine. Evidently no suspicion of approaching death was disturbing him. It is probable that a temporary expansive state was alternating with the depression from which he had been suffering. Mrs. Weiss writes:

The knowledge of this weakness was by his own request concealed from me. All that I knew of the matter was when a friend informed me that 'Mr. Poe was too unwell to see us that evening.' . . . On the day following he made his appearance among us, but so pale, tremulous, and apparently subdued as to convince me that he had been seriously ill. On this occasion he had been at the 'Old Swan,' where he was carefully tended by Mrs. Mackenzie's family, but on a second and more serious relapse he was taken by Dr. Mackenzie and Dr. Gibbon Carter to Duncan Lodge, where during some days his life was in imminent danger. Assiduous attention saved him, but it was the opinion of the physicians that another such attack would prove fatal. . . . Dr. Carter relates how, on this occasion, he had a long conversation with him, in which Poe expressed the most earnest desire to break from the thralldom of his besetting sin, and told of his many unavailing struggles to do so.

Poe, in spite of these repeated attacks, was seriously considering marriage with Mrs. Shelton, but, before he took this step, he wished to bring Mrs. Clemm from New York, and again he ventured forth alone. No one can trace his movements from the time he left Richmond, in his effort to reach New York, until he was found insensible on the water front of Baltimore. In this condition he was removed to the Washington University Hospital, under the charge of Dr. Moran, where, a few days later, he died.

On his way north he stopped at Baltimore. Woodberry thus narrates the essential facts:

Just as when in the summer of 1847 at Philadelphia he was saved by a friend, just as when in the summer of 1848 at Boston he was saved by a friend, just as in the summer of 1849 he was saved by Burr,

he had experienced one of those repeated attacks, worse at each return, and he had found no friend by to save him.

His one friend and his loyal friend, his "Dear, Dear Muddy," never should have left him. It would have been better for him and for his good name had he died when death so nearly seized him at his home in Fordham. At least no name but that of Virginia would have been connected with his own; and he might have passed into history as a shining example of connubial happiness that death itself could not dissever. The picture Harrison drew of Poe's mental sufferings, due to the death of Virginia, might at least have seemed to have some foundation in fact; nor would it have given his enemies the opportunity of rejoicing because of his end. Death would also have saved the poor old mother, who was so willing to sacrifice all personal feeling, the agony of anticipating a marriage feast set out with cold meats and decorated with cypress boughs. A few days later she was summoned to a different ceremony: abject poverty prevented even this journey.

Two weeks after Poe's death, his physician, Dr. J. J. Moran, wrote a fairly complete statement, covering the facts of his death and described, with sufficient detail, its essential features.

When Poe was taken to the hospital he was unconscious and remained in that condition from five o'clock in the afternoon until three on the following morning.

To this state succeeded tremor of the limbs, and at first a busy but not violent or active delirium—constant talking and vacant converse with spectral and imaginary objects on the walls. His face was pale and his whole person drenched in perspiration. We were unable to induce tranquility before the second day after his admission. Having left orders with the nurses to that effect, I was summoned to his bedside so soon as consciousness supervened and questioned him with reference to his family, his place of residence, relatives, etc. But his answers were incoherent and unsatisfactory. He told me, however, that he had a wife in Richmond (which I have since learned was not

the fact), that he did not know when he had left the city nor what had become of his trunk of clothing. . . . Mr. Poe seemed to doze, and I left him a short time. When I returned I found him in a violent delirium, resisting the efforts of two nurses to keep him in bed. This state continued till Saturday evening (he was admitted on Wednesday), when he commenced calling for one 'Reynolds', which he did through the night until *three* on Sunday morning. At this time a very decided change began to affect him. Having become enfeebled from exertion, he became quiet and seemed to rest for a short time; then gently moving his head, he said 'Lord help my poor soul', and expired.

This is a simple and clear medical history. While it contains nothing that might hurt the mother, it does not attempt to minimize or explain away Poe's real condition on entrance, or to deny the delusions and hallucinations from which he suffered. It is an intelligent statement covering the details of a death due to brain inflammation, or engorgement.

It is unfortunate that Moran, in again writing on this subject, depended on his "senile memories." If any memory ever did need refreshing it was his, for, some thirty-five years later, he wrote another account which in no particular corresponds with the earlier one. In 1885, Dr. Moran published his much discussed "Defense of Edgar Allan Poe," giving the "Life, Character and Dying Declaration of the Poet."

It was inspired by Mrs. Shelton, written at her request, and dedicated to her.

While it is a loyal defense, it speaks for the heart rather than the memory of Dr. Moran. Like other things that I have quoted and which emanate from Poe's Southern friends and admirers (I also come from the South, so can speak with sympathetic tenderness, though possibly the San Francisco fogs have somewhat cooled my ardent temperament), and which relate either to their ideals of the past, or to their great dead, it is essentially "Southern" in that it is impassioned, swayed by sympathy for the

living and a profound respect for the dead. It contains nothing that aids us; it rather confuses because it so essentially differs from the simple and direct story originally written. It is impressionistic, unlike that other biography I have quoted contained in "The Ladies Repository" and edited by the Rev. D. W. Clark. Of the two I prefer that of the medical to the one published by the Reverend Doctor. Whenever the name of Poe is mentioned in the "Defense" it is invariably written in capitals showing with what profound respect Moran revered even the name of Poe.

EDGAR ALLAN POE has been more misunderstood than any other poet of the recent past. While his life was beautiful and inspired, yet aspersed, his last moments had more of sublimity than that of any of his contemporaries. The author of gems so delicate as *Annabel Lee*, *The Raven*, and *Lenore*, while no less human and frail than others of his day, had a soul and heart that stamped him an offshoot of Divinity.

If this opening paragraph is somewhat rhapsodical, at least it is more in consonance with the charitable dictates that should govern us in speaking not only of the dead but of our living brothers, than is that other biography beginning, "Edgar Allan Poe was incontestably one of the most worthless persons of whom we have any record in the world of letters." They are equally untrue.

Quoting from Moran:

Much has been said and written in relation to this singular and most remarkable of all our poets, whose life has been an enigma to the world and whose death a mystery. The nature of his disease and how he died, up to the present day, remains a matter of doubt except so far as have been gathered from a few brief voluntary publications made by his physician. . . . Without vanity permit me to say I firmly believe that had they called upon me for statements as to when he died, I could have been instrumental in preventing his 'Dear Muddie,' Mrs. Maria Clemm, and his dear affianced, Mrs. Shelton, his first love, his *Annabel Lee*—from the sore afflictions and trials and heart burning

that fell to their lot, and which in silence they endured. . . . Time speeds on and I repeat that thirty-five years have passed, and at this late period I am invited and urged to make known the facts so long desired in reference to his death. I am grateful to a kind Providence for having spared me to give the positive facts and unfold to the public mind much that had not been made known, and I hope to remove all doubt in respect to the uncertainty which has so long surrounded this part of POE'S history and life. I now proclaim to the world that he has been shamefully abused and misrepresented, that the habit of intemperance, which to some extent did cling to him in his earlier history, did not continue with him in his more mature life, and that what I shall record, shall be a true, unvarnished story from personal intercourse for sixteen hours during his last illness, from his death-bed statements, from information received elsewhere, and from near and dear friends, those who knew him and loved him.

It was my sad duty as his physician to sit by his deathbed; to administer the cup of consolation; to moisten his parched lips; to wipe the cold death-dew from his brow; and to catch the last whispered articulations that fell from the lips of a being, the most remarkable, perhaps, this country has ever known. Let me entreat your thoughtful attention, therefore, to a plain, unvarnished story of a checkered life, and the strange and melancholy events that darkened the last hours of a dying genius.

"A Tale I would unfold"—but, unfortunately, he had unfolded it some thirty-six years before, and apparently had forgotten to refold it. The report he now makes is so diametrically opposed to that contained in a letter to Mrs. Clemm, immediately following Poe's death, that we must believe, influenced by his subject and entirely forgetting the facts, he has drawn up a story of "ratiocination" befitting one whose reputation has cast a halo over an event of such tragic importance, and thus attempts to associate his own name with that of the immortal dead. It is not a deliberate attempt to deceive; simply time had filled Moran's brain cells with "lime," and many of them had been absorbed. It is not to be believed that Dr. Moran actually sat for sixteen hours wiping the "death-dew" from the arched brow, or that he administered any cup of

consolation, or even moistened the parched lips; this is all Southern hyperbole. It is what Moran might have done had Poe come back after thirty-five years with all his accumulated legends and his glorious reputation; what I certainly would be proud of having done, provided by some reversal of the law of mortality, I had been placed in the position of Dr. Moran. Probably what he did do was, as he related thirty-six years earlier—not knowing who Poe was, he turned him over to a nurse. His thirty-six-year-after statement, as far as it concerns the death of Poe, begins with a diagnosis given by the hackdriver who brought him to the hospital:

Where did you find this man? 'On Light Street wharf, sir.' I said, 'dead drunk I suppose?' He replied, 'No, sir; he was a sick man, a very sick man sir.' Why do you think he was not drunk? I asked. 'He did not smell of whiskey,' said the driver, 'he is too white in the face. I picked him up in my arms like a baby, sir, and put him in the hack.'

Little did I then think, that after thirty-five years I should be called upon to give a full account of POE'S death and to defend the man whom at that hour I believed to be drunk; and that man, the great American genius, whose name is now a household word.

In a few minutes POE threw the cover from his breast, and looking up asked the nurse, 'Where am I?' The nurse made no reply but rang for me. I attended the call immediately, and placing my chair by the side of the patient's bed, took his left hand in my own and with my right hand pushed back the raven black locks of hair that covered his forehead.

I asked him how he felt. He answered, 'Miserable.' 'Do you suffer much pain?' 'No.' 'Do you feel sick at the stomach?' 'Yes, slightly.' 'Does your head ache, have you any pain there?' putting my hand on his forehead. 'Yes.' 'Mr. POE, how long have you been sick?' 'Can't say.' . . .

The sick man said, 'Where am I?' 'You are in the hands of your friends,' I replied, 'and as soon as you are better, I will have you moved to another part of the house, where you can receive them.' He was looking the room over with his large dark eyes, and I feared he would think he was unkindly dealt with, by being put in this prison-like room, with its wired inside windows, and iron grating outside.

I now felt it necessary that I should determine the nature of his disease and make out a correct diagnosis, so as to treat him properly. I did not then know but he might have been drinking, and so as to determine the matter I said:

'Mr. POE, you are extremely weak, pulse very low; I will give you a glass of toddy.' He opened wide his eyes, and fixed them so steadily upon me, and with such anguish in them that I had to look from him to the wall beyond the bed.

He then said, 'Sir, if I thought its potency would transport me to the Elysian bowers of the undiscovered spirit world, I would not take it.'

'I will then administer an opiate, to give you sleep and rest,' I said. Then he rejoined, 'Twin sister, spectre to the doomed and crazed mortals of earth and perdition.'

I was entirely shorn of my strength. Here was a patient supposed to have been drunk, and yet refuses to take liquor. . . . I found there was no tremor of his person, no unsteadiness of his nerves, no fidgeting with his hands, and not the slightest odor of liquor upon his breath or person. I saw that my first impression had been a mistaken one. He was in a sinking condition, yet perfectly conscious.

Dr. Moran's account shows a marvelous memory for verbatim statements and minute details of events which had occurred thirty-six years previously; so circumstantial and accurate were they that I am sure I could not have retained and repeated them thirty-six seconds after they were uttered.

This would be a trivial and uncalled for criticism did it not concern Dr. Moran's retraction of his statement made in the letter he wrote Mrs. Clemm a few days after Poe's death, while the facts were still fresh in his memory. According to this statement Poe was unconscious when admitted and remained in this condition several hours; this was "succeeded by a tremor of the limbs, and a busy but not violent delirium." Dr. Moran also stated that, when Poe was questioned with reference to his family, "his answers were incoherent and unsatisfactory. He told me however that he had a wife in Richmond."



Further, he stated that Poe became violently delirious and sank into a stupor, dying without regaining consciousness. This renders all the more remarkable, and stamps as "original" because it sprang, unaided, from Dr. Moran's brain, the following pen picture of Poe's actions as well as his last words:

I said, 'Mr. POE, you are in a critical condition, and the least excitement of your mind will endanger your life.' He said, 'Doctor, I am ill; is there no hope?' 'The chances are against you.' 'How long, oh! how long,' he cried, 'before I can see my dear Virginia, my dear Lenore!' I said to him, 'I will send for her or anyone you wish to see.' I knew nothing of his family or friends. I asked him, 'Have you a family?' 'No,' said he, 'my wife is dead, my dear Virginia. My mother-in-law lives; oh! how my heart bleeds for her; she said when we last met and parted at Fordham, "Eddie, I fear this will be our last meeting."' I said, 'Mr. POE, I will send or write to anyone you may desire me.' 'Doctor,' said he, 'Death's dark angel has done his work. Language cannot express the terrific tempest that sweeps over me, and signals the alarm of death. Oh, God! the terrible strait I am in.' 'Shall I write to anyone for you?' 'Yes, Doctor, write to my mother-in-law, and Mrs.—— no, too late! Too late!

Then he said, 'Write to both at once; write to my mother-in-law and tell her "Eddie is here"—no, too late! Doctor, I must unbosom to you the secret of my heart, though dagger-like it pierces my soul. I was to have been married in ten days.'

He wept like a child, and even now I can see his pale face that told too plainly the depth of grief he felt, and the large tear drops forcing their way down the furrows of his pallid cheeks. I again asked, 'Shall I send for the lady?' 'No, write to both; inform them of my illness and death at the same time, and say that no conscious act of mine brought this great trouble upon me. How it happened that I am brought to this place, God only knows. My mind has kept no record of time; it seems a dream, a horrible dream.' I said, 'Mr. POE, my carriage is at the door; I will send for the lady.' 'No,' said he, 'write to Mrs. Sarah E. Shelton, Richmond, Va., and Mrs. Maria Clemm, Lowell, Mass.'

I remained by his side, watching every breath and movement of his muscles. He had *no tremor or spasmodic action* at this period, which was twelve hours from his entrance in the hospital. I noticed the color deepening upon his cheeks and forehead, blood vessels at the temple

slightly enlarging. I ordered ice to his head and heat to his extremities, and waited in his room about fifteen minutes longer, observing no change except increase in the circulation. . . . POE continued in an unconscious state for half an hour, but when roused he was conscious. On visiting him again I found his pulse feeble, sharp, and very irregular. I took my seat by his bedside and closely watched him for twenty minutes at least; the pupils of his eyes were dilating and contracting. Death was rapidly approaching. Just at this moment my friend, Professor J. C. S. Monkur, came into the sick chamber. As soon as he fixed his eyes upon the patient he said, 'He will die; he is dying now.' After a careful examination, Dr. Monkur gave it as his opinion that POE would die from excessive nervous prostration and loss of nerve power, resulting from exposure, affecting the encephalon, a sensitive and delicate membrane of the brain. . . . He seemed to revive a little and opening his eyes, he fixed them upon the window. He kept them unmoved for more than a minute. I have, since that time, been forcibly impressed with the wild fancies in that wonderful poem, *The Raven*. Did he hear a 'Gentle tapping at the window lattice,' and was his heart still a moment, 'this mystery to explore'? Did he see that stately raven 'perched upon his chamber door. Perched, and sat, and nothing more.' The dying poet was articulating something in a very low voice, and at length he spoke more audibly and said, 'Doctor, it is all over.' I then said, 'Mr. POE, I must tell you that you are near your end. Have you any wish or word for friends?' He said, 'Nevermore.'

At length he exclaimed: 'O God! Is there no ransom for the deathless spirit?' I said, 'Yes, look to your Saviour; there is mercy for you and all mankind. God is love and the gift is free.'

The dying man then said impressively, 'He who arched the heavens and upholds the universe, has His decrees legibly written upon the frontlet of every human being, and upon demons incarnate.'

I then consoled him by saying, 'He died for you and me and all mankind. Trust in His mercy.' . . .

The glassy eyes rolled back; there was a sudden tremor; and the immortal soul of EDGAR ALLAN POE was borne swiftly away to the spirit world.

This statement of Moran is somewhat more impressive than the one he made to Mrs. Clemm, viz.: that Poe continued calling for one "Reynolds," and was in violent delirium till the end, and that, as he died, he exclaimed:

"Lord help my poor soul." It is not certain that he said this, for Poe was not a praying man; yet Dr. Moran did, as all good physicians should do—fit into the mouth of the dying man something that might comfort the poor mother. His later description of the dying scene was for a larger audience.

In this memoir Dr. Moran insists that Poe was in the hospital only sixteen hours before his death. In referring to this matter, he says:

A certain biographer has recently written that 'Poe was four days in a fit of delirium before he died,' and his cousin, Neilson Poe, is reported by this same writer to have said that he, Judge Poe, called to see him, but he was in such wild delirium that admission was refused; that he sent changes of linen, etc., to add to his comfort. I take this opportunity to assert that the statements are utterly untrue and without the slightest foundation.

In the letter written Mrs. Clemm immediately following Poe's death, Dr. Moran wrote:

When I returned I found the patient in a violent delirium, resisting the effort of two nurses to keep him in bed. This state continued until Saturday evening (he was admitted on *Wednesday*) when he commenced calling for one 'Reynolds' which he did all through the night until three on *Sunday* morning.

It is not probable, had Moran's second statement been made thirty-six years earlier, that it would have entirely vindicated Poe, as the doctor hoped; it certainly would not have so severely reflected on the memory of Dr. Moran.

The only medical importance the description possesses is that the symptoms accompanying death to a certain extent elucidate the facts of causation; the first description of Dr. Moran strongly bears out the theory that Poe died of an organically diseased brain complicated by an intense meningeal congestion.

I agree with Moran that Poe did not die of alcoholism, nor was his death that of a drunkard; yet it is entirely possible that alcohol was the exciting cause. It is certain that

meningeal irritation, due to brain congestion or inflammation—Moran seems to have kept no record as to whether or not there was fever—was the direct cause of Poe's death.

Moran was probably mistaken in his statement that Dr. Monkur's diagnosis was an "inflammation affecting the encephalon—a sensitive and delicate membrane of the brain." Such a definition would be in serious conflict with the authorities we now recognize. Probably the word that Moran intended to use was *meninges*. If this be the fact Dr. Monkur was correct.

Apparently it happened in the case of Poe, as in many similar cases, that there was a low grade of inflammation affecting the meninges, which, in all probability, had penetrated and partly disorganized the brain-matter, composed as it is of brain cells and their connecting processes. This was of long standing, and, even without the use of stimulants, might occasionally give evidence of brain irritation. Alcohol, in the slightest quantity, can set up serious irritation—occasionally active inflammation—among such morbid and diseased brain cells. Whether or not in this particular case alcohol precipitated inflammation or intense congestion is not essential for the diagnosis.

There can be no reasonable doubt that the long continued use of alcohol by one so predisposed, would produce this organic change. A simple debauch, with a brain not alcoholically diseased, rarely produces a fatal delirium.

Poe's alcoholic excesses were something for which he was not responsible. His drinking was the result of hereditary compulsion. It was as much a part of him as was his peculiar intellect. If we praise him for his genius, and if his work has made for the world's happiness, as long as we cannot forget the evil thing that obsessed him and for which he paid the penalty, his faults should be condoned in the clear understanding that he cannot be held responsible for the transmitted neurosis.





## TO MY MOTHER.

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BECAUSE I feel that, in the Heavens above,  
The angels, whispering to one another,  
Can find, among their burning terms of love,  
None so devotional as that of "Mother,"  
Therefore by that dear name I long have called you—  
You who are more than mother unto me,  
And fill my heart of hearts, where Death installed you  
In setting my Virginia's spirit free.  
My mother—my own mother, who died early,  
Was but the mother of myself; but you  
Are mother to the one I loved so dearly,  
And thus are dearer than the mother I knew  
By that infinity with which my wife  
Was dearer to my soul than its soul-life.

Unfortunately, it happens that this monograph deals only with the darker side of Poe's life. I have confined myself to what occurred during his periods of irresponsibility. I have not attempted to give an account of his life further than this requirement demanded.

I can not close this study without some reference to Poe, the man. I, too, would have wished to write his name in capitals. No figure in all literary history—save Thackeray and Goldsmith—has so grown into personal affection and hero-worship.

Poe was essentially domestic. He took pleasure only in his small family circle and, in the hour in which he was overcome by his evil inheritance, it was his harbor of refuge. The real love of his life was given to Mrs. Clemm, his "Dear Muddy." She was the mother of the wife, whom he cherished and nursed, and she is the mother-figure who so heroically stands forth as the defender of his home and the preserver of his very life:—the hard-working, devoted and ever-faithful mother. Our earliest record shows that Poe had an intense longing for this mother-love. Apparently he found in Mrs. Clemm all the consideration and consolation for which he longed, and of which the untimely death of his own mother had deprived him; a love that was an absolute necessity for one of his abnormal psychology.

Her lineaments show a face characterized by gentleness and placidity, yet remarkable for nobility of outline. Her eyes appear penetratingly gentle and kind; her letters bespeak much mental strength and womanly tenderness, while her whole life was one of such devotion to her two sick and doomed children, as to justify the tributes that her own friends, as well as all of Poe's biographers, paid her. Woodberry, alone, has aspersed her memory, writing: "All unsupported statements by her are open to doubt." He gives no reason for this derogatory remark.

Willis says:

Winter after winter, for years, the most touching sight to us, in this whole city, has been that tireless minister to genius, thinly and insufficiently clad, going from office to office, with a poem, or an article, on some literary subject, to sell—sometimes simply pleading in a broken voice that he was ill, and begging for him—mentioning nothing but 'that he was ill,' whatever might be the reason for his writing nothing; and never, amid all her tears and recitals of distress suffering one syllable to escape her lips that could convey a doubt of him, or a complaint, or a lessening of pride in his genius and good intentions. Her daughter died, a year and a half since, but she did not desert him. She continued his ministering angel,—living with him, caring for him, guarding him against exposure, and, when he was carried away by temptation, amid grief and the loneliness of feeling unrequited to, and awoke from his self-abandonment prostrated in destitution and suffering, *begging* for him still.

If woman's devotion, born with a first love, and fed with human passion, hallow its object, as it is allowed to do, what does not a devotion like this—pure, disinterested, and holy as the watch of an invisible spirit—say for him who inspired it?

Mrs. Clemm, in a letter written to Mrs. Whitman just after Poe's departure from Fordham, on his last trip to Richmond, throws further light on the relations existing between them:

Eddy has been gone ten days, and I have not heard one word from him. Do you wonder that I *am distracted*? I fear everything. . . . Oh, if any evil has befallen *him*, what can comfort me? The day after he left New York, I left Mrs. Lewis and started for home. I called on a rich friend who had made many promises, but never knew our situation. I frankly told her. She proposed to me to leave Eddy, saying he might very well do for himself. . . . Any one to propose to *me* to leave my Eddy—what a cruel insult! No one to console and comfort him but me; no one to nurse him and take care of him when he is sick and helpless! Can I ever forget that dear sweet face, so tranquil, so pale, and those dear eyes looking at me so sadly, while she said, 'Darling, Muddy, you will console and take care of my poor Eddy—you will never, *never* leave him? Promise me, my dear Muddy, and then I can die in peace.' And *I did promise*. And when I meet her in heaven, I can say, 'I have kept my promise, my darling.'



Surely she did keep it, and wherever Aidenn may be, there will these three be found—and together.

For this sacrificing and faithful woman all who knew her had only words of love and praise—save only one, the Preacher who wrote to Mrs. Whitman:

I cannot refrain from begging you to be very careful what you say or write to Mrs. Clemm, who is not your friend, nor anybody's friend, and who has no element of goodness or kindness in her nature, but whose heart and understanding are full of malice and wickedness. I confide in you these sentences for your own sake only, for Mrs. C. appears to be a very warm friend to me. Pray destroy this note, and at least act cautiously, till I may justify it in a conversation with you.

I am yours very sincerely,

Rufus W. Griswold.

At one time she had extorted admiration even from Griswold, who paid her this tribute:

When once he sent for me to visit him, during a period of illness caused by protracted and anxious watching at the side of his sick wife, I was impressed by the singular neatness and the air of refinement in his home. It was in a small house, in one of the pleasant and silent neighborhoods far from the center of the town, and though slightly and cheaply furnished everything in it was so tasteful and so fitly disposed that it seemed altogether suitable for a man of genius. For this and for most of the comforts he enjoyed, in his brightest as in his darkest years, he was chiefly indebted to his mother-in-law, who loved him with the more than maternal devotion and constancy.

In the end, a man will be judged by his home relations and his everyday home life, rather than by the armor in which he encases himself for the fight in his "Battle of Life." It occasionally happens that the polished exterior which we present to the world and the immaculate habiliments in which we exhibit ourselves conceal a gnawing cancer which destroys the very vitals and uproots all family happiness. In his solitary life Poe apparently shut out the world from his fireside, yet we have the testimony of occasional visitors as to the charm of his home life:

On this occasion I was introduced to the young wife of the poet, and to the mother, then more than sixty years of age. She was a tall, dignified old lady, with most ladylike manners, and her black dress, though old and much worn, looked really elegant on her. She wore a widow's cap, of the genuine pattern, and it suited exquisitely with her snow-white hair. Her features were large, and corresponded with her stature, and it seemed strange how such a stalwart and queenly woman could be the mother of her *petite* daughter. Mrs. Poe looked very young; she had large black eyes, and a pearly whiteness of skin which was a perfect pallor. Her pale face, her brilliant eyes, and her raven hair gave her an unearthly look. One felt that she was almost a disrobed spirit, and when she coughed it was made certain that she was passing away. The mother seemed hale and strong, and appeared to be almost a sort of universal Providence to her strange children.

The cottage had an air of gentility and taste that must have been lent it by the presence of its inmates. So neat, so poor, so unfurnished and yet so charming a dwelling I never saw. The floor of the kitchen was white as wheaten flour. A table, a chair, and a little stove that it contained seemed to furnish it completely. The sitting-room floor was laid with check matting; four chairs, a light stand, and a hanging book shelf completed the furniture. There were pretty presentation copies of books on the little shelves, and the Brownings had posts of honor on the stand. With quiet exultation Poe drew from his side-pocket a letter he had recently received from Elizabeth Barret Browning. He read it to us.

What an association-book to possess! Was it, also, in the Griswold sale?

Again Mrs. Clemm writes:

I always sat up with him when he was writing, and gave him a cup of hot coffee every hour or two. At home he was simple and affectionate as a child, and during all the years he lived with me I do not remember a single night that he failed to come and kiss his 'Mother,' before going to bed.

Willis thus judges him in the memoir he published in the first volume of Poe's works:

Some four or five years since, when editing a daily paper in this City, Mr. Poe was employed by us, for several months, as critic and sub-editor. This was our first personal acquaintance with him. He resided with his wife and mother at Fordham, a few miles out of town,

but was at his desk in the office, from nine in the morning till the evening paper went to press. With the highest admiration for his genius, and a willingness to let it atone for more than ordinary irregularity, we were led by common report to expect a very capricious attention to his duties, and occasionally a scene of violence and difficulty. Time went on, however, and he was invariably punctual and industrious. With his pale, beautiful and intellectual face, as a reminder of what genius was in him, it was impossible, of course, not to treat him always with deferential courtesy, and, to our occasional request that he would not probe too deep into a criticism, or that he would erase a passage colored too highly with his resentments against society or mankind, he readily and courteously assented—far more yielding than most men, we thought, on points so excusably sensitive.

With the prospect of taking the lead in another periodical, he, at last, voluntarily gave up his employment with us, and, through all this considerable period, we had seen none but one presentment of the man—a quiet, patient, industrious, and most gentlemanly person, commanding the utmost respect and good feeling by his unvarying deportment and ability.

Woodberry quotes Willis as to his later association with Poe:

He frequently called on us afterwards at our place of business, and we met him often in the street,—invariably the same sad-mannered, winning, and refined gentleman such as we had always known him, and found in his business letters—friendly notes—sufficient evidence of the very qualities denied to Mr. Poe,—humility, willingness to persevere, belief in another's kindness, and capability of cordial and grateful friendship! Such he assuredly was when *sane*. Such only he has invariably seemed to us, in all we personally know of him, through a friendship of five or six years. And so much easier is it to believe what we have seen and known, than what we *hear of* only, that we remember him but with admiration and respect.

Another associate, even more competent to judge Poe, was Graham. He thus relates his own experience:

I shall never forget how solicitous of the happiness of his wife and mother-in-law he was whilst one of the editors of 'Graham's Magazine'; his whole effort seemed to be to procure the comfort and welfare of his home. Except for their happiness, and the natural ambition of having a magazine of his own, I never heard him deplore the want of

wealth. The truth is, he cared little for money, and knew less of its value, for he seemed to have no personal expenses. What he received from me, in regular monthly installments, went directly into the hands of his mother-in-law for family comforts, and *twice* only I remember his purchasing some rather expensive luxuries for his house, and then he was nervous to the degree of misery until he had, by extra articles, covered what he considered an imprudent indebtedness. His love for his wife was a sort of rapturous worship of the spirit of beauty which he felt was fading before his eyes. I have seen him hovering around her when she was ill, with all the fond fear and the tender anxiety of a mother for her first-born, her slightest cough causing in him a shudder, a heart-chill that was visible. I rode out, one summer evening with them, and the remembrance of his watchful eyes eagerly bent on the slightest change of hue in that loved face haunts me yet as the memory of a sad strain. It was the hourly *anticipation* of her loss that made him a sad and thoughtful man, and lent a mournful melody to his undying song.

There was a well-known "biblioplist," who was a fellow guest with Poe for several months during his first residence in New York. His name was Gowans, and Harrison quotes him as follows:

For eight months or more 'one house contained us, as one table fed.' During this time I saw much of him and had an opportunity of conversing with him often, and I must say that I never saw him the least affected by liquor, nor even descend to any known vice, while he was one of the most courteous, gentlemanly and intelligent companions I have met with during my journeyings and haltings through divers divisions of the globe.

Mrs. Clemm bears the following testimony:

Eddie was domestic in all his habits, seldom leaving home for an hour unless his darling Virginia, or myself, were with him. He was truly an affectionate, kind husband, and a devoted son to me. He was impulsive, generous, affectionate, and *noble*. His tastes were very simple, and his admiration for all that was good and beautiful was very great. We three lived for each other.

And yet Griswold, in the preface to Poe's collected works wrote:

There seemed to him no moral susceptibility; and, what was more remarkable in a proud nature, little or nothing of the true point of

honor. He had, to a morbid excess, that desire to rise which is vulgarly called ambition, but no wish for the esteem or the love of his species; only the hard wish to succeed—not shine, not serve—succeed, that he might have the right to despise the world which galled his self-conceit.

We have, finally, Poe's own estimate of himself, written to Mrs. Whitman.

With the exception of occasional follies and excesses which I bitterly lament but to which I have been driven by intolerable sorrow, and which are hourly committed by others without attracting any notice whatever—I can call to mind no act of my life which would bring a blush to my cheeks—or to yours.

In a letter to Willis, written after Poe's death, in answer to the abuse Griswold had heaped upon Poe in his memoir, Graham made a long and full defense, not only as to his business relations with Poe, but he also discussed the personal relations that had existed, both as to Griswold and to the world at large.

You have spoken with so much truth and delicacy of the deceased, and, with the magical touch of genius, have called so warmly up before me the memory of our lost friend as you and I both seemed to have known him, that I feel warranted in addressing to you the few plain words I have to say in defense of his character as set down by Mr. Griswold.

Although the article, it seems, appeared in the 'New York Tribune,' it met my eye for the first time in the volume before me. I now purpose to take exception to it in the most public manner. I knew Mr. Poe well, far better than Mr. Griswold; and by the memory of old times, when he was editor of 'Graham's,' I pronounce this exceedingly ill-timed and unappreciative estimate of the character of our lost friend, *unfair* and *untrue*. It is Mr. Poe as seen by the writer while laboring under a fit of the nightmare, but so dark a picture has no resemblance to the *living* man. Accompanying these beautiful volumes it is an immortal infamy, the death's head over the entrance to the garden of beauty, a horror that clings to the brow of morning, whispering of murder. It haunts the memory through every page of his writings, leaving upon the heart a sensation of gloom, a feeling almost of terror. The only relief we feel is in knowing that it is not true, that it is a fancy sketch of a perverted, jaundiced vision. The man who

could deliberately say of Edgar Allan Poe, in a notice of his life and writings prefacing volumes which were to become a priceless souvenir to all who loved him, that his death might startle many, '*but that few would be grieved by it,*' and blast the whole reputation of the man by such a paragraph as follows, is a judge dishonored. He is not Mr. Poe's peer, and I challenge him before the country even as a juror in the case.

In referring to Griswold's statement that "*you could not contradict him, but you raised his quick choler: you could not speak of wealth but his cheek paled with gnawing envy*" Graham, for Poe's friends, answered:

This is dastardly, and, what is worse, it is false. It is very adroitly done, with phrases very well turned, and with gleams of truth shining out from a setting so dusky, as to look devilish. Mr. Griswold does not feel the worth of the man he has undervalued; he had no sympathy in common with him, and has allowed old prejudices and old enmities to steal, insensibly perhaps, into the coloring of his picture. They were for years totally uncongenial, if not enemies, and during that period Mr. Poe, in a scathing lecture upon the "Poets of America," gave Mr. Griswold some raps over the knuckles of force sufficient to be remembered. He had, too, in the exercise of his functions as a critic, put to death summarily the literary reputation of some of Mr. Griswold's best friends; and their ghosts cried in vain for him to avenge them during Poe's life-time, and it almost seems as if the present hacking at the cold remains of him who struck them down, is a sort of compensation for duty long delayed, for reprisal long desired, but deferred. But without this, the opportunities afforded Mr. Griswold to estimate the character of Poe occurred, in the main, after his stability had been wrecked, his whole nature in a degree changed and with all his prejudices aroused and active. Nor do I consider Mr. Griswold *competent*, with all the opportunities he may have cultivated or acquired, to act as his judge, to dissect that subtle and singularly fine intellect, to probe the motives and weigh the actions of that proud heart. . . . Among the true friends of Poe in this city—and he had some such here—there are those, I am sure, that *he* did not class among *villains*; nor do *they* feel easy when they see their old friend dressed out, in his grave, in the habiliments of a scoundrel. There is something to them, in this mode of procedure on the part of the literary executor that does not chime in with their notion 'of the true point of honor.'

This article is too long to quote in its entirety. It goes into business details proving that in all Poe's dealings with Graham he was punctiliously honorable, and it defends the moral character of Poe, disproving many of Griswold's charges. It contains so many details elsewhere discussed that I will only quote the conclusion:

They had all of them looked upon our departed friend as singularly indifferent to wealth for its own sake, but as very positive in his opinions that the scale of social merit was not of the highest; that mind, somehow, was apt to be left out of the estimate altogether; and, partaking somewhat of his free way of thinking, his friends are startled to find they have entertained very unamiable convictions. As to his 'quick-choler' when he was contradicted, it depended a good deal on the party denying, as well as upon the subject discussed. He was quick, it is true, to perceive mere quacks in literature, and somewhat apt to be hasty, when pestered by them; but, upon most other questions his natural amiability was not easily disturbed. . . . His 'astonishing natural advantages' *had* been very assiduously cultivated; his 'daring spirit' was the anointed genius; his self-confidence the proud conviction of both; and it was with something of a lofty scorn that he *attacked*, as well as repelled, the crammed scholar of an hour, who attempted to palm upon him the ill-digested learning. Literature with him was religion; and he, its high-priest, with a whip of scorpions, scourged the moneychangers from the temple. In all else, he had the docility and kind-heartedness of a child. No man was more quickly touched by a kindness, none more prompt to return for an injury. For three or four years I knew him intimately, and for eighteen months saw him almost daily, much of the time writing or conversing at the same desk, knowing all his hopes, his fears, and little annoyances of life, as well as his high-hearted struggle with adverse fate; yet he was always the same polished gentleman, the quiet, unobtrusive, thoughtful scholar, the devoted husband, frugal in his personal expenses, punctual and unwearied in his industry, and the *soul of honor* in all his transactions. This, of course, was in his better days, and by them we judge the man. But even after his habits had changed, there was no literary man to whom I would more readily advance money for labor to be done. . . . His pen was regulated by the highest sense of *duty*. By a keen analysis he separated and studied each piece which the skillful mechanist had put together. No part, however insignificant, or

apparently unimportant, escaped the rigid and patient scrutiny of his sagacious mind.

The unfitted joint proved the bungler—the slightest blemish was a palpable fraud. He was the scrutinizing lapidary who detected and exposed the slightest flaw in diamonds. The gem of first water shone the brighter for the truthful setting of his calm praise. He had the finest touch of soul for beauty—a delicate and hearty appreciation of worth. If his praise appeared tardy, it was of priceless value when given. It was true as well as sincere. It was the stroke of honor that at once knighted the receiver. It was in the world of *mind* that he was king; and, with fierce audacity, he felt and proclaimed himself autocrat. As critic he was despotic, supreme. Yet no man with more readiness would soften a harsh expression at the request of a friend, or if he himself felt that he had infused too great a degree of bitterness into his article, none would more readily soften it down, after it was in type—though still maintaining the justness of his critical views. I do not believe that he wrote to give pain; but in combatting what he conceived to be error, he used the strongest word that presented itself, even in conversation. He labored not so much to reform as to *exterminate* error, and thought the shortest process was to pull it up by the roots.

Though this open letter was published in "Graham's Magazine" immediately following Griswold's issue of the memoir, it has not been disseminated, and has not had the publicity of Griswold's scurrilous article. It was not a part of the "Works" and did not circulate so extensively. Harrison only gives it in his appendix, while Woodberry fails to quote it *in extenso*, omitting all that reflects on Griswold and, in no sense, using it as a defense of Poe.

Poe was a Solitary. Apparently there was no one, outside his family group, with whom at any time he became intimate. In some of his letters he seems to long for friendship and, especially in one that he wrote to Lowell, he expressed himself with unusual freedom, and without that veil of mental reserve through which he allowed the world to view and misjudge him:

I can feel for the 'constitutional indolence' of which you complain—for it is one of my own besetting sins. I am excessively slothful and



wonderfully industrious—by fits. There are epochs when any kind of mental exertion is torture and when nothing yields me pleasure but solitary communion 'with the mountains and the woods'—the 'altars' of Byron. I have thus rambled and dreamed away whole months, and awake, at last, to a sort of mania of composition.

I am not ambitious, except negatively. I now and then feel stirred up to excel a fool, merely because I hate to let a fool imagine he can excel me.

I live continually in a reverie of the future; I have no faith in human perfectability.

I think that human exertion will have no appreciable effect on humanity. Man is now only more active—not more happy—not more wise, than he was 6000 years ago. . . . You speak of 'an estimate of my life,' and from what I have already said, you will see that I have none to give.

I have been too conscious of the mutability and evanescence of temporal things to give any continuous effort to anything—to be consistent in anything.

My life has been a whim—an impulse—a passion—a longing for solitude—a scorn of all things present in an earnest desire for the future.

I am profoundly excited by music and by some poems—those of Tennyson especially—whom with Keats, Shelley, Coleridge occasionally, and a few others of like thought and expression, I regard as the sole poets.

It is remarkable, living at the time Byron's poems created so deep an impression—and possibly this is the greatest proof of his genius for criticism and the best evidence that he was not influenced by, nor in any sense an imitator—that he never refers to Byron as a great poet, simply ignoring him further than to remark incidentally that Byron "lacked artistic instinct." Yet Woodberry says that in his poetry Poe was strongly "under Byron's influence."

Poe's was a royal mentality, and it is certain that, in the society and with the individuals among whom he moved, he fully recognized the fact that he was without a peer. Who else would dare write: "Mr. Bryant is not *all* fool. Mr. Willis is not *quite* an ass. Mr. Longfellow *will* steal, but,

perhaps he cannot help it, and it must not be denied that *nil tetegit quod non ornavit.*"

To him who wears the crown, possibly such language is permissible. Yet it is unfortunate that Poe's life could not have been enriched by a few of those literary friendships that have so glorified the lives of such men as Johnson, Thackeray, Goldsmith and Lamb, and of many others whose names were equally noted for their literary friendships and of the things they wrote.

There was one to whom he warmed and, under more propitious circumstances, there might have ripened such mutual regard and kindly appreciation as to have indissolubly linked their names—no matter how vast the literary gap which separated them.

Although Poe's letters to Lowell are marked by an unusual and personal note of genuine friendship, and Lowell apparently reciprocated, they never met except on the one and unfortunate occasion, the circumstances of which were such as to cause a serious and permanent alienation. Yet their correspondence seemed to justify the olive branch Poe held out.

I hope ere long to have the pleasure of conversing with you personally. There is no man living with whom I have so much desire to become acquainted. How much I would like to interchange opinions with you on poems and poets in general! I fancy that we should agree, usually, in results, while differing frequently about principles. The day may come when we can discuss everything at leisure and in person.

There is every reason to believe that, had Lowell reciprocated, a great literary friendship might have resulted, in spite of the fact that the two men differed as greatly in their literary capacities as they did in their material fortunes.

Who of the present generation would have connected the name of Poe the maligned—the man whose name became a synonym for all that genius can make repulsive,

who "succeeded in attracting and combining in his own person all the floating vices which genius had hitherto shown itself capable of grasping in its widest and most eccentric orbit;" "a man who became an object of charity"; "the delirious drunken pauper of a common hospital"; whose memory and name became a byword; in whose own works there was embedded by his unmoral biographer the story of a "career full of instruction and warning, as it has always been made a portion of the penalty of wrong that its anatomy should be displayed for the common study and advantage"; pilloried in his life and crucified in his death—with that of Lowell the Ambassador, the Professor of belles-lettres, the literary arbiter of the late nineteenth century, who wrote those memorable lines:

But the wind without was bitter and sharp  
Of Sir Launfal's gray hair it made a harp.

Poe's name will live in spite of his critics and of evil reports. He has left works which neither time, nor age, nor changing fashions, nor new standards can cast into oblivion. They will constitute a "monument more lasting than brass," and with Horace he can sing:

*Quod si me lyricis vatibus inseris  
Sublimi feriam sidere vertice*

for their dreams have been realized and they "have reached the stars with the high-carried head."

None can begrudge Lowell his niche in the temple of fame. Although in the coming years but few will listen to his "Conversations on Some of the Old Poets," or look with him through his "Study Windows," or accompany him on his "Fireside Travels," yet shall he have the satisfaction of knowing that, so far as this world and its judgments are concerned, his name remains untarnished; and that no word of scandal ever has been uttered which could in the slightest besmirch his reputation.

It is equally certain, although for some good New England reason Lowell assumed the throne left vacant by the death of Longfellow, that generations to come will know him not; and that his name, good or bad, will perish from the memory of man, unless it be recalled as a contributor to the curiosities of literature, when the "Biglow Papers" are referred to, or "A Fable for Critics" is mentioned because it contains an allusion to Poe.

Lowell's name may be carried to future generations because he almost became the friend of Poe.

Did one pay the price because he was the child of genius, while the other inherited the earth because he was lacking in this divine gift? And, after all, who rightly may be judged the more fortunate? For of the mediocre who strive, struggle, die and are forgotten, the world holds no record.

Our beloved Autocrat, more wonderfully than I know of elsewhere, has described this "Race of Life" and the fate of oblivion that the world holds as our meed:

Commencement day always reminds me of the start for the 'Derby' when the beautiful three-year olds of the season are brought up for the trial. . . . But this is the start and here they are, coats bright as silk, and manes smooth as *eau lustrale* can make them. Some of the best are pranced around, a few minutes each, to show their paces. . . . Do they really think those little thin legs can do anything in such a slashing sweepstakes as is coming off in the next forty years? Oh, this terrible gift of second-sight that comes to some of us when we begin to look through the silvered rings of the *arcus senilis!* *Ten years gone.* First turn in the race. A few broken down; two or three bolted. *Cossack*, a black colt, seems to be ahead of the rest; those black colts commonly get the start, I have noticed, of the others in the first quarter. *Meteor* has pulled up.

*Twenty years.* *Cassock* has dropped from the front, and *Judex*, an iron-gray, has the lead. But look! how they have thinned out. Down flat,—five,—six, how many? They lie still enough! They will not get up again in this race, be very sure!

*Thirty years.* *Dives*, bright sorrel, ridden by the fellow in the yellow jacket, begins to make play fast. But who is that other one that

has been lengthening his stride and now shows close up to the front? Don't you remember the quiet brown colt *Asteroid* with the star in his forehead? The black colt, as we used to call him, is in the background taking it easily in a gentle trot.

*Forty years.* More dropping off but much as before.

*Fifty years.* Race over. All that are on the course are coming in at a walk; no more running. Who is ahead? What! and the winning post a slab of white or gray stone standing out from that turf where there is no more jockeying or straining for victory.

Although Poe is now recognized as our literary primate—anathema on those who bracket, with his, the name of Whitman!—he has been denied official recognition; he has been reluctantly admitted to our metropolitan Hall of Fame, and those who should have gloried in the great literary reputation he has given to us, and who should have welcomed him as a peer, coldly declined to participate when they were asked to do him honor.

Years ago the acid test was applied. When, through the efforts of old friends and of the school children of Richmond, a public subscription was raised for the purpose of erecting a "slab of stone" to fittingly mark the resting-place of Poe's body—there he is not—they asked those great men of Boston who had been Poe's contemporaries, and who necessarily recognized his literary eminence to join in commemorating his memory. These invitations were either ignored or they were not accepted.

Lowell, Poe's old friend and admirer, in a four-line letter, "regretted very much that it will be quite impossible for me to be present." Bryant, in a note equally brief, returned "thanks for the obliging invitation." Mr. Whittier: "As a matter of principle, I do not favor ostentatious monuments" (only a very few hundreds had been raised by these poor children of Richmond). Dr. Holmes, in his letter of declination, feelingly referred to Poe's sins of commission: "The hearts of all who reverence the inspiration of genius, who can look tenderly upon the infirmities too often

attending it, who can feel for its misfortunes, will sympathize with you, as you gather around the resting place of all that was mortal of Edgar Allan Poe." If Holmes, usually so generous and warm-hearted, could thus coldly respond, to whom could we then turn? Surely there was one who would exhibit some tenderness for the memory of a contemporary he most certainly admired, however widely apart their orbits ranged. But Longfellow's response was the briefest of all; no kindly memory or literary appreciation roused the slightest spark of human sympathy. To him these two lines:

The fever called living  
Is conquered at last.

seemed the fitting Epitaph and End.

And Tennyson, the Tennyson Poe so admired,—would that I did not have to record it! wrote:

I have long been acquainted with Poe's works and am an admirer of them. I am obliged to you for your expressions about myself, and your promise of sending me the design for the poet's monument, and beg you to believe me, yours very truly.

Possibly the encomiums Poe lavished on Tennyson were so well deserved that no responsive chord was awakened. Possibly he did not possess a responsive chord: maybe after all it was but the "English" of him.

None of these, by the slightest word or token, gave evidence of sympathetic interest, or of respect for the memory of Poe: not one of them went beyond the limit of strict etiquette in their formal answers.

Nor can this indifference be accounted for by sectional jealousies or local prejudices. Long years before our country again had become one; the ties binding it had grown into indissoluble bonds which have made us forget there ever was a line of cleavage. Holmes once used and explained the word "polarized," in a way fully accounting for this attitude.

Continuity of contemptuous memory and biography had overcome and polarized all feeling for the human side of Poe, and had obliterated all thought, except the one that was bitter and that bore no relation to the literary skill or the remarkable accomplishments of this genius. Coming generations will become de-polarized.

Had it been Lowell, and not Poe, whose name was to have been celebrated by a fitting observance of his memorable qualities,—not of the things he wrote,—what an outpouring of commemorative odes would have honored alike the subject and the singers!

I do not believe that I am peculiar in the great love in which I hold the names of certain writers—not necessarily because they wrote marvelous things, but because they are men who appeal to my heart.

It was Thackeray who said:

If Steele is not our friend he is nothing. He is by no means the most brilliant of wits or the deepest of thinkers, but he is our friend; we love him as children love, with an A because he is amiable. I own to liking Dick Steele the Man and Dick Steele the Author much better than much better men and much better authors.

How I would have loved to have gone a-fishing with old Isaac, and had him show me "that very chub with a white spot on his tail." What a feast I could have had at the Mitre, not because of Johnson's turgid argumentations "for effect," but rejoicing in Goldsmith's whimsicalities and his stuttered paradoxes; and the touch of his honest hand would have thrilled me in spite of his absurd "bloom-colored coat," and his homely snub-nosed face, seared by the scars of his old disease.

Or could I have met, only for once, the big-hearted Thackeray in one of his hours of relaxation, possibly on one of his occasional meetings with "Old Fitz," indulging in persiflage and uproarious boyish laughter—Thackeray, the lovable, who never stooped to, nor tolerated, an ignoble

action, and who satirized all that was false, mean, and dishonest; that poor Thackeray who so patiently bore the one great and unbearable affliction in his attempt to mother his motherless girls.

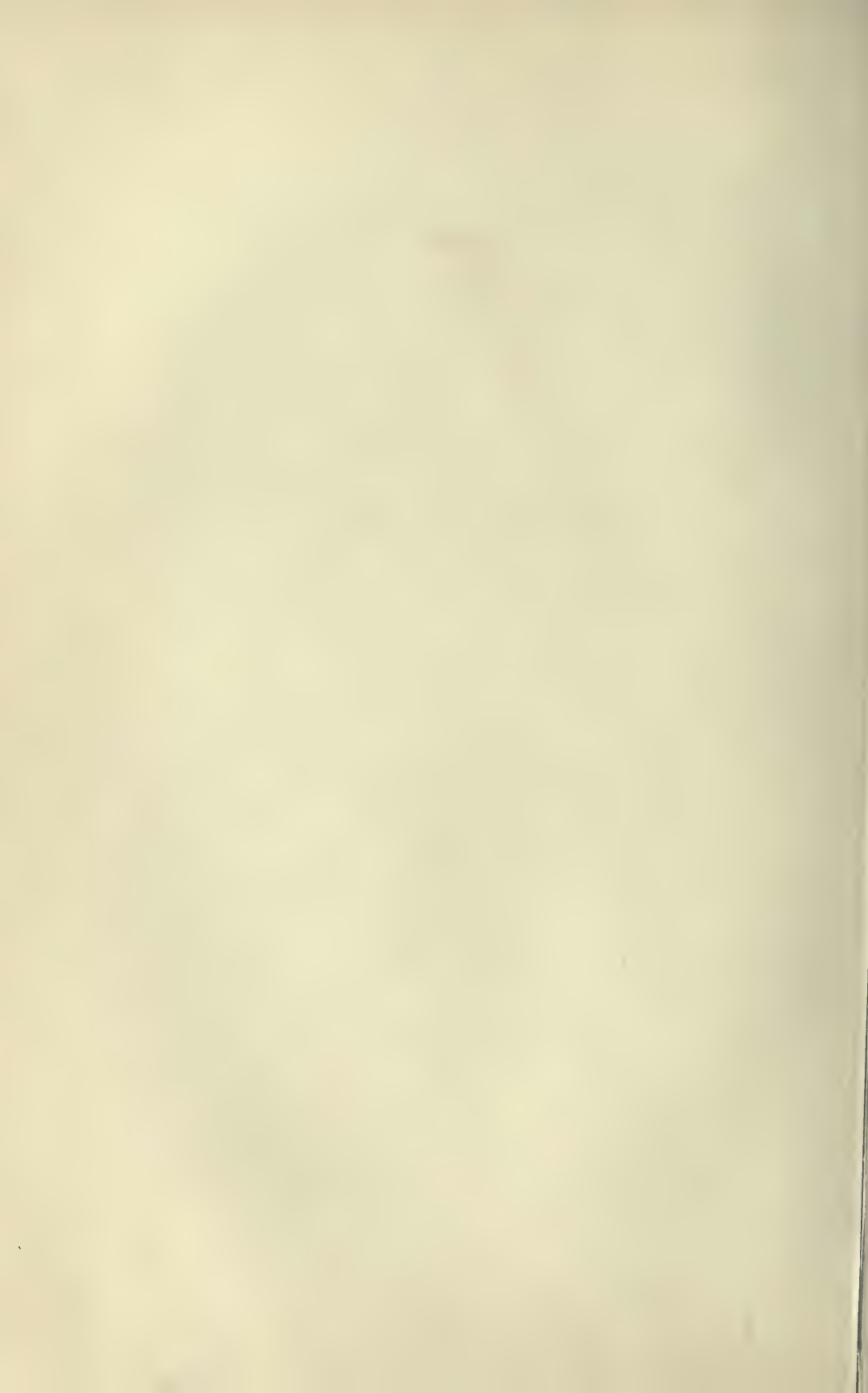
Would not one have enjoyed spending a day at Silverado with Stevenson, that patient sufferer who so pathetically and tenaciously fought for life—not because he feared death, but because life held much joy. We cannot even look at the crags of Mount Saint Helena, which for a time held and finally restored him, without a quickening of the pulse-beat and a tightening of the heart-strings.

And, among these "Royal and Noble Authors," Poe would not have been the least of those I loved. In his hours of sorrow and depression, when he shunned the world and sought seclusion in the little cottage at Fordham, now a shrine to his memory, I could have kept him silent company, and in my own poor way have ministered to his necessities—possibly have given him aid in his affliction; or I would have accompanied him on one of his solitary rambles to High Bridge, bearing with him his load of gloom and wretchedness. Or, when his mood changed and inspiration lighted his mobile face, and supernatural themes employed his facile tongue, I would have rejoiced in his well modulated voice repeating some favorite poem, or dwelling on those wonders of nature that so completely occupied his later years; and, in the words of his beloved Tennyson, I would have attempted with him to find the Ultimate,

And reach the law within the law.







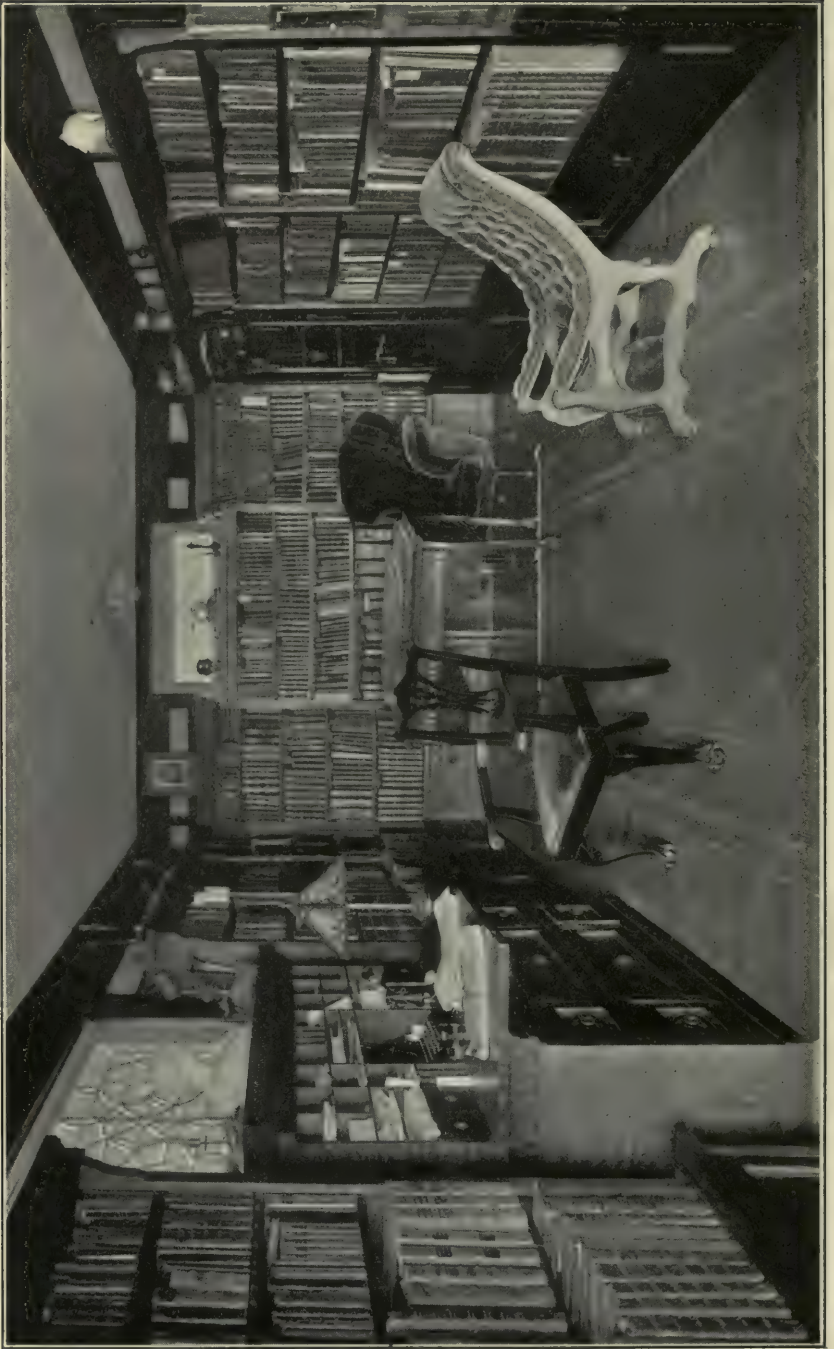
PART II.

EDGAR A. POE

*A BIBLIOGRAPHIC STUDY*







## IN EXPLANATION

IT HAS been my purpose in cataloguing my books not only to give the usual bibliographical details but, in addition, so to abstract their contents as to exhibit that vital spark which has given them the right to live. Books not endowed with this spark of life should not cumber our shelves but should be allowed to crumble and disappear. Those that are ancient, and only have been preserved for the reason that they have been laid away and forgotten, are "Struldbrugs:" helpless and imbecile they continue to exist, a horror to those who must care for them.

Nor do I care for the promising though immature youths who in time may grow into illustrious manhood. So very doubtful am I of my ability to distinguish the great from the near-great, that I have felt it wise to allow Time's judgment to determine this *x-quantity*; but with the personal reservation that, as in the most respectable communities there are certain individuals we like, others we merely tolerate, and still others, however good their repute, whom we thoroughly dislike, there are certain books that we love, or we endure, or that we reject notwithstanding their reputations are excellent and their morals above reproach. There will always be some few that we may not highly respect, which yet we love because they amuse, or because they are possessed of some quality which endears them to us, although association with them may not be judged to be uplifting.

In selecting books for the formation of a library probably we shall be guided by the same unconscious preferences that control us in establishing a home and selecting

associates. There are individuals obsessed by social aspirations who do not seek the old, and possibly out-at-elbows, friends they used to love; they desire for companions only persons of civic prominence, or those who are highly placed. They reject all others, although to find their peers it may become necessary to employ a social secretary and dragnet the city. These care nothing for old associations, and are swayed by no personal inclinations; they allow themselves no likes nor dislikes. The only requirement for companionship is that their companions standardise socially. Usually their book mansions remain closed during many months of each year, and the only evidence of occupation is an occasional footprint, impressed in the dust which has accumulated between infrequent visits.

My book-home was erected, and my book friends were selected, after a design and in a spirit somewhat different. It was built for constant and permanent occupation, although it had its beginnings in surroundings lowly and humble. Most emphatically it was the result of my own inclinations, and it was the offspring of my unbridled love. Few books, however praised by the world or distinguished by long life, were admitted unless I found in them congenial friends. Occasionally, even the vagabond and the outlaw gained admission if possessed of certain qualities (or vagaries) which made them interesting human documents. Necessarily, I have given admission to certain books only because of their eminent respectability, and, occasionally, I have demeaned myself by servilely groveling in the *HOUSE OF THE GILDED*.

As there are differences in the fashions of home building, so there are many different opinions as to what should constitute a library, the Bradstreet rating frequently determining the choice. If one who desires to form a collection be possessed of abundant wealth, he may not be willing to trust his own judgment; but will employ an



“architect” who will plan and construct for him a library of imposing grandeur. Its cornerstone undoubtedly will be the First Four Folios. Next will come the Elogy, and, if possible to procure, an uncut Kilmarnock; then the Songs of Innocence. The price mark is plain, and for this reason their quality cannot be questioned. Because there are only a very few of these rarities to be distributed among a great number of seekers, the scramble would be amusing were it not pitiful to see such desirable items seized and incarcerated in these BOOK MANSIONS.

My critical reflections will have made it evident that I have not been able to follow this method of formation. A good library may be builded without having, as a foundation, the First Four Folios, which, in good condition, are now held at something like \$25,000. There are many desirable items that are within the reach of the *ungilded*. A few manuscripts, glistening in their golden borders and illuminated with miniatures, possibly the work of some *devotee* whose heart's life-blood rubricated their pages, or some illustrative *incunabula* (still an education to our modern printers and binders, as they must be in their original bindings, unless a Payne or a Berthelet or other notable binding has been substituted; otherwise their shorn margins render them valueless); possibly, if very carefully selected, a third rate Caxton or a Wynken de Worde. These, perhaps, may be afforded; while good specimens of 1500-1550 transitional English are not financial impossibilities. A Tyndale Bible, an Elyot's "Governor," and, if one is fortunate, the first Ascham's "Schoolmaster" in its original vellum binding, as well as an early Chaucer and a first Gower—all are within reach. The Nuremberg Chronicle, that great picture book on which it is said Albert Dürer *might* have tried his 'prentice hand, and which is the earliest of all illustrated books, is a most comforting item; but so many rise up and demand recognition that each

individual lover must choose his particular inamorata. However, in this "affair," the polygamous conception is permissible; for when the appetite becomes whetted, and blood is once tasted, it grows with what it feeds upon, and individual tastes—if they be individual—give us the best criterion by which to determine the capacity of the collector. Certainly, any good library must contain all the early English classics, if possible as originally issued, necessarily in contemporary bindings. All modern "creations" and jewelled bindings should be avoided "as strongly as the Moslemite the forbidden wine." Some of the earlier typographical prints from the old presses, the Elzevirs, the Aldines and the Plantins, keep up old traditions, even if their contents are dead. They give the *attic* flavor. The works of many modern presses, of the Moxons and the Baskervilles, and other of the recent printers who issued contemporary and living publications, should be sought, and there are many existent presses noted for the typographical beauty of their productions. So numerous and so notable are they that to mention them is unnecessary.

Personally, I avoid all Kelmscott and other imitations, some of them unspeakably bad, of old manuscripts and *incunabula*. Some of the early *Americana* is almost necessary. Smith's "History of Virginia," Hennepin's and other of the early explorations (never the reprint, if the original can be procured) are most desirable. A "Poor Richard" issued while Franklin still moralized, a genuine Horn Book, if it can be found, and a "New England Primer" issued when it was yet prefaced by that hangman's cut of the Georges; and possibly, if one's nerves be strong and indignant comments be under control, specimens of New England's early contributions to our literature, such as the "Wonders of the Invisible World," which contains an account of the witches and which upheld their persecutors; or other of the Mathers—all of them are interesting and

entertaining human documents, even while they force a realization of the quality of the foundation on which American literature rests. All of these and many other books equally rare, entertaining and informing, may be secured for a much lower figure than is now asked for the four Folios. "Could have been secured" possibly would have been a more accurate statement, for certain of these have so skyrocketed (and book profiteers have so imposed on the occupants of these MANSIONS) that prices now asked seem to us, judging by older catalogs and "Book-Prices Current," out of all proportion to the value of the purchase.

Specimens of Grolier, Derome, and many other of the Royal bindings, are most desirable when placed on books worthy of their covering; but in this we are trespassing on the domain of the LONG-PURSES, and such a collection soon becomes the work of the specialist; it is not for the medium-pursed amateur.

Fine bindings on worthless books are a reflection on any collector unless he can excuse them by some explanation that justifies their presence. I would no more willingly admit one of these to my library shelves than I would choose for friend and familiar associate a manikin such as is placed in a store window on which are exhibited the latest fashions. Gorgeous though it be, its value is purely extraneous. As a rule such coverings conceal nothingness.

Editions de luxe and numbered sets or volumes place their owners under grave suspicion, and their finger prints must be carefully examined. By the speculative dealer they are studied and remembered and, for this reason, many desirable items are now beyond the reach of the average collector. While in individual cases it might work a hardship, I am powerfully inclined to the enactment of a law that would deny the entrance of plutocrats to this Paradise of all that constitutes human happiness.

It frequently happens that he of the medium purse suc-

ceeds by reason of careful and diligent search, where the rich collector fails because of over eagerness to reach the goal. If, for good reasons, a dozen books are desired, and only one can be paid for, the one finally chosen is sure to be an index and a guide to the spirit and the book-knowledge of the man who selects it for his library. There are many collections, rich in the choicest book treasures, that in no sense represent either the intellectual qualities nor are they an index to the taste of the collector. To form a library that will properly characterize the collector, it must be fused into solidarity and individuality by the fire of personal enthusiasm. Predilections vary amongst equally competent and equally book-loving selectors.

My friend also has chosen the books that constitute his library. He has bestowed upon them an enthusiasm and a love as great as my own. However, the qualifications that his books must have, in order to gain admission to his shelves, materially differ from those I require. My Hakluyt must be the 1599-1600 edition, but he prefers the modern reprint. I would accept only the original Adlington "Golden Ass;" he insists upon the Bohn translation, because it is more accurate, and because the **black letter type** is difficult to decipher. My Montaigne, the first folio, he laughs to scorn, for, if it is not illegible, certainly it is not easily read. I selected the folio Hume: it is large, awkward to hold, and will fit only on a specially constructed shelf; but, although it is the finest specimen of typography in existence, my friend will none of it for his library. His copy is an octavo, neither cumbersome nor unwieldy, and, in the best sense, it is readable. I will only have Macauley in the original boards, and as first issued. He refuses to give such a book shelf room, and will accept only the standard edition, freed from all *errata* and with the more modern additions and modifications. I will have no Shelley except as first issued, although it necessitates my taking "Queen Mab"

with torn imprint, consoling myself with the knowledge that Shelley's own hands desecrated—or consecrated—this volume (for it was his individual act to which this mutilation is due); my friend chooses the complete edition, as issued by Mrs. Shelley. The world upholds him in his common-sense views and methods of collecting, while it calls me by a name that is opprobrious, yet which flatters my book-pride.

I also have an acquaintance, a man ambitious to be considered a book collector, whose family the newspapers refer to as "The Horace-Joneses," though the head of it is widely, appropriately, and popularly known as "Jackass Jones." Occasionally he allows me to inspect his books, some of which are the rarest in existence. His original purchase was the four Folios, but they proved to be a cause of great worry. He bought them in the belief that the four constituted the first edition of Shakespeare, and was righteously angry, on inspection, to find that they did not bear the same date, and that they were not properly numbered, and that their bindings were not uniform. They were either in original or contemporary bindings, their margins were uncut, they were not deformed by reproductions. It was only by a *tour de force* that he was prevailed upon not to rebind them to correspond with other of his hand-tooled and gilded creations, and not so to cut them down that they would more snugly fit on his glass encased shelves. As he very intelligently and shrewdly remarked, the margins were unnecessarily large and showed a disregard for the proper conservation of paper, and they occupied an unjustifiable amount of space. His investigation of these books went no further. There is only one book that he has completely read and digested and with every detail of which he is familiar and which he thoroughly understands. It must be very rare for, though I am fairly familiar with books, it is one that I rarely meet with;

and, try as I do, I have never been able to familiarize myself with its contents. *He* calls it a check book.

Tastes differ, and if only a collector will follow his individual preferences, and gather into his library those books that give him pleasure, no one justly may criticize him. He has simply followed where his predilections led. These statements are made to illustrate the fact that every library must be a law unto itself, and, if individually compiled, its volumes are the best commentary on the taste, the philosophy, and the mental capacity of the collector.

Except for commercial purposes, or that one may satisfy some Utopian whim, it is not necessary to invest in the absolutely *first* issue, which can only be identified by a mispagination, or an error in spelling, or some battered type; especially where, to secure such a deformity, it may be necessary to pay many hundreds of dollars more than a perfect copy of the *first* would cost. This statement does not hold good in all cases. It is absolutely necessary to possess the Vicar with the misprint "Waeckfield" but, provided "Robinson Crusoe" be of the right date and carry the Crusoe pictures, it is not at all necessary that, in the preface, apply shall be spelled *apyly*. "Gulliver's Travels" must have the separate pagination, and, if possible, the *unlettered* picture of Gulliver as it was first issued: especially this volume should be in the hands of all Pacific Coast collectors, because of its map showing the location of Brobdingnag. As far as I am aware I am the first to name it an important piece of *Californiana*. This map gives an excellent contour of the Pacific Coast, with its capes and bays properly marked and named; it locates Brobdingnag in the exact position now assigned to Alaska. Had Swift's tale been properly interpreted by a *psychic*, some of its wonders would have been discovered long ago, and many of the tall tales of marvelous adventures and remarkable occurrences, that are now a part of history,

could have been forecast with Monte Cristo results that would have enriched the world. As it is, where the remarkable tales of certain Alaska visitors cannot be verified, the location may account for the magnified imaginings.

It is not necessary that "Tom Jones" shall have the list of *errata*, but it is very necessary that the *contents* be properly placed. Sterne's works, if obtainable, should have "The Sentimental Journey" as first issued in its original covers, and "Tristram Shandy" should not be allowed entrance unless it carries all identifying points of a first issue, which are many and somewhat complicated. "Paradise Lost" is certainly a desirable possession, especially if it bear the date 1667, with the first title page, but a later issue of the first edition costs several hundred dollars less, and is held to be equally a first edition. Not many know the right date, and, if a discriminating enquiry shows familiarity with the facts, properly it will lead to an interesting discussion of the eight title pages; it is not difficult to prove that the contents of all were printed at the same time, the date and title page merely showing the year in which they were sold rather than the date of publication. They also illustrate the various and resourceful methods adopted by the publishers even in those days. If this *palming* fails, it is proper to point out the very material fact that possession of all eight title pages is a display of financial resources not in the best taste.

But this does not hold true of Omar. If one must be "indulged in"—and who can long resist?—it is necessary to possess all of the first four editions, otherwise it may not be possible to follow the ever-shifting text. They should not only be in their original covers, but those covers should be fresh and clean. All Thackeray and Dickens publications should—when so issued—be in their original parts, but it is not necessary that the "Pickwick Papers" shall have all the "points" possessed by the Lapham copy.

The bibliographer who selected this particular copy as the standard was "unduly influenced," either by contiguity or by ownership. I could describe a copy far more significant of the facts, and which would allow a far greater number of candidates to qualify, in spite of the very important consideration that no one has been able to fully determine certain questioned points, and that one guess is as good as another; for none of us can be certain of all the points that do constitute the first issue.

Every library should be a reflex of the mental characteristics—as it necessarily is of the financial status—of the collector; and, if we seem inclined to hold what we possess as a necessary constituent, and to deride those book treasures not held by us as being unduly valued, that is merely another example of the impossibility of solving the human equation, and a repetition in another form of the old story as to "whose bull gored the unlucky oxen." That story is my first "memory," for it was a reading lesson in my first Noah Webster speller,—I forget how many years ago. Yet that book, or its duplicate, is one of my prized possessions, secured after many years of diligent search; and the "Temple of Fame and Knowledge" which decorates it, still appeals to all the ambition that is in me. It contained another reading lesson about a fox that had lost its tail, and its vain attempt to make of this mutilation a fashion. Because of this training, I know it is not right to sneer at the long-pursed, the long-tailed, or the long-eared ones. I try to be satisfied with the crumbs that fall to my lot and not unduly to long for the flesh-pots of the GILDED. If I cannot have the Seymour plates I am at least thankful that I have Pickwick in parts, and I try to brave it through although my copy be not one of the three or four that pass for perfect. Who of us can feel indifferent as to whether it is the first or the eighth title page of "Paradise Lost" he possesses, or who in his book-loving



heart really can scoff at the four Folios? Certain people whistle to keep up their courage, and assume a brave front when repining is useless. At least, I shall attempt to put my few possessions in the very best light.

In studying my books, it has always been a difficult matter to separate and dissociate the personality of the man who wrote, from the things written; for this reason my collection of biographies and autobiographies are co-extensive with the other books collected. I do not believe that the statements contained are in all ways authentic, nor are they to be relied upon as a fair index to the personal qualities and individual traits of the person they attempt to depict. I have found that they are as valuable for what they endeavor to conceal as for what they exhibit, in spite of the fact that their kindly efforts to make plain the inner life end in failure, when they attempt to explain that which is inexplicable. A biographer must psychologize himself before he can psychologize his subject.

A striking illustration of this is found in Bishop's "Theodore Roosevelt and his Time." The gradual change observable in the man we loved for his mental virility, his honesty of purpose, and especially for the enemies he made, is a regrettable instance of the dominant *ego* of youth slowly transformed into the *megalomania* of age. The bitter antagonism Roosevelt exhibited because of deviation from his councils, his intolerance of all things he had not originated, and his exhibition of wrath aroused because of a just award which fulfilled a moral obligation crowning his own greatest achievement, were but symptoms of an *egomania* that finally ended in an obsession. He mistook the buzzing of the bee for the Call of the People demanding his return to public office. Although in Bishop's statement there is an evident attempt either to explain or to ignore these various assumptions, it is not difficult to read between the lines. He omitted unduly.

Undoubtedly, as is the case with Washington, and as it is rapidly becoming with Lincoln, time will cause these human weaknesses to be forgotten, and Roosevelt may become apotheosized; but such books, dealing with matters still fresh in our memories, only arouse criticism.

What autobiography more depressing could be found than that of Henry Adams, the arch pessimist of his pessimistic family, who laid before an interested world his Theories of Education? That neurasthenic, third person statement, filled with morbid introspection, should have contained far more of strenuous life and personal impressions than Adams did give out.

Could two more dissimilar lives have been related, yet each, in their way, self-explanatory? In both cases it was the morbid *ego* that dominated.

Notwithstanding the veil of obscurity thrown around individuals by their biographers, and of their attempts to explain unexplainable facts and to make the world view their subjects as they themselves have been hypnotized into seeing him, in spite of that strabismus which afflicts all autobiographers when they attempt to see themselves as they desire the world to view them, it is not impossible, nor is it really difficult to judge of the facts, not only from what is stated but, almost equally, from what is omitted.

There is an optical illusion frequently experienced, founded upon the temporary retention of an image by the retina. If one travels at a definite speed past an enclosed and ordinarily view-proof fence (a fence that has slight interstices separating the boards), a perfect view is given of the enclosed interior. Before one fleeting image impressed upon the retina has vanished, another again has impressed its image. A continuous picture is thus formed, identical with that known as a moving picture. In the account of any life, we find knot holes and cracks, and interstitial glimpses, that give us a full view of the *interior*

of such authors as interest us. In this way we may arrive at a very satisfactory knowledge of all that we should know about an individual. To probe deeper is not always the decent thing, nor is it necessary that posterity be familiarized with facts which neither the individual nor his biographer care to detail.

Certain of these writers have presented such marked peculiarities, either in what they have written or in the facts of their lives—often in both—as to have been chosen by me as especially interesting psychological problems, well worth the study of an alienist. Blake and Swedenborg, Swift, Bacon, Rousseau, Lamb, Johnson, and many others, are proper subjects for such an investigation. These and others I have painstakingly studied, and have attempted critically to estimate the significance that their peculiarities and personalities should have in a consideration of the things which they have written. I have endeavored to unravel the skein of many threads which constituted their real life, and to view the web of their personality, the woof of which was composed of most heterogeneous and ill assorted strands, even when the warp was sound and well stretched, and the completed fabric proved a Royal Robe.

That I have chosen for publication, from among these, the Study of Poe, needs neither preface nor apology. It contains something which, if not original nor of the highest value, attempts to harmonize and to present in a new aspect, old and well-established facts; and which further make plain the neurosis from which Poe suffered.

If this composite picture, and this reconstruction, be a necessary introduction to a full understanding of Poe's personality, it is unfortunate that it was not made many years ago. The elapsed time has allowed the acid with which that other portrait was etched-in to "bite" so deeply that the impression formed may have become indelible. Even so, I believed myself justified in attempting it.



# EDGAR A. POE\*

## A BIBLIOGRAPHIC STUDY

To make a complete collection of the stories, essays and poems that Poe wrote, in the many publications in which they first appeared, is not a thing easy of accomplishment.

As a rule it is necessary to be satisfied with the collected editions either as first issued, or in their later and more complete form.

For the bibliophile who majors on Poe, and who is willing to delve and to seek for periodicals long dead, no finding better repays the search.

Even my incomplete collection has caused me more persevering effort than I have given to any other writer—Thackeray alone excepted. Nor would it have been as complete as it is without friendly assistance and the good luck that always attends the diligent search. To secure the rarer items it was necessary to await the dispersion of the great libraries; for so few are they in number and so rarely do they appear in catalogs, or do their owners respond to "want" advertisements that, ordinarily speaking, they are unobtainable.

\*Note.—I do not write Edgar Allan Poe for the reason that on no occasion, either in his published writings or in his signatures to letters, did Poe so write it nor did he indicate his middle name except by an initial. (Confer "Harrison's Letters".) For some unknown reason we write Allan, possibly because the full name is regarded as a mark of literary or other distinction.

Apparently we are given to certain mannerisms of speech, or of titles, in order to indicate our literary or social aspirations. Usually the child is taught to pronounce *either* with the long e. If this school boy should aspire to distinction in letters he will early show this inclination by using the long i; for it is a generally received opinion that the well-educated Englishman so pronounces. When this youth enters on his University course he will give a further proof of his literary trend by joining the Athenaeum, and his first cards, in place of the well-known name J. H. Jones, will bear the unfamiliar signature, J. Horace Jones. While

An adventure in book-collecting laid the foundation of my Poe library. With pleasure I recall the day that I visited Sotheran's and was shown a letter that they believed would interest me. Many years ago a Scotchman read a story entitled "Mesmerism in Articulo Mortis," published by Short & Co. of London, and it was said to have been written by "Edgar A. Poe, Esq. of New York."

This Scotchman wrote to Poe asking him if the story was true, writing that he also was a student of Mesmerism, and as a believer, he requested a further statement "for the sake of Science and Truth."

There had been found among Poe's correspondence—appropriated by Griswold—a second letter from this seeker after "Truth," thanking Poe for his answer. It is well known that Poe greatly prized this inquiry, as it indicated that his name was becoming known across the water; and he had requested certain of his friends to make editorial comment on this letter as a proof of his growing popularity.

In the "Letters" published by Harrison is to be found both the Scotchman's inquiry and his answer to Poe acknowledging the reply, but not the letter of Poe.

It was this long lost letter that was now offered me, and it contained matter both autobiographical and literary.

occasionally, for genealogical, or other good reasons, this may be a desirable or necessary, mark for identification, it does seem that, in some mysterious way, this change confers either literary or personal distinction. While it may not, for the first time, be signed to an "Ode to Spring," it will sooner or later lead to some essay in literature, and, if this is received approvingly, then the full name—Joaquin Horace Jones—is assumed.

Great wealth or high social station often results in hyphenation, and when this stage is reached, and the papers announce that the "Horace-Jones" have arrived, then is the zenith of all possible social distinction attained.

I know one unfortunate who believes that he has every right to be thus distinguished, and yet it so happens that his old friends still insist on calling him "Jack-ass-Jones"; for it was while driving and caring for a herd of these animals that he gained his lowly and humble start, and laid the foundation for his enormous wealth.

I had never heard of any story by Poe with this title: accordingly, I sought information from that well-spring of *bibliographica*, Tregaskis.

Not only did Mr. Tregaskis know of this publication but he had in his possession the pamphlet for which I had made inquiry. It proved to be our old friend *M. Valdemar*, but headlined and dressed in a fashion that appealed more strongly to the English taste than did Poe's original title.

These items were the foundation of my Poe collection, and this incident was the incentive that induced me to make a strenuous effort properly to represent in my library our best known writer.

Long ago Poe's personality had interested me: a study of his habits and character, as represented in his life and works, had convinced me that his biographers had not understood certain of the mental phases he exhibited better than had his contemporary critics. Subconsciously I was prepared for a complete exploitation not only of all that Poe had written, but for a collection of these writings in the form in which they were originally published.

All limited and *de luxe* editions were discarded and, basing my "wants" on Harrison's complete and definitive bibliography, I began my search: ignorantly yet hopefully was the collection undertaken. Necessarily it was to be confined to the various magazines, periodicals, and annuals, as well as to the few collections of poems and stories that Poe made during his lifetime. I soon found that Poe, in his frenzied struggle against starvation, could not choose either as to periodical or form of publication. He was compelled to select the magazine that would pay for his contribution: or, as was occasionally necessary, to use these articles as a stop-gap in any periodical with which he happened to be connected. I was not only ignorant of the titles but, even after these were known, I found publications

had been made in so haphazard a manner that, frequently, it was difficult to determine which of the named magazines should be regarded as containing the original issue. The bibliography of both *The Raven* and *The Bells* illustrate this uncertainty.

Poe's desperate financial condition made it necessary for him to seek diligently for publications that would accept his contributions, and to repeat himself in many periodicals. It was not the well known or the popular magazines that sought him; nor would they accept the poems and stories that are now regarded as his masterpieces.

This was partly due to sectional reasons; bitter rivalry, social as well as literary, marked the Dixie line. It was especially because of personal enmities engendered by over-bitter criticisms, and to the righteous verbal castigations in which Poe so unreservedly and joyfully indulged.

If some struggling periodical offered a prize it was Poe who won it, and when such a magazine died, it frequently happened that Poe's choicest literary work was buried in it.

For these reasons the quest for Poe *remains* should prove a trial ground for the bibliomaniac. No search better repays the labor and money expended. So little valued, or known, are these periodicals that, though priceless as containing original Poe contributions, they bring no price. For this reason the rich collector has no incentive for invading this field, though he may pay enormous sums for second rate and, to coming generations, unknown English writers whose works are still esteemed because of some association detail. It certainly is true that, as it relates to Poe and other well-known writers, *Americana* is neither sought, nor known, nor is it held to be of value. As an example of this, a file of the "New England Magazine," containing many of the best-known poems by Longfellow, Bryant, Whittier and, among other items, Holmes' first two papers of the *Autocrat*, otherwise unobtainable, sold at



one of our most important sales of this year for something less than two dollars. At the same time three thousand three hundred dollars was paid for Lamb's "Poetry for Children." A Poe collection based on first publications—and the usual alternative is a de luxe edition—cannot be rapidly acquired, and can be found only by delving into the trash and rubbish heaps that contain the mouldering remains of long dead magazines.

It has seemed to me a curious fact that only in the inedible oyster can pearls be found. We find only in these discarded and defunct magazines the pearls Poe so indiscriminately scattered broadcast.

Few times were the choicest strung and in only one or two instances were they mounted in individual settings. So little appreciated or regarded were they that few of these jewels survive in their original state, and because of this scarcity Poe's earliest and consequently least worthy work has become the most expensive of all *Americana*, while those which best deserve such a monetary tribute are either lost or are held, financially speaking, valueless.

Nor is the price placed on Poe's youthful work of recent date. In the April, 1903, number of the *Book-Lover*, Louis Northorp, in discussing the prices of *Americana*, gives some idea of the interest excited by the auction of a Poe item:

The rarest of all first editions of American poetry is *Tamerlane and other Poems* which is the actual first edition of Poe's poems ever published. That little book of forty pages has become the rarest book in the world. For more than sixty years one copy only was known to exist—an imperfect one in the British Museum. In 1892 another copy was announced in the catalog of a Boston book auctioneer. Excitement ran high among collectors to secure this unique volume. Before the sale \$500 should have been looked upon as a good price for it. When the little paper-covered volume was brought under the hammer, an unusual excitement was manifested in the auction-room. The bidding was lively and advanced rapidly from \$100 to \$500; when \$1000

was reached, there was a pause for a moment, but soon the bids came briskly again, until the much coveted volume was knocked down for the astonishing price of \$1875.

. . . To show how impossible it is to predict the future value of a rare book, I will add that last year the first edition of Poe's Poems brought the unparalleled price of \$2050 at auction; the second edition (Baltimore, 1829) brought \$1300, while the original brown paper copy of *The Murders in the Rue Morgue* fetched \$1000. Twenty-five years ago a friend of mine picked up a copy of Poe's poems, (New York 1831 edition) for twenty-five cents. Thinking to improve the appearance of the shabby board binding my friend had the original covers removed and had it rebound in full Russia. The Vandal!

Last year a cousin of Edgar A. Poe disposed of this book at private sale for \$150, about one-fifth of its actual value.

Poe's work in the original covers, are worth their weight in gold. Every first edition of his work is eagerly bought at fabulous prices.

Possibly it would have added to Northorp's surprise could he have looked forward seventeen years to the day when *Tamerlane* sold at auction for \$11,600:—a matter to which I shall again refer.

But not all of Poe's work, certainly not the best, is thus eagerly sought for, nor, if sought for, can it be found.

The "Southern Literary Messenger," and the "Broadway Journal," both edited by Poe, and to which he contributed all that was best in him and in them, are for this reason of distinct literary value. Though they had a wide circulation, now they are rarely found. Many of the less pretentious periodicals to which Poe contributed have been so long out of circulation that they have become practically extinct. Of one magazine, in which Poe won his first recognition, Harrison says: "In spite of the large circulation of 'The Baltimore Saturday Visiter,' not a single file of it is known to exist."

Woodberry says that no copy of "The Flag of Our Union", which contained a few Poe items, can be found and, as far as I know, there is only one copy of the "Dollar Newspaper" in existence. For these reasons it may seem to

be a hopeless task to attempt a complete Poe collection. Even those magazines known to have survived, and which occasionally can be found, are of such rare occurrence that Poe bibliographers do not give them even their proper titles, and have been seriously in error as to their contents.

None of the reasons assigned deter the bibliomaniac and, though the hunt may be in obscure corners, and is often barren of result, it only adds zest to the search.

Once upon a time I remember to have read a story regarding a virtuoso who collected ceramics. He had employed, as curator, a man noted for his ability to judge of what was rare and for his indefatigable industry in hunting out all that had made this collection notable. When this collector died he left to his curator not only all his treasures, but also a vast fortune with which to house and care for them. The curator continued his search until he was in possession of all the desirable pieces the world contained. Thereupon not only did he cease collecting but he commenced a dispersal of that which he had held so precious, although he allowed no two specimens of his *faience* to go to the same buyer. When he could not dispose of a piece for what it was supposed to be worth he sold it for whatever was offered. Rumor finally became a certainty: serious flaws, blemishes and counterfeits had been found in this so highly regarded collection. One vase that had been its chiefest treasure he gave to a wandering huckster as unworthy of price. He scattered every article that had constituted this collection till no vestige of it remained.

Now a new energy possessed him. His step became elastic, the rose again bloomed in his cheek and his old-time vigor reasserted itself. He was seen searching the highways and delving in the byways. He rummaged in the hidden corners and sought out the old shops—avoiding only those denominating themselves “**De Antique Shoppe;**” for nothing of interest is ever found *there*.

He was often seen returning home laden with disreputable-looking bundles, yet he carried them most tenderly. At last he disappeared. When found in his garret where he had evidently lived parsimoniously and where he had died apparently of starvation, he was surrounded by his rarest treasures, and in his dead hand was held the vase that had been the aim and end of his tireless search.

For those who do not have to save hard-earned money, and who do not have to deny certain appetites, and who are not compelled to scrimp and plan, the real joy of book collecting does not exist. I do not envy the man who can indulge in the Shakespeare Folios, or who can afford to pay \$2,000,000 for a library, even if it contain the rarest of first editions, illuminated manuscripts, Incunabula, Caxtons *et omne id.*

Personal memories, founded on boyhood experience, have taught me the danger of satiety. I remember that, as a small boy living in the backwoods of Alabama, Sunday was a gala day and I longed for its coming as does the parched traveler for the desert oasis. This was not for reasons religious, but because on that day the Circuit Rider was entertained at dinner, and hot biscuits with yellow-legged chicken were always served. For the whole week during which I had waited for this feast, my throat had been scratched by the rough corn-pone.

In times more recent, when hot biscuit and fried chicken were within my daily command, I turned from them and again welcomed the despised pone.

I am certain that my lone and imperfect Caxton gave me greater mental exhilaration and bibliophile joy than any wholesale acquisition of the rarest bibliographical treasures could have brought me.

Over-rapidly acquired and without full time for their absorption these rarities are sure to give mental indigestion. Unless you can feel the thrill of accomplishment

which possesses you when some long sought treasure has been captured, the first and greatest pleasure of book-collecting is not for you.

I remember, when Aldines were still the vogue, I found a "Juvenalis et Persis", dated MDI, with the *straight anchor*, in spite of the fact that MDII has been assigned as the date when the anchor was first used. I threw this Aldine to one side with other discarded trash and, during the next few visits to the shop, forgot its existence. Finally, when I had reduced the patient dealer to exhaustion, my hand again sought this Aldine, but only for the purpose of pointing out certain defects that were in evidence. After severely criticising its dilapidated though original vellum cover, finding certain wormholes in its uncut pages, and animadverting on the continued existence of a book printed in a language long dead and that but few could now read, I demanded his reason for trying to sell something so useless, and ended with an inquiry as to what he thought a book of this kind was really worth. In sarcasm an extremely small sum was named which at once I paid: or rather, I threw the money on the counter, clutched my bargain, and was out and up the street before the amazed owner could reconsider his offer.

What this book is worth I have not the remotest idea, nor does such a question interest me. As for any pleasure its contents has given me, I am certain that I overpaid; I have never made any attempt to read the dead and forgotten language. Even could I, the memory of the drudgery entailed in translating it, in my long past college days, makes me know that it would be most stupid reading. Nevertheless, to me this book is a treasure, for it recalls one of my earliest book memories: more than this it was the beginning of my acquaintance with Cowan, one of my good book friends and our greatest authority on *Californiana*. To me its value lies in the memory of its acquirement, and

I have placed this "memory" among certain others—all imbedded in contiguous brain cells. It is these memories which constitute my victory over Time and Age.

Years and experience have taught me the futility of hoarding riches, and the fallacy of believing that money, alone, can either compensate or protect me against the infirmities of old age. Memories are our defense and our consolation, and I gather them as eagerly and preserve them with as much care as does a miser his gold.

As a specialist, I am often consulted by those who are breaking under the worry and stress of business cares. At once and always, I attempt to recall and reestablish those fads and diversions which will store new memories outside their business life. If I can find no "memories," and can create no new interests, then indeed is my prognosis bad. Golf may save a few, but its memories are trivial—at least my own had best be forgotten—hunting and fishing are only for those who are strong and vigorous, travelling bores many who are unfitted and illy equipped for new environments, or who prefer the comforts of home to discomforts and dust. I have occasionally, but with bad conscience, justified by the condition of physical and mental weakness I have found, advised certain patients to major on philately, as better than no "mania." In whatever manner acquired, diversion of some kind, with its accompanying memories, is essential to a contented old age.

It was old Dame Julia who begun her

**"Tretysse on Fyshynge"**

with the following corroborative thought:

**Salaman in his parablys sayth that a good sppyte  
maketh a flourynge aege that is a fayre aege and longe  
—and syth it is soe: I aske this question? whiche ben  
the meanes & the causes that endure a man in a mery  
sppyte.**

For this reason do I collect and treasure my memories. Many hundreds cluster in adjacent brain cells, stored and catalogued and to be used as necessity requires.

Occasionally I have seen cattle grazing, browsing and still eating when apparently all demands of appetite had been satisfied. Then I have seen them seek some shady and secluded spot where they rested and chewed the cud of contentment, thus setting an example of wisdom that we humans might well imitate.

For these reasons I welcomed the hunt. As much as possible avoiding the modern collections, except as guides because of unfamiliarity, I sought in the highways and the byways: occasionally my reward was proportionate to the energy I expended. The really good things of Poe still sell for a song. Others are expensive and may only be acquired by those who can properly pitch the note. In my search I ransacked most of the cities, haunted the auction rooms, patronized the "Publisher's Weekly," and searched the *Americana* of our catalogs, but with only meager results.

As a rule my inquiries were received with a vacant stare; or, from some old and wise book-dealer, a pitying shake of the head as if I were seeking the wraith of one long dead, or were attempting to resurrect the figure of an antedeluvian which had not left even a pedal bone as a guide for reconstruction.

It was not at all certain that some of these dealers ever had heard of "The Yankee," except as a generic term: from my persistent inquiries they seemed to think that it was of my own ancestry I was seeking information. They had heard of a "Saturday Visitor," but did not know anything about a "Baltimore Saturday Visiter." If there were one it was not on sale in New York.

When I asked for a "Flag of our Union," they respectfully raised their hat, as a token of regard for my loyalty,

but there was nothing under it; all they could suggest was a military supply store across the street. "Saturday Evening Posts" could be found by the million but they were all dated 1917, whereas the one I wanted was the issue of November 27, 1841. My quest for the "Philadelphia Saturday Museum" was equally unavailing. They had heard of a Museum in Philadelphia, but they assured me that it did not compare with the Metropolitan and, as far as they knew, it contained only the Liberty Bell—and that was cracked. They had never heard it called the "Philadelphia Saturday Museum", but it might be, for the Philadelphians were a law unto themselves, and it was entirely possible that they had selected this for their day of exhibition. And so it was with a dozen other publications known to contain Poe contributions. Possibly they had been destroyed, or had been sold to some junk dealer. Few can now be found. I am sure that a copy of the "Union" lies hidden away in some attic, for all could not have been destroyed. There is a treasure trove and happy is he who can uncover one of these old volumes. It is not difficult to find Gifts, Opals, Visitors, and other fancifully named Annuals for, as parlor table ornaments, they were the *mode* in those days. Usually they were bound in leather, black being the color most frequently chosen, as it corresponded with the horsehair-covered furniture then in vogue. The Poe articles have added but slightly to their cost although, except for the Cheney engravings, Poe's contributions give them their only value.

Somewhere there is a "Philadelphia Dollar Newspaper" containing Poe's prize story, *The Gold Bug*. Sooner or later I shall find it. Possibly, in time, I may stumble on a file of "The Baltimore Saturday Visiter," and if I do not, I know where one volume of its *remains* can be found. It is in the possession of descendants of the original editor—an heirloom such as a Virginian will never sell. All financial offers



properly have been refused, for no one worthy of this treasure would have so desecrated it. Yet if enthusiasm and "ways and means" fail to accomplish that which has hitherto proved to be an impossible achievement, the never-dying hope that chance will discover a "find" still animates me, and I may yet add this treasure to the wanderers I have already gathered in.

Should I succeed in these final discoveries, they will very nearly fill my list of long advertised "wants," and in case my realization results in loss of interest, it may be possible a collector, equally enthusiastic, will fall heir to the distribution. It is certain that I shall never willingly see them entombed in some rich man's library, or buried in a general "Museum." I have always regarded approvingly a quotation which formerly was printed on the cover of an auction catalog. It was extracted from the will of Edmond de Goncourt:

My wish is that my Drawings, my Prints, my Curiosities, my Books—in a word, these things which have been the joy of my life—shall not be consigned to the cold tomb of a museum, and be subjected to the stupid glance of the careless passerby: but I require that they shall all be dispersed under the hammer of the Auctioneer, so that the pleasure which the acquirement of each one of them has given me shall be given again, in each case, to some inheritor of my own tastes.

For some years it was my custom to borrow a certain book when I found myself in bibliographical difficulty regarding *Americana*. At that time I had found no copy for sale, or there were other and good reasons for its non-acquirement. It has long been out of print and its cost has doubled many times (at a recent auction sale it brought \$52.50), but its value remains. I refer to that *Americana* bibliography compiled by our Nestor of Bookmen, P. K. Foley. It was my desire to drink at the fountain-source but to do this a trip to Boston was necessary. Although it was my first visit, I neither inquired for the Column nor

glanced at the Common, in spite of the fact that it had been the favorite walk of the Autocrat.

With some trepidation I proceeded to a shop in an unfrequented street and made myself and my errand known. This shop is not a "Book Emporium", but it is what all good shops should be; cluttered from floor to ceiling with rare *Americana*. There is nothing like it, except possibly Spencer's, in London. My reception was kindly, although it threatened to be barren of result. In fact, had I come a few weeks earlier, Mr. Foley could have aided me greatly. His Poe seemed not to be appreciated, and certain Thackeray items were in greater demand on the other side: accordingly he had packed all of his Poe and Thackeray for shipment to England. After a moment's thought, Mr. Foley ceased to dwell on the items composing this shipment and reverted to topics less depressing. Surely what he had to show fully compensated me for the time and energy expended on this trip: and to be allowed to listen to the kindly voice, wise in book lore, and to watch the twinkle responsive to my book enthusiasm, was alone worth the visit.

I found no ignorance and obtained much helpful advice. He knew of those inedible oysters and had found many of the pearls, but knowing that they were not appreciated here, he had ceased offering them, and, for this reason, he had prepared them for shipment to the other side.

Mr. Foley urged me to call on the following morning, as he might in the meantime find something to justify another day's stay. Personally I should have considered myself well repaid by being allowed to partake of the crumbs that fell from such a table. When I did call I found a reason more substantial. It was not "The Oblong Box" but a wooden one, open and partly unpacked; and it contained all the Thackeray and Poe items mentioned the previous day, the loss of which had not contributed to the

soundness of my night's rest. This case had been overlooked and forgotten till the world-war prevented shipment. I shall not here dwell on the Thackeray items, although, for the first time, I found a complete "Corsair" containing the Thackeray "Letters from Paris", which later were republished under the title "The Student's Quarter", as well as many other early American reproductions of Thackeray's works.

Among other Poe items was "The Yankee," containing the first of Poe's magazine contributions; also a letter in which he poured out his boyish heart, indulging in day dreams and building air-castles which do not always come true as they did for him. It was here I found my first complete "Broadway Journal." I had a Journal, but it lacked that last and frequently missing number—January 3, 1846,—in which Poe bade farewell "as cordially to foes as to friends", and which was the last appearance of this, so often sung, swan-song. And there were other periodicals and publications of vast assistance in turning my meager gleanings into complete collections. Of the very early magazines, outside "The Yankee," I could get no trace, and it was only after Mr. Foley kindly enlightened me that I began to realize the very great difficulty of my quest. No one had seemed interested, and, as a consequence, there had been no demand for the earlier magazines containing Poe's original contributions. I found that Woodberry's bibliography, so accurately copied from that of Harrison's, while showing an intelligent understanding, was not altogether reliable; for it was not in all points founded on definite and first-hand knowledge. Hearsay evidence is not always admissible.

Except in the "Southern Literary Messenger," the 1839-1840 "Gentleman's," "Graham's," and the "Broadway Journal," all of which Poe edited, only isolated articles can be found; and these are scattered in so many unknown and

unobtainable magazines, and often so many years separate their appearance in any one magazine, that a complete collection becomes a formidable task. At least it becomes a game for the bibliomaniac—not for the plethoric and gentlemanly collector who sits quietly in his counting house paying out thousands of dollars for signed Shelleys, unknown Lambs, and unread Keats items, imagining that he has become a real, red-blooded book collector. He is merely a book speculator. Such, necessarily, leave Poe to the book-hound: or, if they do collect him, it is in some *de luxe* edition, deformed by horrible illustrations in which the artist, having no conception of Poe's real insight into the human heart, and the spirit that ruled him in his delineation of that human soul, so evanescent and ill-grasped except by the sensitives among us, attempts to delineate Poe's thought by some horror or grotesque. Their book shelves may be ornamented by some limited edition in the sumptuous bindings with which Poe publishers usually encase his works. Surely a full collection, in the assorted garments in which the many owners have arrayed these various magazines, is a formidable undertaking and a forbidding sight, and one that would not please the *dilettanti*.

To the student of literature these magazines are of the greatest interest; for authoritatively they measure the capacity of the many authors that flourished in those days, whose work was eagerly sought, and constituted the pabulum on which our fathers were fed and mentally were nourished. Also they are made resplendent by "illuminations," showing the fashion plates that rendered our ancestors so gorgeous, and which are still sought and collected as curiosities. As a rule their owners are none the wiser if, concealed in their pages, is to be found some of the best of Poe's works. Do many possessors of the 1838 "Baltimore Book" know—or care—that *Siope* lies hidden in its pages? Possibly for this reason we find, occasionally, certain Poe

items preserved, not for their Poe associations, but because of engravings and other embellishments. Where this has not been the case, the hunt is far more difficult; and, though years have been occupied in the search, there are still *lacunae* in my collection that may never be filled.

There are compensations. I well remember when a very competent book dealer accepted my offer of one dollar and fifty cents—the final and ultimate bargain price, slowly and hesitatingly raised from seventy-five cents,—and I became the possessor of a copy of “The American Whig Review”, which is credited with not only the first appearance of *The Raven*, from which other journals borrowed it with due credit, but many other Poe contributions, and also some of the very best articles by writers still well known. What this dealer paid for this rather important Poe item is a matter for microscopical investigation.

Certain other magazines were arrived at after a far greater expenditure, but I have a memory so well trained and so conveniently constituted that I have entirely forgotten the sordid business details. The fact seems to be that dealers began to realize that I wanted these magazines, for my inquiries had been frequent, insistent and demandful; and, having once taken advantage of my innocence, their prices at times became exorbitant. I had dreamed of a complete “Southern Literary Messenger” for a very few dollars, but, as I remember, the price I paid was somewhat in excess of my anticipations. Finally, paying whatever was demanded, several years were necessary to gather my Poe collection, still incomplete, yet one of the few in existence because not many have felt the “urge”.

In my Poe life of search and research there is a third occasion that I take pleasure in recalling. It was on a recent visit to Chicago, that “City of Dreadful Night”, yet I was separated from all its narrowness of streets and over-

crowded thoroughfares, its terrifying commercialism, and was up many stories, gossiping with that most intelligent of bookmen, Walter Hill. As usual, I was reminiscent, dwelling on my book memories, and had sought this interview, knowing that Mr. Hill was as great a book-lover as he was a book-dealer. If I found nothing rare or curious, or that could satisfy my special "wants," I knew I would nevertheless depart the richer for my visit. Book knowledge may be gained only by absorption. As the leech looks for its nourishment to the occasional demands of necessitous victims, so do we book-collectors attach ourselves to those who live with, and in, books; and, when we are apparently on a mission of benevolence, as a matter of fact we are absorbing knowledge and gleaned information that only long, varied and intimate intercourse with books can give.

By chance the name of Poe slipped in, and, as I dilated on the difficulties of my search, Mr. Hill listened sympathetically. He, also, invited me to come back on the following morning. While making no definite promise, he told me of a book that for some years he had greatly treasured and which he had never included in his book lists; nor had he associated it with his commercial work. He had held it as his peculiar possession. When I called again it was no wooden box that I found, but a book royally cased and protected.

In spite of my confidence in the exhibitor, I had experienced so many disillusionments and disappointments, where these preliminaries were most in evidence, that I unconsciously hesitated, fearing, if not a jewelled binding, at least some Sangorski "creation," or some flamboyant production such as often impresses the book-collector, if not the book-lover.

Not long ago I saw one of these jewelled bindings which enclosed the 4th Omar. I quote from the sale catalog:

In the center of the panel is a garnet with an outer circle of 16 peridots; also four peridots are set in the strap-work border. The floral designs on a solid back ground of gold are in vari-colored inlays with 14 garnets set in the margin. . . . Doublures of red levant morocco, with a rich geometric design in gold, and blue inlays, and an outer chain border, flys of maroon levant morocco, etc.

And this grotesque brought \$300. If Omars are wanted, why not get an Omar? I know a library containing a collection of Omars, each one of which is a necessary member of the whole, and to handle each, and to fondle each, is a pleasure that is understandable only to a bibliophile. The eldest is royally housed and cased, and this covering is justified because it holds an Omar in its original paper cover, now so precious that it should be looked at through glass, and should never be touched by a desecrating hand. It is clean, fresh, and unsoiled and certainly was not among those which Quaritch, in despair of finding a purchaser, exposed on his two-penny shelf. Then there is the second, not quite so immaculate, but equally rare and even more precious. It is in its original paper cover which bears this inscription:

*from the Translator*

The third is a necessary member of the whole, for it gives evidence of many changes which the man, who so humbly inscribes himself as "translator," felt it wise to make. For the first time it has put off its swaddling-clothes and is garbed in conventional covers.

This collection can only be completed by the fourth and definitive edition. As the fourth is the one for common use, it should be dressed in its every-day working garb, not tricked out in finery that no book-lover would touch—not, however, for reasons which render the *first* untouchable.

While this completes the essential Omars, there is another that may not be overlooked. Vedder caught the

spirit, and, of all who have made the attempt, his pencil alone was guided by the same inspiration that *begot* this poem—translated it was not. The copy of Vedder accompanying this group, happens to be an extremely early, fresh, and brilliant collection of these drawings.

Three hundred for a rebound 4th Omar! No wonder the vandal book-profiteers remember the finger prints, and continue to deluge our "collectors." Like to the Like!

I well remember some book-loving salesman in Dodd, Mead and Co., driven to violent protestations when his lady customer, who had just purchased a first edition of the "Leaves of Grass,"—the book was both printed and bound by Whitman and a sloppy mess he made of both jobs, in spite of which they constitute its criterion of value—ordered off the cover, which was unusually firm in its hinges, and insisted on a blue crushed levant morocco binding that would correspond with other of her library furniture. It was to be hand-tooled, and undoubtedly it proved a very satisfactory ornament, but she ruined the strongest and best bound "Leaves" I have ever seen.

Occasionally some rare book deserves a fine binding. I have the first issue of the first edition of the "Vicar," but I show it with an anticipatory shudder, for I know the exclamations of delight its binding will bring forth from those who never examine it to determine the spelling of "Waeckfield." For those who do, there is another copy which I have to show. It was published in London and is of the same date as the Salisbury copy; and, for all I know, it may antedate it. It is mentioned in no bibliography and I have never seen another copy advertised or described. It is unknown and unfriended, and it was probably born, as are many other offspring, surreptitiously and without any one to father it. No publisher's name gives it dignity: simply it was ushered in with the Legend: "LONDON: Printed in the year M,DCC,LXVI."



It is in its original binding and even though, in appearance it is dogeared and dilapidated, I take it to my heart and fondle it,—possibly for the reason that it looks so friendless and forlorn. At least no binder's shears shall ever trim it; nor shall its forehead, although gray and bedraggled, ever be gilded and ironed out to erase its legitimate wrinkles. It is never shown except to the very few who constitute the inner circle,—and who never exclaim over a binding.

Knowing Mr. Hill, I had no right to dwell on these disconcerting book memories, nor to question the worth of what he had promised to show me; in spite of the fact that he had not clearly indicated the condition of dilapidation at which the binding had now arrived. In ninety years many things can happen to one of those poorly printed and cheaply bound board covers. For this reason I watched eagerly as he unswathed this bibliographical foundling. After the removal of the pull-case, its primary cover and its tissue container—have you ever plucked a sparrow?—he showed me the jewel these wrappings enclosed. It was the slenderest of tomes and in its pristine state; fresh in its original binding and practically unopened. Just why Mr. Hill was willing to part with what for years he had regarded as his chiefest treasure, I do not know. Possibly he thought it was lonely for it was the oldest of the family—at least it had been acknowledged as the eldest of the legitimate and lawful heirs. Perhaps he thought that it might rest better among its kindred, or it is possible, like the hapless bird, he gazed too long on the glittering eye of the snake and was lost.

The book, the introduction to which has so long been delayed, proved to be the long-sought volume, "Al Aaraaf, Tamerlane, and Minor Poems." Nor can the appearance it makes or the dress in which it is presented cause any unfavorable comment.

ALAAARAAF, TAMERLANE, AND MINOR POEMS. By Edgar A. Poe. Baltimore. Hatch and Dunning. 1829.

Collation: Title, Copyright and imprint (quotation, 2 lines). Half title, (quotation, 1 line). Dedication: (quotation, 1 line). quotation, 3 lines): Proem: Text pp. (13)-21. Half title, Part II. Text pp. (25)-38. Half title: Advertisement (two lines). Dedication: Text, pp. (43)-54. Part III. (quotation, 2 lines), (quotation, 1 line). Preface. Text, pp. 59-71.

This book was printed by Matchett and Woods, and should carry their name, honorably, to future generations of printers. While no attempt was made to produce a *de luxe* copy, a remarkably readable type was selected, and the proof-reading and printing show painstaking care—very different from the second edition of Poe's poems.

The paper selected has withstood the ravages of time and exhibits none of the foxing so characteristic of other books printed at that period. It is in its original binding and, although the boards bear slight stains, these are due to the law of disintegration from which nothing is immune. The margins are wide, the pages are clean, and the book bears no evidence of having been often opened.

Poe's quotations scattered over several pages indicate a youthful tendency toward the odd and picturesque, a macaronic exhibit of wide reading, and a knowledge of books exhibiting learning not possessed by him. Among these are:

Entiendes, Fabio,—lo que voi deciendo?  
Toma, si, lo entendio:—Mientes, Fabio.

What has night to do with sleep?  
COMUS.

My nothingness—my wants—  
My sins—and my contrition—  
SOUTHEY E PERSIS

And some flowers—*but no bays.*  
MILTON.

**AL AARAAF,**  
**TAMERLANE,**

AND

**MINOR POEMS.**

---

**BY EDGAR A. POE.**

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BALTIMORE:  
HATCH & DUNNING.

1829.

The dedication of the first part is unique, being contained in these lines:

**DEDICATION.**

Who drinks the deepest?—here's to him.

CLEVELAND.

Preceding *Al Aaraaf* and intended as an explanation of the subject matter of the poem is this quotation:

A star was discovered by Tycho Brahe which burst forth, in a moment, with a splendor surpassing that of Jupiter—then gradually faded away and became invisible to the naked eye.

The arrangement of the contents is as remarkable as is this dedication, and the explanatory and other quotations are equally original. At times they are unexplainable. *Al Aaraaf* is divided into two parts, each prefaced by a half title; the second division, technically the third part, has a separate dedication with half title and quotations. This third part contains *Tamerlane* and *Miscellaneous Poems* and, in proper form, is dedicated to John Neal, the editor of "The Yankee."

Poe always referred to this 1829 volume as his first edition, so that the *Tamerlane*, printed in Boston in 1827, remains a bibliographical puzzle. It is only to be had as a reprint; even in this form, it is not a desirable item, such as should have been reproduced when the original could not be procured. An Englishman, who was not in possession of the necessary literary vision, not only edited this reprint, but attempted to improve the spelling, to change the punctuation and to emend the text. When it was published it was believed that the copy of *Tamerlane*, belonging to the British Museum, from which the reprint was made, was unique. Since that time three other copies have been found.

The original title page did not contain Poe's name and was simply arranged.

# TAMERLANE

AND OTHER POEMS

BY

EDGAR ALLAN POE

FIRST PUBLISHED AT BOSTON IN 1827 AND NOW

FIRST REPUBLISHED FROM A UNIQUE COPY

OF THE ORIGINAL EDITION

WITH A PREFACE

BY

RICHARD HERNE SHEPHERD

LONDON

GEORGE REDWAY

MDCCLXXXIV.

# TAMERLANE

AND

OTHER POEMS

---

BY A BOSTONIAN

---

Young heads are giddy and young hearts are warm  
And make mistakes for manhood to reform.

COMPTON



BOSTON

CALVIN F. S. THOMAS . . . . . PRINTER

1827

TAMERLANE AND OTHER POEMS By A Bostonian [Quotation] Boston Calvin F. S. Thomas. . . Printer 1827.

The republication is more verbose.

TAMERLANE AND OTHER POEMS By Edgar Allan Poe First published at Boston in 1827 and now first republished from a unique copy of the original edition with a preface By Richard Herne Shepherd London George Redway MDCCLXXXIV.

The only reference to this volume outside a publisher's list, is contained in an advertisement inserted into the 1829 edition announcing that, for personal reasons, the first issue had been suppressed. It certainly was not circulated, nor can we unravel the mystery of its genesis, nor the reason for its suppression.

In explanation of the changes made in the republication Shepherd states:

'There are several palpable *errata*,' as Mr. Ingram has remarked, 'in Edgar Poe's first book.' These I have thought it best to correct, wherever they are perfectly obvious (a list of them and of proposed conjectural emendations is appended), and I also have reduced the orthography and punctuation to a uniform standard. The present case was not one where a facsimile reprint was desirable,—the typography, arrangement, size, and general appearance of the original edition being unsatisfactory in the extreme.

As this was supposed to be the only copy in existence it would have been a bibliographical satisfaction to have been able to secure an accurate reprint of the original without Shepherd's emendations and corrections. He has republished it typographically improved, but it is valueless as a reproduction. The redeeming feature of the one I possess is that it was a presentation copy to Swinburne and bears the impress of his ownership. Unfortunately, Swinburne made no emendatory notes. In spite of the personal association possessed by this item and the fact that Shepherd limited his publication to one hundred, it is valueless when compared with a copy of the original,

said to have been improperly punctuated, faultily spelled, and miserably printed. When first described no one could speak positively as to the binding, for the one in the British Museum is without wrappers. Another, also lacking wrappers, is in Philadelphia; a third, with wrappers bound in, is in the Huntington collection, while the fourth, "complete with wrappers and untouched by the binder,"—what greater recommendation can the outside of any book possess?—was in the recent Halsey sale. This is the copy to which reference already has been made and which was in the McKee sale of 1900, where it brought the sum of \$2050. It was immediately resold for \$2550. It was this same copy that, in the Halsey sale, February, 1919, brought \$11,600—an unheard of price for even the highest valued *Americana*. It is now in the Huntington collection, but it is hardly possible that even Mr. Huntington will countenance this duplication, enormous as are his powers of appropriation, deglutition and absorption. Assuredly, sooner or later, indigestion, or at least difficult assimilation, again will put one of these in circulation.

Nothing is definitely known concerning Calvin F. S. Thomas except that this name is printed as publisher on the first *Tamerlane*. Thomas is said to have lived in Boston and it is presumed that he was a printer, but no other book bearing his imprint has been found. There is no record showing that he did live in Boston, when he left, or where he went. There have been many attempts to elucidate these obscure points, and much research has been given to a solution of this riddle. Certain of Poe's biographers have regarded it as a vital question and they have made many ingenious explanations. It is, like much else that relates to Poe's early life, a matter of conjecture. The interesting thing to determine is Poe's reason for printing this volume, for withdrawing it from circulation, and for not publishing it.

I can find no authority for Harrison's statement:

This precious little volume, only forty copies of which are said to have been printed, was published by the nineteen-year old printer, Calvin F. S. Thomas, then living in Boston. Thomas afterwards moved west and died, probably in Springfield, Mo., in 1876, without being aware that he had ushered into the world the most unique specimen of American poetic genius.

Possibly Harrison confounded the number issued with the number of pages it is said to have contained.

Woodberry, the most painstaking of Poe biographers, in a letter to Shepherd published in the reproduced *Tamerlane*, offered the following solution:

Of the original edition Mr. Ingram states that he has a copy, and thinks it unique because Poe stated that the edition was suppressed. I do not think it was suppressed, however, and as you may be interested in the matter I extend this note. The printer, Mr. Calvin F. S. Thomas, was a very obscure man, who had a printer's shop at Boston in that year; I have sought through all the Thomas families of Massachusetts, Maine, Rhode Island, Maryland, Ohio, etc., to which he was likely to belong, and there is no trace of him. I can find no other book with his imprint. Consequently I suppose the edition to have been small and obscure. It was published between June and October, 1827, probably in June. It was not noticed or advertised, apparently, but it occurs in the *North American Review's* quarterly list of new publications, in the October number, 1827. How Poe, a youth of eighteen, in a strange city, friendless and penniless as he was, persuaded this unknown printer to issue this volume, is a mystery to me. I have talked with old men, and have had the printers and publishers who survive from that time interrogated, but though Boston was a small town, no one knew Thomas or ever heard of him. You may be sure, however, that the Mr. Ingram who seems to own Poe, is wrong in believing that the volume was only printed, and not published. Poe left Boston in October of that year.

Yet Woodberry, who certainly knows his Poe, ignores the fact that it was Poe himself who, in his 1829 *Tamerlane*, announced this suppression.

#### ADVERTISEMENT.

This Poem was printed for publication in Boston, in the year 1827, but suppressed through circumstances of a private nature.

It is certain that, except for this advertisement, Poe



neither at the time he published *Al Aaraaf*, nor later in 1831, nor in 1845, when the final and definitive edition was published, recognized or referred to this 1827 publication. It is to C. F. S. Thomas, the boyhood friend of Poe, that Woodberry attributes this volume.

The abundant alloy in the substance of the work, however, and the rudeness of its execution justly condemned the volume to speedy oblivion. It brought neither fame to the poet nor money to the printer, and shortly after its publication Thomas removed to New York. Neither in his stay in that city nor during his later life in Buffalo, New York, and Springfield, Missouri, did Thomas, who lived until 1876, ever mention, either in his own family or, so far as is known, to his friends or associates, that his first venture in the book-trade was Poe's verses. In view of this fact, in connection with the general publication of reminiscences by all who were ever well acquainted with Poe, and the special interest of this obscure portion of his life, it may be safely inferred that Thomas never identified the first author he knew with the famous poet who wrote 'The Raven.'

Neither Thomas nor his family remembered these poems as having been published by him, nor so far as has been ascertained, was he at any time in the publishing business elsewhere. In 1876 Poe was too well known, and too many reminiscences had been recalled, for so important an association to have been forgotten. It may have been that this publication was the result of Poe's love for "mystification," and that for this reason he used the name of his boyhood friend.

Why Poe suppressed this volume is the real mystery—if mystery there be. Possibly the key is contained in the preface to *Tamerlane*.

The greater part of the Poems which compose this little volume were written in the year 1821-2, when the author had not completed his fourteenth year. They were of course not intended for publication; why they are published now concerns no one but himself. Of the smaller pieces very little need be said; they perhaps savour too much of egotism; but they were written by one too young to have any knowledge of the world but from his own breast.

In *Tamerlane* he has endeavored to expose the folly of even *risking* the best feelings of the heart at the shrine of Ambition. He is conscious that there are many faults (besides that of the general char-

acter of the poem), which he flatters himself he could, with little trouble, have corrected, but unlike many of his predecessors, has been too fond of his early productions to amend them in his *old age*.

It is apparent that this matter of revision, to which Poe thus jokingly alluded, was not altogether persiflage. It is possible, when he saw the printed volume, and found it as unsatisfactory as Shepherd believed it to have been, that he reconsidered and seriously attempted a very complete revision. In the version published in 1829 hardly a stanza remains unaltered, and it is difficult to recognize similarity in the two poems except as two versions with the same general theme. To illustrate, I quote and parallel as much of the two poems as will serve to elucidate this suggestion.

1827

I

"I have sent for thee, holy friar;  
But 'twas not with the drunken hope,  
Which is but agony of desire  
To shun the fate, with which to cope  
Is more than crime may dare to dream,  
That I have call'd thee at this hour:  
Such, Father, is not my theme—  
Nor am I mad, to deem that power  
Of earth may shrive me of the sin  
Unearthly pride hath revell'd in—  
I would not call thee fool, old man,  
But hope is not a gift of thine;  
If I *can* hope (O God! I can)  
It falls from an eternal shrine.

II

The gay wall of this gaudy tower  
Grows dim around me—death is near.  
I had not thought, until this hour  
When passing from the earth, that ear  
Of any, were it not the shade  
Of one whom in life I made  
All mystery but a simple name,  
Might know the secret of a spirit  
Bow'd down in sorrow, and in shame.—  
Shame, said'st thou?

Ay, I did inherit

That hated portion, with the fame,  
The worldly glory, which has shown  
A demon-light around my throne,  
Scorching my sear'd heart with a pain  
Not Hell shall make me fear again.

1829

I

"Kind solace in a dying hour!—  
Such, father, is not (now) my theme—  
I will not madly deem that power  
Of Earth may shrive me of the sin  
Unearthly pride hath revell'd in—  
I have no time to dote or dream:  
You call it hope—that fire of fire!  
It is but agony of desire:  
If I *can* hope—Oh God! I *can*—  
Its fount is holier—more divine—  
I would not call thee fool, old man,  
But such is not a gift of thine.

2

Know thou the secret of a spirit  
Bow'd from its wild pride into shame.  
O! Yearning heart! I did inherit  
Thy withering portion with the fame,  
The searing glory which hath shone  
Amid the jewels of my throne,  
Halo of Hell! and with a pain  
Not Hell shall make me fear again—  
O! craving heart! for the lost flowers  
And sunshine of my summer hours!  
Th' undying voice of that dead time,  
With its interminable chime,  
Rings, in the spirit of a spell,  
Upon thy emptiness—a knell.

III

I have not always been as now—  
The fever'd diadem on my brow  
I claim'd and won usurpingly—  
Ay—the same heritage hath given  
Rome to the Caesar—this to me;  
The heirdom of a kingly mind—  
And a proud spirit, which hath striven  
Triumphantly with human kind.

In mountain air I first drew life;  
The mists of the Taglay have shed  
Nightly their dews on my young head;  
And my brain drank their venom then,  
When after day of perilous strife  
With chamois, I would seize his den  
And slumber, in my pride of power,  
The infant monarch of the hour—

For, with the mountain dew by night,  
My soul imbibed unhallow'd feeling;  
And I would feel its essence stealing  
In dreams upon me—while the light  
Flashing from cloud that hover'd o'er,  
Would seem to my half closing eyes  
The pageant of monarchy!  
And the deep thunders echoing roar  
Came hurriedly upon me, telling  
Of war, and tumult, where my voice,  
My own voice, silly child! was swelling  
(O how would my wild heart rejoice  
And leap within me at the cry)  
The battle cry of victory!  
\* \* \*

IV

The rain came down upon my head  
But barely shelter'd—and the wind  
Pass'd quickly o'er me—but my mind  
Was maddening—for 'twas man that  
shed  
Laurels upon me—and the rush  
The torrent of the chilly air  
Gurgled in my pleased ear the crush  
Of empires, with the captive's Prayer,  
The hum of suitors, the mix'd tone  
Of flattery round a sovereign's throne.

XVII

I reach'd my home—my home no more—  
For all was flown that made it so—  
I pass'd from out its mossy door,  
In vacant idleness of woe.  
There met me on its threshold stone  
A mountain hunter, I had known  
In childhood, but he knew me not.  
Something he spoke of the old cot:  
It had seen better days, he said;

3

I have not always been as now:  
The fever'd diadem on my brow  
I claim'd and won usurpingly—  
Hath not the same fierce heirdom given  
Rome to the Caesar—this to me?  
The heritage of a kingly mind,  
And a proud spirit which hath striven  
Triumphantly with human kind.

4

On mountain soil I first drew life:  
The mists of the Taglay have shed  
Nightly their dews upon my head,  
And, I believe, the winged strife  
And tumult of the headlong air  
Hath nestl'd in my very hair.

5

So late from Heaven—that dew—it fell  
(Mid dreams of an unholy night)  
Upon me—with the touch of Hell,  
While the red flashing of the light  
From clouds that hung, like banners,  
o'er  
Appeared to my half-closing eye  
The pageantry of monarchy,  
And the deep trumpet-thunder's roar,  
Of human battle, where my voice,  
My own voice, silly child!—was swelling  
(O! how my spirit would rejoice,  
And leap within me at the cry)  
The battle-cry of Victory!

6

The rain came down upon my head  
Unshelter'd—and the heavy wind  
Was giant like—so thou, my mind!—  
It was but man, I thought, who shed  
Laurels upon me: And the rush—  
The torrent of the chilly air  
Gurgled within my ear the crush  
Of empires—with the captive's prayer—  
The hum of suitors—and the tone  
Of flattery 'round a sovereign's throne.

22

I reach'd my home—my home no more—  
For all had flown who made it so—  
I pass'd from out its mossy door,  
And, tho' my tread was soft and low,  
A voice came from the threshold stone  
Of one whom I had earlier known—  
O! I defy thee, Hell, to show  
On beds of fire that burn below,  
An humbler heart—a deeper wo—

## XVII (continued)

23

There rose a fountain once, and there  
 Full many a fair flower raised its head:  
 But she who rear'd them was long dead,  
 And in such follies had no part,  
 What was there left me now? despair—  
 A kingdom for a broken-heart.

Father, I firmly do believe—  
 I know—for Death who comes for me  
 From regions of the blest afar,  
 Where there is nothing to deceive,  
 Hath left his iron gate ajar,  
 And rays of truth, you cannot see  
 Are flashing thro' Eternity—  
 I do believe that Eblis hath  
 A snare in ev'ry human path—  
 Else how, when in the holy grove  
 I wandered of the idol, Love,  
 Who daily scents his snowy wings  
 With incense of burnt offerings  
 From the most unpolluted things,  
 Whose pleasant bowers are yet so riven  
 Above with trellaced rays from Heaven  
 No mote may shun—no tiniest fly  
 The lightning of his eagle eye—  
 How was it that Ambition crept,  
 Unseen, amid the revels there,  
 Till growing bold, he laughed and leapt  
 In the tangle of Love's very hair?

In the 1827 version, *Tamerlane* is divided into seventeen stanzas, while, in the one of 1829, where all is revised and much is omitted, there are twenty-three. It is difficult to follow the story, which is deficient in ideas, declamatory in style, and without continuity of plot.

The conclusions are verbally dissimilar and are equally senseless as a *denouement* of the plot.

My theory as to Poe's reason for suppressing the first *Tamerlane* would be more credible had he not revised and published this second version. If the first had been written when Poe was fourteen, much could have been forgiven, especially the suppression: but this second publication must have been rewritten, and he was twenty when it was published.

The solution of this question is probably very simple—as simple as was the method Columbus adopted for forcing an egg to stand on its end. Poe's financial inability to pay debts contracted was always a marked feature of his business ventures; unfriended and unknown as he undoubtedly was at this time, there might have arisen an acute financial crisis which prevented the payment of

obligations he had assumed. If this be a fact the real explanation is simple, and the conclusions are not difficult to draw. It seems unfortunate that the Baltimore printers were not equally insistent in their demands. Personally, the last version pleases me no better than the first, and the final stanzas seem a most impotent and lame conclusion to a story lacking in narrative, and without historical foundation or metrical skill. Poe's reputation would not have been diminished had he destroyed all copies of the first and had he not rewritten and published his chosen edition.

Not one of the poems of the first volume was republished *verbatim* in the second. Though a few retain the same title, they are so thoroughly emended that they appear to have been fully rewritten, and they retain but slight traces of their original phraseology. Only two of these poems were republished practically unaltered: "To—," beginning "I saw thee on thy bridal day,"—a rather precocious production for a boy of fourteen—and *The Lake*.

To illustrate the care with which Poe recast, and the thoroughness with which he rewrote the poems he believed worthy of reproduction, I give both versions of a poem originally called *Visit of the Dead*, in the 1829 version christened *Spirits of the Dead*.

## VISIT OF THE DEAD

Thy soul shall find itself alone—  
Alone of all on earth—unknown  
The cause—but none are near to pry  
Into thine hour of secrecy.  
Be silent in that solitude,  
Which is not loneliness—for then  
The spirits of the dead, who stood  
In life before thee, are again  
In death around thee, and their will  
Shall then o'ershadow thee—be still:  
For the night, tho' clear, shall frown;  
And the stars shall look not down  
From their thrones, in the dark heaven,  
With light like Hope to mortals given,  
But their red orbs, without beam,  
To thy withering heart shall seem  
As a burning, and a fever  
Which would cling to thee for ever.

## SPIRITS OF THE DEAD

Thy soul shall find itself alone  
Mid dark thoughts of the grey tomb-  
stone—  
Not one, of all the crowd, to pry  
Into thine hour of secrecy:  
Be silent in that solitude  
Which is not loneliness—for then  
The spirits of the dead who stood  
In life before thee are again  
In death around thee—and their will  
Shall overshadow thee: be still.  
The night—tho' clear—shall frown—  
And the stars shall look not down  
From their high thrones in the Heaven,  
With light like Hope to mortals given—  
But their red orbs, without beam,  
To thy weariness shall seem  
As a burning and a fever  
Which would cling to thee for ever:

But 'twill leave thee, as each star  
 In the morning light afar  
 Will fly thee—and vanish:  
 But its *thought* thou canst not banish.  
 The breath of God will be still;  
 And the mist upon the hill  
 By that summer breeze unbroken  
 Shall charm thee—as a token,  
 And a symbol which shall be  
 Secrecy in thee.

Now are thoughts thou shalt not  
 banish—  
 Now are visions ne'er to vanish—  
 From thy spirit shall they pass  
 No more—like dew-drop from the grass:  
 The breeze—the breath of God—is  
 still—  
 And the mist upon the hill  
 Shadowy—shadowy—yet unbroken,  
 Is a symbol and a token—  
 How it hangs upon the trees,  
 A mystery of mysteries!—

Both of these were omitted by Poe in the 1845 collection of poems. While neither of them were worthy of such insertion, they illustrate something of Poe's style, and give a faint indication of his future mastery of words and versification. A poem called the *Evening Star* was entirely omitted, although it bears a close resemblance to Poe's later and better work.

#### EVENING STAR.

Twas noontide of summer,  
 And mid-time of night;  
 And stars, in their orbits,  
 Shone pale, thro' the light  
 Of the brighter, cold moon,  
 'Mid planets her slaves,  
 Herself in the Heavens,  
 Her beam on the waves.  
 I gazed awhile  
 On her cold smile;  
 Too cold—too cold for me—  
 There pass'd, as a shroud,  
 A fleecy cloud,  
 And I turn'd away to thee,  
 Proud Evening Star,  
 In thy glory afar,  
 And dearer thy beam shall be;  
 For joy to my heart  
 Is the proud part  
 Thou bearest in Heaven at night,  
 And more I admire  
 Thy distant fire,  
 Than that colder, lowly light.

All could have been emended or omitted without diminishing the reputation Poe later earned.

Preceding the poems, under the title "Preface", the poem now known as *Romance* was published. This was greatly amplified in the 1831 edition, where Poe used it as a preface to his poems and entitled it "Introduction". This amplification consisted in the addition of several stanzas that remind one of Milton's lighter verse; certainly it has no relation to that of Poe:

And so, being young and dipt in folly  
I fell in love with melancholy.

In the 1845 edition the original version was restored, with the title "Romance".

The eleven explanatory notes carried by the 1827 edition were omitted from that of 1829; wisely, for they were most juvenile in conception and added nothing in the way of interpretation. For instance, in explaining his reason for using the term "holy friar", in the first line of *Tamerlane*, Poe, apparently in all seriousness, published this foot note:

How I shall account for giving him 'a friar' as a death-bed confessor—I cannot exactly determine. He wanted some one to listen to his tale—and why not a friar? It does not pass the bounds of possibility—quite sufficient for my purpose—and I have at least good authority on my side for such innovations.

To illustrate the humorous attitude Poe occasionally assumed, I quote from his poem *Fairyland*:

In easy drapery falls  
Over hamlets, and rich halls,  
Wherever they may be—  
O'er the strange woods—o'er the sea—  
Over spirits on the wing  
Over every drowsy thing—  
And buries them up quite  
In a labarynth of light—  
And then, how deep! O! deep!  
Is the passion of their sleep!  
In the morning they arise,  
And their mooney covering  
Is soaring in the skies,  
With the tempests as they toss,  
\*Like—almost any thing—  
Or a yellow Albatross.

\*Plagiarism—see the works of Thomas Moore—passim. [Edr.]

At this time Poe was in active correspondence with John Neal, the editor of "The Yankee," to whom he later dedicated the 1829 version of *Tamerlane*.

There had appeared among the editorial notes reference to communications received from "E. A. P." In the November number there is another reference to Poe.

Many papers intended for this number have been put aside for the next, from necessity. Among others are *Night—The Magician—Unpublished Poetry* (being specimens of a book about to be published in Baltimore), and a long piece of poetry which may or may not appear.

Evidently Neal regarded these contributions hopefully and encouraged Poe to further effort. The December issue contained a long article, probably written by Neal to whom had been submitted the manuscript of Poe's proposed book of poems.

The following passages are from the manuscript-works of a young author, about to be published in Baltimore. He is entirely a stranger to us but with all their faults, if the remainder of *Al Aaraaf* and *Tamerlane* are as good as the body of the extracts here given—to say nothing of the more extraordinary parts—he will deserve to stand high—very high in the estimation of the shining brotherhood. Whether he *will* do so, however, must depend, not so much on his worth now in mere poetry, as upon his worth hereafter in something yet loftier and more generous—we allude to the stronger properties of the mind, to the magnanimous determination that enables a youth to endure the present, whatever the present may be, in the hope, or rather the belief, the fixed unwavering belief, that in the future he will find his reward. 'I am young,' he says in a letter to one who has laid it on our table for a good purpose, 'I am young—not yet twenty—am a poet—if deep worship of all beauty can make me one—and wish to be one in the more common meaning of the word. I would give the world to embody one half the ideas afloat in my imagination. . . . I appeal to you as a man that loves the same beauty which I adore—the beauty of the natural blue sky and the sunshiny earth—there can be no tie more strong than that of brother for brother—it is not so much that they love one another, as that they both love the same parent—their affections are always running the same direction—the same channel—and cannot help mingling. I am, and have been, from my childhood, an idler. It cannot therefore be said that

'I left a calling for this idle trade  
A duty broke—a father disobeyed.'

for I have no father—nor mother.'



THE  
**YANKEE;**  
AND  
**BOSTON LITERARY GAZETTE.**

Conducted by JOHN NEAL.

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UTILITY—The greatest happiness of the greatest number—BENTHAM.

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**AUGUST; 1829.**

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NEW SERIES....NO. 1

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**Boston:**  
WELLS AND LILLY—COURT-STREET.  
PORTLAND: Office of JOHN NEAL, Congress-Street.  
1829.

The poems to be published are *Al Aaraaf*—*Tamerlane*—one about four, and the other three hundred lines, with smaller pieces. *Al Aaraaf* has some good poetry, and much extravagance, which I have not had time to throw away. *Al Aaraaf* is a tale of another world—the star discovered by Tycho Brahe, which appeared and disappeared so suddenly—or rather, it is no tale at all.

Very long quotations are given both from *Al Aaraaf* and *Tamerlane*, as well as from some of the *Minor Poems*. It was a creditable, if not laudatory, notice, and justified Poe in dedicating the *Tamerlane* to Neal. It does not quite explain the reason for his peculiar dedication of *Al Aaraaf*; but in all things, even in his punctuation, Poe was a law unto himself. His self-assertive letter would serve as an amusing instance of literary pride had it not been so fully justified by his later accomplishment.

So far as is known "The Yankee" was the first magazine to contain any of Poe's contributions. No contributor is mentioned by name, although such indication is usually made by initials. Two of the poems contained in this magazine now are attributed to Poe. *The Skeleton Hand*, signed "P.", bears some resemblance to the work of Poe, aged 14-20. The same redundancy of words, and ideas darkly hinted, Poesque in conception, are the marks of identification.

#### THE SKELETON-HAND

Lo! one is on the mountain side,  
 While the clouds are passing by—  
 With their black wings flapping heavily,  
 Like eagles in the sky;  
 Or lying up in the forest trees,  
 And waiting there for the mountain-breeze.  
 And now he passes through the clouds—  
 And up to the mountain-top,  
 Nor yet to look at the joyous sun  
 Does the hasty traveller stop.  
 But he leaped down in the broken path  
 With a step as light and free—  
 As ever in his days of mirth,

In the dance and revelry.  
 Why endeth he his hasty speed?  
 Why stoppeth on his way?  
 In truth it is a fearful thing,  
 For human tongue to say.  
 He fears that toward him pointeth there,  
 A fleshless human hand;  
 Where the mountain rains have swept away,  
 Its coverings of sand;  
 That hand his very soul doth stir,  
 For it proveth him a murderer.  
 Ay long ago on the mountain side,  
 The fearful deed was done;  
 And the murderer thought him safe, that none  
 Could see, save the broad bright sun,  
 As he rolled in the heavens the dead above,  
 And flooded the earth with his rays of love.  
 Now lifted he his clouded eye,  
 To the mountain crests behind;  
 And o'er them came the broad black clouds,  
 Upheaving with the wind;  
 And on them their thick darkness spread—  
 A crown upon the mountain's head.  
 And then shone out the flaming sun,  
 From the waters of the sea;  
 And God's own bow came in the clouds,  
 And looked out gloriously;  
 But its colours were of wo and wrath,  
 That threw their light o'er the murderer's path.  
 And now God's chariots—the clouds,  
 Came rolling down with might;  
 Their wheels like many horsemen were,  
 In battle or in flight.  
 And yet no power to move hath *he*,  
 His soul is in an agony.  
 Over the murderer and dead,  
 They rolled their mighty host;  
 Old ocean's waves come not so thick,  
 By northern tempests tost.  
 Forth from their mighty bosom came,  
 A flash of heaven's wrath,  
 And away the heavy clouds—and dun,  
 Rolled from the murder-path.  
 And the sun shone out where the murderer lay,  
 Before the dead in the narrow way—  
 With his hand all seared, and his breast torn bare—  
 God's vengeance had been working there.

*The Magician* is with more certainty assigned to Poe.

THE MAGICIAN\*

Thou dark, sea-stirring storm,  
Whence comest thou in thy might—  
Nay—wait, thou dim and dreamy form—  
Storm spirit, I call thee—'tis mine of right—  
Arrest thee in thy troubled flight.

STORM SPIRIT

Thou askest me whence I came—  
I came o'er the sleeping sea,  
It roused at my torrent of storm and flame,  
And it howled aloud in its agony,  
And swelled to the sky—that sleeping sea.  
Thou askest me what I met—  
A ship from the Indian shore,  
A tall proud ship with her sails all set—  
Far down in the sea that ship I bore,  
My storms wild rushing wings before.  
And her men will forever lie,  
Below the unquiet sea;  
And tears will dim full many an eye,  
Of those who shall widows and orphans be,  
And their days be years—for their misery.  
A boat with a starving crew—  
For hunger they howled and swore;  
While the blood from a fellow's veins they drew  
I came upon them with rush and roar—  
Far under the waves that boat I bore  
Two ships in a fearful fight—  
When a hundred guns did flash  
I came upon them—no time for flight—  
But under the sea their timbers crash  
And over their guns the wild waters dash  
A wretch on a single plank—  
And I tossed him on the shore—  
A night and a day of the sea he drank,  
But the wearied wretch to the land I bore—  
And now he walketh the earth once more

MAGICIAN

Storm spirit—go on thy path—  
The spirit has spread his wings—  
And comes on the sea with a rush of wrath,  
As a war horse when he springs—  
And over the earth his winds he flings—  
And over the earth—nor stop nor stay—  
The winds of the storm king go out on their way.—P.

\*The punctuation throughout is the author's—by desire.

While it has not been definitely proved that either *The Skeleton Hand* or *The Magician* were written by Poe, I believe that the evidence, both because of their construction and their signatures, justifies such an assignment. While these poems bear no resemblance in their versification or the metrical use of words to Poe at his best, in my opinion, no poem written by Poe during this period foretold his later accomplishment. In his early poems many words suffered elision and dashes were frequent. This Poe characteristic is noticeably absent in *The Skeleton Hand*, and its having been proof-read possibly explains the footnote appended to *The Magician*. Such a request, odd and unusual, would have been characteristic of Poe.

POEMS. By Edgar A. Poe. Second Edition. New York: Published by Elam Bliss. 1831.

Collation: Half Title, Title, Contents, Quotation. Introductory Letter to Mr.— pp. (13) -29. Introduction (Poem) "Romance" pp. 33-36. Text 39-124.

This book bears the inscription "To the U. S. Corps of Cadets this Volume is Respectfully Dedicated." It is prefaced by a letter containing Poe's earliest creed as to what should constitute poetry. It is addressed to a mythical friend and, in it, he not only explains his poetic faith, but he lays down his well known dogma as to metaphysical and definitive poetry; or as he happily expressed this idea: "Music, when combined with a pleasurable idea, is poetry; music without the idea is simply music; the idea without the music is prose from its very definitiveness."

Believing only a portion of my first volume to be worthy a second edition—that small portion I thought it as well to include in the present book as to republish by itself. I have, therefore, herein combined *Al Aaraaf* and *Tamerlane* with other Poems hitherto unprinted. Nor have I hesitated to insert from the *Minor Poems*, now omitted, whole lines, and even passages, to the end that being placed in a fairer light, and the trash shaken from them in which they were imbedded, they may have some chance of being seen by posterity. . . .

\* \* \* \* \*

It has been said, that a good critique on a poem may be written by one who is no poet himself. This, according to *your* idea and *mine* of poetry, I feel to be false—the less poetical the critic, the less just the critique, and the converse. On this account, and because there are but few B——s in the world, I would be as much ashamed of the world's good opinion as proud of your own.

\* \* \* \* \*

I mentioned just now a vulgar error as regards criticism. I think the notion that no poet can form a correct estimate of his own writings is another. I remarked before, that in proportion to the poetical talent, would be the justice of a critique upon poetry. Therefore, a bad poet would, I grant, make a false critique, and his self-love would infallibly bias his little judgment in his favor; but a poet, who is indeed a poet, could not, I think, fail of making a just critique.

\* \* \* \* \*

As I am speaking of poetry, it will not be amiss to touch slightly upon the most singular heresy in its modern history—the heresy of what is called very foolishly, the Lake School. . . .

Aristotle, with singular assurance, has declared poetry the most philosophical of all writing—but it required a Wordsworth to pronounce it the most metaphysical. He seems to think that the end of poetry is, or should be, instruction—yet it is a truism that the end of our existence is happiness; if so, the end of every separate part of our existence—everything connected with our existence should be still happiness. Therefore the end of instruction should be happiness; and happiness is another name for pleasure;—therefore the end of instruction should be pleasure: yet we see the above mentioned opinion implies precisely the reverse. . . .

Poetry, above all things, is a beautiful painting whose tints, to minute inspection, are confusion worse confounded, but start boldly out to the cursory glance of the connoisseur. We see an instance of Coleridge's liability to err by reason of his very profundity, and of his error we have a natural type in the contemplation of a star. He who regards it directly and intensely sees, it is true, the star, but it is the star without a ray—while he who surveys it less inquisitively is conscious of all for which the star is useful to us below—its brilliancy and its beauty.

\* \* \* \* \*

As to Wordsworth, I have no faith in him: that he had, in youth, the feelings of a poet, I believe. . . . He was to blame in wearing away his youth in contemplation with the end of poetizing in his manhood. With the increase of his judgment the light which should make it apparent has faded away. . . . The long wordy discussions by which he tries to reason us into admiration of his poetry, speak very little in his favor: they are full of such assertions as this—"Of genius the only proof is the act of doing well what is worthy to be done, and what was never done before"—indeed! then it follows that in doing

what is *unworthy* to be done, or what *has* been done before, no *genius* can be evinced.

\* \* \* \* \*

What is Poetry? Poetry! that proteus-like idea, with as many appellations as the nine-titled Corcyra! Give me, I demanded of a scholar some time ago, give me a definition of poetry? . . . He proceeded to his library, brought me a Dr. Johnson, and overwhelmed me with a definition. Shade of the immortal Shakspeare! I imagined to myself the scowl of your spiritual eye upon the profanity of that scurrilous Ursa Major. Think of poetry, and then think of—Dr. Samuel Johnson! Think of all that is airy and fairy-like and then of all that is hideous and unwieldy; think of his huge bulk, the Elephant! and then—and then think of the Tempest—the Midsummer Night's Dream—Prospero—Oberon—and Titania!

\* \* \* \* \*

A poem, in my opinion, is opposed to a work of science by having, for its *immediate* object, pleasure, not truth; to romance, by having for its object an *indefinite* instead of a *definite* pleasure, being a poem only so far as this object is attained: romance presenting perceptible images with definite, poetry with *indefinite* sensations, to which end music is an *essential*, since the comprehension of sweet sound is our most indefinite conception. Music, when combined with a pleasurable idea, is poetry; music without the idea is simply music; the idea without the music is prose from its very definitiveness.

To sum up . . . I have, dear B——, what you no doubt perceive, for the metaphysical poets, as poets, the most sovereign contempt.

The sentiments contained in this preface may not fully represent Poe's mature opinions, and they certainly are characterized by youthful ebullition, but these beliefs were the foundation on which Poe based the papers that constituted his *Literati* and *Marginalia*. Probably they were essentially true for such poetry as Poe composed; but Poe was not a master poet.

In this edition, which Poe designated the "second edition," all of his earlier poems either were rejected or so altered as to lose their identity; yet they so clearly represent the transitional phase of his genius, and so strongly indicate the rising glory of his later creations, that they are worthy of being most fully discussed. The later poems, those that he believed might by reason of their intrinsic merit have "some chance of being seen by posterity,"

were *Israfil*, *The Doomed City*, later changed into and renamed *The City by the Sea*, *Irene*, transformed into *The Sleeper*, *A Paean*, now known as *Lenore*, and *The Valley Nis* and *Fairyland*, both later suppressed, or emended almost beyond recognition.

Poe was justified in his expressed belief. These poems have now become a part of his best known work and two of them rank among his best. Not one of those contained in either the 1827 or the 1829 volume ever are popularly recalled, and, when republished, are consigned to the appendices. While this may not be strictly true of *Tamerlane* and *Al Aaraaf*, the exception does not invalidate the truth of this statement. Both *Tamerlane* and *Al Aaraaf* were retained, although there were many omissions, emendations and additions. They were not only made to include lines, but, also, whole poems formerly published under individual titles. *Al Aaraaf* was given a new introductory stanza. All these changes and additions were omitted when Poe issued his volume "The Raven and Other Poems", where he chose the 1829 versions of such of his poems as he cared to reproduce. Poe republished the 1827 version of *To Helen* with very few textual changes. These strengthened the effect of the poem, although the verbal alterations were slight. This poem, while bearing the same title as that other *To Helen*, which Poe composed under the compulsion of his abnormal passion for Mrs. Helen Whitman, was also inspired by his love for the memory of a woman—the original "Helen." According to Woodberry, she was Jane Stith Stannard, the mother of a boyhood friend whom, as a child, Poe occasionally visited. The details of this childhood love, and the devotion Poe displayed in his worshipful idealization of the mother-love given him, have been related by Mrs. Whitman in her memoir of Poe.



# POEMS

BY

EDGAR A. POE.

ПОЕТЪ ИА КРОДЪ А РАИЗОН.—НОЧЕРОВОДАУМЪ.

SECOND EDITION.

New York:

PUBLISHED BY ELAN BLISS

1891.

## TO HELEN.

Helen, thy beauty is to me  
Like those Nicean barks of yore,  
That gently, o'er a perfum'd sea,  
The weary way-worn wanderer bore  
To his own native shore.

On desperate seas long wont to roam,  
Thy hyacinth hair, thy classic face,  
Thy Naiad airs have brought me home  
To the beauty of fair Greece,  
And the grandeur of old Rome.

Lo! in that little window-niche  
How statue-like I see thee stand!  
The folded scroll within thy hand—  
A Psyche from the regions which  
Are Holy land!

While at the academy in Richmond, which he entered in his twelfth year, he one day accompanied a school mate to his home, where he saw for the first time Mrs. H—— S——, the mother of his young friend. This lady, on entering the room, took his hand and spoke some gentle and gracious words of welcome, which so penetrated the sensitive heart of the orphan boy as to deprive him of the power of speech, and, for a time, almost of consciousness itself. He returned home in a dream, with but one thought, one hope in life—to hear again the sweet and gracious words that had made the desolate world so beautiful to him, and filled his lonely heart with the oppression of a new joy. This lady afterwards became the confidant of all his boyish sorrows, and hers was the one redeeming influence that saved and guided him in the earlier days of his turbulent and passionate youth. After the visitation of strange and peculiar sorrows she died, and for months after her decease it was his habit to visit nightly the cemetery where the object of his boyish idolatry lay entombed. The thought of her—sleeping there in her loneliness—filled his heart with a profound, incommunicable sorrow. When the nights were very dreary and cold, when the autumnal rains fell, and the winds wailed mournfully over the graves, he lingered longest and came away most regretfully.

These statements throw some light on Poe's early characteristics, showing him to have possessed amiable and lovable traits. Poe always longed for this mother-love which the early death of his own mother had denied him. Occasionally he was allowed to visit this friend, and Mrs. Stannard lavished on Poe the same affection she gave her own son, and so won him that he gave her his undying love.

Mrs. Whitman would not have drawn this picture had she not had foundation for her statements. Woodberry's unkind reference to this passage in Poe's life can only be explained by the fact that "contact with the subject may have bred prejudice."

He saw this lady, Jane Stith Stannard, but once. She died April 28, 1824, at the early age of thirty-one years; but the tale that he haunted her grave by night, with all its later Poesque atmosphere, must be dismissed. His superstitious sense was early developed by darky tales, and it was in his shivering response to these that the germinal terror of his genius first stirred.

This assumption of Woodberry is a gratuitous slur on the memory of Poe, and is without foundation, nor will

critics agree with him that *To Helen* "has been over-praised."

Mrs. Whitman again refers to this subject:

It was the image of this lady, long and tenderly, and sorrowfully cherished, that suggested the stanzas "To Helen" published among the poems written in his youth, which Russell Lowell says have in them a grace and symmetry of outline such as few poets ever attain, and which are valuable as displaying 'what can only be expressed by the contradictory phrase of *innate experience*'.

The following lines, taken from the 1831 version of *The Valley Nis*, undoubtedly refer to this reverential memory of his boyhood friend:

Helen, like thy human eye  
There th' uneasy violets lie—  
There the reedy grass doth wave  
Over the old forgotten grave—  
One by one from the tree top  
There the eternal dews do drop—

It is certain that through life Poe remained steadfast in his love for this mother-memory. Occasionally, it is necessary to make a statement with a sanctity that not even the sworn oath gives. Under such circumstances one will necessarily recall that memory most sacredly treasured among the archives contained in the Holy of Holies: in Poe's later life such an occasion arose when he protested to Mrs. Shew:

You must know and *be assured* of my regret and sorrow if aught I have ever written has hurt you. *My heart never wronged you*. I place you in *my esteem—in all solemnity*—beside the friend of my boyhood—the mother of my school-fellow, of whom I told you, and as I have repeated in the poem.

It has been assumed that *Lenore* was a further expression of this boyish bereavement. In its original form, *The Paean*, it was not in his early collections nor does it contain a genuine note of grief.

*The Doomed City* was fully revised when Poe published it under the name of *The City by the Sea*.

## THE DOOMED CITY

Lo! Death hath rear'd himself a throne  
 In a strange city, all alone,  
 Far down within the dim west—  
 And the good, and the bad, and the  
 worst,  
 Have gone to their eternal rest.  
 There shrines, and palaces, and towers  
 Are—not like anything of ours—  
 O! no—O! no—ours never loom  
 To heaven with that ungodly gloom!  
 Time-eaten towers that tremble not!  
 Around, by lifting winds forgot,  
 Resignedly beneath the sky  
 The melancholy waters lie.  
 A heaven that God doth not contemn  
 With stars like a diadem—  
 We liken our ladies' eyes to them—  
 But there! that everlasting pall!  
 It would be mockery to call  
 Such dreariness a heaven at all.  
 Yet tho' no holy rays come down  
 On the long night-time of that town,  
 Light from the lurid, deep sea  
 Streams up the turrets silently—  
 Up thrones—up long-forgotten bowers  
 Of sculptur'd ivy and stone flowers—  
 Up domes—up spires—up kingly halls—  
 Up fanes—up Babylon-like walls—  
 Up many a melancholy shrine  
 Whose entablatures intertwine  
 The mask—the viol—and the vine.  
 There open temples—open graves  
 Are on a level with the waves—  
 But not the riches there that lie  
 In each idol's diamond eye,  
 Not the gaily-jewell'd dead  
 Tempt the waters from their bed:  
 For no ripples curl, alas!  
 Along that wilderness of glass—  
 No swellings hint that winds may be  
 Upon a far-off happier sea:  
 So blend the turrets and shadows there  
 That all seem pendulous in air,  
 While from the high towers of the town  
 Death looks gigantically down.  
 But lo! a stir is in the air!  
 The wave! there is a ripple there!  
 As if the towers had thrown aside,  
 In slightly sinking, the dull tide—  
 As if the turret-tops had given  
 A vacuum in the filmy heaven:  
 The waves have now a redder glow—  
 The very hours are breathing low—  
 And when, amid no earthly moans,  
 Down, down that town shall settle hence,  
 Hell rising from a thousand thrones  
 Shall do it reverence,  
 And Death to some more happy clime  
 Shall give his undivided time.

## THE CITY BY THE SEA

Lo! Death has reared himself a throne  
 In a strange city lying alone  
 Far down within the dim West,  
 Where the good and the bad and the  
 worst and the best  
 Have gone to their eternal rest.  
 There shrines and palaces and towers  
 (Time-eaten towers that tremble not!)  
 Resemble nothing that is ours.  
 Around, by lifting winds forgot,  
 Resignedly beneath the sky  
 The melancholy waters lie.  
 No rays from the holy heaven come  
 down  
 On the long night-time of that town;  
 But light from out the lurid sea  
 Streams up the turret silently—  
 Gleams up the pinnacles far and free—  
 Up domes—up spires—up kingly halls—  
 Up fanes—up Babylon-like walls—  
 Up shadowy long-forgotten bowers  
 Of sculptured ivy and stone flowers—  
 Up many and many a marvellous shrine  
 Whose wreathed friezes intertwine  
 The viol, the violet, and the vine.  
 Resignedly beneath the sky  
 The melancholy waters lie.  
 So blend the turrets and shadows there  
 That all seem pendulous in air,  
 While from a proud tower in the town  
 Death looks gigantically down.  
 There open fanes and gaping graves  
 Yawn level with the luminous waves;  
 But not the riches there that lie  
 In each idol's diamond eye—  
 Not the gaily-jeweled dead  
 Tempt the waters from their bed;  
 For no ripples curl, alas!  
 Along that wilderness of glass—  
 No swellings tell that winds may be  
 Upon some far-off happier sea—  
 No heavings hint that winds have been  
 On seas less hideously serene.  
 But lo, a stir is in the air!  
 The wave—there is a movement there!  
 As if the towers had thrust aside,  
 In slightly sinking, the dull tide—  
 As if their tops had feebly given  
 A void within the filmy Heaven.  
 The waves have now a redder glow—  
 The hours are breathing faint and low—  
 And when, amid no earthly moans,  
 Down, down that town shall settle  
 hence,  
 Hell, rising from a thousand thrones,  
 Shall do it reverence.

The other poems contained in this volume, *A Paeon*, *Irene*, and *The Valley Nis*, were so completely rewritten that, when compared with their later publications, they appear to have completely lost their identity. *The Paeon* survives under the name *Lenore*, but, in my opinion, the original version was the better one; at least there was no reference to "Guy de Vere." There is a complete change of versification, it is simpler in construction, and less dramatic than is the poem now known as *Lenore*. A short quotation will exemplify these changes:

THE PAEAN

I

How shall the burial rite be read?  
The solemn song be sung?  
The requiem for the loveliest dead,  
That ever died so young?

II

Her Friends are gazing on her,  
And on her gaudy bier,  
And weep!—oh! to dishonor  
Dead beauty with a tear!  
They loved her for her wealth—  
And they hated her for her pride—  
But she grew in feeble health,  
And they *love* her—that she died.

IV

They tell me (while they speak  
Of her "costly broider'd pall")  
That my voice is growing weak—  
That I should not sing at all—

V

Or that my tone should be  
Tun'd to such a solemn song  
So mournfully—so mournfully,  
That the dead may feel no wrong.

VI

But she is gone above,  
With young Hope at her side,  
And I am drunk with love  
Of the dead, who is my bride.—

LENORE

Ah, broken is the golden bowl!  
the spirit flown forever!  
Let the bell toll!—a saintly soul  
floats on the Stygian river;  
And, Guy De Vere, hast *thou* no tear?  
weep now or never more!  
See! on yon drear and rigid bier  
low lies thy love, Lenore!  
Come! let the burial rite be read—  
the funeral song be sung!—  
An anthem for the queenliest dead  
that ever died so young—  
A dirge for her the doubly dead  
in that she died so young.  
"Wretches! ye loved her for her wealth  
and hated her for her pride,  
"And when she fell in feeble health,  
ye blessed her—that she died!  
"How *shall* the ritual, then, be read?—  
the requiem how be sung  
"By you—by yours, the evil eye,—  
by yours, the slanderous tongue  
"That did to death the innocence  
that died, and died so young?"  
"Peccavimus; but rave not thus!  
and let a Sabbath song  
Go up to God so solemnly  
the dead may feel no wrong!

Israfil, published in 1831, was republished in the "Southern Literary Messenger" for August, 1836, with the omission of one line and a few emendations. Poe completely revised it for the October, 1841 "Graham's." It underwent further emendation in the 1845 publication.

ISRAFEL\*  
(1831 Edition)

I.  
In Heaven a spirit doth dwell  
Whose heart-strings are a lute—  
None sing so wild—so well  
As the angel Israfel—  
And the giddy stars are mute.

II.  
Tottering above  
In her highest noon  
The enamored moon  
Blushes with love—  
While, to listen, the red levin  
Pauses in Heaven.

III.  
And they say (the starry choir  
And all the listening things)  
That Israfeli's fire  
Is owing to that lyre  
With those unusual strings.

IV.  
But the Heavens that angel trod  
Where deep thoughts are a duty—  
Where love is a grown god—  
Where Houri glances are—  
—Stay! turn the eyes afar!  
Imbued with all thy beauty  
Which we worship in yon star.

V.  
Thou art not, therefore, wrong  
Israfeli, who despisest  
An unimpassion'd song;  
To thee the laurels belong  
Best bard,—because the wisest.

VI.  
The ecstasies above  
With thy burning measures suit—  
Thy grief—if any—thy love  
With the fervors of thy lute—  
Well may the stars be mute!

VII.  
Yes, Heaven is thine; but this  
Is a world of sweets and sour:  
Our flowers are merely—flowers,  
And the shadow of thy bliss  
Is the sunshine of ours.

VIII.  
If I did dwell where Israfel  
Hath dwelt, and he where I,  
He would not sing one half as well—  
One half as passionately,  
And a stormier note than this would  
swell  
From my lyre within the sky.

\*And the Angel Itrafel who has the  
sweetest voice of all God's creatures.  
Koran.

ISRAFEL\*  
(*Graham's Magazine, October, 1841*)

In Heaven a spirit doth dwell  
"Whose heart-strings a lute;"  
None sing so wildly well  
As the angel Israfel,  
And the giddy stars (so legends tell)  
Ceasing their hymns, attend the spell  
Of his voice, all mute.

Tottering above  
In her highest noon  
The enamored moon  
Blushes with love,  
While, to listen, the red levin  
Pauses in Heaven,  
With the rapid Pleiades, even,  
Which are seven.

And they say (the starry choir  
And the other listening things)  
That Israfeli's fire  
Is due unto that lyre  
By which he sits and sings—  
That trembling living lyre  
With those unusual strings.  
But the Heavens that angel trod,  
Where deep thoughts are a duty—  
Where Love is a grown God—  
Where Houri glances are  
Imbued with all the beauty  
Which we worship in the star—  
The more lovely, the more far!

Thou art not, therefore, wrong  
Israfeli, who despisest  
An unimpassioned song  
To thee the laurels belong,  
Best bard because the wisest.  
Merrily live, and long!

The ecstasies above  
With thy burning measures suit—  
Thy grief, thy joy, thy hate, thy love,  
With the fervor of thy lute.  
Well may the stars be mute!  
Yes, Heaven is thine; but this  
Is a world of sweets and sour—  
Our flowers are merely—flowers  
And the shadow of thy bliss  
Is the sunshine of ours.

If I did dwell  
Where Israfel  
Hath dwelt, and he where I,  
He might not sing one half so well  
One half so passionately,  
While a bolder note than this might  
swell  
From my lyre within the sky!

\*And the Angel Israfel, or Israfeli,  
whose heart-strings are a lute, and who is  
the most musical of all God's creatures.  
Koran.

*The Valley Nis* survived only partially; in its republication it suffered the elision of many lines and was called *The Valley of Unrest*.

THE VALLEY NIS

(1831 Edition)

Far away—far away—  
 Far away—as far at least  
 Lies that valley as the day  
 Down within the golden east—  
 All things lovely—are not they  
 Far away—far away?  
 It is called the valley Nis.  
 And a Syriac tale there is  
 Thereabout which Time hath said  
 Shall not be interpreted.  
 Something about Satan's dart—  
 Something about angel wings—  
 Much about a broken heart—  
 All about unhappy things:  
 But "the valley Nis" at best  
 Means "the valley of unrest."  
*Once it smiled a silent dell*  
 Where the people did not dwell  
 Having gone unto the wars—  
 And the sly, mysterious stars,  
 With a visage full of meaning,  
 O'er the unguarded flowers were leaning:  
 Or the sun ray drip'ed all red  
 Thro' the tulips overhead,  
 Then grow paler as it fell  
 On the quiet Asphodel.  
*Now the unhappy shall confess*  
 Nothing there is motionless:  
 Helen, like thy human eye  
 There th' uneasy violets lie—  
 There the reedy grass doth wave  
 Over the old forgotten grave—  
 One by one from the tree top  
 There the eternal dews do drop—  
 There the vague and dreamy trees  
 Do roll like seas in northern breeze  
 Around the stormy Hebrides—  
 There the gorgeous clouds do fly,  
 Rustling everlastingly,  
 Through the terror-stricken sky,  
 Rolling like a waterfall  
 O'er th' horizon's fiery wall—  
 There the moon doth shine by night  
 With a most unsteady light—  
 There the sun doth reel by day  
 "Over the hills and far away."

THE VALLEY OF UNREST

(*Amer. Whig Review, April, 1845.*)

*Once it smiled a silent dell*  
 Where the people did not dwell;  
 They had gone unto the wars,  
 Trusting to the mild-eyed stars,  
 Nightly, from their azure towers,  
 To keep watch above the flowers  
 In the midst of which all day  
 The red sun-light lazily lay.  
*Now each visiter shall confess*  
 The sad valley's restlessness.  
 Nothing there is motionless—  
 Nothing save the airs that brood  
 Over the magic solitude.  
 Ah, by no wind are stirred those trees  
 That palpitate like the chill seas  
 Around the misty Hebrides!  
 Ah, by no wind those clouds are driven  
 That rustle through the unquiet Heaven  
 Unceasingly, from morn till even,  
 Over the violets there that lie  
 In myriad types of the human eye—  
 Over the lilies there that wave  
 And weep above a nameless grave!  
 They wave:—from out their fragrant  
 tops  
 Eternal dews come down in drops.  
 They weep:—from off their delicate  
 stems  
 Perennial tears descend in gems.  
 They wave; they weep; and the tears,  
 as they well  
 From the depth of each pallid lilly-bell  
 Give a trickle and a trinkle and a knell.

*Irene* was later rewritten and renamed *The Sleeper*. It contains much that could well have been omitted or humanized; also much that characterizes Poe at his best.

## IRENE

'Tis now (so sings the soaring moon)  
 Midnight in the sweet month of June,  
 When winged visions love to lie  
 Lazily upon beauty's eye,  
 Or worse—upon her brow to dance  
 In panoply of old romance,  
 Till thoughts and locks are left, alas!  
 A ne'er-to-be untangled mass.  
 An influence dewy, drowsy, dim,  
 Is dripping from that golden rim;  
 Grey towers are mouldering into rest,  
 Wrapping the fog about their breast:  
 Looking like Lethe, see! the lake  
 A conscious slumber seems to take,  
 And would not for the world awake:  
 The rosemary sleeps upon the grave—  
 The lilly lolls upon the wave—  
 And million bright pines to and fro,  
 Are rocking lullabies as they go,  
 To the lone oak that reels with bliss,  
 Nodding above the dim abyss.  
 All beauty sleeps: and lo! where lies  
 With casement open to the skies,  
 Irene, with her destinies!  
 Thus hums the moon within her ear,  
 "O lady sweet! how camest thou here?"  
 "Strange are thine eyelids—strange thy  
 dress  
 "And strange thy glorious length of  
 tress!  
 "Sure thou art come o'er far-off seas,  
 "A wonder to our desert trees!  
 "Some gentle wind hath brought it  
 right  
 "To open thy window to the night,  
 "And wanton airs from the tree-top,  
 "Laughingly thro' the lattice drop,  
 "And wave this crimson canopy,  
 "Like a banner o'er thy dreaming eye!  
 "Lady, awake! lady, awake!  
 "For the holy Jesus' sake!  
 "For strangely—fearfully in this hall  
 "My tinted shadows rise and fall!"  
 The lady sleeps: the *dead* all sleep—  
 At least as long as Love doth weep:  
 Entranc'd, the spirit loves to lie  
 As long as—tears on memory's eye:  
 But when a week or two go by,  
 And the light laughter chokes the sigh,  
 Indignant from the tomb doth take  
 Its way to some remember'd lake,  
 Where oft—in life—with friends—it  
 went  
 To bathe in the pure element,  
 And there, from the untrodden grass,  
 Wreathing for its transparent brow,  
 Those flowers that say (ah hear them  
 now!)

## THE SLEEPER

At midnight, in the month of June,  
 I stand beneath the mystic moon.  
 An opiate vapour, dewey, dim,  
 Exhales from out her golden rim,  
 And, softly dripping, drop by drop,  
 Upon the quiet mountain top,  
 Steals drowsily and musically  
 Into the universal valley.  
 The rosemary nods upon the grave;  
 The lilly lolls upon the wave;  
 Wrapping the fog about its breast,  
 The ruin moulders into rest;  
 Looking like Lethe, see! the lake  
 A conscious slumber seems to take,  
 And would not, for the world, awake.  
 All Beauty sleeps!—nd lo! where lies  
 (Her casement open to the skies)  
 Irene, with her destinies!  
 Oh, lady bright! can it be right—  
 This window open to the night?  
 The wanton airs, from the tree-top,  
 Laughingly through the lattice drop—  
 The bodiless airs, a wizard rout,  
 Flit through thy chamber in and out,  
 And wave the curtain canopy  
 So fitfully—so fearfully—  
 Above the closed and fringed lid  
 'Neath which thy slumb'ring soul lies  
 hid,  
 That, o'er the floor and down the wall,  
 Like ghosts the shadows rise and fall!  
 Oh, Lady dear, hast thou no fear?  
 Why and what art thou dreaming here?  
 Sure thou art come o'er far-off seas,  
 A wonder to these garden trees!  
 Strange is thy pallor! strange thy dress!  
 Strange, above all, thy length of tress,  
 And this all solemn silentness!  
 The lady sleeps! Oh, may her sleep,  
 Which is enduring, so be deep!  
 Heaven have her in its sacred keep!  
 This chamber changed for one more  
 holy,  
 This bed for one more melancholy,  
 I pray to God that she may lie  
 Forever with unopened eye,  
 While the dim sheeted ghosts go by!



To the night-winds as they pass,  
 "Ai! ai! alas!—alas!"  
 Pores for a moment, ere it go,  
 On the clear waters there that flow,  
 Then sinks within (weigh'd down by  
 wo)  
 Th' uncertain, shadowy heaven below.

The lady sleeps: oh! may her sleep  
 As it is lasting so be deep—  
 No icy worms about her creep:  
 I pray to God that she may lie  
 Forever with as calm an eye,  
 That chamber chang'd for one more  
 holy  
 That bed for one more melancholy.  
 Far in the forest, dim and old,  
 For her may some tall vault unfold,  
 Against whose sounding door she hath  
 thrown,  
 In childhood, many an idle stone—  
 Some tomb, which oft hath flung its  
 black  
 And vampyre-winged pannels back,  
 Flutt'ring triumphant o'er the palls  
 Of her old family funerals.

My love, she sleeps! Oh, may her sleep,  
 As it is lasting so be deep!  
 Soft may the worms about her creep!  
 Far in the forest, dim and old,  
 For her may some tall vault unfold—  
 Some vault that oft hath flung its black  
 And wing'd panels fluttering back,  
 Triumphant, o'er the crested palls,  
 Of her grand family funerals—  
 Some sepulchre, remote, alone,  
 Against whose portals she hath thrown  
 In childhood, many an idle stone—  
 Some tomb from out whose sounding  
 door  
 She ne'er shall force an echo more,  
 Thrilling to think, poor child of sin!  
 It was the dead who groaned within.

At all times these poems are rhythmical, and occasionally they are possessed of a sweetness and tenderness and of so delicate an ideality as strongly to affect us. The horrible and disagreeable ideas suggested are the result of a studied effort. They are not "the outpourings of a diseased brain poisoned by alcohol and opium," producing the macaber images so frequently indulged in by *Lauvrière*.

*Al Aaraaf* and *Tamerlane* were the only poems that were republished with their original titles. *Al Aaraaf* was given an entirely new opening stanza that was not in the first edition and was not retained in the definitive edition of 1845. The other changes were verbal and immaterial.

AL AARAAF (1829 Edition).

PART I

O! NOTHING earthly save the ray  
 (Thrown back from flowers) of beauty's  
 eye,  
 As in those gardens where the day  
 Springs from the gems of Circassy—  
 O! nothing earthly save the thrill  
 Of melody in woodland rill—  
 Or (music of the passion-hearted)  
 Joy's voice so peacefully departed

AL ARAAF (1831 Edition).

Part First

Mysterious star!  
 Thou wert my dream  
 All a long summer night—  
 Be now my theme!  
 By this clear stream,  
 Of thee will I write;  
 Meantime from afar  
 Bathe me in light!  
 (Thy world has\*) not the dross of ours,

\*Reading conjectural because of uninked type.

That like the murmur in the shell,  
 Its echo dwelleth and will dwell—  
 Oh, nothing of the dross of ours—  
 Yet all the beauty—all the flowers  
 That list our Love, and deck our  
     bowers—  
 Adorn yon world afar, afar—  
 The wandering star—  
 'Twas a sweet time for Nesace—for  
     there,  
 Her world lay lolling on the golden air,  
 Near four bright suns—a temporary  
     rest—  
 An oasis in desert of the blest.

Yet all the beauty—all the flowers  
 That list our love, or deck our bowers  
 In dreamy gardens, where do lie  
 Dreamy maidens all the day,  
 While the silver winds of Circassy  
 On violet couches faint away.  
 Little—oh! little dwells in thee  
 Like unto what on earth we see:  
 Beauty's eye is here the bluest  
 In the falsest and untruest—  
 On the sweetest air doth float  
 The most sad and solemn note—  
 If with thee be broken hearts,  
 Joy so peacefully departs,  
 That its echo still doth dwell,  
 Like the murmur in the shell.  
 Thou! Thy truest type of grief  
 Is the gently falling leaf—  
 Thou! thy framing is so holy  
 Sorrow is not melancholy.

The spelling "Araaf" is a misprint. Both in the table of contents and where elsewhere noted in this edition, the original spelling is given. Why Poe changed the ordinary spelling "Al Araf," which apparently is the Mohammedan name for Purgatory, a region midway between Heaven and Hell,—if my theological geography be correct—I do not know, unless it was so metamorphosed that it might seem in keeping with the rest of this poem: nor does there seem to have been any good reason for suppressing this version and restoring that of the first edition.

In lack of continuity of thought and in obscurity of its subject matter, it comported well with the rest of Al Araaf. It lacks the melodic rhythm and "that red drop of blood" which has given life to many of Poe's other poems, even where they were equally lacking in subject matter.

In *Tamerlane* several passages were inserted that, later, were omitted.

Despair, the fabled vampire-bat,  
 Hath long upon my bosom sat,  
 And I would rave, but that he flings  
 A calm from his unearthly wings.  
 I reach'd my home—what home? above,  
 My home—my hope—my early love,  
 Lonely, like me, the desert rose,  
 Bow'd down with its own glory grows.

were interjected at the end of the second stanza. For the eighth stanza, as here numbered, Poe introduced *The Lake*, originally published in the 1827 *Tamerlane*, though it contained the emendations adopted in the 1829 version. There were other insertions, one of special interest being a new rendition of stanza 22 already quoted. In this edition it is made to read:

XXIV

If my peace hath flown away  
 In a night—or in a day—  
 In a vision—or in none—  
 Is it, therefore, the less gone?  
 I was standing 'mid the roar  
 Of a wind beaten shore,  
 And I held within my hand  
 Some particles of sand—  
 How bright and yet to creep  
 Thro' my fingers to the deep!  
 My early hopes? no—they  
 Went gloriously away,  
 Like lightnings from the sky—  
 Why in the battle did not I?

All additions that I have enumerated were suppressed in the 1845 edition, and, except in a very few instances, the original readings were restored. I have made no effort to indicate all these changes, for this study undertakes to detail only such particular alterations and reconstructions as proved of personal interest to me, or that seemed of value as an indication of Poe's mental growth.

Harrison, in the notes appended to his "Virginia Poe" ("Poems" Vol. VII) has very fully and accurately indicated all emendations of the original text. I regard it as unfortunate that he did not more fully carry out his expressed purpose of exhibiting the growth of Poe's power of versification by publishing the poems as originally issued, instead of adopting the revisions Poe made twenty-five years later when he was in the zenith of his mental power.

Harrison explains:

These editions bring to the front the best poems and leave the earlier and inferior poems to the last. If the student of the poetry follow this order he is sensible of the anti-climax of such an arrangement. Moreover it furnishes no clue whatever to the developing powers of the artist and leaves the impression of waning rather than that of waxing talent. To obviate this . . . the poems are so arranged as to show Poe's growth and are here printed as nearly as possible in the order in which they were produced.

Had Harrison, in carrying out this most intelligent conception, printed the poems as they were originally published, and had he indicated in his notes the changes to which they were subjected, rather than the reverse, he would have made these emendations more understandable to the reader.

Nor can Harrison justly criticize Poe who naturally desired to exhibit these poems not as they were originally issued, but as they were altered after passing through the process of his artful craftsmanship and the trained understanding of his matured intellect. They rightly bear the imprint of his final judgment. Except as an elucidation of the development of Poe's genius, they should have been suppressed, although it is not to be expected that a writer will ignore the youthful work in which he once gloried, and on which he had rested his hope of immortality.

The second printing of these poems was made possible by subscriptions received from Poe's acquaintances at West Point. I assume that Poe had few friends among the cadets capable of appreciating his mental capacity, or of sympathizing with his poetical aspirations, and that the "Dear B—," to whom this prefatory letter was addressed, was a figment of Poe's imagination. At all events, the letter served the purpose of introducing his somewhat original views on the true aim of poetry to his larger audience.

This volume proved a disappointment to those who subscribed believing, as they did, that it would contain

some of the many personalities in which Poe had indulged in his characterization of those in command at West Point.

Harrison summarizes its reception:

They, supposing the volume to contain squibs and pasquinades, satires and jokes against the professors, were, it is said, egregiously disappointed on receiving the volume, to find it contained only—*Israfel, To Helen, Lenore, The Sleeper, The Valley of Unrest*, and other masterpieces!

Guffaws of amazement received this third venture of 'Gaffy' Poe, according to General Cullum.

Woodberry, quoting from General Magruder, further describes the circumstances attending its issuance, and the meagerness of Poe's reward.

The Cadets, especially from the South, generally subscribed at seventy-five cents a copy, which the superintendent allowed to be deducted from our pay. . . . The sum thus raised enabled him, I suppose, to save a small margin for his traveling expenses and necessities beyond the cost of publication. The book was not supplied to the subscribers until some time after he had left the Point. It was a miserable production mechanically, bound in green boards and printed on inferior paper. The subscription was not fully paid until the book was delivered, and I remember a general expression of indignation at the inferior quality and condition of the book.

That this volume was received with indignation and was treated contumeliously, and that it was scorned by its recipients, possibly explains the inscription I found on a fly-leaf of my own copy, evidently written by its indignant recipient:

*This book is a damn cheat—  
all that fills 124 pages could  
be compressed in 36*

*lie*

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This publication deserves Magruder's strictures. The paper used for printing was of the poorest quality, the type

was battered, and all its mechanical features show a most slovenly and careless production. It occasionally happens that the first letter, or even several words, failed of reproduction because of uninked type; such letters or words must be conjecturally supplied either by the context or by an indefinite type impression. The small sum of seventy-five cents, which was the charge originally made for this book of poems, does not represent its present value. Had our contemptuous youth been able to have restrained his indignation, and had laid aside this purchase, he could not have left a more valuable asset—at least on so small an investment. Possibly the boards that formed its original cover, and which at one time may have been green, can now be described only as drab. Time and careless handling have dealt harshly with its dilapidated exterior. Fortunately, no crushed levant morocco covering has been supplied.

For its acquirement, I am again indebted to Mr. Hill. Advertisements had failed, and no trace of a copy could be found. I had scrutinized the catalogs in a vain search, and, while their perusal had abundantly rewarded, this particular item still eluded me.

As a rule the bibliophile finds no hunt so exciting as that given by the catalog pursuit. I never receive one describing rare and old books—I read no others—without an expectant thrill, a hope that some long missed but eagerly sought title lies hidden in its pages; or perhaps I find some old friend, and immediately begin to compare with my own, condition, issue, binding and \$ mark; and when I find the price of one soaring, especially if its condition does not shame my own copy, it is balm to my heart. Bibliomaniacs are as confirmed gamblers as are those whose souls in time become identified with the "tickers", and whose heartbeats quicken or grow weak in unison with their click. Not that we are willing to sell, but we like to

feel, foolish as our mania may seem that, should we so desire, the sale would return us many-fold.

In late years there has arisen an ominous cloud which has obscured the peaceful and happy prospect, and which in time may pour on us a flood of uncalled-for speculation. A golden thread has been most skillfully woven into the musty woof of book-collecting, and our spiders have so spun their webs that escape may be difficult, and we may find ourselves helplessly enmeshed. Nor can it be said that this is altogether a modern development, for it has been attempted many times in the past years. There is a story current that, some fifty years ago, the head of one of our best known English firms was the possessor of two copies of the first Boccaccio. A third copy, supposed to be the only one that for years could come up for sale, the others being in permanent collections, had been announced for auction. Ordinarily a few guineas, fifty at most, was regarded as a fair price. When this dealer, without being forced, bid several hundred guineas, it was difficult to understand the "psychology" underlying his action. Later, when attempts were made to purchase one of these copies, it was found that a new price had been set by this monopolist. Some of our American dealers have so elaborated this method of book-inflation, and have so recklessly offered unheard-of prices, publicly to illustrate the futility of opposing them—although in the end they were made to pay high, or their customers were, which was a more serious matter—that this procedure has for the time being utterly demoralized "prices current," and book profiteering has become a recognized and legitimate venture more speculative than the "food-corners."

I have been told that the Hoe library, which was sold for nearly two million dollars, did not cost a quarter of that sum. Evidently this increase was partly due to the book-knowledge and marvelous discrimination of the col-

lector, and to the fact that, when a book was allowed entrance to his library, it was the most perfect of its kind. Occasionally it was unique, and such a collection could be found nowhere else. This careful selection entitled the collector to an enhancement of price, but the vast increase was not a necessary consequence of this painstaking care in collecting. I was present at certain of these sales—a guest of the lamented Livingston, on the night of the sale of the great Bible,—and the psychology of the bidders interested me as greatly as the books that were auctioned. The “madness of crowds” was evident. In the heat of competition the bids made were out of proportion to the value of the books offered, and could only be accounted for by mental contagion. Although a reaction has followed and, in many instances, the prices of certain books have never approached those at that time bid, the sale did set a new scale of values on many rare books there offered. This sale has been so thoroughly advertised that the public has become strongly impressed with the possibility of speculation in this new field, and certain dealers have so artfully cultivated public opinion that many individuals are now collecting, not because they are book-lovers, but in the hope of making a gain on their investment.

We may dream of finding bargains but, as a rule, they do not materialize, and we delude ourselves when we believe that some hoped for “find” is possible of realization. When a book once has passed through the hands of a book-loving dealer, a man whose whole life has been passed in the study of the outside; if not the inside of a book, who knows all about dates, binding, margins and the various issues (many first editions are not first issues, and frequently the first, for some good reason, is not the desirable copy), an amateur finds but meager pickings. Not infrequently it has happened that, when I believed I had found a bargain and had prided myself on some sharp



turn, I have had occasion to pay dearly for my ignorance. As a matter of fact ignorance in matters bookish is a crime—an excuse which no self-respecting bibliophile ever will offer. We should appear pleased, rub our bruised ego, adjust our lightened pocketbook, and pass it to the next. This is one of the recognized “amenities” of book-collecting and our chiefest amusement.

A collector's greatest pleasure, next to collecting, is watching for and noting the enormous gains he could harvest were he disposed to sell. The large crop of millionaires who have adopted book-collecting because of its supposed literary inoculation, or social distinction, or for other and good reasons, are giving unlimited orders to the book experts who collect for them. There is another, an unmentionable class, skilled in all book lore, that uses its knowledge for the purpose of gathering together all that is valuable, and unloading these collections in the auction houses. Stimulated by the hope of gain, these books continue to circulate, ever enhancing in price, and the end cannot be predicted. These classes, one feeding on the other, have so increased the old time book values that one can, without boasting, “point with pride” to the sum that might be obtained, did he wish to sell. “Did one wish to sell”, except some old, cut-down and rebound volume, recalling a vision of it as we remember its old time form, when it was fresh, crisp, and uncut in its original binding, is the true test of a bibliomaniac. Should ever I offer to part with some book I have apparently valued and housed, it will be well for the purchaser to be on his guard and to watch his step. Either there is another better preserved and ready to take its place, or there is concealed within its vitals a canker which has so eaten into my heart that the very thought and sight of it has grown unendurable. Those who really love books would as soon think of selling their children into slavery as to part with some treasured, loved, and oft-fondled volume,

unless they know that it will have tender care and loving consideration, and that it will be held, housed, and protected as its worth deserves.

It is not well for any collector, whatever the wealth he may possess, unduly to indulge in the catalog habit. After all, collecting is an indication of intellectual, rather than of financial capacity; no better index of the mental equation that every man possesses exists than a glance through, not his library, but the books that he treasures, and that he collects because they appeal to him.

These are *not*, necessarily, first editions, and but rarely are they expensive books; all books ever published, worth the reading, have been reproduced and are within the reach of those who love them, and who are willing to sacrifice some other self-indulgent habit to that of book collecting. The extreme to which this habit may lead is well called a "mania", and is as much an obsession to those afflicted with it as is any other mental peculiarity. Yet, when possessed and held within proper limits, its delights must be explored to be believed. Unfortunately, in time, our pampered tastes refuse other aliment, and when that stage is reached, when our game must be "rare" to be enjoyed, we do not find a great amount of literature that will satisfy. Occasionally we meet with a "Ballinger" whose book-loving heart beats responsive to our own; or some "Amenities of Book-collecting" may throw a glamor over our mania that raises it to the dignity of a profession.

When Mr. Newton exhibits some of his rare association books or other bibliographical treasures that produce in us a thirst that cannot be assuaged, and which engenders an appetite that cannot be satisfied, inducing a ptyalism that is embarrassing, he, doubtless unintentionally, commits a breach of the peace by exciting in us a desire to break certain of the Commandments. It is well that he particularizes only at a distance and through the medium of print.

Should ever I be given the privilege of personal inspection he ought to see to it that certain of the treasures he enumerates are kept in his safety vault or under guard. Surely though, from his numberless treasures, he would not miss a Kilmarnock Burns, or the "Songs of Innocence," and possibly he might not discover the absence of a certain drawing. I can sympathize with his appreciation of them, but I would give them as devoted care and, possibly because there are not so many upon which to lavish my love, even more undivided worship. To others he is welcome. He can keep his Dickens' with their curlicued signatures on his most exposed shelf. They would not disturb *my* dreams. But I wonder what he has of Thackeray, the Bighearted? Has he "The Snob," containing Thackeray's first literary essays and the Timbuctoo parody; or a "Flore et Zephyr" with the spindle-shanked legs; or one of those treasured books showing that Thackeray gave more of his time to drawing on the unprinted margin the images that welled up in his contemplative mind than he did to reading the printed page? Even though all listed may not be in Mr. Newton's individual possession, they belong to him morally, if not legally, and he enters the list as their champion—surely one worthy of encounter in a friendly bout. Unfortunately two or three, or for that matter very many that he mentions, if met, would completely unhorse me, and I would be vanquished because of my inability to oppose the slightest resistance to such syren blandishments. I would not be deaf to the "Songs of Innocence," and no amount of wax could obtund her enchanting music. I met her once. One glance convinced me that my "Job" and "Dante" required her sisterly presence, and many other of Blake's Visions cried aloud for the soothing lullaby to which she alone could give a proper rendition. She was beautifully hand colored—before this I had never been able to endure the sight of hand-painted ladies—and only

the financial stringency that would have enforced swimming the Atlantic and "counting" some three thousand miles of ties, prevented her acquirement. It is true that I had intended to stop all other collecting and to pursue her alone, but, since that time, speculators have so exaggerated the price that her pursuit seems useless. Nor have I remained true to my enchantress. In the years that have followed I have met with many other adventures—if not adventures—in book collecting, and my book loves are fickle.

Others mentioned have proved equally attractive and even more elusive. I met "Robinson Crusoe" once and was fast being overcome without putting up my usual fight when I discovered that this was the Huth copy, the first volume of which contained "aply" unmistakably misspelled, but the second volume was found to be imperfect. For this reason, and for a much lower price, I bought one with the proper spelling. Although I rejected the Crusoe on that ground, I must acknowledge that it would have found in my library many companions also "not quite," in spite of the vow I made many years ago.

There is *one* described that, were she in reach, I should never forego, however time might stale, or custom change, or age wither her. I refer to Thackeray's own conception of Becky Sharp's rejection of the "dixony," and the further fortunate fact that it was not Johnson's first.

Others mentioned excite in me no itching acquisitiveness, and against them I could "joust most doughtily." I want none of Newton's blue-stocking Thrale, whose sole reputation rests on the senile affection of an old man in his dotage,—even at his best not a thing of beauty or a writer I love, however I may admire his elephantine proportions, mentally and physically. Victoria, with her youthful flourishes, does not interest me; others, although respectable, will never have a place on my shelves.

Such statements as these are made only to illustrate the

fact that tastes, even in books, differ: if they did not, how we would tear and rend!

It is not difficult to understand why this small and badly printed volume of the second edition of Poe's poems, with its drab colored, although sound board binding, did not appeal to its original owner. It was not prepossessing and, even at the present time, if met with by one of the unknowing its reception would be no more cordial than that given to it by the outraged cadet. If the recipient had been properly advised, and had this volume been purchased at the suggestion of and through the profiteer, I fear that its time-stained and dilapidated cover would have been torn off, and that this little scare-crow would now rest in a jewelled binding; or that some hand tooled "creation" would have taken the place of the homely, hand-scarred, and ink besmudged face that I now regard so approvingly. At least its individuality remains and no non-descript covering conceals its imperfections. I have placed it among those other ill-clad members of its family that, so far as was possible, have retained their original covers. Not one of them is gorgeously bedecked, nor are any inclosed in a décolleté binding so cut down as to expose for adverse criticism the anatomy of construction, although in many instances the symmetry of their proportions is such that if fully exposed this fact would bring no blush of shame. A very few are so perfect that not even a fig-leaf, much less a calf's skin, shall cover their naked purity.

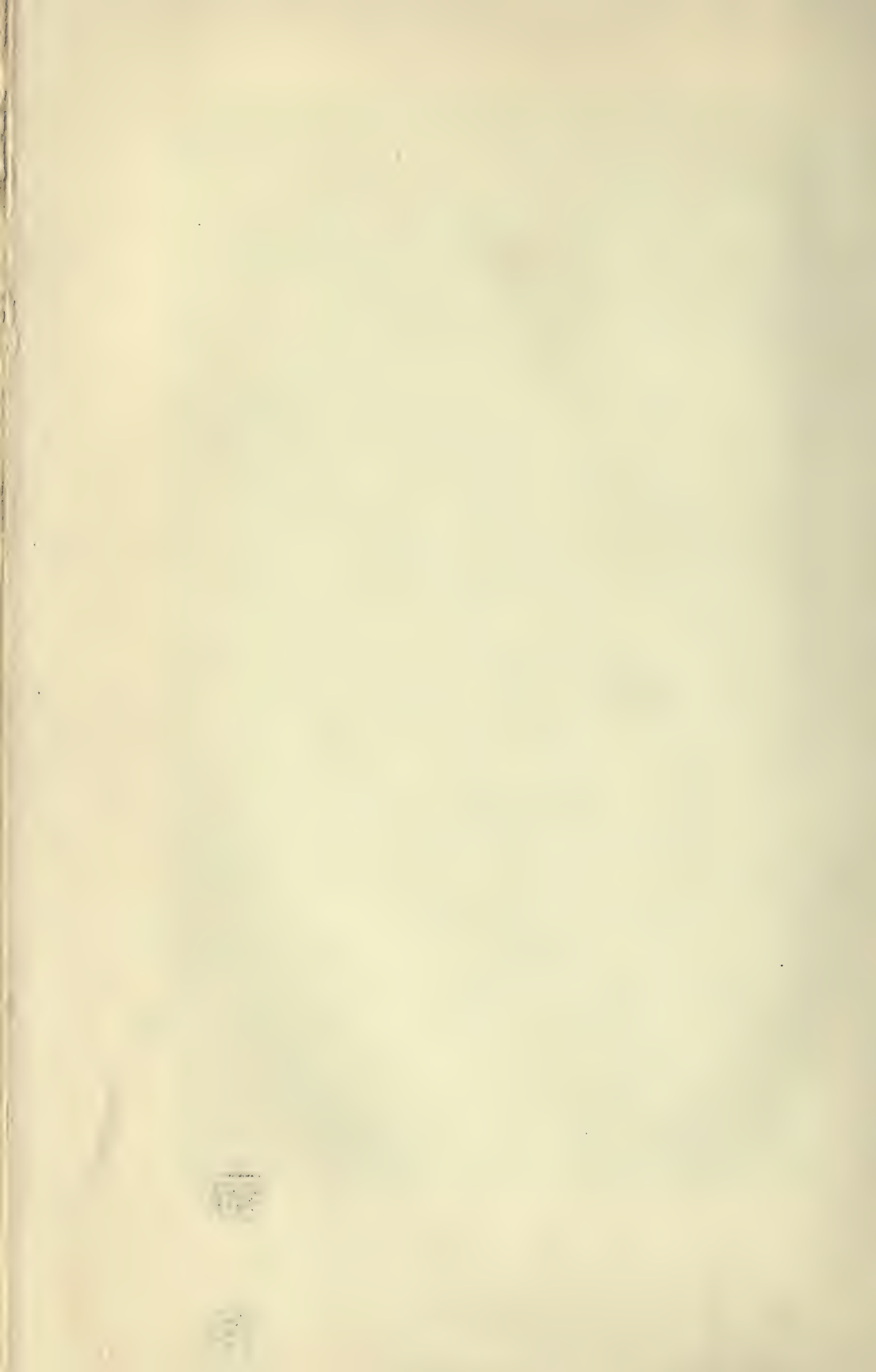
The addition of these poems was particularly welcome, for it resulted in practically reuniting the surviving members of a family that, at best, had never been fully assembled. Like their creator, they had been born in inhospitable climes and had grown up among unfriendly environments. So unacknowledged and anonymously had they been published that many received no christening greetings; so unannounced and unnoticed were they that

even their author could not name their birth places nor their birth days—like their progenitor they had been wanderers over the face of the earth, contumeliously man-handled. No tablet ever marked either their birthplaces or their temporary abodes. Out of such poverty and dire necessity did they spring that, twin-like, it is with difficulty that they can be distinguished, and some confusion has followed attempts to claim priority. All, to a greater or less degree, have been defaced by the hand of time; indifference, neglect and careless housing in their poverty stricken tenements have scarred their honest features. They deserved a kinder fate, but need no tribute as to their many and eminent merits. For many months they have occupied the seat of honor at my right hand, and they have been my constant companions. How long my fickle heart will hold them as its chiefest delight is not a matter of possible prognostication.

In reproducing their ill-clad and unadorned figures I am merely illustrating the frequently experienced apothegm that most lovable qualities and eminent merit may be hidden behind the roughest of exteriors, and that such books must be judged by their contents only. That the eldest of this group has been renounced and disowned does not mitigate the grief I feel for its absence: like Rachel I mourn and find little comfort in its reproduction. Rather than live with the pampered and legitimate heir, I would have preferred, like Hagar, to have wandered forth, everywhere seeking for the life-giving spring that saved Ishmael, and which, when found, must have proved so refreshing and invigorating as fully to have repaid the hardships of the desert search. However, that one should drink twice at this fountain, and monopolize its available source, is not a thing to be patiently borne.

The publication of the second edition could not have brought any financial reward, nor did it add to Poe's







literary reputation, although it deserved recognition as containing evidence of his developing genius. There was no Star that pointed, a beacon light, to its humble birth place, and there were no Wise Men to worship at this newly erected shrine.

The mystery as to Poe's means of existence, to the life he lived, and to the things he wrote, is not one that ever fully can be dissipated. It is doubtful that he again entered the army. To ordinary reasoning this would seem most improbable, knowing that twice he had been unable to become reconciled to military life. He might have visited Europe on sailing vessels, but the life of a sailor could have not been more congenial than was that of a soldier. He was without occupation and must have been strongly attracted by the profession of Letters. It is known that a portion of this transitional period—1831 to 1834—was spent in and around Richmond and Baltimore, and it is more than probable that he contributed to the contemporaneous magazines of those cities. Could these magazines be resurrected, and a list be found of the contributors, it is certain that many Poe contributions would be discovered. Whether or not this would prove a desirable consummation is a matter of serious doubt. Poe was most industrious in selecting and revising such work as, in his judgment, was worthy; and, as far as has been ascertained, everything he rejected proved the soundness of his judgment. Poe, 14-21, wrote much that we could wish had not been republished. We know that he did not confine his literary work to poetry, but that he wrote stories which he read to his friends. None of these very early stories, outside those contained in "The Folio Club," so far as is known, have been published. Probably neither the poems nor the tales can now be identified, the poems of this period bearing little resemblance to those on which his fame rests.

One story that appeared in "The Yankee" has attracted my particular notice; for it is so much better in construction and in the elaboration of its plot, as to bear no comparison to any other contribution in it. In addition, certain details are given that might be regarded as autobiographic. The experiences detailed are such as Poe might well have met with when he decamped from home and shipped for Europe. The meeting with an old friend, and the unlooked for denouement, characterizes Poe's method of treating the mysterious, and the marked originality of the plot, and occasionally the boyish and immature reflections, point to great capacity that had not yet achieved stability. I assume that, had Poe written it, he would sooner or later have recast it, and that some of its characters and characteristics would have been retained. It is so much better than any other story contained in this magazine, and it is so inferior to Poe at his best—but not at his worst, as in *The Scythe of Time*,—that its authorship is properly a matter for investigation. It is contained in the same issue as *The Skeleton Hand* and immediately follows; but, unlike the other contributions contained in this number, it bears not even an initialed signature.

Poe, aged twenty, might have tried his 'prentice hand, and it is possible that this may in time be shown to be his maiden effort: but all such speculations are at best untrustworthy and without any foundation of proof. This story, however, has intrinsic merit and a shadowy resemblance to Poe's characteristic style and to his penchant for the mysterious, on which he did so often dwell.

Of all the recent commentators on the early work, and especially on the early poetry of Poe, J. H. Whitty deserves especial recognition. While it is true that Poe could have best judged what he believed should be given to posterity, and while it is evident that he did collect all that had merit and should live, he reckoned without taking into

consideration the insatiable curiosity of his bibliographers. Many poems that he wished posterity to forget and which he refused to include in his collected work, have, nevertheless, been discovered; we recognize them as his offspring, even if they bear only the faintest resemblance to those children of his genius by which he desired to be known to coming generations.

One periodical, unknown to Woodberry and Harrison, called "The Saturday Courier," has been found, covering the year 1832, and containing five of Poe's stories, viz.: *Mergenstein*, *A Tale of Jerusalem*, *Duc de l'Omelette*, *A Decided Loss* (later known as *Loss of Breath*) and *Bon-Bon*, published with the title *The Bargain Lost*. None of these bore Poe's signature. Both *The Bargain Lost* and *Loss of Breath* are said markedly to differ from the tales later published under their newer titles. Two files of this date have been found and are now a part of historical collections in Wisconsin and Massachusetts. The original discovery was made by Professor Campbell of Texas. No complete file of the "Saturday Visiter" has been found. A unique bound volume for the year 1833 has been located by Professor French, and, though privately owned, its contents have been given careful study. Some discoveries have been made, and several new poems have been found that undoubtedly were written by Poe. It was this "Visiter" that offered the prize won by Poe, the publication of whose story established his reputation. What a complete file would have shown as to Poe's early work is problematical; such a discovery would be a matter of interest to students but could not materially enhance Poe's reputation.

I am indebted to Thomas Ollive Mabbott, our youngest and most enthusiastic Poe bibliographer, for the details of these recent discoveries, and for their verification by reason of his personal investigations.

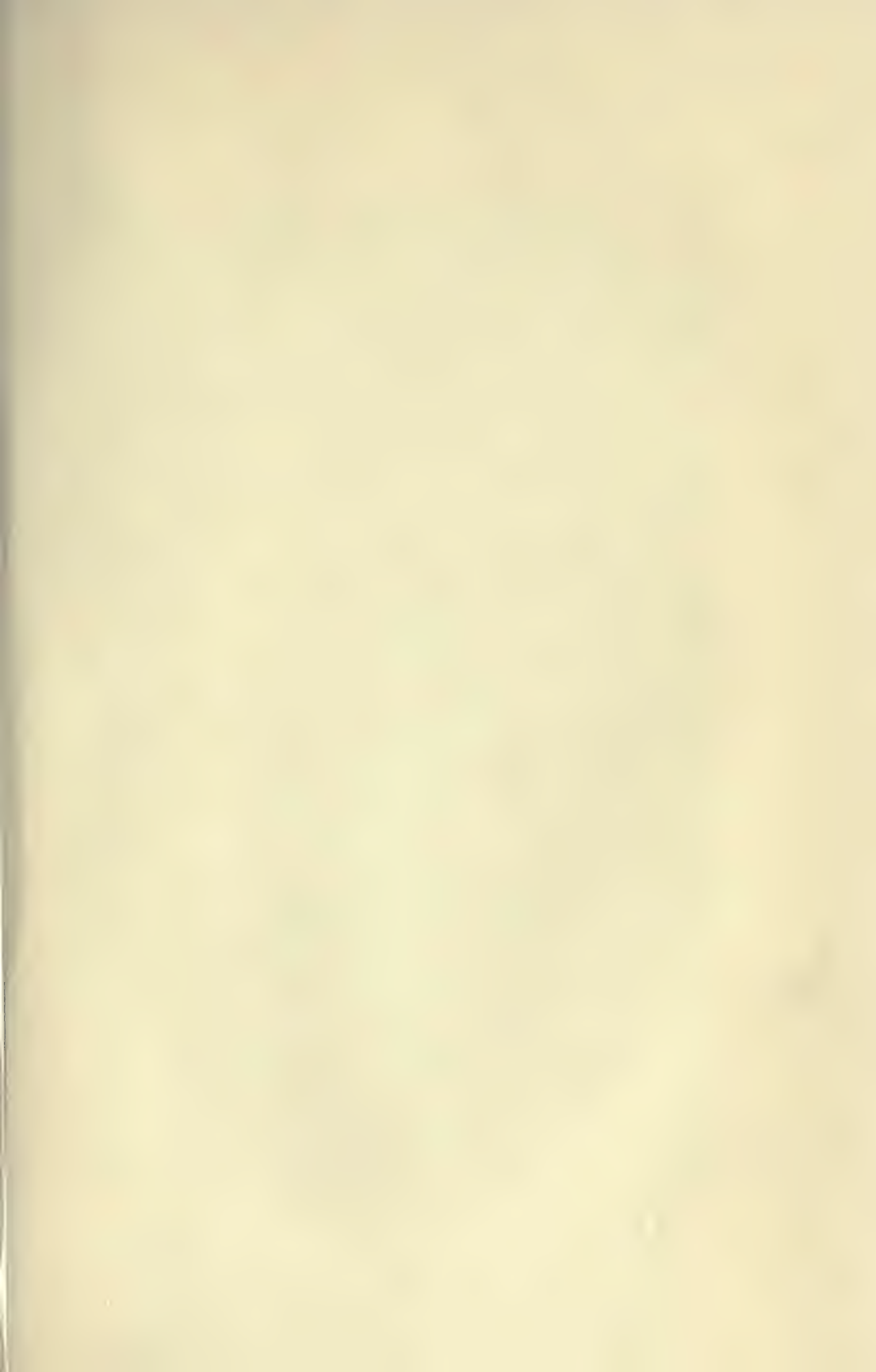
Whitty has added a number of poems to those already

accepted as specimens of Poe's early work, but none of these had the right to live because of any merit they possessed. Many of them were evidently "thrown off" without thought of future curiosity or preservation, and it is questionable to just what extent we have the right to play the part of "Resurrectors."

All of the poems so far identified have been republished in the latest edition of Poe's Poetical Works, edited by Whitty. They add nothing to Poe's reputation. Many of them are "doggerel", such as one unconsciously may scribble, or as absent-mindedly may be used to decorate a scrap of paper. These trifles are totally unworthy of preservation. They are brain children resulting from youthful folly that his mature judgment disowned, provided they were by any possibility recalled when poetry became with Poe a "passion." They cannot be considered legitimate specimens of his youthful poetry—a selection of which he carefully made. Yet so avaricious are we of all things relating to Poe that we cannot reject even these trifles. They are interesting *morceaux* in spite of the fact that, in no way, do they properly represent even his youthful work.

From these contributions, as well as from the testimony of friends that Poe made during these years, it seems probable that he passed the greater portion of his time in Richmond and Baltimore, and it is assumed that Allan partially financed him. At best his literary life must have been strenuous, and while there is no definite record as to his habits, they were not such as to attract unfavorable attention, or to cause serious comment among his friends. It is equally certain that there were periodical attacks which temporarily unfitted him for the ordinary routine of life.

Our first definite knowledge of Poe commences with his "discovery" by John H. Kennedy, whose writings were at one time quite the *vogue* among Southerners. A prize had been offered by the "Saturday Visiter" of Baltimore, and



THE SOUTHERN LITERARY MESSENGER,

DEVOTED TO EVERY DEPARTMENT OF LITERATURE

AND THE FINE ARTS.

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The LITERARY MESSENGER contains 32 pages, being 2 sheets to each number, the postage on which, according to law, is, for 100 miles and under, three cents; over 100 miles, five cents.

RICHMOND, VA:

T. W. WHITE, PRINTER AND PROPRIETOR.

1834.

Kennedy had been nominated one of the judges. So impressed was he by the stories contained in "The Folio Club", submitted for this prize, that he sought Poe's acquaintance and from the resulting association we have many details of Poe's life following his first literary achievement. It was through Kennedy that Poe became acquainted, and later associated with, T. W. White, "Printer and Proprietor" of "The Southern Literary Messenger."

THE SOUTHERN LITERARY MESSENGER: Devoted to Every Department of Literature and the Fine Arts. Richmond: T. W. White, Publisher and Proprietor.

Vol. I August to September, 1835 (13 numbers).

Vol. II December to November, 1836 (12 numbers).

Vol. III January to December, 1837.

Vol. (assorted) 1838 to 1848.

Vol. XV January to December, 1849.

In the first number published White lamented the "vassalage" of the South to the North. His effort to publish a representative magazine was an experiment.

It is understood that the first number of the 'Messenger' will be sent forth by its Publisher, as a kind of pioneer to spy out the land of literary promise, and report whether the same be fruitful or barren. . . . Hundreds of similar publications thrive and prosper north of the Potomac, sustained as they are by the liberal hand of patronage. *Shall not one be supported in the whole south?*

White believed that a medium for proper representation, and exploitation, of Southern literature and Southern writers, required such a magazine.

While we shall endeavor to render the 'Messenger' acceptable to all, it is more particularly our desire to give it as much as possible a *Southern* character with those of the region in which it has taken root.

While White was not a man of editorial capacity, and made no pretension to literary ability, he associated those with him who did possess these requisite qualifications. Apparently their services were contributed with the same

sectional enthusiasm that induced White to attempt the publication of this journal and that seemed to animate all who contributed to its success. James Heath was the acting editor of the early issues. It is probable that Poe's direct connection with the "Messenger" began in July, 1835.

In September he must have been in full charge for in the December issue White wrote:

The gentleman, referred to in the ninth number [May] of the Messenger, as filling its editorial chair, retired thence with the eleventh number; and the intellectual department of the paper is now under the conduct of the Proprietor, assisted by a gentleman of distinguished literary talents. Thus seconded, he is sanguine in the hope of rendering the second volume which the present number commences, *at least* as deserving of support as the former was: nay, if he reads aright the tokens which are given to him of the future, it teems with even richer banquets for his readers, than they have hitherto enjoyed at his board.

Apparently the "intellectual department" was satisfactorily conducted by Poe, and the "Messenger" flourished under his administration. At that time the circulation was said to have been about 700. When Poe left the journal sixteen months later this had increased to over 5000. However it was not a time of uninterrupted prosperity, nor was White altogether free from anxiety. We know that occasionally Poe was incapacitated to perform properly his duties, and that there were serious interruptions. In spite of these infrequent lapses Poe did much review writing. If he added to his store of poems and tales, there is no evidence of this fact. Even so, the "Messenger" furnished an excellent medium for exhibiting all the work that, at twenty-four, he had written. For this reason a detailed statement of all that Poe contributed to the "Messenger," during 1835-36, well illustrates and summarizes his literary accomplishments up to this date.

January, 1835: Review of "Poems, by William Cullen Bryant."

March: *Berenice—A Tale.*



April: *Morella—A Tale*. Review of "Confessions of a Poet."

Harrison, alone of Poe's biographers, has attempted a bibliography detailing the individual contributions of Poe to this magazine. Even the most cursory examination of the files of the "Messenger" shows careless tabulation on his part, yet as a whole his work is good in that it gives all of Poe's known contributions.

There may be uncertainty as to the authorship of the first reviews. In the early issues for 1835 there are many that Harrison assigns to Poe. He probably had good reason for his selection, possibly access to the "Messenger" records, but he does not state his authority.

May: *Lion-izing—A Tale*. By error, Harrison assigns this to the April number with the title "Some Passages in the Life of a Lion." In this case as in all others he denominates the story by its later name, not using the one under which it was originally published.

There are only three reviews for this month, all of which Harrison assigns to Poe. One of these is a full review of "Horse-Shoe Robinson." In it Poe attempts to repay the debt of gratitude he owed Kennedy, its writer.

June: *Hans Phaall—A Tale*. Harrison called this story "The Unparalleled Adventures of One Hans Phaal." Woodberry writes it "Pfaal."

During this time Poe lived in Baltimore and his association with the "Messenger" was through correspondence. It is probable that he took charge in July, or at least that he came to Richmond about that time and began his personal association with the "Messenger."

July: *The Visionary—A Tale*. From this time it is presumed that Poe was in charge of the "intellectual department." Harrison credits Poe with only three of the seven reviews contained in this issue of the "Messenger."

There also was published, for the first time, the poem

*To Mary*—"Poe's Mary." This poem bears some resemblance to a poem later published in Graham's, March, 1842, known as *To One Departed*. Neither of these have been since republished and I assume that their omission, when so much that is trashy and unworthy has been included, is due to an oversight.

## TO MARY

Mary, amid the cares—the woes  
 Crowding around my early path,  
 (Sad path, alas! where grows  
 Not ev'n one lonely rose,  
 My soul at least a solace hath  
 In dreams of thee, and therein knows  
 An Eden of sweet repose.  
 And thus thy memory is to me  
 Like some enchanted, far-off isle,  
 In some tumultuous sea—  
 Some lake beset as lake can be  
 With storms—but where, meanwhile,  
 Sunset skies continually  
 Just o'er that one bright island smile.  
 Seraph! thy memory is to me.

## TO ONE DEPARTED

Like some enchanted far-off isle  
 In some tumultuous sea  
 Some ocean vexed as it may be  
 With storms; but where meanwhile,  
 Serenest skies continually  
 Just o'er that one bright island smile  
 For mid the earnest cares and woes  
 That crowd around my earthly path  
 (Sad path, alas, where grows  
 Not even one lonely rose!)  
 My soul at least a solace hath  
 In dreams of thee; and therein knows  
 An Eden of bland repose.

*To F*— now included among Poe's poems, seems to be a composite of these two.

August: *Bon-Bon—A Tale*. In addition forty books are mentioned by title but the criticisms are so perfunctory as not to deserve consideration.

There appears in this issue an interesting article regarding the "Visiter" awards, inspired, if not written, by Poe.

As one or two of the criticisms in relation to the Tales of our contributor, Mr. Poe, have been directly at variance with those generally accepted, we take the liberty of inserting here an extract from a letter . . . which we find in the Baltimore Visiter. 'This paper having originally offered a premium for the best Prose Tale, and also one for the best Poem—both these premiums were awarded . . . to Mr. Poe. The award was, however, subsequently altered . . . in consideration of his having received the higher one. . . . Among the prose articles were many of various and distinguished merit; but the singular force and beauty of those sent by the author of the *Tales of the Folio Club* leave us no room for hesitation. We have accordingly awarded the premium to a Tale entitled *Ms. Found in a Bottle*. It would hardly be doing justice to the writer of this collection to say that the Tale we have chosen is the best of the six offered by him. . . . These tales are eminently distinguished by a wild, vigorous, and poetical imagination.'

We presume this letter must set the question at rest. *Lionizing* is one of the Tales here spoken of—*The Visionary* is another. The *Tales of the Folio Club* are sixteen in all, and we believe it is the author's intention to publish them all in the autumn.

*The Coliseum* was republished and was further designated "A Prize Poem," Poe apparently taking the will for the deed.

This August number also contained *To Sarah*, which Whitty assigns to Poe. This poem is signed "Sylvio" and contains nothing characteristic of Poe. It states:

The silvery streamlet gurgling on,  
 The mock-bird chirping on the thorn,  
 Remind me, love, of thee  
 They seem to whisper thoughts of love,  
 As thou didst when the stars above  
 Witnessed thy vows to me;—  
 The gentle zephyr floating by,  
 In chorus to my pensive sigh,  
 Recalls the hour of bliss,  
 When from thy balmy lips I drew  
 Fragrance as sweet as *Hermia's* dew,  
 And left the first fond kiss.

If these lines be Poe's, they were written during a period of irresponsibility. Could this assignment be authenticated, and Whitty undoubtedly has proof, this same unfortunate seizure would also account for the paucity of Poe's criticisms. I find an indicial reference to this poem stating that it is a rendition of "Sappho's Ode 'To the Beloved Fair', a stanza of it in Sarah—Lines to."

September: *Loss of Breath*. This, by a sub-title, is designated "A Tale a la Blackwood." Judging by the contents of this story, Poe did not have an exalted opinion of the excellencies of the Blackwood tales. That number also contained the lines written to "Eliza," but this was so closely paraphrased by that now known *To F— O—*, as not to deserve repetition.

There are seven reviews, all by Poe. They show careful study and critical ability.

This September issue completed Volume I, which consisted of thirteen numbers. For some reason that I do not know, there was no issue in October or November. The first number of Volume II was published in December, 1835, but in it no reference was made to this omission. For the first time White announced that "a gentleman of distinguished talents" had been associated with him in the "intellectual department", although he mentions no name. Poe in reality had been actively connected with the "Messenger" for several months and deserved fuller recognition of the work he had contributed.

Vol. II, commencing with December, is essentially the individual work of Poe. He wrote all the reviews and criticisms, nearly one hundred in number, republished many of his poems and a few of his tales and contributed much fresh material. He undertook this new campaign with a full quiver, and he shot with such accuracy that he pierced many inflated reputations of overpraised writers. Though their work made a fair target for his sharp-pointed and occasionally envenomed arrows, unfortunately by reason of such criticisms he raised a host of enemies whom later he had to meet in his metropolitan struggle for existence.

December: *Scenes from an Unpublished Drama, Part I.* This was later republished with the added title "Politian." For some unknown reason, Poe republished—its third appearance—*MS. Found in a Bottle*. Of the sixty-eight pages included in this magazine twenty-eight were devoted to criticisms, a few brief, the majority full reviews. For the first time the vitriolic character of Poe's onslaughts was in evidence. In his review of "Norman Leslie," a novel written by T. S. Fay, one of the editors of "The New York Mirror," he indulged in bitter comment and fierce denunciation which were uncalled for, however bad the story.

Well!—here we have it! This is *the* book—the book *par excellence*—the book bebuffed, beplastered, and be-Mirrored: the book 'attributed to' Mr. Blank, and 'said to be from the pen of' Mr. Asterisk: the book which has been 'about to appear'—'in press'—'in progress'—'in preparation'—and 'forthcoming': the book 'graphic' in anticipation—'talented' *a priori*—and God knows what *in prospectu*. For the sake of everything puffed, puffing, and puffable, let us take a peep at its contents.

This tirade of critical comment was followed by a scathing eight-column analysis of the story. It was a new procedure, a form of literary castigation that must deeply have wounded the author.

Harrison adds another review—Latrobe's "Rambler in North America"—as belonging to December. This was not published till January, 1836.

January: This issue contained the second and concluding *Scenes From An Unpublished Drama*. Another of his Folio tales, *Metzengerstein, A Tale in Imitation of the German*, was published, and the reviews, nine in number, were all made with painstaking care. In the first of these Poe included the combined poetry of Mrs. Sigourney, Miss Gould and Mrs. Ellet, in one criticism—an extended notice of eleven columns. As a rule the amount of space covered is no criterion of the labor expended, or of the value of a criticism: in the case of Poe it is a fairly accurate index. He wasted neither space nor labor. While treating his subjects with the chivalry such poetesses inspire, whatever be their sins of commission, Poe very elaborately summarizes their various demerits. If he put on the mask of flattery it fell when he formulated his conclusions. Only in his criticisms of Mrs. Osgood did the heart dominate the head.

In the *Paeon*, which was republished, the ninth stanza was omitted, and the eighth, tenth, and eleventh were elaborately emended, though they did not approximate those changes made when it was transformed into *Lenore*.

February: A tale, *The Duc De L'Omelette*, is all that Poe contributed to the reading columns, unless a translation

from the French, named "The Cousin of the Married" be his. It bears more resemblance to an original contribution than to a translation. However, to attribute to Poe whatever in the "Messenger" that is above mediocre, is absurd; even the style of Poe is not so characteristic that one can with any certainty select. There is one of these critical reviews, among the ten which appear in this issue, that is unmistakable. It is a long and painstaking dissection of "Paul Ulric."

These two volumes are by Morris Mattson, Esq., of Philadelphia, and we presume that Mr. Mattson is a very young man. Be this as it may, when we called 'Norman Leslie' the silliest book in the world we had certainly never seen 'Paul Ulric.' *One* sentence in the latter, however, is worthy of our serious attention. 'We want a few faithful laborers in the vineyard of literature, to root out the noxious weeds which infest it.'

In itself the book before us is too purely imbecile to merit an extended critique—but as a portion of our daily literary food—as an American work published by the Harpers—as one of the class of absurdities with an inundation of which our country is grievously threatened—we shall have no hesitation, and shall spare no pains, in exposing fully before the public eye its four hundred and forty-three pages of utter folly, bombast, and inanity.

Fourteen columns galvanize this long forgotten production into a temporary resuscitation that gives it the similitude of life. It comes as a ghostly skeleton whose bones Poe rattles so artfully that he accentuates the cachination of his sardonic laughter. As it has utterly disappeared, comparison with the original is not possible; but, preserved very much as Bierce embedded his "Black Beetles in Amber," it lives in memory because of Poe's characterization.

Another article well worth perusal is Poe's personal tribute to the memory of Chief Justice Marshall, whom Poe, as a boy, had known and loved. While given as a review of orations and eulogies on Marshall's public life, it is in fact a short and most appreciative biographical sketch, covering twenty-two columns.

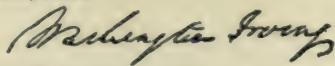
There also appeared in this February number, the first of

Poe's articles on *Autography*. These consisted of a series of letters to which were attached facsimile reproductions of genuine signatures. Each letter was so characteristic of the writer, the style of whom it was intended to imitate, that several who were quoted wrote protesting that, according to their best memory, they had never written the letters attributed to them. These were not caricatures in the manner of Thackeray and Harte; they were decidedly brief characterizations in the style Poe later adopted for his *Marginalia* and *Literati*. At the same time they were droll in their affectation of certain peculiarities of style, and especially of the verbosity and redundancy which in those days writers cultivated. Occasionally only the signature was reproduced, and from the idiosyncrasy of letter formation, Poe pretended to interpret and judge the capacity and peculiarity of style that characterized the writer.

LETTER XI.

*New York, ———.*  
 My Dear Sir,—I must be pardoned for refusing your request touching your MS. "Treatise on Figs." I was obliged, some years ago, to come to the resolution not to express opinions of works sent to me. A candid opinion of those whose merit seemed to me small, gave offence, and I found it the best way to avoid a judgment in any case. I hope this will be satisfactory.

I am, my Dear Sir, very respectfully yours,



JOSEPH L. MILLER, Esq.

<p>Mr. Irving's hand writing is common-place. There is nothing indicative of genius about it. Neither could any one suspect, from such penmanship, a high finish in the author's compositions. This style of writing is more frequently met with than any other. It is a very usual clerk's hand—scratchy and tapering in appear-</p>	<p>ance, showing (strange to say)—an eye deficient in a due sense of the picturesque. There may be something, however, in the circumstance that the epistle to Mr. Miller is evidently written in a desperate hurry. Paper very indifferent, and watered.</p>
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March: Except that this issue contained *Epimanes* there was nothing of interest, either as it related to Poe or other contributors. *To Helen* again makes its appearance, without emendations. Of the five reviews, four are negligible; only one, "Georgia Scenes," a book that remains a popular contribution to the *mores* of the Southern "Cracker," received adequate and appreciative notice.

April: *A Tale of Jerusalem* is the last of the "Tales of

the Folio Club" to appear in the "Messenger." It completed the series, so far as this particular journal was concerned. When Poe first tendered his tales for the "Visiter" prize they were six in number, viz.: *MS. Found in a Bottle*, *Berenice*, *Morella*, *Lionizing*, *Hans Phaall* and *The Visionary*. In addition to these, ten tales had been prepared for publication, but were rejected by Carey and Lea. Fourteen had now been published either in the "Messenger" or other journals, and *Siope* remained unpublished, though it had been submitted to Miss Leslie for the 1836 Gift. The sixteenth tale is said, by Woodberry, to have been *Ligeia*; by others, *A Descent into the Maelstrom*. This latter, published in Graham's several years later, like other of Poe's poems and tales, may have been held in reserve. The really noticeable fact is that Poe had written the great majority of these tales and poems, which constitute the foundation of his reputation, before he was twenty-four; and that all those he reproduced in the "Messenger" were written before his connection with it. This, necessarily, does not hold true of his critical work. It is to be noted that during this time all of his early literary efforts were devoted to the field of criticism. It is possible that Poe wrote much that was later republished in other journals.

I do not particularize the succeeding numbers for 1836. Poe's reviews have been tabulated by Harrison; and, while a few inaccuracies are to be noted, no attempt will be made at correction. In the succeeding months of this year there were no further literary contributions, except that, in August, *Pinakidia* was published. This is composed of pithy critical aphorisms borrowed from well-known writers; in it, he draws attention to various plagiarisms and adaptations of popular quotations. His criticisms were neither so elaborate nor so numerous as in the earlier numbers.



One is strongly tempted to attribute to Poe many of the best selections contained in the "Messenger," even where his peculiar style is only slightly in evidence. While to point out these is at times irresistible, the suggestion that they were contributed by Poe comes from the heart, and is not a matter of judgment. In the January, 1835, issue there is a story called "The Doom" which impressed White so unfavorably that, in his particular column, it called forth a protest against the "wild and incredible;" and, after his usual manner, he moralizes on "wickedness meeting with its just award:" even on him its literary merit seems to have made such an impression as to allow its publication—with apologies and explanations. In construction and narrative, *The Doom* is worthy of Poe and without any very great stretch of the probabilities it might well be an idealization of his love episode with Miss Royster. White protested that the writer of this story "should have drawn the mantle of oblivion over his dark frailties." He also declaimed against a tendency to "profane and unchaste allusions," assuring his readers "that the 'Messenger' shall not be the vehicle of sentiments at war with the interests of virtue and sound morals—the only true and solid foundation of human happiness." White by no means approved of Poe's stories, and in his "Editorial Remarks" on *Morella*, he regrets that Poe "has drank so deep at some enchanted fountain, which seems to blend in his fancy the shadows of the tomb with the clouds and sunshine of life."

Several papers entitled "Essays on English Poetry," unsigned, might well be the work of Poe, and an essay on "Genius," in the April, 1836, "Messenger," shows evidence of an extremely clever summarization of the subject—certainly not one that required any editorial apology. Yet Poe inserted a note protesting against being held "responsible for the opinions of his contributors."

Poe did the same thing when, without his signature, he

republished in July, 1836, the preface to his 1831 poems, *Letter to B—*, with a similar note denying responsibility. "They have vigor and originality—but of course we shall not be called upon to endorse the writer's opinions." Neither essay required such an apology; as far as I know, they are the only articles in the "Messenger" thus editorially noticed. Had the similarity ended with these notes the suggestion here made would be the merest guess; in addition, both papers dealt with the definition of poetry and contained equally pronounced ideas as to its true object.

Another paper by Poe, worthy of special mention, was *Maelzel's Chess-player*. In this he discussed the explanations which had been made by Sir David Brewster and others regarding this automaton with human intelligence. In discussing the various theories that had been advanced, Poe gave evidence of his powers of analytical reasoning.

There are two series of contributions that appeared in this journal which serve to render its pages somewhat humorous. One of these was the column of "Editorial Remarks" before alluded to, and which constituted White's entire contributions. The other was that of his daughter Eliza, to whom Poe had addressed the album verse. She not only composed poems, but saw to it that they were published. Her contributions were usually Odes to Spring or concerned other meteorological phenomena. The heart shared in her moods, for she dealt largely with the emotions. She exhibited familiarity with all meters, and she ran the gamut of all possible rhymes, yet one of her most successful poems was that one in which she made use of neither. She called it *The Broken Heart*.

—yet did they soon discover  
 The rosy tinge upon her youthful cheek  
 Concentrate all her radiance into one  
 Untimely spot, and her too delicate frame  
 Wither away beneath the false one's power.  
 But lovelier yet, and brighter still she grew

Though death was near at hand—as the moon looks  
Most lovely as she sinks within the sea.  
Her fond devoted parents watch with care  
The fatal enemy: friends and physicians  
Exert their skill most faithfully.

That the effort to restore Eliza was successful, is evident. She lived many years and when in her seventies she detailed some interesting Poe reminiscences.

Although much of Poe's notable literary work had appeared in the "Messenger," neither his tales nor his poems received particular notice in the columns of the metropolitan journals. Poe's gibes and stings forced recognition where his stories failed. These criticisms could not fail seriously to wound the vanity of budding authors and unfledged poets, and they laid the foundation of bitter personal enmities. Poe especially enjoyed flinging sarcasms at those he delighted in calling "The Frogpondians," and they retorted in kind. The adverse criticisms of Henry James, our transplanted transcendentalist, were made notable because of Shaw's sarcastic flings in answer. Emerson's reference to Poe's "jingling verses" are not forgotten and they may become the measure by which generations to come will judge Emerson's critical ability. Nor can all of Poe's critical reviews be judged by the same high standard. His capacity as a critic was only exhibited on those subjects with which he possessed personal familiarity.

Poe unhesitatingly gave reverence where reverence was due. In spite of the abnormal state which late in his life gave rise to the "Longfellow war," Poe's known appreciation of Longfellow's poetry must not be forgotten, and his full reviews of Bryant, and of Miss Barrett and Tennyson, is evidence of his capacity for discriminating criticism.

Although Poe's connection with the "Messenger" was so brilliant a period in his own literary life, and although it brought such substantial gain in circulation to this journal, it suddenly came to a close in February, 1837. This was

unquestionably due to the irregular life Poe led, and to the fact that he could not long continue in the drudgery of office work, nor could he patiently bear the grind of daily toil. Pegasus hitched to a plow never pulled well.



*A marginal sketch by Thackeray illustrating Schiller's poem "Pegasus im Joch."*

The January number had seemed to show a recrudescence of Poe's genius. In addition to the first installment of *Pym*, it contained two poems, *A Ballad*, and *To Zante*. In a review of Bryant, to whom he gave eighteen columns, Poe made an elaborate and comprehensive study such as it is a pleasure to record. Although he found much to discuss, if not criticise, the fairness of his estimate at the time it was given cannot be questioned, and his summarization is now held to be true.

Therefore, could we consider the mere enjoyment of the beautiful when perceived, or even this enjoyment when combined with the readiest and truest perceptions and discriminations in regard to beauty presented, as a sufficient test of the poetical sentiment, we could have no hesitation in awarding to Mr. Bryant the very highest poetical rank. But something more, we have elsewhere presumed to say, is demanded. Just above, we spoke of 'objects in the moral or physical universe coming within the periphery of his vision.' . . . Judging Mr. Bryant in this manner, and by a *general* estimate of the volume before us, we should, of course, pause long before assigning him a place with the spiritual Shelleys, or Coleridges, or Wordsworths, or with Keats, or even Tennyson, or Wilson, or with some other burning lights of our own day, to be valued in a day to come. . . . Between Cowper and Young, perhaps, would be the post to assign

him. Even in this view he has a juster appreciation of the beautiful than the one, of the sublime than the other. . . . In regard to his proper rank among American poets there should be no question. Few, at least few who are fairly before the public, have more than very shallow claims to a rivalry with the author of 'Thanatopsis.'

Five other reviews for this month exhibit careful reading. No definite explanation was made for Poe's resignation from the "Messenger" further than an explanatory note.

Mr. Poe's attention being called in another direction, he will decline with the present number, the Editorial duties of the 'Messenger.' His critical notices for the month end with Professor Anthon's Cicero—what follows is from another hand. With the best wishes to the Magazine, and to its few foes as well as to its many friends, he is now desirous of bidding all parties a peaceful farewell.

This is the first of those valedictories that mark the repeated failures in his journalistic life. That it was not altogether voluntary is evident. That it was desired by White can only be accounted for because of his inability to depend on Poe's steadiness of purpose, and not because of any lack of ability shown in the work assigned him. Poe left his story, *Arthur Gordon Pym*, in an unfinished state and made no attempt at this time to complete it; evidently some very definite break had occurred.

The completion of *Pym* was delayed for a year, and it was then published simultaneously in New York and in London.

The English edition differs from the American not only in its title page but also in size, the number of pages, and the quantity of reading matter. The last entry is that of March 21st. Why the entry of March 22d was omitted is not understandable. This entry carries the events a day further, and dangers grow more threatening by the introduction of a "shrouded human figure", complicating, but in no way elucidating, the *denouement* of the plot.

Woodberry, in giving a bibliographical description of this book, has made peculiar errors. In quoting the title page, he makes one omission and six mistakes. He sub-

stituted for the name of the ship "Guy," Grey. He omitted the date "in the month of June, 1827." He misspelled "survivors" and "farther,"—assuming that Poe had correctly spelled them—and he changed the punctuation. He also failed in properly naming the number of pages. Knowing that Woodberry occasionally depended on Griswold for those facts in his biography which show misinformation, I turned to the memoir of Griswold in the preface to the *Literati*, and found that my surmise was correct. In vindication of Woodberry, and of his extreme accuracy as a copyist, I can further say that his reproduction of Griswold's description was letter perfect, even to the capitalization of certain outstanding words composing the title page—a thing necessarily arbitrary. In the discussion of this book, Woodberry takes his usual stand as a critic of Poe.

The narrative is circumstantial and might well seem plausible to the unreflecting and credulous, although there are a few slips. . . . Its credibility, however, is not so strange, nor the realistic art so ingenious, as might be thought, since portions of it are either suggested from other lately printed books, such as Irving's "Astoria," or directly compiled (the detailed account of the South Seas is taken almost textually from Morell's "Voyages") by the easy process of close paraphrase.

While the basis of this opinion might not have been "prejudice," it certainly was not based on a personal inspection and examination of Morrell: it must have been the result of hearsay evidence. This is not a fair statement of the facts, and the most casual examination of the two books shows that it is without foundation. For reasons that I personally found to be good, such a comparison was most difficult. I could find no trace of Morell nor could I find his name in our *Californiana*: search of all available lists or bibliographies gave me no evidence that such a book had ever been published. None of the authorities I consulted knew of such a title, and its existence became

THE NARRATIVE  
OF  
ARTHUR GORDON PYM,  
OF NANTUCKET.

COMPRISING THE DETAILS OF A MUTINY AND ATROCIOUS REVENGE  
ON BOARD THE AMERICAN SHIP ELEANOR, ON HER WAY TO  
THE SOUTH SEAS, IN THE MONTH OF JUNE, 1827,  
WITH AN ACCOUNT OF THE RESCUE OF THE VESSEL BY THE  
SEIZURES; THEIR SHIPWRECK AND SUBSEQUENT MISERIES;  
SUFFERINGS FROM FAHINE; THEIR DELIVERANCE BY  
MEANS OF THE BRITISH SLOOPOFER JANE GUY; THE  
SALE OF GORDON OF THIS LATTER VESSEL, IN THE  
ANTARCTIC OCEAN; HER CAPTURE, AND THE  
MISADVENTURE OF HER CREW AMONG A  
GROUP OF ISLANDS IN THE  
EIGHTY-FOURTH PARALLEL OF SOUTHERN LATITUDE;  
POSTERS WITH THE INCREDIBLE ADVENTURES AND  
DISCOVERIES  
STILL FARTHER SOUTH  
TO WHICH THAT INTERESTING CLAIMANT GAVE LIFE.

NEW-YORK:  
HARPER & BROTHERS, 32 CLIFF-ST.  
1838.

THE NARRATIVE  
OF  
ARTHUR GORDON PYM,  
OF NANTUCKET, NORTH AMERICA:

COMPRISING THE DETAILS OF A MUTINY, FAMINE,  
AND SHIPWRECK,  
DURING A VOYAGE TO THE SOUTH SEAS;  
RESULTING IN VARIOUS  
EXTRAORDINARY ADVENTURES  
AND  
DISCOVERIES  
IN THE  
EIGHTY-FOURTH PARALLEL OF SOUTHERN LATITUDE.

LONDON:  
WILEY AND PUTNAM, 67, PATERNOSTER ROW;  
WHITTAKER AND CO., AND CHARLES TIL.  
[PRINTED AT GRIFFITHS' HALL.]  
1838.

doubtful. Finally it occurred to me to look up in "Pym" Poe's own reference to this writer. There I found that the name was not "Morell" but "Morrell"—a slight change that identified the sought for book as one that had been published as described and spelled by Poe. Its acquirement was a more difficult matter. My nearest approach was:

SCENES, INCIDENTS AND ADVENTURES IN THE PACIFIC OCEAN, or the Islands of the Australian Sea during the cruise of the Clipper Margaret Oakley, under the Command of Capt. Benjamin Morrell. Clearing up the mystery which has heretofore surrounded this famous expedition, and containing a full account of the exploration of the Bidera, Papua, Banda, Mindoro, Sooloo, and China Seas, the manners and customs of the Inhabitants of the Islands, and a description of the vast regions never before visited by Civilized Man."

This book was written by Thomas Jefferson Jacobs, and definitely established that to which before I had only found an unsatisfactory reference. Diligent search was finally rewarded, and I secured not only the original work of Morrell, but also that of his wife, who had accompanied him on one of these voyages. She not only corroborated many of the incidents related by Captain Morrell, but further, and minutely, discussed the sentiments called forth by her husband's love for her, and his consideration in marrying her and taking her with him on this voyage; also her pursuit by those in whose charge her husband had left her and who should have protected her, the whole interspersed with observations and deductions drawn from the experiences of extensive travel on a receptive mind. In the matter of sentiment, the assertion of patriotic motives, and a highly developed moral and religious code, Captain Morrell set her a prolix example, not in all ways borne out by the statements of Jacobs.



Morrell's "Narrative" read:

A NARRATIVE OF FOUR VOYAGES, To the South Sea, North and South Pacific Ocean, Chinese Sea, Ethiopic and Southern Atlantic Ocean, Indian and Antarctic Ocean. From the year 1822 to 1831. Comprising critical surveys of Coasts and Islands, With Sailing Directions. And an Account of Some new and valuable discoveries, including the Massacre Islands, where thirteen of the Author's Crew were Massacred and eaten by Cannibals. To which is prefixed A Brief Sketch of the Author's Early Life. By Capt. Benjamin Morrell, Jun. New York: Harper & Brothers, Cliff Street, 1832.

This book was dedicated to the "Hon. Levi Woodbury, Secretary U. S. Navy."

These three books entirely exculpate Poe from either servilely copying Morrell, or paraphrasing him. No incident related bears the slightest resemblance to the dangers, sufferings, horrors and mutinies to which Pym was subjected, further than the fact that Captain Morrell lost a few men in his attempt to establish a trading station. He lost no ship and had, outside his one misfortune, no exciting adventures. Being a man of scientific mind Captain Morrell did make and relate certain zoölogical observations that Poe copied, and also mentioned other details, geographical and historical. Poe refers to these voyages of Morrell's, repeatedly quoting statements, and he makes no effort to conceal their source. Occasionally he paraphrases and judiciously condenses the somewhat verbose descriptions of Morrell, as when he describes the nesting penguins and albatross. Neither in conception, narrative, plot, nor action, does the voyage of Pym bear the slightest resemblance to those of Morrell. In addition, Poe quotes the narratives of Captain Cook and of other captains who sailed these seas.

Poe made use of their reports for his historical, zoölogical, and geographical facts, and freely acknowledged his

indebtedness. As far as I can judge his inventions were original. He enumerated numberless horrors: starvation, confinement in a rat-infested hole in the bottom of the ship, a fight with a mad-dog and with men more brutal, the shipwreck with its accompanying hardships, the approaching rescue ship of death with the horrors it contained, and other occurrences equally exciting, revolting and overwhelming.

Looking toward Augustus, I perceived that he had become at once deadly pale, and that his lips were quivering in the most singular and unaccountable manner. Greatly alarmed, I took notice of his eyes, which were glaring at some object behind me. I turned my head and shall never forget the ecstatic joy that thrilled through every particle of my frame, when I perceived a large brig bearing down on us. . . . The vessel in sight was evidently a large hermaphrodite brig of a Dutch build . . . and had suffered much in the gale which had proved so disastrous to us. . . . The awkward manner in which she sailed was remarked by us. She yawed about so considerably, that once or twice we thought it impossible she could see us. Upon each of these occasions we screamed and shouted at the top of our voices, when the stranger would appear for a moment to change her intention, and again hold to us. No person was seen upon the decks until she arrived in about a quarter of a mile of us. We then saw three seamen, whom by their dress we took to be Hollanders. Two of these were lying on some old sails near the forecastle, and the third who appeared to be looking at us with great curiosity, was leaning over the starboard bow near the bowsprit. This last was a tall stout man, with a very dark skin. He seemed by his manner to be encouraging us to have patience, nodding to us in a cheerful although rather odd way, and smiling constantly so as to display a set of the most brilliantly white teeth. The brig came on slowly and now more steadily than before . . . we poured our whole soul in shouts of thanksgiving to God for the complete unexpected and glorious deliverance. Of a sudden there came wafted over the ocean a smell, a stench, such as the world has no name for—no conception of—hellish—utterly suffocating—insufferable, inconceivable. . . . The brig was within fifty feet of us, when suddenly a wide yaw threw her off full five or six points and as she passed under our stern we had a full view of her. Shall I ever forget the triple horror of that spectacle? Twenty-five or thirty human bodies, among whom were several females, lay scattered about in the last and most loathsome state of putrefaction! We plainly saw that not a soul lived in that fated vessel. Yet we could not help shouting to the dead for help! . . . We were raving with horror and despair— . . . As our first loud yell of terror broke forth, it was replied to by something from near the bowsprit of the stranger so closely resembling

the scream of a human voice that the nicest ear might have been startled and deceived. At this moment another sudden yaw brought the region of the fore-castle into view and we beheld the origin of the sound. We saw the tall stout figure still leaning on the bulwark, and still nodding his head to and fro, but his face was now turned from us so that we could not behold it. His arms were extended over the rail, and the palms of his hands fell outward. . . . On his back, from which a portion of the shirt had been torn, leaving it bare, there sat a huge seagull, busily gorging itself with the horrible flesh, its bill and talons deep buried, and its white plumage spattered with blood. . . . The gull arose lazily from the body upon which it had been feasting, and flying directly above our deck, hovered there awhile with a portion of clotted and liver-like substance in its beak. The horrid morsel dropped at length with a sudden splash immediately at the feet of Parker. May God forgive me! but now there flashed through my mind a thought, a thought which I will not mention, and I felt myself making a step towards the ensanguined spot. I looked upward, and the eyes of Augustus met my own with a degree of intense and eager meaning which immediately brought me to my senses. . . . As the gull relieved it of its weight it swung round and fell partly over. . . . Never surely was any object so terribly full of awe! The eyes were gone, and the whole flesh around the mouth, leaving the teeth utterly naked. This then was the smile which had cheered us on to hope!

This is a record of misfortunes that not even Pym could have met and long survived. The fact of sailing the south seas and meeting with geographical features and zoölogical data that were either copied or paraphrased should cause no comment. Pym's descriptions and the plot of his story alone call for criticism. There is no possibility of plagiarism. Such a description as I have quoted, though full of the essence of horror and disgust, necessarily is the handiwork of a master. Certain of these revolting details, such as that of Pym and his companions drawing lots as to who should be sacrificed for the preservation of the rest, or insanity by reason of hardships and exposure, murders artistically planned and stratagems adopted for overpowering mutineers and savages, occasionally have been recorded; but Morrell details none of these, further than his own bravery when he slaughtered, from a distance, many savages in retaliation for their forcible objection to his occupation of their island.

Woodberry's mistaking the spelling of Morrell is but a small matter, and was the result of copying Harrison too faithfully. His assertion that the plot and material facts were either suggested by or copied from Morrell was original. The fact that it resulted in an exciting book hunt should not be held against him. Probably the book is not so rare as I had supposed; after the correct spelling was established, my strenuous search located two other copies.

Local pride induces me to interject Morrell's description of San Francisco as he found it in the year 1825.

The bay of San Francisco, connected with the surrounding scenery, is the most delightful place I have ever seen on the western coast of America. It presents a broad sheet of water, of sufficient extent to float all the British navy without crowding; the circling grassy shores, indented with convenient coves, and the whole surrounded by a blooming verdant country, pleasingly diversified with cultured fields and waving forests; meadows clothed with the richest verdure in the gift of bounteous May; pastures covered with grazing herds; hill and dale, mountain and valley, noble rivers, and gurgling brooks. Man, enlightened, civilized man, alone is wanting to complete the picture, and give a soul, a divinity to the whole. Were these beautiful regions which have been so much libelled, and are so little known, the property of the United States, our government would never permit them to remain thus neglected. The Eastern and Middle states would pour out their thousands of emigrants, until magnificent cities would rise on the shore of every inlet along the coast, while the wilderness of the interior would be made to blossom like a rose.

Possibly it was well that Poe *did* condense and paraphrase.

This story of Captain Pym received but scant attention in America. That, in England, "such was the realism of the narrative that it was taken for genuine" is a matter of surprise. The fact that this story, as well as the one of *M. Valdemar*, was believed, makes it evident that both the English and Scotch are more credulous than their descendants now inhabiting Missouri. "The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym" does not impress me as possessing either a well conceived plot, or a development of action and incident worthy of Poe. While, with his usual facility, he invents

horrors unbelievable, and his imagination runs riot in conceiving awful images, and in picturing the unknown Antarctic region with its majestic tropical fauna where we should have expected snow-environed inhabitants, he so indiscriminately heaps disaster upon disaster, and invents such impossible catastrophes which necessarily lead to the certain destruction of Pym and his companions, that he leaves not even a *deus ex machina* for their extrication.

Poe ended this story with an explanatory note in which he states that, by reason of "the late sudden and distressing death of Mr. Pym" the concluding chapters, describing his manner of escape, "which were to have completed his narrative, and which were to be retained by him for the purpose of revision, have been irrevocably lost." This statement makes a lame and impotent conclusion to a most impossible situation. The added hieroglyphs, with suggested decipherments, are not worthy of Poe's known ability as a cryptographer.

I subjoin the description of the majestic surroundings and the approaching doom that threatened to overwhelm the helpless crew:

March 21. A sullen darkness now hovered above us—but from out the milky depths of the ocean a luminous glare arose, and stole up along the bulwarks of the boat. We were nearly overwhelmed by the white ashy shower which settled upon us and upon the canoe, but melted into the water as it fell. The summit of the cataract was utterly lost in the dimness and the distance. Yet we were evidently approaching it with a hideous velocity. At intervals there were visible in it wide, yawning, but momentary rents, and from out these rents, within which was a chaos of flitting and indistinct images, there came rushing and mighty, but soundless winds, tearing up the enkindled ocean in its course.

The English publication ends at this date, but the American carries the story of events one day further:

March 22. The darkness had materially increased, relieved only by the glare of the water thrown back from the white curtain before us. Many gigantic and pallidly white birds flew continuously now from beyond the veil, and their scream was the eternal *Tekli-li!* as they re-

treated from our vision. Hereupon Nu-Nu stirred in the bottom of the boat; but on touching him we found that his spirit had departed. And now we rushed into the embraces of the cataract, where a chasm threw itself open to receive us. But there arose in our pathway a shrouded human figure, very far larger in its proportions than any dweller among men. And the hue of the skin of the figure was of the perfect whiteness of the snow.

So ends this story of horrors. Why Poe did not complete it I cannot conceive. That he possessed sufficient imagination to have taken us into this unknown and tropical Antarctic World which he had conceived, is not to be questioned. The wonder to me is that he could have resisted so opportune an occasion for depicting another balloon-hoax.

It seems to have been the custom during these years to publish a Christmas Annual containing poems, tales, and moralities, suitable for greetings and presents. Apparently the best known writers contributed, and it is probable that such articles brought some remuneration to their writers; if not, these Annuals brought very desirable publicity.

I will summarize those to which Poe contributed, although their issuance covered several years.

THE GIFT: A Christmas and New Year's present for 1836. Edited by Miss Leslie, Philadelphia: E. L. Carey and A. Hart.

Much to Poe's annoyance, Miss Leslie chose the twice-told story *MS. Found in a Bottle*. With justice Poe complained of this second reproduction:

The Gift [Miss Leslie's Annual for 1836] is out. They have published *The MS. Found in a Bottle* (the prize tale you will remember,) although I not only told Mr. Carey myself that it had been published, but wrote him to that effect on my return to Baltimore, and sent him another tale in place of it (*Epimanes*). I can not understand why they have published it—or why they have not published either *Siopé* [Silence] or *Epimanes* [Four Beasts].

The Gift also contained contributions from Paulding, Irving and other writers known and unknown. Among the unknown was a writer named Thompson, four of whose

## SIOPE—A FABLE.

[*In the manner of the Psychological Autobiographists.*]

BY EDGAR A. POE.

Ours is a world of words: Quiet we call  
*Silence*—which is the merest word of all.

*Al Aaraaf.*

“Listen to *me*,” said the Demon, as he placed his hand upon my head. “There is a spot upon this accursed earth which thou hast never yet beheld. And if by any chance thou *hast* beheld it, it must have been in one of those vigorous dreams which come like the Simoom upon the brain of the sleeper who hath lain down to sleep among the forbidden sunbeams—among the sunbeams, I say, which slide from off the solemn columns of the melancholy temples in the wilderness. The region of which I speak is a dreary region in Libya, by the borders of the river Zaire. And there is no quiet there, nor silence.

“The waters of the river have a saffron and sickly hue—and they flow not onwards to the sea, but palpitate forever and forever beneath the red eye of the sun with a tumultuous and convulsive motion. For many

stories were published. That one—or all—of his could not have been omitted, and room found for *Siope*, cannot be explained by unappreciation. Deficient as those times were in literary comprehension, such a story could not have been passed over, though it might not have possessed the public appeal contained in the *MS. Found in a Bottle*. The selection of certain stories that, from literary considerations, are so utterly worthless can only be accounted for by Poe's suggestion, *quid pro quo*.

THE BALTIMORE BOOK, A Christmas and New Year's Present: Edited by W. H. Carpenter and T. S. Arthur. Baltimore; MDCCCXXXVIII.

Harrison, ever considerate and tender of Poe, thoroughly appreciative but at times overfond, in the following criticism does not overpraise or underrate the excellence of this issue of "The Baltimore Book."

In a faded and time stained copy of the Baltimore Book for 1839 [1838] edited by W. H. Carpenter and T. S. Arthur, now lying before us, we find *Siope* a fable (in the manner of the psychological autobiographists) by Edgar A. Poe.

'Ours is a world of words: quiet we call  
*Silence*—which is the merest word of all.'

(AL AARAAF).

the earliest form of allegory which is perhaps Poe's most majestic piece of prose, worthy of Jean Paul Richter in its music and its magnificence. This earliest form of the fable is destitute of the fine lines from the Greek of Alcman [Alcmaeon] and their English interpretation by Poe, found in later editions, and shows that *Arthur Gordon Pym* did not wholly occupy the Poet's attention at this time.

These were the lines referred to.

Ἐβδουσιν δ' ὄρεων κορυφαί τε καὶ φαράγγες  
Πρωγές τε καὶ χαράδραι.

ALCMAN.

The mountain pinnacles slumber; valleys, crags and caves *are silent*.

In my opinion it is not a happy substitution, although the Greek words look impressive. As Poe himself once upon a time explained in *The Psyche Zenobia*, his satirical story



written to ridicule certain English writers, and which was later named *How To Write A Blackwood Article*, the Greek letters give not only a dignity of appearance but an air of learning that is most impressive.

The very letters have an air of profundity about them. Only observe, madam, the acute look of that *Epsilon*. That *Phi* certainly ought to be a Bishop! Was there ever a smarter fellow than that *Omicron*? Just twig that *Tau*. In short there is nothing like Greek for a genuine popper-sensation.

That Poe later adopted this same substitution shows a lack of "good memory."

THE GIFT: A Christmas and New Year's Present for 1840.

Edited by Miss Leslie, Philadelphia: Carey & Hart.

"The Gift," which appeared first in 1836 and was regularly published during the following years, contained nothing further by Poe until the issue of 1840, when *William Wilson*, a psychological self-study, well worth the attention of Poe students, appeared. The priority of appearance is in question, as the story was first published in the October, 1839, issue of "The Gentleman's Magazine," although it is credited to the 1840 Gift. Of all that Poe wrote, nothing more firmly establishes the essential *sanity* and the introspective faculty of his mind, than does this story. As an analysis of character, and an attempt to understand one's own personality, and as an expression of outraged conscience, it has no equal. It is not only a psychological study; it is also a presentment of the double personality that so bitterly contended for the possession of Poe's soul. That Poe recognized his defeat, and realized that he was no longer able to resist the hereditary evil that finally dominated and overcame him, is shown in the concluding lines:

I immediately returned to my dying antagonist. But what human language can adequately portray *that* astonishment, *that* horror which possessed me at the spectacle then presented to view. The brief

moment in which I had averted my eyes had been sufficient to produce, apparently, a material change in the arrangements at the upper or farther end of the room. A large mirror, it appeared to me, now stood where none had been perceptible to me before; and, as I stepped up to it in extremity of terror, mine own image, but with features all pale and dabbled in blood, advanced, with a feeble and a tottering gait, to meet me.

Thus it appeared, I say, but was not. It was my antagonist—it was Wilson, who stood before me in the agonies of his dissolution. Not a line in all the marked and singular liniments of that face which was not, even identically, mine own! His mask and cloak lay, where he had thrown them, upon the floor.

It was Wilson but he spoke no longer in a whisper, and I could have fancied that I myself was speaking while he said—*You have conquered and I yield. Yet, henceforward, art thou also dead—dead to the world and its hopes. In me did'st thou exist—and in my death, see by this image, which is thine own, how utterly thou hast murdered thyself.*

THE GIFT: A Christmas and New Year's Present for 1842.  
Philadelphia: Carey & Hart.

This contains *Eleonora*, another autobiographical study.

In this instance the theme is wedded love, and is based upon the affection Poe bore his wife. While this was written three years before Virginia's death, it cannot be doubted that he saw the end and keenly realized that she was not to remain with him. That this thought at times drove him frantic is evidenced in his letters, and the realization that his wife was fore-doomed overwhelmed him with grief. In *Eleonora* a picture is drawn that was in no sense imaginary; it had an actual basis in the foundation of Poe's life. This story so accurately reproduces the events which led up to Poe's marriage with his cousin, and so pathetically details the happiness their union brought that it should set at rest any question of the love Poe gave his wife, even though their marriage was one of convenience.

THE GIFT: A Christmas and New Year's Present. MDCCC-XLIII. Philadelphia: Carey & Hart.

In this was published *The Pit and the Pendulum*, in which Poe crowds into one narration all the possible hor-

rors that could overcome one in the presence of approaching death. It is a tale of the Spanish Inquisition, diabolically conceived, and excellently told. It was worthy of inclusion in the narrative of *Pym*.

THE GIFT. A Christmas, New Year, and Birthday Present. MDCCCXLV. Philadelphia: Carey & Hart. 1845.

This volume seems to have been enlarged to quarto, or at least to large octavo, possibly for the purpose of better accommodating itself to its new function. Poe's contribution—*The Purloined Letter*—is trifling. In addition to this Poe story, a few other well-known writers are represented: Emerson by a *Dirge* patterned after—but as I remember to have heard some one say—"a very long way after," Burns. Among many now forgotten names, that of Longfellow twice appears, for this Gift contains *A Gleam of Sunshine* and *The Hemlock Tree*.

THE OPAL: A Pure Gift for the Holy Days. Edited by N. P. Willis. With nine Illustrations, by J. G. Chapman. New York: John C. Riker 15 Anne Street. 1844.

The Opal was issued by a New York house, under the editorship of Willis. There was a change not only of contributors, but in the character of the subjects chosen. As a rule these are either highly moral or distinctly religious. *Scriptural Prophecy* occupies a prominent position, and *God will Appoint a Deliverer*, *The Triumph of Christianity*, and *Religious Biography* are among the subjects treated. *Is Death the King of Terrors?* and *The Dream of a Consumptive*, are filled with consolatory thoughts for the dying and the Dream ends with the triumphal chant:

" My dream was kindly given—  
 The spirit's parting sign,  
 One glimpse of earth in beauty bright,  
 Ere breaks the morn divine.

Ah! see the skies are parting now,  
 A holier light is shed—  
 I come, I come!"—and that fair girl  
 Was gathered to the dead!

These lines are characteristic of the contents as a whole, maudlin and unduly religious.

According to the title page, this volume was "embellished" with edifying scenes; among them were *Christ Walking on the Sea*, *The Mother's Grave*, the *Dream of the Consumptive*, illustrated, and the *Daughter of Jairus*.

To this Opal Poe contributed *A Morning on the Wissahiccon*. It is a pot-boiler, possibly suggested by a sketch in the December 1835 "Messenger" similarly titled, but this was in no sense the prototype. It is possible that Poe wrote this Messenger description, but its contents do not justify such a deduction. The introduction of the elk was a realistic touch not in the original story and it could well have been omitted.

Harrison, in introducing his discussion of "The Conchologist's First Text Book", Poe's chief contribution to Zoology, says:

The year 1839 was signalized by two events,—one unimportant, but remarkable as showing the spirit of his enemies, the publication of *The Conchologist's First Book*; the other as witnessing the issue of perhaps the most original volume of short stories ever published—the *Tales of the Grotesque and Arabesque*.

As we write, the first and second editions of the manual on conchology are before us. The facsimile of the title page of the edition of 1839 reveals all the minutiae of the descriptive title once in vogue. . . . The outside cover has a stamped illustration of shells, weeds, and grasses, and the book is bound in paper boards.

THE CONCHOLOGIST'S FIRST BOOK: or, A System of Testaceous Malacology, Arranged expressly for the use of Schools, in which the animals, according to Cuvier, are given with the shells, a great number of new species added, and the whole brought up, as accurately as possible, to the present condition of the science. By Edgar

A. Poe. With illustrations of two hundred and fifteen shells, presenting a correct type of each genus. Philadelphia: Published for the author, by Haswell, Barrington, and Haswell, and for sale by the principal booksellers in the United States. 1839.

It is to be noticed that this book was attributed to Poe alone, and that no other name was mentioned either as editor or author.

Occasionally it happens that when a thief breaks in and steals it is necessary for him to use a "fence" for the disposal of his stolen goods. In this case, it was one "Professor" Wyatt who not only stole the goods but, in connection with Isaac Lea, the printer, arranged the contents and attended to the publication of the whole work; Poe probably knew little of its derivation but allowed his name to be used for a financial consideration. At this time Poe's name was beginning to be well known. It is true that Poe did write the title page, and certainly he composed the Preface. The name of both Wyatt and Lea are most carefully suppressed, and no mention is made of either except, incidentally, in the preface:

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

E. A. P.

Harrison is my authority for the statement:

Wyatt had published through the Harpers an expensive work that would not sell: hence turning to Poe as a necessitous *litterateur* of the day, willing and anxious for a pot boiler, he engaged the Poet to popularize the work, and to issue an edition under his own (Poe's) name. Wyatt sold the book himself.

It would seem that Poe was only the stool-pigeon, for there was a reason, and a very grave reason, why Wyatt did not desire to father the work.

THE  
**CONCHOLOGIST'S FIRST BOOK :**

OR,  
A SYSTEM

OF  
**TESTACEOUS MALACOLOGY,**

Stranged expressly for the use of Schools,

IN WHICH

**THE ANIMALS, ACCORDING TO CUVIER, ARE GIVEN  
WITH THE SHELLS,**

A GREAT NUMBER OF NEW SPECIES ADDED,

AND THE WHOLE BROUGHT UP, AS ACCURATELY AS POSSIBLE, TO  
THE PRESENT CONDITION OF THE SCIENCE.

BY **EDGAR A. POË.**

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS OF TWO HUNDRED AND FIFTEEN SHELLS,  
PRESENTING A CORRECT TYPE OF EACH GENUS.

PHILADELPHIA :  
PUBLISHED FOR THE AUTHOR, BY  
**HASWELL, BARRINGTON, AND HASWELL,**  
AND FOR SALE BY THE PRINCIPAL BOOKSELLERS IN THE  
UNITED STATES.

1839.

THE

**CONCHOLOGIST'S TEXT-BOOK,**

EMBRACING THE ARRANGEMENTS

OF

**LAMARCK AND LINNÆUS,**

WITH A

GLOSSARY OF TECHNICAL TERMS.

By **CAPTAIN THOMAS BROWN,**

PILOTT OF THE JARNEAR SOCIETY, MEMBER OF THE WERNERIAN, KIRWANIAN  
AND PHRENOLOGICAL SOCIETIES, AND LATE PRESIDENT OF THE ROYAL  
PHYSICAL SOCIETY, &c. &c. &c.

ILLUSTRATED BY NINETEEN ENGRAVINGS ON STEEL.

**GLASGOW :**

**ARCHIBALD FULLARTON & CO. :**  
MACLACHLAN & STEWART, EDINBURGH; W. CURRY, JUN.  
AND CO. DUBLIN; AND W. S. ORR, LONDON

MDCCCXXXIII.

There is no mention, either in the preface or in any part of the book, of a small volume which, after many years of search, is a part of my collection.

THE CONCHOLOGIST'S TEXT-BOOK. Embracing the Arrangements of Lamarck and Linneaus, with a Glossary of Technical Terms by Captain Thomas Brown, Fellow of the Linnaean Society, Member of the Wernerian, Kirkwanian and Phrenological Societies, and late President of the Royal Physical Society, etc., etc., etc., Illustrated by nineteen engravings on steel. Glasgow: Archibald Fullarton & Co.: MDCCCXXXIII.

Although there was nowhere any mention of Brown, Wyatt, through the medium of Poe's name, paid it a higher compliment. He "lifted" the book bodily, placed it in a new cover, and, with a rattling good preface from Poe, launched it in an effort to ballast his own work—if it was his own. In this way has been preserved to us an undoubtedly clever work in its own particular department of scientific research; but, except for the misunderstood kindness of Lea and Wyatt, Brown would hardly have been treasured in this generation, nor would I have had to pay the long price I was compelled to pay to its resurrector. In writing the preface Poe did not require, nor did he seek, any assistance. In the use of Latin and Greek phrases, and their use in derivation, he was a master. Note the way in which he begins his preface:

The term '*Malacology*,' an abbreviation of '*Malacozoology*' from the Greek *Μαλακός* *soft*, *Ζῷον* *an animal*, and *Λόγος* *a discourse*, was first employed by the French naturalist, de Blainville, etc., etc.

I can find nothing in Brown that will square with this phraseology and evident familiarity with the dead languages which still furnish all our scientific terminology.

About ten years ago Tregaskis acquired "The Plan of a Dictionary," written by one Sam. Johnson; and possibly

twice a year since then he has kept on acquiring them. At least, about that frequently, he publishes in his most interesting catalog this stereotyped announcement: "The best written prospectus ever published, and of course the least successful." I am willing to back Poe's preface against anything Johnson ever wrote about his dictionary; or, for that matter, anything his critics ever wrote about it or him. My own copy of this prospectus makes dreadfully heavy and dull reading. In spite of Mr. Tregaskis' well known literary attainments, I fear, in this case, he is like the fox that lost its tail and attempted to set up this mutilation as the fashion. Or it may be he never read Poe's preface.

When it came to the introduction, which contained a scientific discussion of the subject matter, evidently the writer got into water beyond his depth; at least he felt he could not improve on Brown's facts, even though it was possible to rearrange them advantageously.

## POE or WYATT.

The term "*Conchology*," in its legitimate usage, is applied to that department of Natural History, which has reference to animals with testaceous coverings or shells.

It is not unfrequently compounded [*sic*] with *Crustaceology*, but the distinction is obvious and radical, lying not more in the composition of the animal's habitation than in the organization of the animal itself. This latter, in the Crustacea, is of a fibrous nature, and has articulated limbs; the shell strictly adapted to the members, covers the creature like a coat of mail, in produced at one elaboration, is cast or thrown aside periodically, and, again, at one elaboration, renewed; it is

## BROWN.

Conchology or Testaceology, is that department of Natural History which treats of animals with a testaceous covering or shell.

\* \* \* \* \*

Conchology has been sometimes confounded with Crustaceology, but the slightest attention to the subject will at once discover the obvious difference which exists between these two classes.

\* \* \* \* \*

On the other hand shells of crustaceous animals, are cast and renewed annually. The animals are of a fibrous texture (not nature) with articulated limbs, are covered, as it were, in a coat of mail. Besides the shells of crustaceous animals are produced all



moreover composed of the animal matter with phosphate of lime. In the *Testacea*, on the contrary, the inhabitant is of a simple and soft texture without bones, and is attached to its domicile by a certain adhesive muscular force; this domicile, too, is a permanent one, and is increased, from time to time, by gradual adhesions on the part of the tenant; while the entire shell, which is distributed in layers, or strata, is a combination of carbonate of lime, with a very small portion of gelatinous matter.

at one; [once?] those of the testacea evidently are formed by the animal gradually adding to them either annually or at least periodically. . . . Testaceous shells are, in general, permanent coverings for the inhabitants, and the animal is of a soft and simple nature, without bones of any kind; and attached to its domicile by a certain adhesive principle possessed by some of the muscles. . . . Testaceous shells are composed of carbonate of lime, combined with a small portion of gelatinous matter; while those of the Crustacea are composed of phosphate of lime, along with the animal matter.

This paraphrasing continues for several pages. While, possibly, the version attributed to Poe is better written, Brown is the more intelligible. For instance I could not tell just what was meant by Poe's statement:

And is attached to its domicile by a certain adhesive muscular force; this domicile is a permanent one, and is increased from time to time, by *gradual adhesions* on the part of the tenant.

until I read in Brown:

Testaceous shells are, in general, permanent coverings for its inhabitants . . . attached to its domicile by a certain adhesive principle, possessed by some of the muscles.

Another thing that interferes with the lucidity of my presentation of Brown's Introduction, and makes it somewhat disjointed is that, in choosing, it was a most difficult task to select those statements I desired as parallels. Not only was it necessary to skip long passages which greatly would have aided in making Brown's descriptions clear, but, at times, several pages intervene. On the other hand, I have quoted Poe in sequence and without omission or interruption. I suspect Poe was the better writer, while Brown was the more learned conchologist.

Again, this Brown manual was dated 1833, while the Poe edition was not published until 1839; thus Poe or Wyatt had several years in which, possibly, great advances were made in the study of conchology. Apparently, nothing new was discovered. If so, the editors were so considerate as to take no undue advantage.

The first four plates figuring the shells are evidently reproductions printed from those of Brown while the other eight plates contained accurate copies. While there are only twelve plates in Poe's Conchology Brown's work contains nineteen. A careful examination shows that this excess is not such an advantage as it might seem; for the seven extra plates in Brown's Conchology were reproduced in that attributed to Poe by placing a greater number of shells on each plate.

Evidently in the Poe edition it was not believed that any improvement could be made in the "Explanation to the Parts of the Shell," so it was reprinted *verbatim*.

However, the two publications do differ in one essential detail, and for this reason are readily distinguishable. The plates in the Poe edition are, as a rule, colored, while those of Brown are untinted. The covers also should easily differentiate them, as the Poe copy is in decorated boards; and the man who drew the bottom of the ocean, of which a representation is figured on the cover, gave full range to his imagination, a thing from which possibly Brown refrained; yet as my Brown copy is encased in half-leather binding, I cannot be certain that the original cover was not equally ornate. Had the designer of the Poe cover ever visited Catalina, and had he seen the bottom of the ocean from a glass bottomed boat, he would not have drawn such a picture. Sometimes, however, I have noticed that lack of knowledge gives freer rein to the imagination, for it is untrammelled by facts.

*Mollusca*





TALES OF THE GROTESQUE AND ARABESQUE. By Edgar A. Poe. Quotation (3 lines) in Two Volumes. Philadelphia: Lea and Blanchard. 1840.

Collation: Vol. I. Title, copyright (dated 1839), imprint, Dedication, Preface, pp. (1)-6, contents Vol. I. Text, pp. (9)-243.

Collation: Vol. II. Advertisement, pp. (1)-IV. Title, Copyright (dated 1839), Imprint, Contents, Vol. II. pp. (5)-222. Appendix pp. 223-228.

The only new stories this publication contained were *Von Jung* and *Why the Little Frenchman Wears his Hand in a Sling*. The sixteen originally offered Carey & Lea were included and the other seven had appeared either in the *Annals* or in the various periodicals with which Poe was connected and which have already been named. If Poe had written others they had not been published; yet in his preface he stated that these were only a selection of those he had intended for this publication, and intimated that there were others he had either formulated or had not used because they were not suitable for inclusion under the title he had chosen.

The epithets 'Grotesque' and 'Arabesque' will be found to indicate with sufficient precision the prevalent tenor of the tales here published. But from the fact that during a period of some two or three years I have written five and twenty short stories whose general character may be so briefly defined, it cannot be fairly inferred—at all events it is not truly inferred—that I have for this species of writing, any inordinate, or indeed any peculiar taste or prepossession. I may have written with an eye to this republication in volume form, and may, therefore, have desired to preserve, as far as a certain point, a certain unity of design. This is, indeed, the fact; and it may even happen in this manner, I shall never compose anything again. . . . But the truth is that, with a single exception, there is, in no one of these stories in which the scholar should recognize the distinctive features of that species of pseudo-horror which we are taught to call Germanic, for no better reason that that some of the secondary names of German literature have become identified with its folly. If, in many of my productions, terror has been the thesis, I maintain that terror is not of Germany, but of the soul.

Judging from this statement of Poe's, many of his other

TALES  
OF THE  
GROTESQUE AND ARABESQUE.

---

BY EDGAR A. POE.

---

Seltsamen tochter Jovis  
Seinem schosskinde  
Der *Phantasia*.

GOTHE.

---

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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PHILADELPHIA:  
LEA AND BLANCHARD.  
1840.

stories were unpublished, possibly unwritten; yet he fully believed in his capacity for a different kind of work, and it is probable that much of his later production already had been planned.

The public did not care for these stories, and no second edition was called for, although the first edition consisted of only 750 copies. A year later Poe offered Lea & Blanchard eight additional stories to be issued in a second edition with those already published, but this offer was not accepted.

In 1843 Zieber & Co. published two of his tales *Murders in the Rue Morgue* and *The Man That Was Used Up*. This little publication is now the rarest of Poe items, for only three copies have been found. The one in the Huntington collection is valued at \$4000.

THE AMERICAN MUSEUM OF SCIENCE, LITERATURE, AND THE ARTS. A monthly Magazine. Baltimore: Brooks and Snodgrass, Editors and Proprietors. John Murphy, Printer, Light Street.

Vol. I. September, 1838, to December, 1838.

Vol. II. January, 1839, to June, 1839.

Both Brooks and Snodgrass apparently were well known literary men, and while Poe was in Baltimore he was on terms of intimacy with them. Their attempt at establishing a literary journal should have been a successful undertaking, both being well equipped for the editorial duties of a journal of that period. They did provide a most liberal quantity, the first four numbers, constituting Vol. I, extending over 500 pages: the second, consisting of six numbers, was not so large, for it was entering into a slow decline. The last number was dated June 14, 1839.

The fate of the "American Museum" is only a further evidence that quantity cannot make up for quality. It may be said in its favor that it adopted none of the

THE  
AMERICAN MUSEUM  
OF  
SCIENCE, LITERATURE,  
AND  
THE ARTS.

---

A MONTHLY MAGAZINE.

---

VOL. I.

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BALTIMORE:  
BROOKS & SNODGRASS,  
EDITORS AND PROPRIETORS.  
1858.

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JOHN MURPHY, PAINTER, LIGHT STREET.



chromos, or "illuminations," or fashion plates, which later made Godey's and Graham's so appetizing to the tastes of their time.

It was during the "lean years" of 1838-9, after Poe had ceased his connection with the "Southern Literary Messenger", and before he became associated with Burton, that he contributed the embalming fluid which has preserved this short lived periodical to us. In the initial number *Ligeia* first appeared. Surely Poe admirably selected the setting, for the lady was as lonesome and out of place there as Poe depicted her in the story.

In the November number there was published *The Psyche Zenobia*, a title which Harrison (and, following him, and adopting from him this bibliographical error, Woodberry), assigns to the December number, under the title *How to Write a Blackwood Article*. Under a separate title is enumerated *A Predicament (The Scythe of Time)* again incorrectly assigned to the December number. It is essentially a part of *Psyche Zenobia* and it was so published; neither in matter nor manner should it be thus divided. That, later, it was separated and selected as properly belonging to "The Tales of The Grotesque and Arabesque," was an error of judgment. The story, published alone, is absurd; unless one is led up to it by *The Psyche Zenobia* or "Susy Snooks, as she preferred to be called, its absurdity is heightened. In attempting to accommodate himself to what he believed to be the style of a Blackwood writer, Poe undertook something of which he was not capable. While he may have possessed a sense of humor, it is certain that he failed whenever he attempted to give expression to it. This story was not worthy of Poe. Taken with *Zenobia* it can be tolerated, but, without it, there is a resemblance to certain of the *vermes*; when cut in half, both ends may, in a mutilated way, live and grow; but they never regain their perfect form. It was written as a travesty on the

class of literature appearing in Blackwoods; the story itself was written to illustrate the absurdity of some of these Blackwood stories. Why Poe took *The Psyche Zenobia* out of its context and published it separately, I cannot understand; possibly he thought it grotesque.

In naming the birthplace of the gem of all Poe's poems, *The Haunted Palace*, Harrison's mistake has caused me some inconvenience as well as personal embarrassment. He bibliographs it as having been published in the "Baltimore Museum" of April, 1839. Since finding it in the "American Museum" of that date, I have doubted that such a periodical as the "Baltimore Museum" ever existed, and have accordingly withdrawn it from my periodically published "wants." While with Harrison apparently it was carelessness rather than ignorance, others have adopted and perpetuated this mistake.

This second volume contained in its January and February numbers *Literary Small Talk* by Edgar A. Poe. While Poe never revived this title it was evidently the progenitor of his *Literati* and *Marginalia*.

These articles contributed to the Museum during the years 1838-9, measure the amount of his published work during this period; evidently it did not constitute the whole of it, for much that later appeared must have been in the process of gestation. Yet how Poe lived on the meagre returns from these articles in this obscure journal probably only his devoted "Muddy" knew.

THE GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE, AND MONTHLY AMERICAN REVIEW. Edited by William E. Burton. Philadelphia: William E. Burton. Opposite the Exchange, Dock St. 1839.

Volume IV and V January to December, 1839

Volume VI and VII January to December, 1840

## THE HAUNTED PALACE.

BY E. A. POE, ESQ.

In the greenest of our valleys  
By good angels tenanted,  
Once a fair and stately palace—  
Snow-white palace—reared its head  
In the monarch thought's dominion—  
It stood there!  
Never Seraph spread his pinion  
Over fabric half so fair.

Banners yellow, glorious, golden,  
On its roof did float and flow—  
This—all this—was in the olden  
Time long ago—  
And every gentle air that dallied,  
In that sweet day,  
Along the rampart plumed and pallid,  
A winged odour went away.

All wanderers in that happy valley,  
Through two luminous windows saw  
Spirits moving musically  
To a lute's well tuned law,  
Round about a throne where sitting  
(Porphyroger!)  
In state his glory well befitting,  
The sovereign of the realm was seen.

And all with pearl and ruby glowing  
Was the fair palace door;  
Through which came flowing, flowing, flowing,  
And sparkling evermore,  
A troop of echoes, whose sweet duty  
Was but to sing  
In voices of surpassing beauty,  
The wit and wisdom of their king.

But evil things in robes of sorrow,  
Assailed the monarch's high estate!  
Ah, let us mourn—for never morrow  
Shall dawn upon him desolate!  
And round about his home the glory,  
That blushed and bloomed,  
Is but a dim-remembered story  
Of the old time entombed.

And travellers now within that valley,  
Through the red-litten windows, see  
Vast forms that move fantastically  
To a discordant melody;  
While, like a rapid ghastly river,  
Through the pale door,  
A hideous throng rush out forever,  
And laugh—but smile no more.

In May, 1839, Poe contributed his initial review to Burton's "Gentleman's Magazine."

Burton was a well known actor; a comedian with literary aspirations, but with so little capacity that he did not deserve, and consequently did not receive at Poe's hands, the slightest literary recognition. In July Poe became associated with him as assistant editor of the "Gentleman's." Although there was friction, this association continued for twelve months. During this time, Poe contributed many reviews, as well as some of his best stories, and republished a few poems. I again summarize:

July: *Spirits of the Dead*, unchanged from the 1829 version, was Poe's first contribution. He also abstracted the poem, originally published as a part of *The Visionary*, and republished it under the title *To Ianthe in Heaven*. It is now known under the title *To One in Paradise*. While it was republished with but a single emendation, the final verse was omitted:

Alas! for that accursed time  
 They bore thee o'er the billow  
 From Love to titled age and crime  
 And an unholy pillow—  
 From me, and from our misty clime,  
 Where weeps the siver willow!

The name "Ianthe" is of uncertain derivation. It was used by Longfellow in 1832 as the title of a poem later suppressed. During Poe's editorship two poems with this title were published in "The Messenger."

August: *The Man that was Used Up*. Poe amplified the title, *A Tale of the late Bugaboo and Kickapoo Campaign*. Of the fourteen reviews six are attributed to Poe. *Fairyland* and *To The River* were republished without emendation.

September: *The Fall of the House of Usher*. In this tale Poe inserted *The Haunted Palace*, formerly published in the "American Museum." While there are many reviews of books, there are no criticisms worth recording.

There is one poem, entitled *Silence*, undoubtedly the prototype, and probably the original version, of that poem now included in Poe's collected works under the name *Sonnet—Silence*. Poe, who at that time was the editor of "The Gentleman's," placed it on a page opposite *The Fall of the House of Usher*, and signed it P., suggesting, if not fully acknowledging its authorship.

SILENCE.

(Burton, *September, 1839.*)

There is a silence where hath been no sound,  
 There is a silence where no sound may be,  
 In the cold grave—under the deep, deep sea,  
 Or in wide desert where no life is found,  
 Which hath been mute, and still must sleep profound;  
 No voice is hush'd—no life treads silently,  
 But clouds and cloudy shadows wander free,  
 That never spoke—over the idle ground;  
 But in green ruins, in the desolate walls  
 Of antique palaces, where man hath been  
 Though the dun fox, or wild hyena, calls,  
 And owls, that flit continually between,  
 Shriek to the echo, and the low winds moan,  
 There the true Silence is, self-conscious and alone.

P.

SILENCE. A SONNET.

(Graham's, *April, 1840.*)

There are some qualities—some incorporate things  
 That have a double life—a life aptly made,  
 The type of that twin entity which springs  
 From matter and light, evinced in solid and shade.  
 There is a two-fold *Silence*—sea and shore—  
 Body and soul. One dwells in lonely places,  
 Newly with grass o'ergrown. Some solemn graces  
 Some human memories and tearful lore,  
 Render him terrorless—his name's "No More"  
 He is corporate Silence—dread him not!  
 No power of evil hath he in himself;  
 But should some urgent fate—untimely lot!  
 Bring thee to meet his *shadow* (nameless elf,  
 Who haunteth the dim regions where hath trod  
 No foot of man)—commend thyself to God!

Why Poe chose the second version, and why the first has been omitted from his poetical collection, I do not know. In my opinion, the first is the more poetical, natural, and a less labored version.

This number contained eighteen reviews, and apologies for the omission of certain others because of lack of space. Of the four mentioned as omitted, and which were to appear later, only one was published, "Hyperion."

Certain of these reviews were characterized by some of Poe's old time acerbity, and it was on this occasion,

possibly, that Poe and Burton so seriously differed as to the character of the criticisms that were admissible.

October: *William Wilson* was for the first time published. Poe, in printing it, announced that it was from "The Gift" of 1840, in which connection I have already referred to it. Of the four unusually short criticisms, one was Poe's review of "Hyperion."

Were it possible to throw into a bag the lofty thought and manner of the "Pilgrims of the Rhine," together with the quirks and quibbles and true humor of "Tristram Shandy," not forgetting a few of the heartier drolleries of Rabelais, and one or two Phantasy pieces of the Lorrainean Callot, the whole when well shaken up and thrown out, would make a very tolerable imitation of "Hyperion." This may appear to be commendation but we do not intend it as such. Works like this of Professor Longfellow, are the triumphs of Tom O'Bedlam, and the grief of all true criticism.

In making this estimate, Poe was well within his rights as a critic. Whenever Longfellow left his strait but chosen way, and ventured on the highroad travelled by the many, he found the going difficult and unprofitable, and he transformed his admirers into apologists.

December: *The Conversation of Eiros and Charmion*. Poe, in this conception of a future life, disclosed a mental attitude that serves to illustrate certain of his moral qualities. By early training, as well as by a natural bent of his mind, he was strongly impressed with the actuality of a future state. Always he treated religious and moral problems with reverence, and while he did not accept dogmas, and professed no definite belief, he was never irreverent and was always respectful in his attitude toward religious matters.

Yet Poe was filled with a pantheistic hope that later became a morbid obsession, to which in his treatise on the origin of the Universe he gave free rein. That the problem of the stars had long dominated Poe's mind is evident from his early poem, *Al Araaf*, in which he gave free expression to the fancy that finally crystalized in *Eureka*

THE CONVERSATION OF EIROS AND CHARMION.

BY EDGAR A. POE.

EIROS. Why do you call me Eiros?

CHARMION. So henceforward will you always be called. You must forget, too, *my* earthly name, and speak to me as Charmion.

EIROS. This is indeed no dream!

CHARMION. Dreams are with us no more—but of these mysteries anon. I rejoice to see you looking life-like and rational. The film of the shadow has already passed from off your eyes. Be of heart, and fear nothing. Your allotted days of stupor have expired; and, to-morrow, I will myself induct you into the full joys and wonders of your novel existence.

EIROS. True—I feel no stupor—none at all. The wild sickness and the terrible darkness have left me, and I hear no longer that mad, rushing, horrible sound, like the “voice of many waters.” Yet my senses are bewildered, Charmion, with the keenness of their perception of *the new*.

CHARMION. A few days will remove all this—but I fully understand you, and feel for you. It is now ten earthly years since I underwent what you undergo—yet the remembrance of it hangs by me still. You have now suffered all of pain, however, which you will suffer in Aidenn.

EIROS. In Aidenn?

CHARMION. In Aidenn.

EIROS. Oh God!—pity me, Charmion!—I am overburdened with the majesty of all things—of the unknown now known—of the speculative Future merged in the august and certain Present.

CHARMION. Grapple not now with such thoughts. To-morrow we will speak of this. Your mind wavers, and its agitation will find relief in the exercise of simple memories. Look not around, nor forward—but back. I am burning with anxiety to hear the details of that stupendous event which threw you among us. Tell me of it. Let us converse of familiar things, in the old familiar language of the world which has so fearfully perished.

EIROS. Most fearfully, fearfully!—this is indeed no dream.

CHARMION. Dreams are no more. Was I much mourned, my Eiros?

EIROS. Mourned, Charmion?—oh deeply. To that last hour of all there hung a cloud of intense gloom and devout sorrow over your household.

CHARMION. And that last hour—speak of it. Remember that, beyond the naked fact of the catastrophe itself, I know nothing. When, coming out from among mankind, I passed into Night through the Grave—at that period, if I remember aught, the calamity which overwhelmed you was utterly unanticipated. But, indeed, I knew little of the speculative philosophy of the day.

EIROS. The individual calamity was, as you say, entirely unanticipated; but analogous misfortunes had been long a subject of discussion with astronomers. I need scarce tell you, my friend, that, even when you left us, men had agreed to understand those passages in the most holy writings which speak of the final destruction of all things by fire, as having reference to the orb of the earth alone. But in regard to the immediate agency of the ruin, speculation had been at fault from that epoch in astronomical knowledge in which the comets were divested of the terrors of flame. The very moderate density of these bodies had been well established. They had been observed to pass among the satellites of Jupiter, without bringing about any sensible alteration either in the masses or in the orbits of these secondary planets. We had long regarded the wanderers as vapory creations of inconceivable tenuity, and as altogether incapable of doing injury to our substantial globe, even in the event of contact. But contact was not in any degree dreaded; for the elements of all the comets were accurately known. That among *them* we should look for the agency of the threatened fiery destruction had been for many years considered an inadmissible idea. But wonders and wild fancies had been, of late days, strangely rife among mankind; and, although it was only with a few of the ignorant that actual apprehension prevailed upon the announcement by astronomers of a *new* comet, yet this announcement was generally received with I know not what of agitation and mistrust.

The elements of the strange orb were immediately calculated, and it was at once conceded by all observers that its path, at perihelion, would bring it into very close proximity with the earth. There were two or three astronomers, and these of secondary note, who resolutely maintained that a contact was inevitable. I cannot very well express to you the effect of this intelligence upon the people. For a few short days they would not believe an assertion which their intellect, so long employed

as a demonstrated hypothesis. In this *Conversation*, he recounts the catastrophe that ended in world destruction, and raises his subject to a plane of heavenly contemplation characteristic of the noble qualities of soul with which nature had endowed him. Incidentally, in this, he drew the picture which, to him, represented the Aidenn of future happiness. Possibly each of us has the right to construct in imagination our own future abode, and to describe it in whatever light may best please our individual wishes: no man may approach this great problem which faces all of us without reverently uncovering, and voicing a hope, if not a belief, as to what the future will bring. At least each man's soul contains its own heaven; no two of us want the same future state, any more than, in life, our ambitions drive us for the same goal. Poe summarized in this story his confession of hope, although in no sense can it be said to have been a definite faith or belief.

The reviews both in the November and December numbers are without interest. Possibly these deficiencies marked the periodical seizures that at times obsessed Poe.

January, 1840: Poe's story of Western adventure, which he called *The Journal of Julius Rodman*, appeared in this issue. It continued until July, when the narrative ended somewhat abruptly because, at this time, Poe ceased his connection as editor with Burton. Unlike *Pym*, it contains nothing that shows any effort on the part of Poe either for imaginative effect, or of originality. It is a diary of ordinary happenings that befell a trapper who made his way to the headwaters of the Yellowstone. It contains nothing except a summary of what might have befallen the most unimaginative of explorers, and it must have been the result of editorial drudgery. In it, Poe closely follows Astoria, Lewis and Clarke's, Pike's, and the many other accounts of Western exploration. Probably it was modelled on the "Narrative of a Journey Across the



Rocky Mountains," by a naturalist named John K. Townsend, which was published in 1839. Certainly the *Journal of Julius Rodman* does not equal this Narrative in interest, and one cannot but regret that this composite compilation emanated from a man so capable of original description as was Poe.

The reviews, four in number, are somewhat elaborate. "Alciphron," a poem by Thomas Moore, was analyzed and unfavorably compared with "Queen Mab" in a manner that again exhibits Poe's capacity as a critic. While Poe did not major on these exhibitions of critical acumen, as he did in the "Messenger," the few serious attempts at this style of composition show him at his best.

February: *Peter Pendulum*—another unfortunate attempt at the humorous—is one of Poe's least worthy stories. This number also contained one of his well known reviews. The "Voices of the Night," by Longfellow, met Poe's most exacting standard of poetical perfection, and he gives it the praise and pays it the tribute that it so fully deserves. Coming from Poe such a criticism does not so much reflect credit on Longfellow, or add to his reputation as a poet, as it does on the capacity of Poe as a critic and on the honesty of his judgment.

It is by no means our design to speak of the volume before us in detail. The spirit of Professor Longfellow is as well determined from the shortest of these 'Voices of the Night,' (which are altogether his best pieces) as from all that he has written combined. We look upon the 'Beleaguered City' as his finest poem. There is a certainty of purpose about it which we do not discover elsewhere; and in it, the writer's idiosyncratic excellences, which are those of expression, chiefly, and of a fitful (unsteady) imagination, are the most strikingly displayed. The 'Hymn to the Night,' however, will be the greatest favorite with the public, from the fact that these idiosyncratic beauties are there more evident and more glowing.

I heard the trailing garments of the Night  
Sweep through her marble halls!  
I saw her sable skirts all fringed with light  
From the celestial walls!

I felt her presence, by its spell of might,  
     Stoop o'er me from above;  
 The calm, majestic presence of the Night,  
     As of the one I love.  
 I heard the sounds of sorrow and delight,  
     The manifold soft chimes  
 That filled the haunted chamber of the Night  
     Like some old poet's rhymes.  
 From the cool cisterns of the midnight air  
     My spirit drank repose;  
 The fountain of perpetual peace flows there—  
     From those deep cisterns flows.  
 O holy Night! from thee I learn to bear  
     What man has borne before!  
 Thou layest thy finger on the lips of care,  
     And they complain no more.

No poem ever opened with a beauty more august. The five first stanzas are nearly perfect—by which we mean that they are nearly free from fault, while embodying a supreme excellence. Had we seen nothing from the pen of the poet but these five verses, we should have formed the most exaggerated conception of his powers. Had he written always thus, we should have been tempted to speak of him not only as *our* finest poet, but as one of the noblest poets of all time.

This should be remembered rather than the "Longfellow War" that exhibited Poe's abnormal irritability. Even then, it was not lack of appreciation of Longfellow as a poet; simply an unnecessarily harsh method in his attempt to point out a certain tendency which Poe believed to be an unfortunate appropriation of the thoughts of others, but it is a tendency which all who take pleasure in the poems of Longfellow do not necessarily disapprove.

Although so unreservedly praising Longfellow, even at this time Poe did not fail to point out certain limitations. He denied Longfellow the universal capacity which he so fully awarded Tennyson long before the world recognized him as one of our greatest poets. That Longfellow had limitations all critics agree. In the end Poe's estimate must be accepted; yet the harshness of his later criticisms is regrettable and has greatly injured him in the estimation of all lovers of Longfellow, and in the estimation of all fair-minded men. Much also could be alleged

against the narrow limits both of Poe's poetry and of his tales, even though in the peculiar qualities that characterize them, they are supreme. His attacks are not yet forgotten—nor forgiven.

Probably it will be many years before a tablet marks the spot where Poe was born—could it now be located or imagined—and another generation will have passed before a statue to Poe adorns Boston Common. Poe, however, would not have aspired to such an honor.

It would be well for Poe compilers to take note of a statement made in this critical review: "Neither should any author, of mature age, desire to have this poetical character estimated by the productions of his mind at immaturity."

May: The leading article for this month was a formal discussion of Bryant, written to accompany a very excellent engraving of him. It is neither so long nor so elaborate as the "Messenger" review, though in it Poe reasserts the opinions and estimate formerly made. *The Philosophy of Furniture* was a criticism by Poe on the prevailing taste of "glitter" and "glare" which he attributes to our republican institutions and to the fact that "here, a man of large purse has a very little soul which he keeps in it."

July: The last chapter of the *Journal of Julius Rodman* appeared in this number, but the narrative was never completed. It also closed Poe's connection with Burton.

Poe's work in this magazine again represented all that he had written up to this time; while small in quantity, its quality is so good as to entitle the "Gentleman's" to a position of honor in all Poe collections. With the "Southern Literary Messenger," of which, as far as Poe is concerned, it is the successor, it represents all the surviving work of Poe with a few exceptions. The one "stain" on it is the continual introduction of stories by Burton; these brand the man the literary quack Poe asserted him to be.

Nothing else of interest in 'Graham's,' as it relates to Poe, requires mention except *The Man in the Crowd*, strongly reminiscent of Hawthorne, although I believe that this field was Poe's by right of priority of occupation.

After Poe's connection with the "Gentleman's" had terminated, for some months he made no serious attempt to find a position. Poe had long been ambitious to found a magazine and, for many months preceding his separation from Burton, this idea seems to have so obsessed him that this was alleged to have been the dominating cause.

Temperamental incompatibility also must have been a powerful factor of that separation. Poe demanded independence of action and the right freely to express his opinions—a liberty he necessarily took, no matter whom he hurt. Griswold alleges that Poe took advantage of his connection with the "Gentleman's" in founding this new magazine. Necessarily, when Poe did undertake to establish "The Penn Magazine," which at once became his dominating idea, he made use of all possible means to further his project. What aid his knowledge of the circulation of the "Gentleman's" would have been is not apparent, for it was the public approval he sought. It could be won only by the pabulum offered, and that was *not* such as Poe could provide. It took a more tempting menu to satisfy the national taste, and it was supplied—*ad nauseam*.

GRAHAM'S LADY'S AND GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE. (The Casket and Gentleman's United) Embracing Every Department of Literature: Embellished with Engravings, Fashions and Music, arranged for the Piano-forte, Harp and Guitar. Philadelphia: George R. Graham. 1841.

Volume XVIII and XIX to December, 1841.

Volume XX and XXI to December, 1842.

Volume XXII-XXXV to December, 1849.

At the end of 1840, as the above title indicates, "The Gentleman's Magazine" was bought by Graham, and, with this consolidation, the scope of the magazine was broadened to include a larger clientele. One short word was added to the title that made for popularity. This word was "Lady's." The journal was so designed as to include all that would prove of interest to its female readers, as well as the males to which the "Gentleman's" had catered. For this reason fashion plates, mat-work on embossed paper designs, and steel engravings were added, forming a combination of picturesque atrocities that rivalled those to be found in "Godey's Lady's Book."

The "Metzotinto" reproductions were a chromo horror unbelievable to those not acquainted with the fashion plates of those days, while the "embossed work" consisted of such paper perforations as now line our candy boxes. The steel engravings were well done, and the titles—"Stags at Bay," "The Gleaners," "The Playmates," with "Why Don't He Come?" and "He Comes,"—together with certain musical selections that the lack of a rhythmical soul prevents me from judging, appealed to the readers of those days. At the time the "Gentleman's" was consolidated with "The Casket," their combined circulation did not exceed 5000. At the end of 1842 it had reached 40,000.

It is certain that whatever energy or able editorial work Poe might have injected into his proposed "Penn Magazine," it never could have survived such competition. From his prospectus it would seem that his only ambition was to furnish a high-class literary and critical magazine such as would represent the best that America could produce. His plan failed and he was compelled again to seek editorial work.

Early in 1841, Poe was offered an assistant editorship on Graham's magazine and, for the present foregoing his plan to establish his own, this offer was accepted.

In the preface to the "Tales of the Grotesque and Arabesque" Poe apparently bade adieu to the "Germanic" horrors, with the result that most of the tales he now published assumed that ratiocinative character for which he is so greatly admired. It is impossible to claim priority for any special class either of poems or tales. They were miscellaneous in character, and the date of their publication was in no way indicative of the time at which they were written. Undoubtedly many of Poe's poems and tales had been in the possession of various editors, who either did not recognize their literary value or believed the public would be unappreciative of their merit. After Poe's direct connection with the editorship of "Graham's" had ceased, he submitted for publication the most popular of his stories, *The Gold Bug*. After it had lain in Graham's drawer for some months, unpublished, Poe withdrew it and entered it for the \$100 prize offered by an obscure newspaper of Philadelphia, named "The Dollar Newspaper." For this reason *The Gold Bug* was ushered into the world in a paper so ephemeral that only one copy, now in the possession of the Maryland Historical Society, can be found.

The facts regarding *The Raven* seem to be a matter of even greater uncertainty, not only as to method of composition but also as to date. Mr. Rosenbach, in an article published in 1887, states:

I read *The Raven* before it was published, and was in Mr. George R. Graham's office when the poem was offered to him. Poe said that his wife and Mrs. Clemm were starving, and he was in very pressing need of money. I carried him \$15 that contributed by Mr. Graham, Mr. Godey, Mr. McMichael and others, who condemned the poem, but gave the money as a charity.

Possibly it was not altogether due to a stupid and unappreciative public that the importance of Poe's work received such slight recognition.

The nature of the articles contributed to "Graham's" makes this a question of biographical and psychological

interest. It is possible that Poe again had collected much new work, which he failed to insert either in "Burton's" or "Graham's" because the recompense he received from these journals was not in proportion to the contributions furnished. With some brilliant exceptions, "Graham's" was the receptacle of his twice, and, occasionally, thrice told tales; this constant repetition raises the doubt of Poe's continuing capacity for original work. While it does not seem necessary to particularize all of his contributions in "Graham's," certain of those he did furnish were among his best.

In April appeared *The Murders in the Rue Morgue*; in May, *A Descent into the Maelstrom*; in June, *The Island Fay*; in August, *The Colloquy of Monos and Una*. These stories probably mark the very highest point to which the genius of Poe attained, although it is possible that they had been among those stories laid away for special publication. It is not certain that *The Descent into the Maelstrom* was among these, or that it was included among "The Tales of the Folio Club" offered to Carey & Lea in 1834. But it is to be remarked that these stories, with one or two exceptions, included all the work he furnished in the way of prose contributions. This supposed deterioration only holds true of his prose works: his poetical gift, his sense of melody with the increasing knowledge of versification, held till the end. The *Marginalia* and *Literati* critiques, in which he so unsparingly lashed those who had been aptly called the "Quacks of Helicon," were but repetitions of his former criticisms and, with few exceptions, they add nothing to the value of the critical estimates given.

In "Graham's" Poe again took up his articles on autography and exhibited remarkable ability in deciphering all cryptograms offered him for solution. Although the process seems simple it is one difficult for the mind to grasp.

It is possible that *The Raven*, not published till some

years later, was built up on the foundation of reasoning and deduction Poe attempted to explain in his essay, *Rationale of Verse*; if so, the process is so unintelligible to ordinary comprehension that the majority of critics have refused to accept it.

Harrison, in summarizing the work of Poe, remarks:

At thirty years of age, before George Eliot or Emerson, or one might say Walter Scott, had begun to write, Poe had produced most of the prose and much of the verse, upon which his enduring fame will rest.

None of the writers Harrison mentions possessed any of the genius that resulted in the early development of a Keats or a Shelley, a Burns, a Byron, or a Poe. They bloomed early and, productively speaking, they died early.

Although their names are immortal, their lives were filled with evil fortune and unhappiness, mainly for the reason that their point of view so differed morally, or their vision was so distorted by hereditary obsessions, that they could not be judged by the standards the normal man has established.

It is not necessary to list the many republications and revisions of the works that Poe printed in "Graham's."

It is possible that he used many of these merely for the purpose of filling unoccupied space, and it is certain they brought him no extra compensation. In his last few months, while employed on "Graham's" these contributions were infrequent. Two additional stories, *The Masque of the Red Death* and *The Oval Portrait*, complete his publications during the time he was employed as editor.

It is known that these contributions were continued for some years after Poe left "Graham's", although there is no certainty as to titles. These consisted principally of reviews, but they did not include any of his well known tales or poems.



THE NEW MIRROR, of Literature, Amusement and Instruction: containing Original Papers; Tales of Romance; Sketches of Society, Manners, and Everyday Life; Domestic and Foreign Correspondence; Wit and Humour; Fashion and Gossip; the Fine Arts, Literary and Dramatic Criticism; Extracts from New Works; Poetry, Original and Selected; The Spirit of the Public Journals; etc., etc., etc. Edited by George P. Morris. Illustrated by J. G. Chapman. Published Weekly.

Volume I. April to September, 1843

Volume II. October to March 30, 1844

Volume III. April to November, 1844

Later N. P. Willis was associated in the management.

Harrison assigns a great number of contributions signed E. P., which appeared in the "New Mirror," to Poe. They are translations from the French, and cover many subjects. They belong to the "pot-boiler" class, show no originality and, if made by Poe, could only have been undertaken through sheer necessity.

While Poe was not officially connected with "the New Mirror" until late in September, 1843, his contributions date from May. They consisted of translations from the French, usually short stories. Finally he majored on a long serial called *The Merchants Daughter*. As a "mechanical paragraphist", Poe continued to be regularly employed on this publication for the balance of this year, and contributed many translations but his work cannot definitely be identified. Woodberry states:

The statement that Poe contributed translations from the French to the *New Mirror* from April, 1843, to its discontinuance, and signed with his initials, rests on a negligent examination of the files. The translations referred to begin January 3, 1843 (i, 9) and are signed E. P.; they continue to the end, but they are also signed at the beginning of the articles 'By a Lady.' For example, i, 307, 355, etc. The complete list is published in *The Virginia Poe*, xvi, 368-371. They are perhaps from the pen of Emily Percival.

As a rule Woodberry is at least accurate, but why he went so far astray, when this paper was accessible, is not understandable. The "New Mirror" was first issued in April 8, 1843, and i, 9 is a blank so far as Poe is concerned. May 13 is properly named as the first date of the appearance of these translations. Nor is Woodberry correct in his statement that these translations are prefaced, "By a Lady." They are signed E. P. and no mention of the lady translator is made till the third installment of *The Merchants Daughter*, i, 262, where the initials are missing. Many other translations bear the signature E. P., and Poe partisans will rejoice if ever it be established that they were made "By a Lady." Possibly a seizure temporarily incapacitated Poe. "By A Lady," without signature, continued through the three numbers that followed.

The last issue of "The New Mirror" was that of September 28, 1844. In this the editors made an illuminating

#### ANNOUNCEMENT

The undersigned, having for some time published a popular periodical, the postage on which varied, at the caprice of the postmasters, from *two cents to fifteen*, and having struggled in vain with the Department to secure either certainty or moderation, as to its cost by postage, have determined to struggle no longer against such oppressive discouragement, but to change the form of the Weekly Mirror, and to issue in addition a Daily Paper, to be called THE EVENING MIRROR. . . . THE WEEKLY MIRROR will contain the condensed spice and variety of the six daily papers, *without advertisements*. Adieu, dear reader, till we meet again.

The "Weekly Mirror" retained this name for only sixteen numbers when, without explanation, its title was changed to "New York Mirror", a name that was retained at least till 1846, covering all Poe association. It was on this newspaper that Poe was given a minor position—Woodberry calls it that of "an assistant or 'mechanical paragraphist'"—and it was mainly through this association that Willis was able, later, to speak with such positiveness as to Poe's habits, and to form the estimate of Poe's character that he used as the basis for his "Memoir."

Contained in these is much that Poe wrote in his capacity of "sub-editor", but it is difficult always to select. An article entitled *Plagiarism*, in No. 20, was his and it deals in no kindly vein with Griswold's "Poets and Poetry."

There is a sympathetic review of Poe's lecture on this production, written by Willis, containing this criticism:

What we heard last night convinced us, however, that one of the most readable and salable of *books* would be a dozen of such Lectures by Mr. Poe, and we give him a publisher's counsel to print them. . . . Mr. Poe gently waked up the American poetesses. He began with Mrs. Sigourney, whom he considered the best known, and who, he seemed to think, owed her famousness to the same cause as 'Old Boss Richards'—the being kept before the people. He spoke well of her poetry abstractly, but intimated that it was strongly be-Hemans'd, and that without the Hemans-hood and the newspaper iteration, Mrs. Sigourney would not be the first American Poetess. . . . Mrs. Osgood came next, and for her he prophesied a rosy future of increasing power and renown. . . . He spent some time in showing that the two Miss Davidsons, with all their merit, were afloat 'on bladders in a sea of glory.' The pricking of these bladders, by the way, and the letting out of Miss Sedgwick's breath, was most artistically well done. . . . Of the inspired males Mr. Poe only took up the copperplate five—BRYANT, HALLECK, LONGFELLOW, SPRAGUE and DANA. These, as having their portraits engraved in the frontispiece of Griswold's 'Poets and Poetry of America,' were taken to represent the country's poetry, and dropped into the melting-pot accordingly. Mr. BRYANT came first as the allowed best poet; but Mr. Poe, after giving him high praise, expressed a contempt for 'public opinion,' and for the opinion of all majorities, in matters of taste, and intimated that Mr. Bryant's universality of approval lay in his keeping within very narrow limits, where it was easy to have no faults. HALLECK, Mr. Poe praised exceedingly, repeating with great beauty of elocution his *Marco Bozarris*. LONGFELLOW, Mr. Poe said, had more genius than any other of the five, but his fatal alacrity at imitation made him borrow, when he had better at home. SPRAGUE, but for one drop of genuine poetry in a fugitive piece, was described by Poe as Pope and water. DANA found very little favor. Mr. Poe thought his metre harsh and awkward, his narrative ill-managed, and his conceptions eggs from other people's nests. . . . Mr. Poe had an audience of critics and poets—between two and three hundred of victims and victimizers—and he was heard with breathless attention.

It is greatly to be regretted that this is the only reference to his lecture, which is said to have contained a scathing criticism of Griswold's "Poets and Poetry of

America," and which Griswold failed to insert in Poe's "Complete Works."

It was in the "Weekly Mirror" that the Longfellow war raged. It was begun by Poe, who, in his criticism of Longfellow's "Waif", in No. 16, said:

Obviously, this volume is a collection of some few of the prettiest shells that have been thrown ashore by the poetic ocean; but, looking behind this idea, we see that Mr. Longfellow's real design has been to make a book of his 'Waifs,' and his own late compositions, conjointly; since these late compositions are not enough in number to make a book of themselves:—an ingenious thought, too, with which no one can possibly quarrel. There are fifty brief poems in all, exclusive of the Proem which is professedly by the compiler; and, of these fifty, the seventeen attributed to Anonymous (a person who writes more and better than any man living,) we take to be the work of him who composed *Outre-Mer*. . . . Let us mention some half dozen of the great names which embellish the compilation:—Shelley, Herrick, Marvel, Browning, Hood, and Horace Smith:—there are others, too, nearly, if not equally, eminent. Of course, then, we mean a compliment worth at least a bow with the hand upon the heart, when we say that the Proem is the worthiest composition in the volume.

It is unfortunate that this complete criticism has not been more widely republished. Harrison partly quotes it as it appeared in the *Marginalia*, but the heart of the criticism was omitted. Evidently Poe approved within certain limits, but his own *peculiar* method leaves me in doubt as to just how far this approval was intended seriously to be taken.

The first quatrain of this poem, nevertheless, embodies a fault of illustration which Mr. Longfellow often commits;—let us quote the verses:

"The day is done, and the darkness  
Falls from the wings of Night,  
As a feather is wafted downward  
From an eagle in his flight."

The *single* feather is imperfectly illustrative of the omniprevalent darkness—but our more special objection is to the likening of the falling of one feather to the falling of another.—Night is personified as a bird, and darkness (the feather of this bird) falls from it—how?—as another feather falls from another bird. Why, it does this *of course*. The illustration is identical—that is to say, null. It has no more force than an identical proposition in logic.

It is probable that Poe attempted a compliment in the following:

There is no error, as a general rule, more certainly fatal to a poem than defective *rhythm*;—but in this case the cautious, skillfully planned and dexterously executed *slip-shod-iness* is so thoroughly in unison with the *nonchalant* air of the thoughts—which, again, are so capitally applicable to the thing done—(a mere introduction of other people's fancies)—that the effect of the looseness of metre becomes palpable, and we see at once that here is a case in which to be *correct* would have been inartistic.

Evidently Poe resented the fact that “no American poet was included among Longfellow's selections”; he concluded his criticism as follows:

We conclude our notes on the ‘Waif,’ with the observation that, although full of beauties, it is infected with a *moral taint*—or is this a mere freak of our own fancy? We shall be pleased if it be so;—but there *does* appear, in this exquisite little volume, a very careful avoidance of all American poets who may be supposed especially to interfere with the claims of Mr. Longfellow. These men Mr. Longfellow can continuously *imitate* (is that the word?) and yet never even incidentally commend.

It was this final thrust that induced Willis, in the same issue, to offer his columns to any Boston friend who desired to answer. This was feebly responded to by a correspondent signing himself H., denying that Longfellow had written *any* of the anonymous poems. As a matter of fact, the “Proem” was the only poem contributed by Longfellow.

It is difficult to understand Poe's reason for using the pseudonym “Quarles” in the *American Review* while his own name prefaced the “Mirror” publication.

In the February 1845 number *The Raven* was published. This poem having been issued in advance, the following explanation was prefaced:

We are permitted to copy (in advance of publication) from the 2d No. of the ‘American Review,’ the following remarkable poem by EDGAR POE. In our opinion, it is the most effective single example of ‘fugitive poetry’ ever published in this country; and unsurpassed in English poetry for subtle conception, masterly ingenuity of versification, and consistent sustaining of imaginative lift and ‘pokerishness.’ It is one of these ‘dainties bred in a book’ which we *feed* on.



In Number 22, in an adjoining column to that containing Willis's review of the Poe lecture, was finally printed a reply, signed by Outis, and Poe found a worthy foeman. The war was prosecuted with vigor in the "Mirror," till Willis refused further space, and then on Poe's part in the "Broadway Journal." The "Mirror" contains much else, both that Poe wrote and that referred to Poe. Among the latter were several parodies of *The Raven*. One of these was called "The Owl," another "The Whippoorwill"; neither rose above the mediocrity of parodies although they showed the rapidity with which *The Raven* had become popularized. Probably the best thing was a humorous prose criticism, attempting an analysis of the underlying thought—which proved that there was no "think." Poe was sensitive to these criticisms and complained of them as silly and pointless.

Nearly fifty other pieces, mostly reviews and translations, which appeared in the "Mirror" have been attributed to Poe. Many of these were signed E. P., but none of them deserves particular notice; they were perfunctory contributions made in his capacity as editor. During this time many of his noteworthy productions were published in other journals, for the reason, apparently, that in the salaried position Poe occupied he could not afford to furnish articles that other magazines were willing to buy. During this time appeared in various publications: *The Tell Tale Heart*, a marvelous description, from the alienist's standpoint, of an incipient homicidal mania, *The Pit and The Pendulum*, *The Mystery of Marie Roget*, *Lenore*, *The Gold Bug* and *The Black Cat*. It was only by courtesy that *The Raven* appeared in the "Mirror."

In addition to these major productions, many others less well known were published. *Morning on the Wissahicon*, republished under the title *The Elk*, *A Tale of the Ragged Mountains*, *The Balloon Hoax*, *Diddling Con-*

sidered as *One of the Exact Sciences*, *Mesmeric Revelations*, *The Premature Burial*, *The Oblong Box*, *The Angel of the Odd*, as well as his *Marginalia*, appeared in various magazines and annuals.

This certainly was the fruiting season of Poe's genius. Or was it that *The Raven* created a demand for his poems and tales, and caused them more eagerly to be sought for both by publishers and the public?

THE PIONEER. A Literary and Critical Magazine. J. R. Lowell and R. Carter, Editors and Proprietors. January, 1843. Boston: Leland and Whiting, 67 Washington Street, opposite the Post Office.

This journal was established and was excellently edited by Lowell, although it did not survive the year that gave it birth. While Lowell's work is trifling, consisting of one poem, a few essays, and probably "literary notices" and "literary intelligence," he was fortunate in the character of his contributors. John Neal, the Yankee editor, furnished several readable sketches, the one on "Aaron Burr" being of special interest.

Hawthorne published in "The Pioneer" his well known tales "The Hall of Fantasy" and "The Birth Mark."

It is interesting at this time to look back and attempt to recognize those Hawthorne placed in this Hall. One is not surprised to find Longfellow occupying a well deserved seat, but that Holmes should occupy the Throne of Honor is a little startling. Who was Percival? and by what right did Pierpont and Sprague, or even Dana occupy seats among the poets? It is embarrassing to read of "The young author of Dolon," and to have another referred to as the "author of Arthur Mervyn," yet I suppose it is possible for some book worm to delve into the archives of our early literature and read the riddle. Charles Brockden Brown's name recalls no answering memory, nor do I



# THE PIONEER.

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Literary and Critical Magazine.

J. R. LOWELL AND R. CARTER,  
EDITORS AND PROPRIETORS.

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1843.

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VOL. I.—NO. 1.

Reform, therefore, without bravery or scandal of former times and persons; but yet set it down to thyself as well to create good precedents as to follow them.

LORD BACON.

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BOSTON:  
LELAND AND WHITING,  
67 WASHINGTON STREET, OPPOSITE THE POST OFFICE.

Three sheet periodical.

PRINTED BY FREEMAN AND BOLLER,

\$3 per. ann. in adv.

believe that the fault lies altogether with myself. Halleck and Willis occupy prominent positions. Sargent, Tuckerman and Hillard receive mention, while "Lowell, the poet of the generation that now enters upon the stage," is especially honored. "There was Washington Allston, who possesses the freedom of the hall by the threefold claim of painter, novelist and poet." Another reference deserves notice: "I saw Mr. Rufus Griswold, with pencil and memorandum book, busily noting down the names of all the poets and poetesses there, and likewise of some, whom nobody but himself had suspected of ever visiting the hall." Evidently Griswold was not highly regarded even in his own day. A strange omission was the name of Whittier.

I looked eagerly for some reference to Poe. Finally it came at the bottom of the list. Evidently he was not loved, nor regarded as a literary man—rather he was placed as a critic in the "Hall" erected by the kindest and one of the greatest of our men of letters. He was *persona non grata* in this assemblage of the Unknowns. "Mr. Poe had gained ready admittance for the sake of his imagination, but was threatened with ejection, as belonging to the obnoxious class of critics."

But, side by side with this semi-humorous statement of Hawthorne's was Poe's refutation, and the printed evidence of his right not only to entry but to primacy. Although only three numbers of the "Pioneer" were published, each contain a proof of Poe's supremacy in the three departments in which he excelled. The January number contained *The Tell Tale Heart*. In that of February was his revised and reconstructed *Paean*, republished as *Lenore*. The third and concluding number contained Poe's *Notes upon English Verse*, probably his most logical essay in that field in which he was master. The one published in the November, 1848, "Southern Literary Messenger," under the title *The Rationale of Verse*, while more elaborated, I believe

## SONNET.

BY J. R. LOWELL.

Our love is not a fading earthly flower ;  
 Its winged seed dropt down from paradise,  
 And nursed by day and night, by sun and shower,  
 Doth momentarily to fresher beauty rise :  
 To us the leafless autumn is not bare,  
 Nor winter's rattling boughs lack lusty green,  
 Our summer hearts make summer's fulness where  
 No leaf or bud or blossom may be seen :  
 For nature's life in love's deep life doth lie,  
 Love — whose forgetfulness is beauty's death,  
 Whose mystic key these cells of thou and I  
 Into the infinite freedom openeth,  
 And makes the body's dark and narrow grate  
 The wide-flung leaves of heaven's palace-gate.

## THE TELL-TALE HEART.

BY EDGAR A. POE.

Art is long and Time is fleeting,  
 And our hearts, though stout and brave,  
 Still, like muffled drums, are beating  
 Funeral marches to the grave.

*Longfellow.*

TAVE! — nervous — very, very dreadfully nervous I had been, and am ; but why *will* you say that I am mad? The disease had sharpened my senses — not destroyed — not dulled them. Above all was the sense of hearing acute. I heard all things in the heaven and in the earth. I heard many things in hell. How, then, am I mad? Harken! and observe how healthily — how calmly I can tell you the whole story.

It is impossible to say how first the idea entered my brain ; but, once conceived, it haunted me day and night. Object there was none. Passion there was none. I loved the old man. He had never wronged me. He had never given me insult. For his gold I had no desire. I think it was his eye! — yes, it was this! He had the eye of a vulture — a pale blue eye, with a film over it. Whenever it fell upon me, my blood ran cold ; and so, by degrees — very gradually — I made up my mind to take the life of the old man, and thus rid myself of the eye forever.

Now this is the point. You fancy me mad. Madmen know nothing. But you should have

seen me. You should have seen how wisely I proceeded — with what caution — with what foresight — with what dissimulation I went to work! I was never kinder to the old man than during the whole week before I killed him. And every night, about midnight, I turned the latch of his door and opened it — oh so gently! And then, when I had made an opening sufficient for my head, I first put in a dark lantern, all closed, closed, so that no light shone out, and then I thrust in my head. Oh, you would have laughed to see how cunningly I thrust it in! I moved it slowly — very, very slowly, so that I might not disturb the old man's sleep. It took me an hour to place my whole head within the opening so far that I could see the old man as he lay upon his bed. Ha! — would a madman have been so wise as this! And then, when my head was well in the room, I undid the lantern cautiously — oh, so cautiously (for the hinges creaked) — I undid it just so much that a single thin ray fell upon the vulture eyes. And this I did for seven long nights — every night just at midnight — but I found the eye always closed ; and so it

shows evidence of Poe's mental deterioration. I do not believe that Poe's story, *The Tell Tale Heart*, in statement, in simplicity of construction, and in horror of conception, can be paralleled by any other in our language. It is a study of a homicidal maniac. As such, its superior is not found in our medical annals.

True!—nervous—very, very dreadfully nervous I had been and am; but why *will* you say that I am mad? The disease had sharpened my senses—not destroyed—not dulled them. Above all was the sense of hearing acute. I heard all things in the heaven and in the earth. I heard many things in hell. . . . It is impossible to say how first the idea entered my brain; but, once conceived, it haunted me day and night. . . . I loved the old man. He had never wronged me. He had never given me insult. For his gold I had no desire. I think it was his eye! Yes, it was this! One of his eyes resembled that of a vulture—a pale blue eye, with a film over it. Whenever it fell upon me my blood ran cold; and so by degrees—very gradually—I made up my mind to take the life of the old man, and thus rid myself of the eye forever. . . . You fancy me mad. Madmen know nothing. But you should have seen *me*. You should have seen how wisely I proceeded. . . . Every night about midnight, I turned the latch of his door and opened it. . . . I moved it slowly—very, very slowly, so that I might not disturb the old man's sleep. Would a madman have been so wise as this? . . . And this I did for seven long nights, but I found the eye closed; and so it was impossible to do the work; for it was not the old man who vexed me but his Evil Eye. . . . Upon the eighth night I was more than usually cautious in opening the door. A watch's minute hand moves more quickly than did mine. Never before that night, had I *felt* the extent of my own powers—of my sagacity. . . . I fairly chuckled at the idea; and perhaps he heard me; for he moved on the bed suddenly, as if startled. . . . I kept quite still and said nothing. For a whole hour I did not move a muscle. . . . Presently I heard a slight groan, and I knew it was the groan of mortal terror. . . . I knew the sound well. Many a night, just at midnight, when all the world slept it has welled up from my own bosom, deepening with its dreadful echo, the terrors that distracted me. . . . When I had waited a long time, very patiently, without hearing him lie down, I resolved to open a little—a very little crevice in the lantern. So I opened it—you cannot imagine how stealthily, stealthily—until, at length, a single dim ray, like the thread of the spider, shot from out the crevice and fell upon the vulture eye. It was open—wide, wide open—and I grew furious as I gazed upon it. I saw it with perfect distinctness—all a dull blue, with a hideous veil over it that chilled the very marrow of my bones; but I could see nothing else of the old man's face or person; for I had directed the ray as by instinct, precisely upon the damned spot.

And now have I not told you what you mistake for madness is but over acuteness of the senses?—now, I say, there came to my ears a low, dull, quick sound, such as a watch makes when enveloped in cotton. I knew *that* sound well, too. It was the beating of the old man's heart. It increased my fury, as the beating of a drum stimulates the soldier into courage. . . . Meantime the hellish tattoo of the heart increased. It grew quicker and quicker, and louder and louder every instant. . . . I say louder every moment! do you mark me well? . . . But the beating grew louder, louder! I thought the heart must burst. . . . With a yell I threw open the lantern and jumped into the room. He shrieked once—only once. . . . But, for many minutes the heart beat on with a muffled sound. This did not vex me; it would not be heard through the wall. . . . I placed my hand upon the heart and held it there many minutes. There was no pulsation. He was stone dead. His eye would trouble me no more. . . . I then took up three planks from the flooring of the chamber, and deposited it between the scantlings. . . . As the bell sounded the hour there came a knocking at the street door. I went down to open it with a light heart,—for what had I *now* to fear? There entered officers of the police. A shriek had been heard during the night; suspicion of foul play had been aroused. . . . I smiled, for *what* had I to fear? . . . I took my visitors all over the house. I bade them search—search *well*. I led them at last to *his* chamber. . . . I brought chairs into the room and desired them *here* to rest from their fatigues. . . . The officers were satisfied. My *manner* had convinced them. I was singularly at ease. . . . Ere long, I felt myself getting pale and wished them gone. My head ached, and I fancied a ringing in my ears: But still they sat and chatted. The ringing became more distinct:—it continued and became more distinct. I talked more freely but it continued and gained definiteness—until at length, I found that the noise was *not* in my ears.

No doubt I now grew very pale;—but I talked more fluently, and with a heightened voice. Yet the sound increased. It was a *low, dull, quick sound—much such a sound as a watch makes when enveloped in cotton*, yet the officers heard it not. I talked more quickly—more vehemently; but the noise steadily increased. . . . I foamed—I raved—I swore! I swung the chair upon which I had been sitting, and grated it upon the boards, but the noise rose above all and continually increased. It grew louder—louder—*louder!* And still the men chatted pleasantly and smiled. . . . I felt I must scream or die!—and now—again!—hark! louder! louder! louder! *louder!*—

“Villains!” I shrieked, “dissemble no more! I admit the deed!—tear up the planks,—here, here!—it is the beating of his hideous heart!”

Lauvrière is seriously in error in confusing the motive underlying this story with that of *The Black Cat*. In the latter, the murder was the compulsive act of a diseased

*compare  
to  
and*

brain inflamed and engorged by constant use of alcohol which produced morbid changes that resulted in uncontrollable outbreaks of anger, but with no delusion. Our medical literature, as well as our daily papers, have noted many such crimes. *The Tell Tale Heart* has a delusional basis and is to be differentiated, pathologically as well as etiologically, from *The Black Cat*. It is in this that its appeal to the psychiatrist lies. No better description exists of the slowly developing homicidal impulse, swayed by no passion or sudden emotion, but reasoned and premeditated, and based on an uncontrollable delusion.

THE BOSTON MISCELLANEY of Literature and Fashion.  
Edited by Nathan Hale, Jr.

Volume I. January to July, 1842,

Volume II. July to December, 1842

This magazine is only mentioned to protest against claims that have been made in its behalf as containing matter of Poe interest.

As far as I can ascertain these were the only two volumes of this "Miscellaney," published, and neither contained any reference to Poe, further than a review of "Griswold's American Poetry", and it is that one which Griswold paid Poe to write. Its insertion was probably the result of a *quid pro quo*, for, as Griswold assured Poe, he (Griswold) would find a way to have it published. Although this journal contains little Poeana, there is much of interest in it. There are several poems by Lowell, "The Old English Dramatis", and a few of his essays. W. W. Story, Longfellow, Thoreau, and other well known writers were contributors. It was profusely illustrated with fashion-plates and engravings. Among these, the Astor House, Bunker Hill Monument and Boston Common vividly recall past glories.

THE LADIES' COMPANION. A Monthly Magazine Embracing Every Department of Literature. Embellished with Original Engravings, and Music arranged for the Piano-forte and Guitar.

Volume XVIII. October, 1842, to May, 1843

Volume XIX. May, 1843, to October, 1843

New York: William W. Snowden

This magazine belongs to the same class of publication as "Graham's," "Godey's" and other of the periodicals that catered to the public taste of those days.

Unlike "Graham's," which for some years maintained a high standard, and included among its contributors the best known writers of those days, the "Ladies" apparently was satisfied with writers less well known—at least few names appeared which students of American literature now can place. Among this set of unknown writers, and in this distinctly third rate magazine, we find the name of Poe. It was in November, 1842, that the first installment of *The Mystery of Marie Roget* appeared, to be followed by the second installment in December, and the third and concluding installment in February, 1843. It is another of Poe's detective stories and he calls it "A Sequel to 'The Murders in the Rue Morgue'." It is in reality an attempted solution of a murder that actually had occurred. It is said that later developments seemed to establish Poe's deductions as correct, but all such statements are to be taken *cum grano salis*. However, Woodberry relates the ininteresting fact that Mary Rogers' employer, a man named Anderson, believed that he was in mediumistic communication with her, and that she not only detailed the facts of the murder but remained in personal association with him and advised him in business matters.

"Snowden's," for October, contained *The Landscape Garden*.

GODEY'S MAGAZINE AND LADY'S BOOK. Edited by Mrs. Sarah J. Hale, Morton M'Michael and Louis Godey.

Volumes XXVIII and XXIX to December, 1844

Volumes XXX and XXXI to December, 1845

Volumes XXXII and XXXIII to December, 1846

Volumes XXXIV to XL to December, 1849

Bad as the illustrations are, and absurd as are the fashion plates and the mezzo-tints of those days, the tales, sketches and poetry appeal even less to the taste of modern readers. Such inane contents indicate a demand that does not speak well for the literary judgment of those days.

Yet it is among these trivial contributions that we must seek for much of Poe's work. In this magazine was first published *A Tale of the Ragged Mountains*, *The Oblong Box*, *The Thousand and Second Tale of Scheherazade* and Numbers 3 and 4 of the *Marginalia*, the first two having been published in the "Democratic Review." *The Literati*, in its entirety, was published in "Godey's," May to October, 1846. Poe's last contribution was *The Cask of Amontillado*, in the November number. After that date his regular contributions ceased. In February, 1849, *Mellonta Tauta* was published. There were occasional reviews, the most notable one being entitled "Tale Writing: Hawthorne."

THE AMERICAN REVIEW. A Whig Journal of Politics, Literature, Arts and Science. New York: Wiley and Putnam. 1845.

Volumes I and II to December, 1845

Volumes III and IV to December, 1846

Volumes V and VI to December, 1847

Volumes VII and VIII to December, 1848.

In January, 1845, this American magazine, worthy of its great city, and of any period of American literature,



was first published. While from its title it would seem that, in its foundation, it was intended to be essentially political, and while for that reason it no longer holds the interest it at one time possessed, it represents the beginning of that great movement that ended in secession; and this subject in all its phases was most fully discussed. But it contained much of interest besides political subjects. There were reviews of foreign matters; especially was our relation to the "Naboth's Vineyard," surrounding us, frequently considered. Our policy in acquiring territory, especially as it related to Texas, Oregon and California, was seriously debated. Even the possibility of constructing a great Pacific railroad was fully discussed, and one is surprised by the breadth of vision our fore-fathers showed—in getting what we had no legal, but every right, utilitarian and economical to have. It would seem that, while honesty is the best policy, the other policy occasionally pays.

One of the delightful features of this magazine was that it was not all political, literary, or even confined to topics of world interest. It had, as an associate editor, C. W. Webber, who had sat at the feet of Audubon, and who well deserved the friendship that naturalist gave him. In return, and because of that friendship, we have some very delightful sketches and details of actual experiences relating to Audubon. In his younger and more adventurous life, Webber had lived among the wild animals, brute and human, and had studied many of the subjects that particularly interested Audubon. The two met in their travels, the one old in honors and already a celebrity, the other a neophyte,<sup>1</sup> but with a heart full of love and veneration. Webber's pen pictures give us much information of the great naturalist in the declining years of his life, when he was still vigorous mentally and physically.

Entertaining, and well worth preserving as these issues are, they would not have been so eagerly sought as

they have been, had not Poe also been a frequent and important contributor. For the second number issued in February, 1845, contains the original publication of *The Raven*. This poem was preceded by an explanatory note signed by the "Ed. Am. Rev." but which sounds extraordinarily like Poe.

The resources of English rhythm for varieties of melody, measure, and sound, producing corresponding diversities of effect, have been thoroughly studied, much more perceived by very few poets in the language. While the classic tongues, especially the Greek, possess, by power of accent, several advantages for versification over our own, chiefly through greater abundance of spondaic feet, we have other and very great advantages of sound by the modern usage of rhyme. Alliteration is nearly the only effect of that kind which the ancients had in common with us.

"Quarles," for some unknown reason, was selected as a pseudonym. In a note special attention is called to the poem as being "the most felicitous" that the writer had yet met with in the English language. It was also published in the "Mirror" simultaneously with its appearance in the "Review." In the "Mirror" Poe used his own name.

In the April number, *Some Words with a Mummy* was first published. In the same number two of Poe's poems, *The Valley of Unrest*, signed, and *The City by the Sea*, unsigned, also appeared. To the July number Poe contributed *Eulalie—A Song*. In September there was an elaborate review of Poe's tales, a revision of which had just appeared, published by Wiley and Putnam. This was probably written by Duyckinck, who had made the selection—a selection which Poe hotly resented as not representing his best stories.

Another and important contribution by Poe was made to the "Review" in December, 1845, when *The Facts in the Case of M. Valdemar* was published. This was the second of his tales that had been separately republished in England. It was given the following title:

MESMERISM IN ARTICULO MORTIS. An astounding and horrifying narrative, showing the extraordinary power of mesmerism in arresting the Progress of Death. By Edgar A. Poe, Esq., of New York. London: Short & Co. 1846. 8 King St. Bloomsbury. Price three pence.

It was with reference to this tale that an apothecary, who lived in Stonehaven, Scotland, wrote Poe inquiring as to the authenticity of the story. His letters were given *in extenso* in the "Virginia Poe," although, at that time, Poe's answer, which completed the correspondence, had not been found.

It was to this letter that Poe referred when he wrote to Duyckinck:

By the enclosed letter from Stonehaven, Scotland, you will see that 'The Valdemar Case' still makes a talk, and that a pamphlet edition of it has been published by Short and Co. of London under the title of 'Mesmerism in Articulo Mortis.' It has fairly gone the rounds of the London Press, commencing with 'The Morning Post.' 'The Monthly Record of Science' etc. gives it with the title 'The Last Days of M. Valdimir, by the author of a Somnambule.' My object in enclosing the Scotch letter and the one from Miss Barrett, is to ask you to do me a favor which (*just at this moment*) may be of great importance. It is, to make a paragraph or two for some one of the city papers.

For many years this answer of Poe's had been lost, and the finding of it was the result of a search instituted because the Stonehaven letters had been found among Griswold's possessions. It is this letter I was fortunate enough to find. It completes the Ramsay correspondence.

This inquiry and Poe's answer, with the concluding Ramsay letter, as a specimen of "Scotch density," is worth recording.

Stonehaven, Scotland,  
Nov. 30 1846.

Sir: As a believer in Mesmerism I respectfully take the liberty of addressing you to know if a pamphlet lately published in London by Short & Co., (Bloomsbury) under the authority of your name & entitled *Mesmerism, in Articulo-Mortis*, is genuine.

It details an acc't of some *most extraordinary circumstances*, con-

nected with the death of a M. Valdemar under mesmeric influence by you. Hoax has been most emphatically pronounced upon the pamphlet by all who have seen it here, & for the sake of the Science & of truth a note from you will oblige.

In behalf of the Science,

Your very obt. Svt.

Arch Ramsay.

To Edgar A. Poe, Esq.,  
New York.

Please address A. Ramsay,  
Stonehaven, Scotland.

New York

December 30. 46.

Dear Sir: Hoax is precisely the word suited to M. Valdemar's case. The story appeared originally in 'The American Review,' a Monthly Magazine, published in this city. The London papers, commencing with the 'Morning Post' and the 'Popular Record of Science,' took up the theme. The article was generally copied in England and is now circulating in France. Some few persons believe it—but I do not—and do not you.

Very Resp:

Yr ob. St.

Edgar A. Poe.

P.S. I have some relatives, I think, in Stonehaven, of the name of Allen, who again are connected with the Allens and Galts of Kilmarnock. My name is Edgar *Allan* Poe. Do you know any of them? If so, and it would not put you to too much trouble, I would take it as a favor if you could give me some account of the family.

To A. Ramsay Esq.

Stonehaven, Kincardineshire, Scotland

14 April, 1847.

Dear Sir,—I was duly honored with your kind favor of the 30 Decr last & have to apologize for my ingratitude in not sooner returning my best thanks for the trouble you had taken in replying to my enquiry regarding the case of M. Valdemar but I delayed from time to time in expectation of being able to find out the parties you enquire about of the name of Allan. I am however sorry to say that all my endeavors have been in vain,

There are a good number of the name here & hereabout, & I have made inquiry of all of them I could find but none of them appear to be connected with the families or the place you mention.

If you can give me any other clue by which they might be traced I shall be most happy to do anything in my power to find them.

The Pamphlet on Vademar is published in your name as *the sole*

New York

December 30. 45.

Sir,

"Loax" is precisely the word suited to M. Valdemar's case. The story appeared originally in "The American Review", a Monthly Magazine, published in this city. The London papers, commencing with the "Morning Post" and the "Popular Record of Science", took up the theme. The article was generally copied in England and is now circulating in France. Some few persons believe it — but I do not — and don't you

Very Resp<sup>d</sup>.

Yr Obed. Serv<sup>t</sup>.

Edgar A. Poe

P.S. I have some relations, I think, in Stonehaven, of the name of Allan, who again are connected with the Allans and Galts of Kilmarnock. My name is Edgar Allan Poe. Do you know any of them. If so, and it would not put you to too much trouble, I would take it as a favor if you could give me some account of the family.

To A. Ramsay Esq.





JAN 1847

A. January 23

Trichaven

Portland.

Post

1847

JAN 1847



conductor & operator in the case so I thought you could at once affirm or deny it, but from the tenor of your letter to me this appears not to be the fact.

I am Dear Sir  
 Very Respectfully  
 Your Much obliged & obdt Svt  
 Arch Ramsay  
 Druggist

Another important contribution to the "American Review" for December, 1847 was *Ulalume*. When it was written, or how long it had been laid away, is not certain. Poe apparently hesitated to publish it. A Miss Ingram, recalling a meeting with Poe, says:

He recited *The Raven*, *Annabel Lee*, and last of all *Ulalume*, with the last stanza of which he remarked that he feared it might not be intelligible to us, as it was scarcely intelligible to himself and, for that reason, had not been published.

In a letter to the same lady Poe wrote:

I have transcribed *Ulalume* but I fear you will find the verses scarcely more intelligible today in my manuscript than last night in my recitation. I would endeavor to explain to you what I really meant—or what I fancied I meant, by the poem, if it were not that I remembered Dr. Johnson's bitter remarks about the folly of explaining what, if worth explanation, would explain itself. He has a happy witicism, too, about some book, which he calls 'as obscure as an explanatory note.'

As to the morbid mental state that inspired the composition of *Ulalume*, and as to Poe's method, I quote Woodberry:

It is built out of the refrain, the most difficult mode of construction, and consequently it requires in the reader not only a willingness to accept monotony as a means of expression, but a content with it; the thought moves so slowly, with such difficult increments of meaning and indistinguishable deepening of tone, that, like an expiring mind, it just only keeps wearily in action. . . . For these and other reasons the sympathetic mood without which no such poem is comprehended, must be of rare occurrence in this case; but if ever that mood comes,—that physical exhaustion and mental gloom and dreaming upon the dark, in which the modes of expression in this poem are identical with those of nature . . . this poem may well seem the language of a spirit sunk in blank and moaning despair, and at every move beaten back hopelessly on himself. It was written at the period of Poe's

T O — — — .

## ULALUME: A BALLAD.

THE skies they were ashen and sober;  
 The leaves they were crisped and sere—  
 The leaves they were withering and sere;  
 It was night in the lonesome October  
 Of my most immemorial year;  
 It was hard by the dim lake of Auber,  
 In the misty mid region of Weir—  
 It was down by the dank tarn of Auber,  
 In the ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir

Here once, through an alley Titanic,  
 Of cypress, I roamed with my Soul—  
 Of cypress, with Psyche, my Soul.  
 These were days when my heart was volcanic  
 As the scoriac rivers that roll—  
 As the lavas that restlessly roll  
 Their sulphurous currents down Yaanek  
 In the ultimate climes of the pole—  
 That groan as they roll down Mount Yaanek  
 In the realms of the boreal pole.

Our talk had been serious and sober,  
 But our thoughts they were palsied and sere—  
 Our memories were treacherous and sere—  
 For we knew not the month was October,  
 And we marked not the night of the year—  
 (Ah, night of all nights in the year!)  
 We noted not the dim lake of Auber—  
 (Though once we had journeyed down here)—  
 We remembered not the dank tarn of Auber,  
 Nor the ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir.

And now, as the night was senescent  
 And star-dials pointed to morn—  
 As the star-dials hinted of morn—  
 At the end of our path a liquescent  
 And nebulous lustre was born,  
 Out of which a miraculous crescent  
 Arose with a duplicate horn—  
 Astarte's bediamonded crescent  
 Distinct with its duplicate horn.

And I said—"She is warmer than Dian:  
 She rolls through an ether of sighs—  
 She revels in a region of sighs:  
 She has seen that the tears are not dry on  
 These cheeks, where the worm never dies,  
 And has come past the stars of the Lion  
 To point us the path to the skies—  
 To the Lethean peace of the skies—  
 Come up, in despite of the Lion,  
 To shine on us with her bright eyes—  
 Come up through the lair of the Lion  
 With Love in her luminous eyes."

But Psyche, uplifting her finger,  
 Said—"Sadly this star I mistrust—  
 Her pallor I strangely mistrust :—  
 Oh, hasten !—oh, let us not linger !  
 Oh, fly !—let us fly !—for we must."  
 In terror she spoke, letting sink her  
 Wings till they trailed in the dust—  
 In agony sobbed, letting sink her  
 Plumes till they trailed in the dust—  
 Till they sorrowfully trailed in the dust.

I replied—"This is nothing but dreaming :  
 Let us on by this tremulous light !  
 Let us bathe in this crystalline light !  
 Its Sybillic splendor is beaming  
 With Hope and in Beauty to-night :—  
 See !—it flickers up the sky through the night !  
 Ah, we safely may trust to its gleaming,  
 And be sure it will lead us aright—  
 We safely may trust to a gleaming  
 That cannot but guide us aright,  
 Since it flickers up to Heaven through the night."

Thus I pacified Psyche and kissed her,  
 And tempted her out of her gloom—  
 And conquered her scruples and gloom :  
 And we passed to the end of the vista,  
 And were stopped by the door of a tomb—  
 By the door of a legended tomb ;  
 And I said—"What is written, sweet sister,  
 On the door of this legended tomb ?"  
 She replied—"Ulalume—Ulalume—  
 'Tis the vault of thy lost Ulalume !"

Then my heart it grew ashen and sober  
 As the leaves that were crisped and sere—  
 As the leaves that were withering and sere,  
 And I cried—"It was surely October  
 On this very night of last year  
 That I journeyed—I journeyed down here—  
 That I brought a dread burden down here—  
 On this night of all nights in the year,  
 Oh, what demon has tempted me here ?  
 Well I know, now this dim lake of Auber—  
 This misty mid region of Weir—  
 Well I know, now, this dank tarn of Auber,  
 In the ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir."

Said we, then—the two, then—"Ah, can it  
 Have been that the woodlandish ghouls—  
 The pitiful, the merciful ghouls—  
 To bar up our way and to ban it  
 From the secret that lies in these wolds—  
 From the thing that lies hidden in these wolds—  
 Had drawn up the spectre of a planet  
 From the limbo of lunar souls—  
 This sinfully scintillant planet  
 From the Hell of the planetary souls ?"

lowest physical exhaustion. . . . It is more than likely that the lack of finish in conjunction with the justness of touch in its essential structure, we have in this poem the most spontaneous, the most unmistakably genuine utterance of Poe, the most clearly self-portraying work of his hand.

Poe's own criticism of this poem is given in a letter to Willis:

My Dear Willis:—I send you an "American Review" in which is a ballad by myself, but published anonymously. It is called *Ulalume*—the page is turned down. I do not care to be known as its author just now, but I would take it as a great favor if you would copy it in the H. J. with a word of *inquiry* as to who wrote it;—provided always that you think the poem worthy the room it would occupy in your paper—a matter about which I am no way sure.

I do not believe that *Ulalume* was the result of a deliberate attempt at composition; rather, as Poe himself expressed it, "the words were actually present to me." Composed entirely of rhythm and of words whose import was intended to appeal only to a soul overburdened with woe, no poem was ever written comparable with it; if so, "it died in the borning."

#### THE BROADWAY JOURNAL.

Volume I. January to June, 1845

Volume II. June to January (3), 1846

As far as my own copy goes, this is all the information I have. I can find no title page nor table of contents. These usually follow at the end of the year but, in this case, it is probable that the end of the "Journal" seemed so near that such matters were considered useless effort. None of Poe's bibliographers seem to be in possession of all the facts. Harrison says: "Its collapse was announced the day after Christmas. . . . A final number, dated January 3, is said to have been issued under the editorship of Thomas Dunn English." There certainly was an issue of January 3, containing Poe's valedictory: but Harrison is mistaken in his

# THE BROADWAY JOURNAL.

VOL. 1.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, JANUARY 4, 1845.

N<sup>o</sup> 1.

*Fresh, whether in or out of fashion, is the measure of knowledge and the business of the understanding; whatsoever is beside that, however authorized by consent or recommended by variety, is nothing but ignorance, or something worse.*  
Locke.

## INTRODUCTORY.

There is but one way of coming into the world, says Dean Swift, although there are a great many ways of going out of it, and we wish there were but one way of coming before the public in a newspaper for the first time; that we might be spared the possibility of a blunder in our first appearance, by following in the line of safe precedents. But since we are left to our own discretion, and have no kind friend to take us by the hand and present us to our dear friend, the Public, we will tell our own story as shortly as possible.

It is not improbable that somebody may object to our name, and exclaim with Milton's Stall-reader,

*Hens us, what a world on  
A title page is this!*

but we have chosen it for the sake of individuality, and because it is indigenous, and furthermore is indicative of the spirit which we intend shall characterise our paper. Broadway is confessedly the finest street in the first city of the New World. It is the great artery through which flows the best blood of our system. All the elegance of our continent permeates through it. If there is a handsome equipage set up, its first appearance is made in Broadway. The most elegant shops in the City line its sides; the finest buildings are found there, and all fashions exhibit their first gloss upon its sidewalks. Although it has a character of its own, the traveller often forgets himself in walking through it, and imagines himself in London or Paris. Wall street pours its wealth into its broad channel, and all the dealers in intellectual works are here centered; every exhibition of art is found here, and the largest caravanseries in the world border upon it. Its pavement has been trod by every distinguished man that has visited our continent; those who travel through it are refreshed by the most magnificent fountains in the world. It has a sunny side too, where we have opened our office of delivery. It terminates at one end in the finest square in the city, doubtless in the Union, and at the other in the Battery, unrivalled for its entire beauty; by any marine parade in the world. So travellers say. For ourselves, we have seen many in the old world and the new, but none that equal it. As Paris is France, and London, England; so is Broadway, New York; and New York is fast becoming, if she be not already, America, in spite of South Carolina and Boston.

We have little hope of making our paper among other journals, what Broadway is among other streets, but we shall do what we can to render it in some degree worthy of the name that we have given it. We are fully aware that "we have a reasonable quantity of giants" to encounter in our undertaking, and that we have to rely more upon good intentions than good weapons to overcome them, but it must be an unreasonably tall giant that shall overcome our perseverance in the end.

In the conduct of our paper we shall follow the advice of Isaacates to his pupils, and "study the people," but rather with a

view to profit them than ourselves. We have a prodigious respect for the people, tempered with no small amount of love, but we think with Falstaff, "that either well-bearing, or ignorant carriage, is caught, as men take diseases, one of another; therefore it is well to take heed of our company;" and we shall choose rather to talk to the people than with them. We do not arrogate to ourselves the character of a reformer; yet we hope to reform some of the abuses which we sometimes hear spoken of as existing among us. The husbandman who never pulls up a weed in his garden can never hope to see them all removed from his enclosures.

We shall endeavor to make our paper entirely original,—and, instead of the effete vapors of English Magazines, which have heretofore been the chief filling of our weekly journals, give such homely thoughts as may be generated among us; and if our columns do not smack of home, it will be because "our spirits have been so married in conjunction with the participation of foreign society," that we cannot procure a divorce.

As we are entirely disconnected with any of the traders in literature, and have no personal friends among our literary producers,—saving an illustrious name or two, in Mr. Griswold's Pantheon—we have no inducements to indulge in the luxury of puffing; but we entertain so kindly a feeling towards the whole brood of unfortunates, called American authors, that we can never find it in our hearts to utter an ill word of them, or to treat them otherwise than with honest candor.

Although our daily and weekly press often contain admirable criticisms on literature and art, with the spirit of a quarterly review compressed into the limits of a half column, yet these are rather accidental than a general rule, and the public, in many cases, must submit to the actual caution of buying and reading a new book before they can judge of its quality. There are too many good things to be had for time and money, to waste these precious commodities on uncertain productions. A sixpence worth of honest criticism will often save a dollar, or an hour, from being mispent.

We shall devote a good part of our columns to the interests of American Art; especially to Painting and Architecture,—and shall give specimens of American designs, in both departments, as often as they can be procured of sufficient merit to entitle them to notice.

The Lecture room, the Concert, and the Theatre, will all be dealt with; and though we hoist the signal of no political party, we shall dabble in politics when there is any thing in the wind worth heeding.

As the refinement of modern times has given birth to a ladies' literature, which, out of compliment to the sex is made as unmeaning as possible, we shall so far conform to the complexion of the times as to have a LADIES' LEAF, wherein we shall do our best to be very lady-like and innocent. We can promise all, both ladies and gentlemen, that we shall raise no blushes on the cheek of modesty, because modest people are not easily put out of countenance; but the salacious and foul-minded are always changing colour. Our pen has two ends to it, and if we sometimes fail to

statement that it was in the issue of December 26. There was no issue on this date, December 27 being the last issue for the year 1845. It was numbered 25 and the final copy for January 3, 1846, was numbered 26. It still carried under its title the words, "Edgar A. Poe, Editor and Proprietor." It made no reference to English, but it did contain his Poem "Azthene." Poe contributed nothing except this farewell: "Unexpected engagements demanding my whole attention, and the objects being fulfilled, so far as regards myself personally, for which 'The Broadway Journal' was established, I now, as its editor, bid farewell—as cordially to foes as to friends.—Edgar A. Poe."

For just what purpose the "Journal" was established I have been unable to ascertain, further than the statement in the prospectus signed by John Briscoe that:

The 'Broadway Journal' will differ from any of the weekly Periodicals now published in this city, and it will be made up entirely of original matter consisting of Essays, Criticisms on Art and Literature, Domestic and Foreign Correspondence, and Literary and Scientific Intelligence.

In the early numbers Briscoe signed his name publisher, and mentions no editor, although it is known that Briggs was associated with him in that capacity. The number issued on March 10 contained the first public announcement connecting Poe, or other editors, with the "Journal": "C. F. Briggs, Edgar A. Poe, and C. H. Watson, Editors." The first issue was dated January 4, 1845. Briggs thus explained Poe's connection with the "Journal," which was not officially announced till the eighth number, although it had contained many Poe contributions:

Poe is an assistant to me, and will in no manner interfere with my own way of doing things. It was requisite that I should have his or some other person's assistance, on account of my liability to be taken off from the business of the paper, and as his name is of some authority I thought it advisable to announce him as an Editor.

Again Briggs wrote Lowell:

I thought it best to gain Poe's services as a critic because he always

had a reputation for reviewing, and I could gain them by allowing him a certain portion of the profits of the paper. . . . Poe's fol-de-rol about plagiarism I do not like, but the replies which it provokes serve us as advertisements, and help us along. As he dealt more severely by me and my friend Aldrich than anybody else I do not think anybody has any right to complain about his thumps. I think that you are too sensitive in regard to Longfellow; I really do not see that he has said anything offensive about him. . . . Poe has indeed a very high admiration for Longfellow, and so will he say before he is done. . . . The Rev. Mr. Griswold told me some abominable lies about him, but a personal acquaintance with him has induced me to think highly of him. Perhaps some Philadelphian has been whispering foul things in your ear about him. Doubtless his sharp manners have made him many enemies. But you will think better of him when you meet him.

Evidently the "Journal" was not a financial success and there was a serious misunderstanding between Briscoe and Briggs, which resulted in the displacement of Briggs. Watson and Poe constituted the editorial staff. Briggs' connection ended with the issue of June 28, completing Volume I. The "Journal" did not appear the following week, the delay being due to this editorial change. Number one of the second volume made its appearance on July 12, still under the management of Briscoe.

On October 25, Poe assumed full control and announced himself "Editor and Proprietor," and, for the first and only time, he attained the ambition of his life. But his fruiting season was passed as far as invention and ideation were concerned: his powers were slowly waning, and contentious criticism and captious judgments replaced his severe but just estimates.

Apparently Poe's first contribution, after association, was another onslaught on "Outis," and, incidentally, on Longfellow. This he continued in the two following numbers, March 15 and 22, concluding his criticisms in the first April number, apparently for the reason that he could elicit no answer.

Who was "Outis?"

Poe contributed many reviews. More than sixty, with

several essays, have been attributed to him. That they brought little financial gain is indicated in a letter he wrote to his friend Thomas.

And yet, Thomas, I have made no money. I am as poor now as I ever was in my life—except in hope, which is by no means bankable. I have taken a third interest in the 'Broadway Journal,' and for everything I have written for it I have been of course so much out of pocket. In the end it will pay me well—at least the prospects are good.

In addition to these reviews and essays, Poe republished many of his tales and poems, so that "The Journal" became a depository for his final revision.

Harrison says:

His new papers were, for the most part, hack-work articles on anastatic printing, street paving, magazine literature, etc., etc. He also utilized passages from old book reviews by incorporating them in new notices.

The short lived 'Broadway Journal' enabled him to revise and reprint, generally in more finished form, nearly everything that he had produced. He has been bitterly reproached and sneered at by persons who should have known better, whose own search for imperfection is directly the reverse of Poe's continual search for perfection.

Poe's other contributions to 'The Journal' during the time that he had a third interest, were plentiful but not fresh. The very early, grotesque, *Peter Snook* and the long rejected tale *The Premature Burial*, of which no earlier publication is found were the freshest stories.

Both the *Literati* and the *Marginalia*, published about this time, were compiled from various reviews long before printed. While in many instances they were recast, they contain nothing original.

Probably the market for anything bearing Poe's name now was good because of the great reputation *The Raven* had given him: the misfortune was that no capacity for supplying this demand was left. That Poe fully appreciated his opportunity is certain. He wrote to Thomas:

I send you an early copy of the 'B. Journal' containing my *Raven*. It was copied by Briggs, my associate, before I joined the paper. *The Raven* has had a great 'run,' Thomas,—but I wrote it for the express purpose of running—just as I did the *Gold Bug*. The bird beat the bug, though, all hollow.



Dr Sir,

If I am not mistaken, you were one of the earliest subscribers to "The Southern Literary Messenger", and aided me very materially while it remained under my control. For this reason, and because I am naturally anxious for the support of those whose good opinion I value — because, so, I believe that my objects, as regards our National Literature, are such as your judgment approves — I venture now frankly to solicit your subscription and influence for "The Broadway Journal", of which I send you a specimen number.

With high respect,  
Yr. Mo. & S.

Edgar A. Poe

New-York

Nov. 1845.

After Poe failed in his journal, he did not cease in his effort to establish a new magazine, but necessity or sickness for awhile forced him to rest, or to write only those things that may be classed as restatements either of literary opinions or of other subjects already published. He contributed three of his *Marginalia* to "Graham's" and his *Literati* to "Godey's," together with a few reviews. After this period his magazine work practically ceased.

There were a few new magazines to which Poe made unimportant contributions.

COLUMBIAN LADY'S AND GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE, Embracing Literature in Every Department: Embellished with the finest Mezzotint Engravings, Music and Colored Fashions. Edited by John Inman.

Volumes I and II. 1844

Volumes III and IV. 1845

Volumes V and VI. 1846

Volumes VII and VIII. 1847

Scattered through various numbers, several known Poe contributions are to be found. How many there are, not identified, is, at best, guess-work.

*Mesmeric Revelation*, published in August, 1844, again deals with hypnotism which, for over a century, had been a matter of great scientific interest and medical research, but which is still encumbered with so much charlatanism that its real value as a therapeutic measure is not yet fully comprehended. It has been exhibited under so many forms, and it has been so frequently misnamed, that its actual power is not generally understood, nor have all of its capabilities been recognized. First prominently exploited by Mesmer, its efficacy was not denied by the commission appointed by the Academy of Medicine of Paris, on which our own Franklin served. Their report is one of my most

valued—if not valuable—bibliographical treasures. While not denying its utility, their explanation entirely freed it from the gross and superstitious beliefs, and the electrical reactions that had been supposed to be the basis of its curative value, and they demonstrated that it was the mind itself, and no extraneous influences or surroundings, that produced the hypnotic trance. Nor was this subject one of recent manifestation although, for the first time, it came under reputable and scientific investigation. The subject is one of the oldest with which our historical annals deal. From the time that Saul consulted the Witch of Endor and was impressed with the belief that he had visioned Samuel, down to the "Christ Cures," and the Omphalists who, by fixedly gazing at their navels were thrown into trances in which they communicated with God-head exhibiting many hysterical manifestations, as well as the various legends of Saints with their shrine cures, and other supernatural middle-age marvels, have these same psychological phenomena been exhibited. The manifestations of this power were not confined to the Dark Ages: the "Kingly Touch," Kenelm Digby's "Weapon Salve," the "Strange Cures" of Greatrak's, with his hypnotized oak tree and the "Metallic Tractors" of Perkins, are only a few of the hundreds of recorded and certified methods of cure. Nor is this power a matter of past centuries. It never flourished more vigorously than at the present time. The shrine of Our Lady of Lourdes still cures its thousands; even reproductions of this grotto are efficacious where faith is sufficiently strong. Christ's demand for "faith," is a necessary prerequisite to such cures. The homeopathic craze has subdivided into many cults, all of which have their devoted followers. Christian Science is the latest development of this belief, but, like all others, it will have its day and pass into "innocuous dessuetude." Nor is the practice of medicine, in its most regular form, free

from this influence; it frequently happens that it is the physician who prescribes the drug, not the drug prescribed, which effects the cure. Medicine, as a science, hardly has passed its twenty-first birthday, although it is now on a solid foundation of demonstrated truth which will drag it out of the mire of superstition. For the first time are we certain of the cause of malaria, typhoid fever, diphtheria, and many other diseases, and the proof that our knowledge is solidly founded is that we have been able to produce preventative serums. That we have not been able to discover the particular germ of every disease need not be a matter for shame. The last thirty years has accomplished more than, and even now outmeasures the millions of years that have elapsed without any medical progress. Nor are our regular physicians who unconsciously practice this mesmeric power open to criticism. The public is a credulous and mentally unbalanced patient that could not exist without some hand-hold; so spineless that it can not stand unaided. It does not yet know that ninety per cent of ordinary ailments would recover with good nursing and without medical aid,—in spite of the fact that Christian Science is setting such a marvelous curative exhibition.

Nor can the influence of hypnotism, with its varied manifestations be measured by such mental phenomena as I have mentioned. A more mysterious phenomenon, as ill understood as is the mind itself, demands solution; yet, until we understand the many problems still unsolved as to the brain structure and cell function and its method of manifesting the power of cognition and sensory perception, no one can declare with certainty its method of comprehension or its limits. We know that under favorable conditions "mediums" develop a capacity for "introspection," but to explain this is the merest guesswork; that it in some way involves the reading of our own minds—a sixth sense

given them, which ordinarily they do not possess, satisfies me, in spite of the fact that it is an individual opinion. However it explains nothing. Very few, especially after hearing Sir Oliver Lodge's own explanation of his belief, follow him into its complete realization. We know that this hypnotic sleep is the basis of all such manifestations, but as the mind and its devious meanderings cannot be followed, we cannot hope to base a conclusion till we can discover the psychological foundation.

While "suggestion" is a recognized medical procedure, we know little more about it than did those who investigated Mesmer. Braid, a reputable physician, was its greatest exponent in America during the last century, and undoubtedly it was on his experiments that Poe based his Mesmeric stories. Poe's discussion of this subject can no more be argued than can that of Lodge. Both have the right of explanation and deduction until such time as the cause is made plain: we do not blame our old time medical teachers because they taught us that malarial fever and cholera were "miasmatic" in origin.

In the October issue of the "Columbian," Poe's story *The Angel of the Odd—An Extravaganza*, was published. It is a most remarkable anticipation of Freud (by some pronounced Frauid, others omit the "i") and his theories, and it is not for me to attempt its analysis; rather for those marvelous "psycho-analysts," and recent novelists, now so volubly contributing to a theory that has its origin in somnolence and its explanation in the quiescence of mental vacuity. That the world of science has taken notice of a psychological problem based on so intangible a structure as the dreams that come to us in sleep, is the real mental state that should interest us.

In the December number Poe wrote a brief account of the love scene depicted in the steel engraving of Byron and Miss Chaworth which appeared in that issue. Poe asserts:

That his attachment for this 'Mary' (in whose very name there indeed seems to exist an 'enchantment' was earnest and long abiding, we have every reason to believe. There are a hundred evidences of this fact, scattered through his own poems, letters, the memoirs of his relatives and contemporaries in general. . . . In every allusion made by the author of 'Childe Harold' to his passion for Mary Chaworth, there runs a vein of almost spiritual tenderness and purity, strongly in contrast with the gross earthliness pervading and disfiguring his ordinary love-poems. . . . She to him was the Egeria of his dreams—the Venus Aphrodite that sprang, in full and supernal loveliness, from the bright foam upon the storm tormented ocean of his thoughts.

In March, 1847, *The Domain of Arnheim*—the home of the Arn(olds), Poe's play on his mother's maiden name—was published. This was an adaptation or "visualization" of *The Landscape Garden*.

*To* — —, a poem in blank verse, supposed to have been inspired by Mrs. Shew, partakes of the character of other things written about this time when Poe's mental state excused much that he said and wrote.

THE UNION MAGAZINE of Literature and Art, Embellished with the Finest Steel, Mezzotint, and Wood Engravings, music, and Colored Fashions. Edited by Mrs. C. M. Kirkland.

Volume I. July to December, 1847

Volumes II and III to December, 1848

In March, 1848, this magazine published Poe's *Sonnet* beginning:

'Seldom we find,' says Solomon Don Dunce  
'Half an idea in the profoundest sonnet.'

This sonnet, apparently written to embalm the name "Sarah Anne Lewis," characterized its subject; but even had it not been written to "fit" Mrs. Lewis, we would necessarily bracket it with other of his work produced during his declining years. It contains sentiment but not the slightest sense. Later the title was amplified and the poem is now known as *An Enigma*.

Another of Poe's poems, also written in memory of a woman, appeared in the November, 1848, issue of the "Union." This originally bore the title *To———*, which later was changed *To Helen*; it is said to be one of his finest poems.

Volume IV was issued under the new title, "Sartain's Magazine," this well known artist having purchased it "to make the magazine a work of Art as well as of literature." In March, 1849, *A Valentine* was published, again containing "enwrapped from every reader," a name "that nestling lies." This was the name of another woman, Mrs. Frances Osgood. This kaleidoscopic appearance of so many names does not so much honor the ladies, as it reflects Poe's own unstable amative mental state.

Volume V, for November, 1849, contains the final version of *The Bells*. It had gone through many changes in its slow development, and this poem was undoubtedly Poe's last attempt in composition.

Volume VI, in its initial number, republished *Annabel Lee*. Poe had given it to Sartain in memory of the kindness he had received, but it was not printed till after it had appeared both in the "New York Tribune" and "The Southern Literary Messenger." In October, *The Poetic Principle* was published, the final statement of Poe's poetic faith.

The only other magazine known to contain Poe items, was called "The Flag of Our Union." The only copy of it which so far has been found is now in the Congressional Library in Washington. It contained the poem, *To My Mother*, Poe's tribute to the love he bore Mrs. Clemm, as well as his last and most passionate love message, *To Annie*.

Although Poe's reputation had steadily grown, and he was fully recognized before 1845, no collection of his poems had been made, nor was there such a representative collection of his Tales as he desired.

In this year was published:

THE RAVEN AND OTHER POEMS. By Edgar A. Poe. New York: Wiley and Putnam. 161 Broadway, 1845.

Collation: Half-title, title, copyright and imprint. Dedication, preface, contents: text (pp. 1)-91. Publisher's list unnumbered (12 pages).

This appeared in the half title as "Wiley and Putnam's Library of American Books." It was dedicated:

To the Noblest of her sex—to the Author of 'The Drama of Exile'  
TO MISS ELIZABETH BARRETT of England, I dedicate this volume,  
with the most enthusiastic admiration and with the most sincere  
esteem.—E. A. P.

The preface follows:

These trifles are collected and republished chiefly with a view to their redemption from the many improvements to which they have been subjected while going the 'rounds of the press.' If what I have written is to circulate at all, I am naturally anxious that it circulate as I wrote it. In defense of my own taste, nevertheless, it is incumbent on me to say that I think nothing in this volume of much value to the public, or very creditable to myself. Events not to be controlled have prevented me from making at any time, any serious effort at what, under happier circumstances, would have been the field of my choice. With me poetry has been not a purpose but a passion; and the passions should be held in reverence; they must not—they cannot at will be excited with an eye to the paltry compensations, or the more paltry commendations of mankind.—E. A. P.

Undoubtedly this indifference to public opinion was a pose on the part of Poe. There is much evidence to show that he requested his friends to give publicity and to comment on his poems and tales even if they did not care to commend them. It does represent a belief that poetry cannot be written at will, nor can it receive a money equivalent. Poe was too good a judge of what constituted literary merit not properly to value his own work.

In addition to his later poems which had appeared before 1845, this volume contained those issued in 1829, including *Al Araaf* and *Tamerlane*. Later changes, especially those made in the 1831 edition, were rejected and the 1829 version was restored. These poems had been slightly emended: the verbal changes were few and, as a



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BY

EDGAR A. POE.

NEW YORK:  
WILEY AND PUTNAM, 161 BROADWAY.

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NEW YORK:  
WILEY AND PUTNAM, 161 BROADWAY.

1840.

rule, they retained their original titles. Only two of the 1827 poems, *Romance* and *A Song*, were republished without change. All others were omitted, *Tamerlane* and *Al Araaf* being issued as rewritten in 1829.

To these poems Poe appended the following note:

Private reasons—some of which have reference to the sin of plagiarism, and others to the date of Tennyson's first poems—have induced me, after some hesitation, to re-publish these, the crude compositions of my earliest boyhood. They are printed *verbatim*—without alteration from the original edition—the date of which is too remote to be judiciously acknowledged.—E. A. P.

It is a thin volume, padded though it is with these juvenile poems; yet upon what other collection ever issued could a poet more confidently have relied to pass his name and his fame to posterity?

In 1845 a new collection of his stories was published with the title:

TALES. By Edgar A. Poe. New York: Wiley and Putnam. 161 Broadway, 1845.

Collation: Half-title, title, copyright and imprint. Contents: text pp. (1)—228. Publisher's list unnumbered.

In the half title this appeared as No. 2 of Wiley and Putnam's Library of American Books.

It contained only twelve stories. Apparently Poe was not consulted as to the selection and was dissatisfied with the result. In "The Broadway Journal" for July 12, 1845, Poe made the following comment:

This collection embraces the *Gold Bug*; the *Black Cat*; *Mesmeric Revelation*; *Lionizing*; *The Fall of the House of Usher*; the *Descent into the Maelstrom*; the *Colloquy of Monos and Una*; the *Conversation of Eiros and Charmion*; the *Murders in the Rue Morgue*; the *Mystery of Marie Roget*; the *Purloined Letter* and the *Man of the Crowd*. This is a selection from about seventy tales, of similar length, written by Mr. Poe. No particular arrangement has been made in their selection. The stories published in the volume before us, are neither better nor worse, in general, than the remainder of the seventy. In the composition of the whole series, variety of subject and manner, especially

diversity of invention, were the objects held in view. Of course these objects are lost sight of, and must necessarily be sacrificed, in *any* mere selection of twelve tales from seventy.

Harrison says:

Poe objected strongly to the selection because he thought it revealed his ratiocinative side too exclusively, to the detriment of the romantic, poetic, humorous and imaginative facets of his many-sided authorship. His own opinion of his prose works as revealed in the well known letter to Lowell was as follows: "My best tales are *Ligeia*, *The Gold Bug*, *the Murders of the Rue Morgue*, *The Fall of the House of Usher*, *The Tell Tale Heart*, *the Black Cat*, *William Wilson* and *the Descent into the Maelstrom*.

EUREKA. A Prose Poem. By Edgar A. Poe. New York: Geo. P. Putnam; of late firm of "Wiley and Putnam," 155 Broadway. MDCCCXLVIII.

Collation: Title, copyright, imprint. Dedication, preface, text pp. (7)—143. Publisher's list (1)—15 (16). Apparently advertising pages 5-12 omitted.

It is interesting to study the opinions regarding this book, which various biographers have expressed.

Griswold asserts:

To the composition of *Eureka* he brought his subtlest and highest capacities, in their most perfect development.

Denying that the Arcana of the Universe can be explored by induction, but informing his imagination with the various results of science, he entered with unhesitating boldness, though with no guide but the divinest instinct,—into the sea of speculation, and there built up of according laws and their phenomena, as under the influence of a scientific inspiration, his theory of Nature. . . . When I read *Eureka* I could not help but think it immeasurably superior as an illustration of genius to the 'Vestiges of Creation;' and as I admired the poem so I regretted its pantheism, which is not necessary to its main design.

Mrs. Whitman in her "Defense of Poe" made the following comment:

The unrest and faithlessness of the age culminated in him. Nothing so solitary, nothing so hopeless, nothing so desolate as his spirit in its darker moods has been instanced in the literary history of the nineteenth century.

It has been said that this theory, as expressed in *Eureka* of the universal diffusion of Deity in and through all things, is identical with

E U R E K A :

A P R O S E P O E M

BY

EDGAR A. POE.

NEW-YORK:  
GEO. P. PUTNAM,  
OF LATE FIRM OF "WILEY & PUTNAM,"  
155 BROADWAY.

MDCCLXVIII.

the Brahminical faith as expressed in the Bagvat Gita. But those who will patiently follow the vast reaches of his thought in this sublime poem of the 'Universe' will find that he arrives at a form of unbelief far more appalling than that expressed in the gloomy pantheism of India, since it assumes that the central, creative Soul is, alternatively, not *diffused* only, but merged and *lost* in the universe, and the universe in it: 'A new universe swelling into existence or subsiding into nothingness at every throb of the Heart Divine.

The creative Energy, therefore, 'now exists solely in the diffused matter and spirit, of the existing universe.' The author assumes, moreover, that each individual soul retains in its youth a dim consciousness of vast dooms and destinies far distant in the bygone time, and infinitely awful; from which inherent consciousness the conventional 'World-Reason' at last awakens it as from a dream. 'It says you live, and the time was when you lived not. You have been created. An Intelligence exists greater than your own, and it is only through this Intelligence that you live at all.' 'These things,' he says, 'we struggle to comprehend and cannot: cannot, because being untrue, they are of necessity incomprehensible.'

Harrison thinks:

Poe's argumentative faculty attained perhaps its highest expression in *Eureka*: the theme, in itself so abstract, so transcendental, burns and glows with a concrete radiance that *seems* to convince the reader that it is true light and not quagmire phosphorescence; the suppleness of the poet's tongue never abandons him as he climbs the empyrean in his Excelsior flight and forces one stronghold after another of retreating Deity, talking volubly of Newton, Kepler and LaPlace the while, until at last 'Eureka' burst from his lips and he fancies he has found the Eternal.

Woodberry, not altogether relying on his own ability to solve Poe's conception of this riddle of the universe, called on Professor Irving Stringham of the Astronomical Department of the University of California "for the substance of the criticism of Poe's astronomical speculations." The result of their double labor still leaves much to be explained.

The mind knows intuitively . . . that the creative act of Deity must have been the simplest possible; or, to expand and define this statement, it must have consisted in willing into being a primordial particle, the germ of all things existing without relation to aught, or, in the technical phrase, unconditioned.

This particle, by virtue of the divine volition, radiated into space uniformly in all directions, a shower of atoms, of diverse form, irregularly arranged among themselves, but all, generally speaking, equally

distant from their source; this operation was repeated at intervals, but with decreased energy in each new instance, so that the atoms were impelled less far.

So this composite explanation continues for several pages and a fairly lucid—as demonstrated by this excerpt—explanation is made of Poe's Theory of the Universe. However, the scrambled expositions of Poe, Woodberry and Stringham do not seem to me to bear a marked resemblance to Poe's unscrambled statement. Poe himself might have felt highly gratified could he have read this appreciation, but I believe that he would have rejected at least two-thirds of the statements it contains.

I do not mean to criticise, or to deny, the capacity of either critic further than to suggest that where a thing is so essentially obscure, and so evidently unformed in the creator's own brain, it was not wise to attempt a solution. Their double explanation is sufficiently lucid. Just how nearly it represents Poe's basic idea is the matter which I regard as debatable.

Occasionally it has happened that astronomers have attempted to compute the distance of a star by measuring the angle its rays make when the earth, in its revolution around the sun, occupied those two positions the farthest possible from each other. This they call the "parallax." We, likewise, may be permitted, in our attempt at solving this question, to go almost to our antipodes and there seek for a solution. Distance may make clear, and an untrammelled imagination may solve this vexed question. I refer to Lauvrière's solution, contained in a *Life of Poe*, later to be discussed.

In the Beginning, God created a particle without form, without individuality, without emptiness, absolutely unique. This particle was the germ of all things. It glittered in space in a wave of unequally distributed atoms of different shapes. Other waves followed, the atoms of which were forced among the original atoms by a slight pressure. Still other waves followed that were somewhat weaker, but which, in time, more or less completely filled this space with a multitude of

atoms. \*Bearing a proportion to the number of atoms at the surface of this sphere and starting at the square of the distance between these surfaces and the center, the force of diffusion continues to decrease.\*

As soon as this is exhausted an attractive force which is the natural reaction, and which is in inverse proportion to the square of this distance, develops and in its turn draws back the mass of atoms to a common center. To prevent the immediate return of the atoms to their primitive unity a third force manifests itself. This is a repulsive force, agglomerating these atoms into a mass, slowly forming sidereal bodies of infinite and heterogeneous shapes. This repulsive force, a form of immaterial ether which, lacking a better name, Poe called electricity, manifests itself in light, heat, magnetism, even in life and brain power. It is the spiritual element of things divine and for this reason it is impossible of human analysis. It is the breath of God animating all beings on this earth with a greater or less consciousness of divinity. Our universe, where all these phenomena actually take place, is filled with these reactions and with consequent condensation, the result of evolution. While the force of attraction slowly condenses it, that of repulsion shapes it into combinations more and more complicated. †However, as, in time, the play of these combinations will become exhausted because the divine laws of creation have been fulfilled, the attractive force, the inevitable consequence of primitive diffusion can only increase itself in proportion to the force of repulsion, it being a temporary invention of God that will have been lost. † From this will come the fated result that all created worlds will, one by one, be in the central conflagration by which means matter, which is in fact only the result of attractive and repulsive forces, will be swallowed up;— will be engulfed in the bosom of the initial particle, and in the confusion of the two forces that constitute it. Thus will end our existing universe. Others may come after it, as others have preceded it, and as others possibly exist in infinite space. For each creation, in essence, is only the ephemeral result of a diffusion and reabsorption into the divine being. This was Poe's conception of the universe.

It is certain that Poe believed he knew what he was trying to express and, in his attempt to make this plain to the world, he used all the powers of thought-compelling English in his vocabulary to convey his meaning to the world, still in ignorance of the first cause.

These elucidations have been variously interpreted and, a matter of surprise to me, serious attempts have been

\*Proportionné à la fois au nombre des atomes, aux surfaces des sphères, et, partant, au carré des distances entre ces surfaces et la centre, la force diffusive n' cessé de décroître.

†Mais, lorsqu'à la longue se trouvera épuisé le jeu de ces combinaisons, lorsque seront accomplies les vues, divines sur la création, la force d'attraction, conséquence inévitable de la diffusion primitive, ne pourra que s'accroître de tout ce que la force de répulsion, simple intervention temporaire de Dieu, aura perdu.

made to formulate them. Poe has excited the admiration, even if he has not been able to satisfy the comprehension of many of his biographers.

Poe's own explanation deserves some consideration. In discussing the subject as it was given in his preliminary lecture he thus epitomized it:

General Proposition. Because nothing was, therefore all things are.

1. An inspection of the *universality* of gravitation—of the fact that each particle tends not to any one common point, but to every other particle, suggests perfect totality of *absolute unity* as the source of the phenomenon.

2. Gravity is but the mode in which is manifested the tendency of all things to return into their original unity.

3. I show that the law of the return—i. e., the law of gravity—is but a necessary result of the necessary and sole possible mode of equable irradiation of matter through a *limited* space.

4. Were the universe of stars (contradistinguished from the universe of space) unlimited, no worlds could exist.

5. I show unity is nothingness.

6. All matter springing from unity sprang from nothingness, i. e., was created.

7. All will return to unity, i. e., nothingness.

I would be obliged to you if you would let me know how far these ideas are coincident with those of the 'Vestiges.'

Very Resp'y yr. ob. st.,  
EDGAR A. POE.

His full statement is not more comprehensible.

I design to speak of the *Physical, Metaphysical and Mathematical—of the Material and Spiritual Universe:—of its Existence, its Origin, its Creation, its Present Conditions and its Destiny.* . . . My general proposition, then, is this:—*In the Original Unity of the First Thing lies the Secondary Cause of ALL Things, with the Germ of their Inevitable Annihilation.* . . .

As our starting-point, then, let us adopt the *Godhead*. Of this Godhead in itself, he alone is not imbecile—he alone is not impious who propounds—nothing. "We know absolutely *nothing* of the nature or essence of God:—in order to comprehend what he is, we should have to be God ourselves. . . . By *Him*, however—*now*, at least, the Incomprehensible—by *Him*—assuming him as *Spirit*—that is to say, as *not Matter*—a distinction which, for all intelligible purposes, will stand well instead of a definition—by *Him*, then, existing as a Spirit, let us content ourselves, to-night, with supposing to have been *created*, or made out of nothing, [not a shower of atoms, created from a particle, radiated into space uniformly in all directions, as Woodberry interprets it] by dint of his Volition—at some point of Space which we will



take as a center—at some period into which we do not pretend to inquire, but at all events immensely remote—by Him, then again, let us suppose to have been created—*what?* This is a vitally momentous epoch in our considerations. *What* is it that we are justified—that alone we are justified in supposing to have been, primarily and solely, *created?* We have attained a point where only *Intuition* can aid us:—but now let me recur to the idea which I have already suggested as that alone which we can properly entertain of *Intuition*. It is but *the conviction arising from those inductions or deductions of which the processes are so shadowy as to escape our consciousness, elude our reason, or defy our capacity of expression.*

With this understanding, I now assert—that an intuition altogether irresistible, although inexpressible, forces me to the conclusion that what God originally created—that that Matter which, by dint of his Volition, he first made from his Spirit, or from Nihility, *could* have been nothing but Matter in its utmost conceivable state of—*what?*—of *Simplicity?* This will be found the sole absolute *assumption* of my Discourse.

There are more than one hundred pages of this—and such. I have read it attentively and have tried to comprehend it, for it reads exceedingly well without flaw or break of sentence, but I fail to grasp the idea.

Some time ago, in reading Mark Twain's account of a "Distressing Accident," which happened to one William Schuyler, I was compelled to reread and again to read, but I was not able to understand the cause leading up to the accident, nor even the nature of the accident; and still it read with perfect fluidity and clarity. I recalled the celebrated interview between Artemus Ward and Mark Twain, and the suspicion that gradually grew up in Mark's brain when he found that, although he could follow all Artemus said with the greatest ease, comprehension was lacking. The point of both joke-stories was their incomprehensibility.

No one can accuse Poe of any desire or attempt to perpetrate a joke. This effort at explanation of the secrets of the universe must be taken seriously.

In explaining Poe's mental state at the time he composed this book, I have made plain the belief that he was not to be held responsible for all that he said or wrote.

At the time of Poe's death, no complete edition of his works had been published; nor, except for occasional issues of special selections, the titles and contents of which I have discussed, was there even a representative collection. Except for the poems, Poe had been given no choice as to selection, and only in the stray magazines and other periodicals in which originally they had been published or republished, could his reviews and the majority of his stories be found. Poe complained because, of the seventy contributions offered Wiley & Putnam, Duyckinck chose twelve that, in Poe's opinion, "are *not* my best, nor do they fairly represent me in any respect."

Immediately upon Poe's death a well known compiler, named W. R. Griswold, announced that he had been selected by Poe to be his literary executor. Griswold called upon Mrs. Clemm, obtained access to all of Poe's manuscripts, letters, books and papers of every description, and undertook the task of collecting and editing all that Poe had written and published in the many magazines to which he had been a contributor. From these papers Griswold selected such as he believed to be worth preserving, but apparently he found no original material among Poe's papers which deserved publication. Either this collection of Poe remainders was small, or, in the judgment of this literary editor, it was without value. In this republication certain reviews were suppressed, and others were modified either by Poe before his death or by this editor. For some reason Griswold never returned these manuscripts although he had only requested the use of them as a corroborative detail of their *verbatim* publication. Apparently he made some arrangement with Mrs. Clemm by which he retained permanent possession. The possible details of the transaction, as well as Griswold's reason for undertaking this editorship, have been sufficiently discussed in the "Psychopathic Study." At the time of Griswold's death very few

Poe manuscripts could be found. Possibly Griswold had the legal right to do with these papers as he pleased.

Although Griswold explained that he "had been compelled by ill health to solicit the indulgence of my publishers, who had many thousand dollars invested in an unfinished work under my direction"; and he further remarked: "I would gladly have declined a task imposing so much labor," he was overpersuaded and felt it his duty to comply because, he said, of the statement of "several of Mr. Poe's intimate friends that he had long been in the habit of expressing a desire that in the event of his death I should be his editor, I yielded to this apparent necessity," Woodberry, remarking on this selection by Poe, expressed surprise, "notwithstanding a history of personal relations that would seem to exclude the possibility of such a choice." Although Willis had also been named by Mrs. Clemm as an associate, apparently his only contribution was his biographical essay.

This statement by Woodberry is based on the fact that for years bitter personal enmity had existed between Griswold and Poe. This was characterized by open warfare on the part of Poe, who wrote many articles personally reflecting on Griswold and on his editorial fitness for review work, as well as on his capacity as a writer. One of Poe's bitterest criticisms was of Griswold's compilation: "The Poets and Poetry of America." It contained statements that justified Woodberry's expression of surprise. Among other things Poe wrote, "We can only say to Mr. Griswold, 'Jove protect us from his reviewing, and the public from what *he* deems exquisite.'" Poe further accused Griswold of plagiarism, and of deliberately altering and rearranging matter submitted to him for publication. He asks: "How came you to alter Dr. J. K. Mitchell's song in such a manner that the author scarcely knew his own production?" In criticising Griswold's assertion that Tennyson

"stole at first hand from Keats," Poe comments: "Well, if this is not the height of assurance we don't know what assurance is, coming as it does from one of the most clumsy of literary thieves, and who, in his wildest aspirations, never even dreamed of an original thought." Poe ended this criticism with the following statement: "Forgotten, save only by those whom he has injured and insulted, he [Griswold] will sink into oblivion, without leaving a landmark to tell that he once existed; or, if he is spoken of hereafter, he will be quoted as *the unfaithful servant who abused his trust.*"

It is true that there had been occasional truces in this war; also that these criticisms were made entirely on the side of Poe. Griswold had taken no notice of the verbal assaults, nor had he in any way replied to Poe's taunts. That at the time of Poe's death he had written the Ludwig obituary, and that important business engagements occupied his full time, did not prevent him from delaying or voiding these contracts and volunteering his services to Mrs. Clemm. Either this action was the result of a most magnanimous heart, and a desire to have the literary work of a man he had never appreciated in life properly presented after death, or there were other and compelling reasons that induced him to make this offer.

Although ill and under contract to other publishers, Griswold worked with feverish energy gathering together and preparing for publication all of the tales and poetry and a few of the reviews. These were published by Redfield early in 1850. Griswold at least succeeded in doing that in which Poe had so signally failed. Although Poe had sought many publishers, only occasionally had he found one who would undertake his material. Even on those few occasions, he had not been allowed the right of editing. Woodberry states that Griswold "finally persuaded Mr. Redfield to try the experiment of issuing two volumes first,

which were published and had a fair sale—then the third, and finally the fourth volume were added to complete the works." That Griswold was industrious as well as successful is certain, for although arrangements financial and otherwise, were not completed with Mrs. Clemm until late in November, 1849, it is to be noted that the first volume containing the *Tales*, as well as the second volume *Poetry &c.* (or *Poetry and Miscellanies*—there are two issues bearing different titles on the cover, but with identical title pages,) was copyrighted in 1849. Whether Redfield distrusted the salable qualities of Poe's works, and for this reason drove a hard bargain, or whether others participated in the profits that must have accrued, is not known. It is certain that over twenty thousand sets of these two volumes, with the succeeding two, were sold—an enormous circulation for those days. Neither the estate of Poe nor Mrs. Clemm, directly or indirectly, received any of this money.

Mrs. Clemm lived many years, a guest in the home of "Annie" and other of her friends. She died in a publicly supported home for the aged.

THE WORKS OF THE LATE EDGAR ALLAN POE. With Notices of His Life and Genius. By N. P. Willis, J. R. Lowell, and R. W. Griswold. In two volumes. Vol. I *Tales*. New York: J. S. Redfield, Clinton Hall. 1850. Vol. II *Poems and Miscellanies*.

Collation: Vol. I. Title, copyright, preface—To the Reader—signed Maria Clemm. Half-title, contents. Life of Poe, by James Russell Lowell pp. vii-xiii. Death of Edgar A. Poe. by N. P. Willis, pp. xiv-xx. Text, pp. (1)—483. Illustrated by Sartain's engraving of Poe.

Vol. II. Title, copyright. Preface to the Poems—signed E. A. P. Contents, text, pp. (1)-495.

Poems and tales in this collection are, with a few exceptions, *verbatim* reprints taken from the works of Poe already published, or from Poe's final revision of his tales

and poems as republished in "Graham's," the "Broadway Journal," and various other periodicals already mentioned.

Although it is certain, from the title page of the first volume, that Griswold, immediately upon assuming control, intended writing a memoir of Poe, evidently either lack of time, or a deliberate purpose, induced him to delay its issuance. Apparently, it was with forethought, and most careful preparation, that he issued in the third volume, the "Literati", a defamatory and untrue sketch of Poe.

THE LITERATI. Some Honest Opinions about Autorial Merits and Demerits, with Occasional Words of Personality. Together with Marginalia, Suggestions and Essays. By Edgar A. Poe. Quotation. With a Sketch of the Author by Rufus Wilmot Griswold. New York: 1850.

This contained a *Memoir* of Poe filled with malignant statements, the result of the pent up ill-will Griswold had so silently borne. This memoir was an amplification of an obituary Griswold had written immediately after Poe's death, which had been published in the Tribune with the signature "Ludwig." At the time Mrs. Clemm consented to Griswold's assuming the editorship of Poe's works, she did not know that he had written the "Ludwig" obituary, nor was it generally known. Later, Griswold fully acknowledged this article and openly stated "Poe was not my friend, nor was I his", although he prefaced his memoir with letters and statements to the effect that their relations were friendly.

The Ludwig article began:

Edgar Allan Poe is dead. He died in Baltimore the day before yesterday. This announcement will startle many, *but few will be grieved by it.*

The poet was well known personally or by reputation, in all this country; he had readers in England, and in several of the States of Continental Europe; but he had few or no friends; and the regrets for his death will be suggested principally by the consideration that in him literary art lost one of its most brilliant, but erratic stars.

After briefly sketching Poe's early life, and the eminent respectability of "General Poe", as well as his relationship to "Admiral MacBride," Griswold gives an account of Poe's first literary adventure:

In 1832 the proprietor of a weekly gazette, in Baltimore, offered two premiums, one for the best story in prose, the other in poetry. . . . Such matters are usually disposed of in a very off-hand way: committees to award literary prizes drink to the payer's health, in good wines over the unexamined MSS. which they submit to the discretion of the publisher, with permission to use their names in such a way as to promote the publisher's advantage. So it would have been in this case, but that one of the committee, taking up a small book in such exquisite chirography as to seem like one of the finest issues of the press of Putnam, was tempted to read several pages. Being interested he summoned the attention of the company to the half-dozen compositions in the volume. It was unanimously decided that the prizes should be paid to the first of geniuses who had written legibly. Not another MSS. was unfolded.

Poe, coming for his prize money, is described as:

Thin and pale, even to cadaverousness, his whole appearance indicated sickness and the utmost destitution. A tattered coat concealed the absence of shirt, and the ruins of boots disclosed more than the want of stockings.

On what foundation Griswold based his description, or whether it was altogether an imaginary sketch, cannot now be determined. This extract, as well as the first, was pronounced to be an overdrawn statement of the real facts, as occasionally is the newspaper way. Kennedy, Poe's discoverer and friend, did say that Poe excused himself from accepting an invitation to dinner, "for reasons of the most humiliating nature—my personal appearance." In his "Reminiscences of Poe," John H. Latrobe, another member of the committee that awarded Poe the prize offered by "The Saturday Visiter," gives the following description of Poe:

My office in those days was in the building still occupied by the Mechanics Bank, and I was seated at my desk on the Monday following the publication of the tale, when a gentleman entered and introduced himself as the writer, saying that he had come to thank me, as one of the committee, for the award in his favor. Of this interview my recollection is very distinct indeed. . . . He was dressed in black, and

his frock coat was buttoned to the throat, where it met the black stock, then universally worn. Not a particle of white was visible. Coat, hat, boots and gloves had very evidently seen their best days, but so far as mending and brushing go everything had been done, apparently, to make them presentable.

On most men his clothes would have looked shabby and seedy, but there was something about this man that prevented one from criticising his garments and the details I have mentioned were only recalled afterwards. The impression made, however, was that the award made in Mr. Poe's favor was not inopportune. *Gentleman* was written all over him. . . .

Dr. Griswold's statement 'that Mr. Kennedy accompanied him [Poe] to a clothing store and purchased for him a respectable suit, with a change of linen, and sent him to a bath,' is a sheer fabrication.

Describing Poe's personal appearance on the streets, Ludwig wrote:

He was at times a dreamer—dwelling in ideal realms—in heaven or hell peopled with creations and the accidents of his brain. He walked the streets in madness or melancholy, with lips moving in indistinct curses, or with eyes upturned in passionate prayers, (never for himself, for he felt, or professed to feel, that he was already damned, but for their happiness who at the moment were objects of his idolatry;) or with his glance introverted to a heart gnawed with anguish, and with a face shrouded in gloom, he would brave the wildest storms; and all night with drenched garments and arms wildly beating the wind and rain, he would speak as if to spirits that at such times only could be evoked by him from the Aidenn close by whose portals his disturbed soul sought to forget the ills to which his constitution subjected him—close by the Aidenn where were those he loved—the Aidenn which he might never see but in fitful glimpses, as its gates opened to receive the less fiery and more happy natures whose listening to sin did not involve the doom of death.

This Ludwig article was bitterly criticised by John Neal, Poe's first literary sponsor, as well as by Graham, his long time associate, and by Willis, in his "Death of Edgar A. Poe", contained in the first volume. It was to amplify and to prove the basic truth of the Ludwig article that Griswold wrote the memoir he prefixed to the *Literati*. Evidently smarting under these criticisms, he entered more fully into details and extended his descriptions of Poe's misbehavior, adding many statements later proved to be false. In the first portion of this study, I have detailed these allegations of Griswold.



In 1856 Redfield published the fourth volume, thus completing the full collection of Poe's works. It still contained, in display type, the name of Griswold as author of the Memoir.

THE WORKS OF THE LATE EDGAR ALLAN POE, with a Memoir by Rufus Wilmot Griswold and notices of his Life and Genius by N. P. Willis and J. R. Lowell. In Four Volumes. IV. Arthur Gordon Pym, etc. Redfield. 1856.

This volume contained not only Pym but many other of Poe's sketches and short stories with a few reviews.

There is another work of Poe that should be mentioned but, unfortunately, it was never published. Had it been, it is probable that it would have proved Poe's most valuable contribution to criticism. That it must have been the result of years of careful preparation is evident from the subjoined letter of Poe. He gives his reason for delaying the issuance, as well as suggesting the scope of the work:

You will see that I have discontinued the 'Literati' in Godey's Mag. I was forced to do so, because I found that people insisted on considering them elaborate criticisms, when I had no other design than critical *gossip*. The unexpected circulation of the series, also, suggested to me that I might make a hit and some profit, as well as proper fame, by extending the plan to that of a *book* on American Letters generally, and keeping the publication in my own hands. I am now *at this*—body and soul. I intend to be through—as far as I can—to examine analytically, without reference to previous opinions by *anybody*—all the salient points of Literature in general—e. g., Poetry, The Drama, Criticism, Historical Writing, Versification, etc., etc. You may get an idea of the manner in which I propose to write the whole book, by reading the notice of Hawthorne which will appear in the January Godey, [June 1847 'Tale Writing: Hawthorne.'] as well as the article on 'The Rationale of Verse,' which will be out in March or April No. of Colton's American Magazine or Review. ['Southern Literary Messenger,' October and November, 1849].

Do not trust, in making up your library, to the 'opinions' in the Godey series. I *meant* honest—but my meaning is not so fully made out as I could wish. I thought too little of the series myself to guard sufficiently against haste, inaccuracy or prejudice. The book will be

*true* to the best of my abilities. . . . As regards 'The Stylus'—that is the grand purpose of my life, from which I have never swerved for a moment. But I cannot afford to risk anything by persistency—and I *can* afford to wait—at least till I finish *the book*. When this is out I will start the Mag.

It was this book which was advertised in "The Home Journal" as of immediate issue. Evidently he had completed the task; otherwise such an advertisement would not have been inserted. This must have been included among the other Poe MSS, taken by Griswold, and it is but right that to him should be given the dishonor of its suppression.

Already I have dwelled sufficiently upon Poe's literary enemies, and on the fact that others besides Griswold participated in the sentiments expressed in the Ludwig article; and it is not possible altogether to excuse Poe from certain charges. In exculpation it can be said that a study of his morbid mental state shows that he was not at all times to be held responsible. While this must have been patent to all who associated with Poe, possibly to those who did not know him, such an explanation was worthy of slight credence.

On all occasions Poe was the aggressor: often to his credit, for, to one who studies the literature of that day, either as originally published in the many contemporary periodicals, or as selected and preserved in Duyckinck's "Cyclopedia of American Literature," much that Poe wrote, if over-severe, is undoubtedly true. In favorably criticising Wilmer's "Quacks of Helicon," Poe asserted:

We repeat it: *it is* the truth which he has spoken; and who shall contradict us? He has said unscrupulously what every reasonable man among us has long known to be 'as true as the Pentateuch'—that, as a literary people, we are one vast perambulating humbug. He has asserted that we are *clique*-ridden; and who does not smile at the obvious truism of that assertion? He maintains that chicanery, with us, is a far surer road than talent to distinction in letters. Who gainsays this? The corrupt nature of our literary criticism has become notorious. The intercourse between critic and publisher, as it now universally

stands, is comprised either in the paying and pocketing of blackmail, as the price of a simple forbearance, or in a petty and contemptible bribery, properly so called—a system even more injurious than the former to the true interests of the public, and more degrading to the buyers and sellers of good opinion, on account of the more positive service here rendered for the consideration received. We laugh at the denial of our assertions upon this topic: they are infamously true. In this charge of general corruption there are undoubtedly many noble exceptions to be made. . . . But these cases are insufficient to have much effect on the popular mistrust: a mistrust heightened by a late exposure of the machinations of coteries in New York—coteries which at the bidding of leading booksellers, manufacture, as required from time, to time, a pseudo-public opinion.

Poe strongly intimated that Griswold had accepted money or, as he expressed it, a "*quid pro quo*" for admittance of certain writers into his collections, and that the amount of space assigned them depended on the sum of money they paid. Naturally, such statements intensified the personal dislike that from their first meeting had existed, into that deep rooted hatred the evidence of which is so manifest in Griswold's memoir. Although Poe made these statements regarding Griswold openly and in print long before his death, and on all occasions displayed his contempt, Griswold never openly resented it; on the other hand, to Mrs. Clemm apparently he exhibited tender solicitude and a desire to aid her in her bereavement. Otherwise he could not possibly have obtained permanent and complete possession of all Poe's literary possessions, including even his books and private letters.

Poe, in his loyalty to the spirit that, even at that time, was beginning to engender hatred between the North and South, was particularly bitter against the New England writers, and lost no opportunity to excoriate and jibe at those who were so proud of Boston Common:

We know very well that amongst a certain *clique* of the Frogpondians, there existed a predetermination to abuse us under *any* circumstances. We knew, write what we would, they would consider it worthless. We knew that were we to compose 'Paradise Lost' they would pronounce it an indifferent poem. It would have been very weak

indeed in us, then, to have put ourselves to the trouble of attempting to please these people. We preferred pleasing ourselves.

This, written concerning an invitation kindly intended, seriously reflects on Poe, but may be excused because we know that at this time Poe was occasionally irresponsible, and that only in his morbid mood did he show this peculiar attitude of mind. His Boston audience did not understand, and his jest cut deep. All evidence given by Poe's intimates makes us know that, when himself, he was at least a gentleman. The gauge of battle thus flung was taken up by the "Harbinger," the official organ of Brook Farm,—a fiasco at communism, immortalized in Hawthorne's "The Blithedale Romance."

The "Harbinger" was edited by the "Brook Farm Phalanx." This periodical characterized Poe as seeking:

Notoriety, through a certain blackguard warfare which he has been waging against the poets and newspaper critics of New England, and which it would have been more charitable to impute to insanity.

Poe's answer, published in one of the last issues of "The Broadway Journal," was characteristic:

The 'Harbinger'—edited by 'The Brook-Farm Phalanx'—is beyond doubt the most reputable organ of the Crazyites. . . . What we have done to the 'Harbinger', or what we have done to 'The Brook-Farm Phalanx' that 'The Brook-Farm Phalanx' should stop the ordinary operations at Brook Farm, for the purpose of abusing us, is a point we are unable to comprehend. If we have done anything to affront 'The Brook-Farm Phalanx' we will make an apology forthwith—provided 'The Brook-Farm Phalanx' (which we have a curiosity to see) will just step into our office, which is 304 Broadway.

This "fooling" of Poe shows that he was not, by ancestry, far removed from the "ould sod," and that by nature he loved a fight. From what we know of Poe through other sources, he did try to write something worthy of his audience, but could not, and, at the last moment, was compelled to read extracts from *Al Araaf*. It is further known that he was not in a responsible condition, then or later. It was about this time that Poe wrote to Duyckinck: "I

seemed to have just wakened from some horrible dream, in which all was confusion and suffering. . . . I really believe that I have been mad."

The standard by which Poe's actions and moral character were to be judged, established by Griswold, remained for many years the measure of the morals of the man.

While no one attempted any thorough study either of Poe's life or of his writings, there frequently appeared, either in short biographical sketches or in the prefaces to Poe's works, references to his life, the main facts of which were always based on Griswold's statements. These for many years remained unquestioned by the reading public, in spite of monographs either protesting against unfair judgments or filled with denials so sweeping that they did not cover all the facts. These partisan statements in no way lessened the settled conviction as to Poe's immoral life. Gradually the judgment became firmly established that, in spite of their brilliancy, possibly because of it, all of Poe's work was the reflex of a brain diseased or drugged. Certain of Poe's contemporaries and close associates, such as Briggs of the "Broadway Journal," added their testimony to that of Griswold. In the preface to the first English illustrated edition of Poe's works, published in 1858, Briggs prefaced the "Poems" with this statement:

A close study of his works will reveal the fact, which may serve in some degree to remove this embarrassment, that there is nowhere discoverable in them a consciousness of moral responsibility. . . . The Lenore whose loss he deplored, was a being fair to the eye, like Undine, without a soul. . . . Some of the biographers of Poe have been harshly judged for the view given of his character, and it has naturally been supposed that private pique led to the exaggeration of his personal defects.

But such imputations are unjust: a truthful delineation of his career would give a darker hue to his character than it has received from his biographers. In fact he has been more fortunate than most poets in his historians. Lowell and Willis have sketched him with a gentleness and a reverent feeling for his genius: and Griswold, his literary executor, in his fuller biography, has generously suppressed much that he might have given.

This Briggs is one, among others, whom Griswold so considerably shielded from the sting of Poe's sarcasms when, as editor of Poe's collected works, he rewrote and softened Poe's estimate of "Harry Franco," the *nom de plume* under which Briggs wrote. Briggs' gratuitous insult to Poe was a kindly tribute paid to the memory of Griswold by one whom he had considerably protected.

The statements of Griswold and his friends have been accepted without question by European critics. We may take pride in the fact that Poe is recognized by them as a great story teller and poet, and that, in their estimation, he ranks with *certain* of their writers—not with those whom they most highly regard. This toleration and recognition is, however, tinctured with a certain condescension. The estimates of his character, and of the things he wrote, are not pleasant reading. This attitude was taken not necessarily because Poe was an American, but because, being the man he was, both by reason of his strength and his weaknesses, he was misunderstood and misrepresented. That this was done ignorantly and not viciously does not make it more excusable. For this reason, I will mention certain of the foreign biographers before resuming a discussion of those who, in recent years, have elucidated the facts, and have more leniently judged the many things alleged.

In England Poe was regarded as a monster of vice, one whose evil life placed him beyond the pale of public discussion. The details of his life were said to be so shocking that they could only be suggested. It was assumed that a full statement was not a thing wise to give. Every reference to his writings, and the prefaces to his published works, reeked with foul insinuations, as if the facts could not bear detailed repetition. He was classed among the degenerates, or worse; and, when details were given, this publication was excused for the reason that the facts might teach a moral; or wonder was expressed that such unde-

nably good work could have emanated from so vicious an individual, or from one whose brain was diseased.

That this was the fully accepted belief is evidenced both in the prefaces to Poe's writings and in the contemporary magazines of that time.

The "London Athenaeum" gave this judgment:

In most of Edgar Poe's tales there is either an extravagance, as though they had been written by a man on the verge of *delirium tremens*, or else a labored monotony, as though his resources were beginning to run dry. The poems, with their strange unwholesome vigor (if such things can be) speak for themselves. Their writer, apart from his works, had best be forgotten. Edgar Poe's stories seem, all of them, to have been written under the inspiration of gin-and-water.

The first Englishman who attempted to stem this full flood of ignorant criticism was Hannay, but his assertions were met with jeers of derision; it is not certain, even at the present time, that Poe is there judged so kindly, nor are his works so fully appreciated, as in either America or France.

"Fraser's Magazine" of August, 1857, contained a criticism of Poe based on a review of "The Poetical Works of Edgar Allan Poe: With a Notice of his Life and Genius. By James Hannay."

We must go back to the days of the early dramatists—of Marlowe, Dekker, Ford, Massinger, and Otway—before we shall find any parallel to the wild and morbid genius and the reckless and miserable life and death of Edgar Allan Poe. Never was there a sadder story than that of this wayward and infatuated youth, his wasted opportunities, his estranged friends, his poverty stricken manhood, his drunken degradation, his gradual sinking lower and lower into the depths of profligacy and misery till at last he died of *delirium tremens* at the early age of 39. And his poetical genius, his extraordinary analytical powers, his imagination that revolved in the realm of the awful, the weird and the horrible; his utter lack of truth and honor, his inveterate selfishness, his inordinate vanity and insane folly—all go to make a picture so strange, so sad, that it cannot be easily forgotten. This volume unhappily sets out with a biographical notice of Poe, written by Mr. James Hannay, which we have read with considerable surprise. Should any man of sense and taste, not acquainted with Poe, be so unfortunate as to look on Mr. Hannay's preface before reading the poetry, it is extremely probable that he will throw the book into the fire in indignation at the self conceit and affected smartness by which the preface is characterized.

Hannay's defense was rather apologetic and was by no means fulsome in its praise of Poe; evidently facts were lacking on which to base a full statement.

In 1858, the "Edinburgh Review," in reviewing Griswold's four-volume publication, again expressed the English estimate of Poe. It was more elaborate in its denunciation. That such a periodical would have assumed a tone so bitter is evidence of the fact that it believed itself fully justified. Unfortunately the article was not only quoted, but was republished in full by various periodicals. This must have been regarded as a definitive statement both in England and America. I have already referred to this publication, but will quote it more fully:

Edgar Allan Poe was incontestably one of the most worthless persons of whom we have any record in the world of letters. Many authors have been as idle; many as improvident; some as drunken and dissipated; and a few, perhaps, as treacherous and ungrateful; but *he* seems to have succeeded in attracting and combining, in his own person, all the floating vices which genius has hitherto shown itself capable of grasping in its widest and most eccentric orbit. Yet his chances of success at the outset of life were great and manifold. Nature was bountiful to him; bestowing upon him a pleasing person and excellent talents. Fortune favored him; education and society expanded and polished his intellect, and improved his manner into an insinuating and almost irresistible address. Upon these foundations he took his stand; became early very popular among his associates, and might have erected a laudable reputation, had he possessed ordinary prudence. But he defied his good genius. There was a perpetual strife between him and virtue, in which virtue was never triumphant. His moral stamen was weak, and demanded resolute treatment; but instead of seeking a bracing and healthy atmosphere, he preferred the impurer airs, and gave way readily to those low and vulgar appetites, which infallibly relax and press down the victim to the lowest state of social abasement. The usual prizes of life—reputation, competency, friendship, love—presented themselves in turn; but they were all in turn neglected or forfeited—repeatedly, in fact, abandoned under the detestable passion for drink. He outraged his benefactor, he deceived his friends, he sacrificed his love, he became a beggar, a vagabond, the slanderer of a woman, the delirious drunken pauper of a common hospital—hated by some, despised by others, and avoided by all respectable men. He was, as we have said, a blackguard of undeniable type. We say all this very unwillingly; for we admire very sincerely many things that Mr. Poe has produced. We



are willing to believe that there may have been, as Mrs. Osgood has stated, an amiable side to his character and that his mother-in-law had cause to lament his loss. We learn, moreover, from Mr. Willis, that at one time, in the latter portion of his life, 'he was invariably punctual and industrious.' The testimony of that gentleman and of Mr. Lowell (both men of eminence in literature), tempted us at first to suspend our opinion of the author; but the weight of evidence on the darker side proved overwhelming, and left us no choice but to admit and to stigmatize with our most decided reprobation those misdeeds that seem to have constituted almost the only history of his short career. His was, as Mr. Griswold states, a 'shrewd and naturally unamiable character.' We refuse our assent to the argument of one of his advocates, that 'his whole nature was reversed by a single glass of wine.' We lean to the ancient proverb, which asserts that Truth is made manifest upon convivial occasions.

The writer suggests a curious revival of the "Longfellow War" by gratuitously introducing the following statement:

We are not able to ascertain the precise date at which he borrowed a poem from Professor Longfellow, imitated it, and afterward *denounced the author as a Plagiarist from himself, the Simulator*. The mimic poem is called 'The Haunted House,' and is one of Poe's best pieces of verse. The original is 'The Beleaguered City,' of Mr. Longfellow.

It is probable that in the use of the words "The Haunted House," this writer refers to *The Haunted Palace*, and this error may be due to confusing this poem with *The Deserted House* of Tennyson, which is an embodiment of a similar idea;—one typifying death, the other, not death, but a disordered mind. That either bears the slightest resemblance, in basic idea or in expressed description, to *The Beleaguered City*, is not possible. If one poem suggested, or was in any way the prototype of the other, the originator was Poe. *The Haunted Palace* was first published in the "American Musuem" for April, 1839, and it is very certain that Poe did not borrow the MS. from Longfellow, as suggested. *The Beleaguered City* is equally remarkable both for its underlying thought and its marvelous word-cadence; further than this, the poems have nothing in common, though apparently at one time, Poe believed that Longfellow "imitated." *The Beleaguered City* was also

published in 1839, but *after* the appearance of *The Haunted Palace*.

The one-sidedness of the delineation of Poe seems to have impressed the reviewer and, while he does not question Griswold's statements, he seems to feel conscious of the possibility of the existence of a germ of good—if only it could be discovered.

We feel, even in the case of Mr. Poe, that it would have been desirable if a fuller biography had accompanied his works. Honest and able, so far as it goes, it leaves us without information on many matters from which much might have been gathered to form an accurate judgment. Perhaps, after all, we are copying the deformities only of the man, at a time when we are anxious to submit all that was good as well as all that was bad. The roughnesses that were so conspicuous on the surface of Poe's character would naturally attract the notice of his biographer in the first instance. But, underneath, was there nothing to tell of?—no cheeriness in the boy—no casual acts of kindness—no adhesion to old friendships—no sympathy with the poor and unhappy, that might have been brought forward as indicative of his better nature. . . . For no man is thoroughly evil. There must be slumbering virtues—good intentions undeveloped—even good actions, claiming to have a place on record. . . . The influence of his faults were limited, and the penalty he alone had to bear. But the pleasure arising from his writings has been shared by many thousand people. In speaking of himself personally, we have felt bound to express our opinions without any subterfuge. But we are not insensible that, while he grasped and pressed hardly upon some individuals with one hand, with the other he scattered his gifts in abundance to the public.

In taking the statements of Griswold in preference to those of Lowell and Willis, this reviewer naturally assumed that, in inserting a "Memoir" into the Works of Poe, Griswold was only performing a painful duty, and that at least he had not magnified Poe's faults.

For this reason no odium was attached to Griswold because of his arraignment of Poe. His memoir was believed to be as kindly a statement as the facts permitted, and that in carrying out the unpleasant task that had been delegated to him, it was Griswold's sense of duty, which had forced from him these damaging statements.

It is curious to note changing customs which character-

ize different times. Very lately intense indignation was expressed because, in a recently published autobiography, a statement was printed which reflected on Stevenson. The propriety, not the truth, of this statement was questioned, and, so vigorous were the denunciations, that suppression was necessary. Yet the insertion of virulent statements in Poe's own works, caused but little comment.

These Griswold statements were republished by many periodicals both in England and America, and necessarily they represented the estimate in which Poe was held.

Among foreign critics, the writings of Poe have appealed especially to those of France, and it is among the French that his earliest and most earnest literary admirers were found. It is also among the writers of this nation that the Griswold charges most fully have been accepted. These charges in no way detracted from the pleasure Poe's work gave them; but that they have essentially misunderstood and misjudged Poe, the man, is a serious matter.

Even in America, the high position assigned to Poe is occasionally questioned, and a tendency is apparent that would deny his Americanism, and that would class him as a distinct *species* with a French nomenclature. Occasionally he is called a "decadent" because, probably, of a certain French School which has enthusiastically praised his work, and who have modelled their own upon a portion of it. Nor can it be said that he was German by reason of the terror and horror which characterize certain of his stories. Still less would the English claim him, even though his stories of ratiocination exhibit pure intellect. America hesitates to accept him in the same sense that she does Cooper and Irving,—and Walt Whitman. Poe is a writer without a country, and no nation, nor age, nor period, may claim him. Although his domain of letters is narrow, no one has, and probably no one in future ages ever will

equal him in the expression of purely intellectual clarity of thought and in verbal resonance.

That he is regarded with special favor by the French is not true, although before his death, a few of his stories were accepted at their full value. By certain French writers he is regarded as a master.

The great majority of their critics wonder and admire, but they do not accept him as a peer in comparison with their best writers. Nowhere has he been more severely condemned.

His followers have proved his worst enemies, for their praises rest on certain of his qualities that are most abnormal. Neither his life nor many of his best qualities have been fairly exhibited. Rather, they have set forth his abnormalities, and they have made of him a monster:—at least a spectacle to be imitated by some, but to be shunned by all who are not classed among the decadents. His chief exponent, Baudelaire, who translated his work and who set him up as a divinity, to be invoked and to be worshipped as a god, has seriously injured the standing of Poe among the greater French writers.

As far as Baudelaire and his School are concerned, evidence is not required, and explanations are unnecessary.

Baudelaire apparently regarded Griswold's criticism of Poe as typically American, and that it was in consonance with our national standards. He follows the beaten tracks, expatiating on Poe's excellent family and gentle birth, not forgetting that his grandfather was a general in the Revolutionary War and an intimate friend of Lafayette, and that his grandmother was related to Admiral McBride who, in turn, "was allied to the noblest English houses."

I suspect that the last statement was supplied by the Englishman on whose translation, inserted as a preface to the Hotten publication of Baudelaire's Works, I depend.

Baudelaire dimly realized that Poe was born with an in-

heritance, perhaps not of evil, but one that was fraught with disaster. He psychologizes:

There are, in the history of literature, many analogous destinies of actual damnation,—many men who bear the word *Luckless* written in mysterious characters in the sinuous folds of their foreheads. The blind angel of Expiation forever hovers around them, punishing them with rods for the edification of others. It is in vain that their lives exhibit talents, virtues or graces. Society has for them a special anathema, accusing them even of those infirmities which its own persecutions have generated. What would Hoffman not have done to disarm Destiny? what Balzac not attempted to compel Fortune? Does there, then, exist some diabolic Providence which prepares misery from the cradle; which throws, and throws with premeditation, these spiritual and angelic natures into hostile ranks, as martyrs were once hurled into the arena? Can there, then, be holy souls destined to the sacrificial altar, compelled to march to death and glory across the very ruins of their lives? Will the nightmare of gloom eternally besiege these chosen souls? . . . Their destiny is written in their very constitution; sparkling with a sinister brilliancy in their looks and in their gestures; circulating through their arteries in every globule of their blood. . . . I bring today a new legend to support this theory; today, I add a new saint to the holy army of martyrs, for I have to write the history of one of those illustrious unfortunates, over-rich with poetry and passion, who came after so many others, to serve in this dull world the rude apprenticeship of genius among inferior souls.

A lamentable tragedy this Life of Edgar Poe! His death a horrible unravelling of the drama, where horror is besmudged with trivialities! All the documents I have studied strengthen me in the conviction that the United States was for Poe only a vast prison through which he ran, hither and thither, with the feverish agitation of a being created to breathe in a purer world [Paris?], only a wild barbarous country—barbarous and gas-lit—and that his interior life, spiritual as a poet, spiritual even as a drunkard, was but one perpetual effort to escape the influence of the antipathetical atmosphere. . . . We might say that from the impious love of Liberty has been born a new tyranny—the tyranny of fools—which, in its insensible ferocity, resembles the idol of Juggernaut.

Neither Baudelaire nor certain of his *confreres* were in a position to throw stones even had they been so inclined. Accepting as true all that Griswold alleged, they only made answer, "What Then?" Certainly it was not Poe who was at fault, but this *parvenu* of a nation, incapable of appreciating genius.

Once more I repeat my firm conviction that Edgar Poe and his country were never upon a level. The United States is a gigantic and

infantine country, not unnaturally jealous of the old continent. Proud of its material development, abnormal and almost monstrous, this newcomer into history has a *naïve* faith in the all-powerfulness of industry, being firmly convinced, moreover, like some unfortunates amongst ourselves, that it will finish by devouring the devil himself. Time and money are there held in extraordinary esteem; material activity, exaggerated almost to the proportions of a national mania, leaves room in their minds for little that is not of the earth.

Baudelaire attempted no critical discussion either of the facts of Poe's life, or of his works, and accepted everything both as related to his private life and all that he wrote, even *Eureka*, as that of a master, though a master overwhelmed with drugs and drink.

Now, it is incontestable that, like those fugitive and striking impressions—most striking in their repetition when they have been most fugitive—which sometimes follow an exterior symptom, such as the striking of a clock, a note of music, or a forgotten perfume, and which are themselves followed by an event similar to the event already known, and which occupy the same place in a chain previously revealed—like those singular periodical dreams which frequent our slumbers—there exist in drunkenness not only the entanglements of dreams, but whole series of reasonings, which have need to reproduce themselves, of the medium which has given them birth. If the reader has followed me without repugnance, he has already divined my conclusion. I believe that, in many cases, not certainly in all, the intoxication of Poe was a mnemonic means, a method of work, a method energetic and fatal, but appropriate to his passionate nature. The poet has learned to drink as the laborious author exercises himself in filling note books. He could not resist the desire of finding again those visions, marvelous or awful—those subtle conceptions which he had met before in a preceding tempest; they were old acquaintances which imperatively attracted him, and to renew his knowledge of them, he took a road most dangerous, but most direct. The works that give us so much pleasure today were, in reality, the cause of his death. . . . Upon the heart of this literature, where the air is rarified, the mind can feel that vague anguish, that fear prompt to tears, that sickness of the heart, which dwells in places vast and strange. Like our Eugene Delacroix, who has elevated his art to the height of grand poetry, Edgar Poe loves to move his figures upon a ground of green or violet where the phosphorescence of putrefaction, and the odour of the hurricane, reveal themselves. Nature inanimate participates of the nature of living beings, and, like it, trembles with a shiver, supernatural and galvanic. Space is fathomed by opium; for opium gives a magic tinge to all the hues, and causes every noise to vibrate with the most sonorous magnificence. Sometimes glorious visions, full of light and color, suddenly unroll themselves in its landscape; and on the furthest

horizon line we see oriental cities and palaces, mist covered, in the distance, which the sun floods with golden showers.

Baudelaire may speak for himself and his school; these apparently looked for inspiration to such sources, and imitated the "Germanic horrors" occasionally indulged in by Poe; however, I would like to have the prescription for the mixture, or know the brand of the beverage, that inspired Poe when at his best. Drink and drugs, after their first stimulating or soothing effect, stupify. Their only value is in reviving those physically exhausted and to relieve mental unrest.. They only stimulate and distort.

Again quoting from Baudelaire:

Diderot is a blood-red author; Poe is a writer of the nerves—even something more—and the best I know. . . . No man has told with greater magic the *exceptions* of human life and nature, the ardors of the curiosities of convalescence, the close of seasons charged with enervating splendors, sultry weather, humid and misty, where the south wind softens and distends the nerves, like the chords of an instrument; where the eyes are filled with tears that come not from the heart; hallucinations at first giving place to doubt, soon convinced and full of reasons as a book; absurdity installing itself in the intellect, and governing it with a crushing logic; hysteria usurping the place of will, a contradiction established between the nerves and the mind, and mien out of all accord expressing grief by laughter. He analyzes them where they are most fugitive; he poises the imponderable, and describes in that minute and scientific manner, whose effects are terrible, all that imaginary world which floats around the nervous man, and conducts him on to evil.

Although Baudelaire did not deny any of Griswold's allegations—he had not the facts, nor did he feel the necessity of any explanation—he did resent, with Gallic venom, the use Griswold made of his editorial authority:

The *pedagogue vampire* has defamed his friend at full length in an enormous article—wearisome and crammed with hatred—which was prefixed to the posthumous edition of Poe's works. Are there then no regulations in America to keep curs out of cemeteries?

This memoir concludes:

The characters of Poe, or rather *the* character of Poe, the man with sharpened faculties, the man with nerves relaxed, the man whose ardent and patient will bids defiance to difficulties, whose glance is steadfastly fixed, with the rigidity of a sword, upon objects that increase

the more, the more he gazes—this man is Poe himself; and his women, all luminous and sickly, dying of a thousand unknown ills, and speaking with a voice resembling music, are still himself; or, at least, by their strange aspirations, by their knowledge, by their incurable melancholy, they participate strongly in the nature of their creator. As to his ideal woman—his *Titanide*, she reveals herself under different names, scattering in his, alas! too scanty poems, portraits, or rather modes of feeling beauty, which the temperament of the author brings together, and confounds in a unity, vague but sensible, and where, more delicately, perhaps, than elsewhere, glows that insatiable passion for the beautiful which forms his greatest claim, that is to say, the essence of all his claims, to the affection and respect of poets.

While it is necessary to lay at the door of Baudelaire the underlying idea, if there be one, which this long and intricate quotation would seem to indicate, it would not be fair to attribute to him all the sins of commission that are found in this involved paragraph; and, having heard Baudelaire commended, I prefer to attribute much of this cacophony to his translator.

Baudelaire may find all this apropos of Poe, but where he made this discovery, or his reasons for drawing such deductions, puzzles me. I rather suspect that such thoughts were the result of a vermouth dream.

Lauvrière has placed upon Poe a brand more disfiguring than that of Griswold; for it has been assumed that Lauvrière's statement was only made after a careful study, a full knowledge of the facts of Poe's life, and, above all, that it was without prejudice. Thus handicapped it will be a difficult task fairly to weigh the evidence on which the judgment of future biographers must rest.

EDGAR POE: Sa Vie, et Son Oeuvre. Étude de Psychologie Pathologique, Par Émile Lauvrière. Professeur agrégé au lycée de Charlemagne, Docteur [d]ès lettres. Paris. Felix Alcan, Editeur. 1904.

This work by Lauvrière, the standard Continental life of Poe, is not only the French authority on all that con-



cerns Poe's abnormal psychology, but, by many American and English writers, its *dicta* are quoted as authoritative scientific statements. Whether they should be so accepted must be determined by an investigation of the qualifications of Lauvrière to undertake this important pronouncement, and of the soundness and fairness of his judgment.

No English translation of this work has been made and, for this reason, at times, I have found it difficult fully to comprehend Lauvrière's statements. His use of scientific terms is confusing because, not being fully familiar with their technical value, he has not always made plain those finer distinctions that an alienist would have drawn. In addition to this, certain of his statements are so grandiloquently phrased, and so abound in hyperbole, that a literal translation is not always possible. I can only vouch for the fact that I have made a painstaking effort: I may not always have arrived at the proper renditions and I may not, in all instances, have made plain the finer shades of meaning Lauvrière intended. My referees—excellent French scholars—have not fully agreed among themselves as to just what Lauvrière intended by certain of his scientific statements. On the whole, his meaning is plain, and his general conclusions are not difficult to understand. In addition to the rendering of obscure passages, or words, into such phrases as the English language allows, I will, where for clarity it seems necessary, add the original text.

Lauvrière's book extends over seven hundred pages. The first three hundred detail Poe's life; the other four hundred contain a discussion of his writings.

In both the first and second portions of this critical study, Lauvrière has formulated theories by which he attempts to solve certain problems of Poe's life, and to explain the peculiarities which he believes to be charac-

teristic of much that Poe wrote. Accepting as true all that Griswold alleged, Lauvrière has attempted to establish a thesis that demonstrates an inter-relation between the abnormalities described and the things that he asserts Poe wrote during the time his brain was poisoned by stimulants, or narcotized by drugs.

His conclusion that Poe became a "madman" because of a primarily disordered brain, diseased but stimulated by alcohol, or hallucinated by opium, requires investigation.

Lauvrière's psychological studies are not confined to one section. They are indiscriminately scattered through more than seven hundred pages. Although in their entirety they do not cover forty of these, this number has proved fully adequate by reason of the vigor, the conciseness, and the positiveness of his assertions. Writing before the publication of either Harrison's or Woodberry's biographies, Lauvrière has adopted as his authority the memoir by Griswold, and corroborates it by quotations from Briggs. The contributions of Ingram and Gill have been ignored; apparently they did not fit into his theory. His assertion that Poe's work is merely the manifestation of a disordered brain deserves special consideration.\*

Before we continue the narrative of this hopelessly foredoomed life let us, for a moment, examine his contemporary work. We will find there the same pathetic role played by the same individual, whose haggard countenance is stamped by the imminence of insanity. [les traits à peine accentués prédisent l'imminence de la folie.] Always there is presented the same morbid hero, with his haggard, disease-stamped face, haunted by specters; a Poe prematurely aged and debilitated, who, stupified, sees in his own pages, as in a mirror, a reflection of himself as he awaits the fate to which he is doomed. The same exaggerated sensibility, the same overstrung nerves, the same profoundly unbalanced and over-excited imagination, the legacy of a decadent family which had been noted for the vigor of its imagination and for the ardor of its passions, and which, finally, because of the constitutional evil, manifested itself in a swarm of abnormal sensations; the same inconsistency; the same incoherence arising because of his inability to overcome an habitual timidity, [même inconsistency même incohérence qui vient de futiles efforts pour vaincre

\*Lauvrière. *Edgar Poe. Sa Vie, et Son Oeuvre* [1904]. Page 174.

une trépidation habituelle,"] with excessive nervous agitation showing itself by trembling and broken voice, or, brusque and hoarse and perfectly modulated, such as one finds in the hopeless drunkard, or in the incorrigible eater of opium. Why should one further seek to penetrate into this habitual and excessive reserve, into this dark and unbearable sorrow which reproduces itself over all that he sees in the physical universe, or in our moral nature, and which over them constantly casts its gloomy shadows? Those inconceivable and mysterious obsessions of terror and horror have, like an incubus, settled on his heart causing him baseless alarms. It is into this pitiful condition he sinks when, in that last hour of life, he loses his reason and must face a horrible phantom of fear.

Sometimes, with staring eyes, in an attitude of profound attention, he gazes into vacancy as if he were listening to imaginary voices, again his eyes glow with mad hilarity attempting to hold in check an hysterical seizure in which the wild saraband dance of delirious and inchoate sensations, maddened even to crime, which rise in the sick brain like the nightmare of a madman, when they are aroused and throw themselves into the whirling dance, led by those two macaber and satanic demons: Alcohol and Opium.

It is difficult to understand Lauvrière's application—this dizzy dance led by macaber demons, these resounding words and misapplied metaphors—either to Poe or to the things he wrote. Apparently, to Lauvrière's mind, opium, alcohol, madness and Poe were inextricably mixed, and his portrait betrays this to such an extent that we fail to recognize in the likeness the slightest resemblance to the Poe we know, the Poe of whom even Griswold wrote, "His beauty, his readiness, the daring spirit that breathed around him like a fiery atmosphere." No testimony exists either in the known facts of Poe's life or in the description all biographers give of his personal charm and the brilliancy of his conversation, nor yet in the things he wrote, that would justify these lurid statements. It is most difficult to understand Lauvrière's reason for describing Poe: "Tantôt il reste pendent des heures, les yeux fixés dans l'égarément, en une attitude de la plus profonde attention comme s'il prêtait l'oreille à des bruits imaginaires;" nor his reason for assuming that this was a reproduction of the sensations that haunted the mind of Poe.

In *Berenice* Poe wrote:

To muse for long unwearied hours, with my attention riveted to some frivolous device on the margin or in the typography of a book; to become absorbed, for the better part of a summer's day, in a quaint shadow falling aslant upon the tapestry or upon the floor; lose myself, for an entire night, in watching the steady flame of a lamp or the embers of a fire; to dream away whole days over the perfume of a flower; to repeat, monotonously, some common word, until the sound, by dint of frequent repetition, ceased to convey any idea whatever to the mind; to lose all sense of motion or physical existence, by means of absolute quiescence long and obstinately persevered in: such were a few of the most common and least pernicious vagaries induced by a condition of the mental faculties, not, indeed, altogether unparalleled, but certainly bidding defiance to anything like analysis or explanation.

This assuredly does not justify Lauvrière's deductions nor will it explain "l'effroyable sarabande de sensations incohérentes, déliriantes, affolées jusqu'au crime." It is merely the day dreams of the mentally indolent, and it well describes the auto-hypnotization unconsciously practiced by all of us when we sink into reverie.

A study of the *data* upon which Lauvrière based this and other statements, and from which he drew his conclusions, makes it certain that such verbiage is not all French exaggeration, nor was it written for literary effect. Swept on by the torrent of scientific knowledge that he has imbibed, he pours out and overwhelms Poe with a flood of images drawn from an overwrought imagination. He is sincere in his beliefs, even while his conclusions are based partly on untruthful allegations and partly on failure to understand scientific statements that can be variously interpreted. For this reason, it is proper that we know what was the foundation of his knowledge, and what were the scientific truths on which he based his conclusions. Lauvrière fully details the preparation he made for his special study: \*

When discussing such a condition, ordinarily one will say 'Bah! c'est un malade,' and passes on. But we did not care to side-step this question. We wished with a clear conscience personally to investigate

\*Lauvrière. *Op. Cit. Preface*, pages vi-vii.

this matter, and to discuss it intelligently, and remembering that Poe was a sick man, or, as Briggs expressed it, 'a psychological phenomenon,' it occurred to us that a study of medicine would be necessary and that, possibly, a physician could furnish the key to this startling enigma that conjoined Poe's life and his work.

As our first inducement to begin on this study, a thing we little foresaw when we entered upon this work, was the intermittent nature, and frequent repetition of the brutal alcoholic attacks that were so prominent a symptom in the disease of this poor poet. All the symptoms of degeneration were so deeply graven in the flesh and soul of Poe, they show as plainly in his poor haggard face, the face of an inspired vagabond, as they do in the pages of his immortal prose and verse. Mentally, as well as physically, this degeneration has left its indelible mark upon his whole being. This explains all his abnormalities; his strength and his weakness; his genius and his madness; his defeats and his victories; without them his life and his work resemble monstrosities void of understanding; [monstruosites vides de sens] with them there is no more mystery; everything is made clear, logical and harmonious. Although this extremely simple explanation of the complicated problem was made not without difficulty, these final conclusions were not arrived at without painstaking study and extreme labor. It proved to be a new world for exploration: alienism, that distant and terrifying province of scientific psychology. Happily the means for exploration were at hand, and they served well for one interested, but untrained in scientific research. For this reason it proved pleasant, although it required long months that had to be devoted to this study. We did not hesitate. By reason of the permission granted to us by M. Brouardel, we were allowed to consult, according to our needs, such specialists as Ribot and Janet of the College of France, and Dr. Klippel of the Paris Hospital. To them we return thanks for the information they imparted, and for their considerate advice.

While Lauvrière deserves credit for the effort he made, and for his good intentions, the result hardly justified this preparatory course of study.

A little learning is a dangerous thing;  
Drink deep, or touch not the *Pierian* spring.

It is the complete confidence with which Lauvrière has accepted the various statements he quotes, and his unique interpretation of them, that makes us know that he lacks experience in their practical application.

Lauvrière was a "Docteur dès Lettres," not a Doctor of Medicine. In attempting to discuss a subject by its very nature difficult, and not fully comprehended by our most

advanced students, and one concerning which so many diverse and radically opposed theories still are advanced in explanation of things that, by their very nature, are undecipherable, he undertook something for which he was in no way prepared. It is the wise man whose knowledge, like that of Socrates, consists in knowing its limitations. I do not care to be understood as intimating that to become a competent alienist one must be either a graduate in medicine or a Psychiatrist. On the other hand, the reading of a few books, conversations with specialists, or association with those qualified to speak with authority, can not, in the course of a few months, prepare the most eager investigator authoritatively to discuss a subject which, after years of practical familiarity and constant association, its students are forced to admit has no anatomical foundation, and permits only of the most general theorizing.

Neither the anatomy of the brain nor the pathological changes it undergoes when it functions normally, have been definitely established. Frequently it happens that some new stain upsets our preconceived ideas of brain cells, their association tracts, and their fibrillary connection. Although we believe we are making slow advances in special knowledge of this subject, no organ of the human body is less understood by the physiologist than is the brain. Unlike other departments of medicine, we have no definitely accepted pathology or causation, or even a classification which all follow who discuss these neuroses. We still confuse first symptoms with causation; nor have we the slightest conception what physiological changes underlie normal ideation. Much less do we understand those changes in the cells of the brain that are responsible for abnormal psychology. We cannot solve the riddle of heredity, even though the researches of Mendel, and others who amplified his observations, have laid an excellent

foundation so far as body-characteristics are concerned. Who has, or can, lay down definite rules for guidance in the reproduction of those qualities of head and heart so necessary to the well-being of the race? We talk much of eugenic laws, and various organizations learnedly discuss ways and means of human improvement. We can breed for bulk, or for other physical qualities; but we are *more than* animals. Brain is not synonymous with brawn. We must not measure the stature either of Napoleon or of Lloyd George by the yardstick. In that famous debate between those well known Georgia Senators, Toombs and Stevens, when gigantic Toombs boasted that, if they would only grease Stevens' head and tie back his ears, he "could swallow him whole," and little Stevens replied (borrowing from Scott) that "if he did, Toombs would have more brains in his belly than he had in his head," we have a memorable truth. How can we infuse into the texture of the brain those qualities that make for nobility of character and greatness of soul? that produced a Washington, and that typifies a Wilson? What psychologist could have formulated the mating that produced the lovable qualities of a Goldsmith, or the dominating personality of a Johnson? Who could have foretold the result of the paternal accident that we trace in the life histories of Dickens and Mark Twain? And what soothsayer could so have read the *augury* as to have foretold the result of the mating of a strolling actress (unknown, and who, possibly like Topsy, "just growed") with the drunken, the degenerate, and the shiftless son of a family "whose greatest enemy had always been the bottle"? For a very good reason, and one that no amount of research ever can solve, the qualities of the mind, as well as their morbid reactions, are too delicate ever to be scientifically solved. For the world this is fortunate, however high an inheritance tax the victims of this heredity must pay. Eradicate the nervous diathesis,

suppress the hot blood that results from the overclose mating of neurotics, from that unstable nervous organization due to alcoholic inheritance, or even from insanity and the various forms of parental degeneracy, and we would have a race of stoics: men without imagination, individuals incapable of enthusiasms, brains without personality, souls without genius. It is possible to mate for bulk. By selecting desirable physical qualities we can produce a perfect human brute, but we have lost those higher and ennobling gifts that have made so much for the world's pleasure and progress. Who could, or would, breed for a hump-backed Pope, or a clubfooted Byron, a tubercular Keats, or a soul-obsessed Poe? Nature has done fairly well by us. Love, which mates opposites, which induces the weak to cling to the strong, the bold and reckless to seek the timid and retiring, the bulky frame to search out its opposite in the small and compact stature, supposes a method of selection more in accord with natural laws than any eugenic statutes we could enact. The tuberculous and the neurotic have their place in Nature's scheme. Suppress them, and we have extinguished the flower before it has fruited. While nature often throws these aside in the first generation, always in the second or third unless complementary mates are chosen, the genius in them has given to the world much that the world ill could spare.

Into this mesh of theories, and into this quagmire of ignorance of Nature's laws, Lauvrière boldly has entered with his newly acquired knowledge. He attempts not only to solve the riddle of the mind, but confidently passes on questions of heredity. His study of genius is particularly enlightening, and the result he reaches measures the scientific value of his deductions. Using the translation of Professor Morris: "In short, everywhere in this temple of madness, we witness, enthralled by the charm of a dangerous art, the fascinating but exhausting spectacle of the



human faculties, sensibility, energy, intelligence, imagination, reason, taste, outraged in paroxysms of pain. If the frightful superiority of this extraordinary being comes from genius, then genius is nothing but frenzied excesses."

To Lauvrière, Poe presents a type of genius in its most repulsive form. He traces Poe's career from infancy, stupefied by gin and surrounded by the squalor and poverty-begotten environments that became the lot of the dying mother, through unhappy boyhood with proud spirit chafing against restraint, into young manhood undisciplined by moral laws; and he shows Poe's matured habits characterized by unceasing dissipation that weakened, and finally overthrew, a brain by inheritance abnormal.\*

Poe, from birth, was a degenerate. He was born under miserable hygienic conditions and inherited from his parents both an alcoholic neurosis and a phthisical constitution. With such an heredity this abnormal Richmond child presented a precocious intelligence and an exalted sentimentality, with a quick but intermittent energy on which was laid the foundation of his indisciplinable character. With a mind inflated by pride he passed an unstable youth immersed in a series of ecstatic, morbid trances, and mystic visions commingled with expansive ideas. Following closely upon such dreams came a series of rash and unconsidered adventures until defeats, responsibilities, and misery made of the rich, adopted, city child, of the proud poet, the brilliant idealist and dreamer a deserter, a wandering vagabond without hearth or home, an outcast, a madman. [un bohème sans feu ni lieu, un déclassé un detraqué.]

Is he to be regarded as a man insane or as a genius, this strange, unbalanced and impossible personality; a man whose brain wanders on the border line between crime and genius? It is doubtless true that toward the end of his life and of his sad career, this poor decadent was a partially reasoning madman whose double, circular insanity was allowed to grow greater and greater, and there came recurring periods of depression complicated by outbreaks of erotomania.

In this estimate, evidently based on Poe's own words which Lauvrière has little more than paraphrased, and which we find in the opening description of William Wilson, it is evidently assumed that Poe was giving an accur-

\*Lauvrière. *Op. Cit.*, page 307.

ate autobiographic statement—a thing impossible to conceive except by one who assumes that everything Poe wrote was only his reflected self, and that he could give forth no other sentiments except those he individually felt.

I am come of a race whose imaginative and easily excitable temperament had at all times rendered them remarkable; and, in my earliest infancy, I gave evidence of having fully inherited the family character. As I advanced in years it was most strongly developed; becoming, for many reasons, a cause of serious disquietude to my friends and of positive injury to myself. I grew self-willed, addicted to the wildest caprices, and a prey to the most ungovernable passions. Weakminded, and beset with constitutional infirmities akin to my own, my parents could do but little to check the evil propensities which distinguished me.

Poe, in writing *William Wilson*, did exhibit consummate psychological acumen. It is a story dreadful in its keen psycho-analysis, but it was not necessarily a personal experience, though he wrote in the first person.

Lauvrière bases not only the conception, but even the ideation of much that Poe wrote upon his abnormal psychology while under the influence of drugs and stimulants.\*

We believe that the truth is most difficult to arrive at for the reason that spiritual superiority is the infinitely variable product of mental faculties, more or less abnormal. . . . There is no human faculty the morbid development of which may not end either in genius or insanity, and, at times, it is difficult to draw the line of demarcation separating them. Not to mention the alternating states of exaltation and depression, equally characteristic of this state of nervous tension, it frequently happens that the artistic vision changes into an ocular hallucination; the inspiration of the poet into delirious ramblings; the contemplations of the philosopher into ecstatic visions; the unbending logic of the scientist into the reasoning paranoia; the imperious energy of the man of action into a criminal impulsion: and how often, and in how many celebrated cases, has not this fated change come with some tragic denouément that has startled the world? Between these two orbits of mental revolution, great as these extremes may be, there exists, for the genius, a large neutral zone where these differences, in the degree of the nervous and mental manifestations, make their psychological relationship of less importance than are the practical consequences that may result. In the midst of this questionable zone floats the morbid genius of Poe. It was endowed with this distinctive precocity, and with the fatal predeter-

\*Lauvrière. *Op. Cit.*, page 696.

mined course characteristic of innate tendencies. It possesses for an unstable basis morbid sensibility as greedy of, as it is susceptible to, intense emotional states. From birth to death it balances between conditions of ecstasy and melancholy, and this was the origin both of Poe's poetic inspirations and of his fantastic creations; of his literary dogmas and of his synthetical metaphysical creations. Because of these alternating conditions both in his prose and verse, come those passages of unutterable despair, as well as those vibrating with the exhilaration of life. From this comes that glowing mystic cult which unites beauty with death but ends by confounding them. From this influence come seraphic lovers filled with platonic dreams rather than inspired by passion. From this arises those macaber apparitions exaggerated because of the emanations of alcohol and opium. From this, also, comes those tremulous excesses of a degenerate character, a prey to the most contradictory forces. On this doubly unstable foundation his poetry, from its first childish prattle till its last senile ramblings, always sings its sad melodies that, rising from unconscious depths, survive reason. In his criticisms there is a mixture of bitter intolerance and of proud, suspicious egotism. His stories abound with hallucinatory visions of fear, and of obsessions that lead to criminal acts and, occasionally, are characterized by adventurous flights of intuition and marvelous 'chimeres de l'imagination.' Even in his most grotesque mood, grinning behind his mask, his macaber visions and deep sadness lie hidden; and, in his excited discussions of the most abstruse problems, he erects on a frail and emotional basis the most fantastic structures of occult pantheism.

The clarity of Poe's reasoning, and his powers of analysis as displayed by his solution of cryptograms, as well as in many of his tales, disprove this generalization of Lauvrière. He has strangely ignored the keenness of the mental processes that must have been employed in writing such stories as *The Gold Bug* and the *Murders in the Rue Morgue*, and the imaginative qualities displayed in *The Domain of Arnheim*. Nor has he properly understood and differentiated, the varying mental states Poe delineated in *The Black Cat* and *The Tell Tale Heart*. To use any of these stories, or that masterly description of an overwrought nervous depressive state, *The Fall of the House of Usher* (which in a certain way might have been auto-biographic) as proof, or even as an illustration of a mental condition brought on by the overuse of alcohol and opium, is a psychological crime. It can only be explained by Lauv-

rière's exaggerated belief in the value of the special studies he made. Our investigations into the effect of even small quantities of alcohol in retarding brain operations, must have been well within his knowledge. That the brain could have so functioned as to produce results that required the highest idealizations and the strongest logical faculties, is the best evidence that it was not dulled by alcoholic poisoning.

This thrice-repeated dancing skeleton of Macaber, which Lauvrière so insistently dangles before us, may have been Germanic in its conception, but it is essentially French in its later development, and in this peculiar method of application.

While it is true that, upon occasion, Poe drank to excess, and that, in time, these frequently-repeated, alcoholically-poisoned drenchings did set up organic changes in the brain cells and their coverings, these circumstances added no brilliancy to Poe's mental faculties; on the contrary, they slowly and insidiously unfitted him for his best work. Although there were repeated acute mental disturbances they were but of short duration. At no time, under the most distorted nomenclature, could Poe have been classified as a "madman," nor was he a "monster." Possibly the vigor of Lauvrière's epithets carries him beyond a scientific pronouncement: or it may be that these phrases are to be understood only in a "Pickwickian" sense.

While it is true that, within certain limits, psychiatrists are agreed on fundamental propositions, and accept as an established fact the close relationship of diseases originating in the nervous diathesis, further than this they are by no means unanimous. We recognize groups of symptoms, or "syndromes," as characterizing certain nervous states, but, at best, we do not more than generalize in our attempts to classify them. Beyond this, at times we seriously differ when specific claims are made as to definite causa-

tion, or as to the *modus operandi* of brain functioning. There are as many theories as there are text books written.

Much less this dreamer, deaf and blind,  
 Named man, may hope some truth to find,  
 That bears relation to the mind.  
 For every worm beneath the moon  
 Draws different threads, and late and soon  
 Spins, toiling out his own cocoon.

Lauvrière's error consists in his attempt concretely to apply these generalizations and his excess of faith in the soundness of the doctrines he has absorbed. He accepts as true all that has been alleged, and admits all into his discussion as a basis for further generalization. In this way, he has erected a structure both "arabesque and grotesque" in which he has attempted to domicile Poe.

His final estimate measures the psychological acumen of the man.\*

Beneath this web of contradictory statements, the character of Poe seems to be an enigma: an unreal and an unbelievable personality. Some describe him as a man false, cruel, cynical; more devil than human, whose odious actions seem to arise from a monstrous perversion. Others describe him as a peaceful friend, generous, invariably kind, cheerful and courteous: a model in all that concerns social and domestic virtues; and that, in addition to this, he was the soul of honor. Which of these opinions shall we accept? Whom of his biographers are we to believe? In our opinion, both. It is not wise to adopt the middle course and thus to efface an individuality which nature has so markedly accentuated. Whether or not we like it we must accept this double personality as a fact, and not as an exaggeration; and, further, that they alternated the one with the other. Is it not a matter of common knowledge that the dipsomaniac, whether drinking or abstinent, resembles a man with two personalities inhabiting the same body? one steady, sober, laborious, even austere; the other only half conscious, almost insane, a prey to all follies, to all excesses? This double personality has been compared to a lighthouse that has two differently colored lights and, according to the disk through which the light shines, the rays appear red or blue. For this reason this remarkable man, who, to his tavern companions appeared to be little else than a degraded drunken sot, lacking human reason and moral sense, was, in the eyes of his friends and admirers, a poor misunderstood genius who was calumniated, and, for that reason, so much the

\*Lauvrière. *Op. Cit.*, page 155.

more worthy of admiration and sympathy. These two views cannot possibly be reconciled, and we must accept both as equally true: two aspects of this Janus with the double face.

There is, however, a seriously complicating factor. As we have before remarked, dipsomania is nothing but an inherited form of insanity, and it may present itself under many aspects. In many cases, besides the more or less constant oscillation between melancholic depression and maniacal exaltation, there are a number of eccentric deviations which cross one another because of acquired or inherited degeneration. One should, for this reason, not speak of duality in the presence of this mental incoherence, but rather of the plurality of the ego, the breaking up of human personality, and the return of the individual *ego* to initial chaos [Effritement de la personnalité humaine, retour de la colonie individuelle au chaos initial.] 'An essential and striking clinical fact,' says Dr. Magnan, 'is the coexistence in the same individual patient of more or less marked obsessions, occasionally present at the same time, more frequently separated and exhibiting themselves at various periods of life. This peculiarity is especially to be noted and is illuminating because it makes clear and fully explains the nature of these morbid manifestations. When one thoroughly investigates the lives of these patients it is only exceptionally that only one syndrome is found. It is not rare to find several coinciding syndromes. Generally there is no law governing this association, and their only point of relationship is in their origin. The more one observes the more frequently one finds examples of this multiplication. If all of these syndromes, thus co-existing, succeed and multiply themselves infinitely, it can only be because of the basic fact of their having originated from the same morbid condition, and that they are the result of cerebrosplinal automatism.' Thus through the destructive agency of suffering and unhappiness, of overwork and excesses of all kinds, this poor personality of Poe, so sensitively and so impulsively organized and so badly coordinated, began by degrees to show evidence of disorganization. It was for this reason that he began to show evidences of mental disturbance complicated by such impulses which, originally, he had under control, but which now destroyed the general harmony. Slowly there developed evidences of decay in his fragile and unstable individuality. From the fact of this loss of mental control comes the heartbreaking spectacle of a mind based originally on a groundwork of morbid sensibility, with time growing more diseased, with constantly increasing symptoms characterized by obsessions, impulsions, and morbid fears; ideas of persecution and delusions of grandeur,—all symptoms of a hopeless insanity.

Neither by absorption nor experience did Lauvrière understand more than the most general rudiments of a subject which no one fully comprehends. In attempting to apply these to Poe's particular psychology he accepted as

definitely established truths, the most generally applied theories. It was not altogether because of his dependence on Griswold for the facts of Poe's life that he wrote, "Sa vie et son oeuvre appraisalment commes des monstruosities vides de sens." Surely Poe's own work was open to him: had he not been blinded by scientific aphorisms, basically true but misapplied, he could not have drawn the conclusions he did.

Lauvrière's special study of dipsomania is based on extracts and statements equally distorted. In copying from Magnan, and in elaborating on that excerpt as applicable to Poe, Lauvrière is in serious error. While it is a matter of every day experience, authoritatively established by scientific knowledge, that a man suddenly may be seized by an obsession that compels him to seek oblivion in some form of narcosis, alcoholic or drugged, and that, during this time, he may sin grievously against the moral laws, this fact does not make him either a madman or, necessarily, a degenerate, even while it is established with equal definiteness that such attacks, frequently indulged in and unduly prolonged, may induce organic changes in the tissues that compose the brain matter, and produce mental weakness and, temporarily, acute mental disturbance.

Lauvrière, rightly diagnosing Poe's inherited disease to have been dipsomania, has made a special study of this disease.\*

'Dipsomania is one of the evils following in the train of hereditary insanity, heredity always dominating as a predisposing factor in its causation: all such patients are predisposed to insanity by reason of their ancestry, insofar as we have seen, or can determine. Should one search into their early history it is found that, even in childhood, they have shown peculiarities of character and abnormalities of mind which distinguish them from other children of the same age, though raised under the same social conditions. One of these characteristics is a pronounced precocity.

\*Lauvrière. *Op. Cit.*, page 45.

Such individuals are solitary, live apart, concentrate on special subjects, and, as a rule, are unbalanced, with a predisposition to melancholy. They are especially attracted by whatever is fantastic. With few exceptions they belong to that class of degenerates known as reasoning idiots.

Must we not, in reading these lines, admit that, in addition to these leading characteristics, the unfortunate Poe possessed all these secondary traits which so indelibly and cruelly marked the physiognomy of this hereditary madman, doomed not only to abnormal mental peculiarities but especially to dipsomaniacal fury.

Lauvrière has taken a very broad generalization of Magnan's, which possibly was intended as a reference to "psychoneuroses," and has used it as proof that "*la Dipsomanie n'est qu'un symptôme de la folie héréditaire.*" The explanation given of the duality of Poe's personality, technically correct, assumed as true statements of the facts of Poe's life that had no existence except in Griswold's untrue assertions. In his scientific enthusiasm, Lauvrière fails to take into account those things that are a matter of common knowledge. Possibly a study of the context accompanying the excerpt from Magnan would show that Lauvrière's interpretation is misleading. It certainly is not a fact that syndromes typifying definite neuroses are interchangeable; nor do several of these manifest themselves in the same individual either at the same time or at different periods of his life history. One who inherits sick headache does not have epilepsy as a complicating factor, however closely related be their origin. Neurasthenia remains neurasthenia and by no means, directly or indirectly, does it necessarily change into other neuroses. Dipsomania is not a term synonymous with insanity; neither by heredity nor directly does it bear a closer relation to mental diseases than do the other neuroses. Should a mental disturbance develop because of changed cerebral circulation, this is directly due to an organic change produced because of meningeal involvement, whereas insanity is essentially a functional



disturbance, without an organic basis, and having no discoverable pathological changes as a foundation. Dipsomania has, as a predisposing factor, not insanity, but a direct alcoholic inheritance. To call dipsomaniacs insane, or to class them among the mentally unsound, is not justified by our experience, even though, theoretically, they belong to the same group and, at times, do show traces of nervous instability with occasional irrational acts. Had this unsoundness taken the form of *megrim*, no such reprehensible term would have been applied.

To further make plain Poe's condition, Lauvrière quotes Barine:\*

Recently, Arvède Barine, in three brilliant articles overflowing with generous enthusiasm, believed he had found in dipsomania, alone, the key to this enigma. But this dipsomania of Poe, as we have stated, can not be regarded as a form of drunkenness; rather it is absolutely the result of alcoholic degeneration and is in fact a general disease of the mind. . . . It is in vain that the frightened victim [of dipsomania] repeatedly attempts to regain self control, and takes oaths of reformation in attempting to strengthen his will-power over this alcoholic compulsion—an enemy that has now become a part of his flesh.

In spite of all his efforts the vice persists and, unobtrusively, it accomplishes its task by slowly undermining his bodily functions; with an unstrung nervous system he becomes progressively weakened physically, and there only remains moral insensibility to the finer things of life, while all that is left is mental anarchy. There is a feverish activity which ends in hopeless impotence, and, in place of ambitions realized, only heart-breaking disappointments. It ends in hopeless weakness. There comes fierce criticisms or exalted praise; monomania of persecution, or the brilliant sparkling of a supreme genius; sensational mystification, or a tenacious pursuit of gigantic projects.

Although, occasionally, it happens that dipsomaniacs give evidence of a disturbed mentality, by no possible theory can they be called *madmen*. I have many friends—lawyers, physicians, occasionally clergymen, and men prominent in civil and business life—who, possessing exceptional mental endowments, are the victims of this inheritance. Frequently they succeed in fighting off their periodical

\*Lauvrière. *Op. Cit.*, page 306.

seizures; yet, when the obsession does overwhelm them they will disappear for a few days or for weeks. What happens during this period does not concern the world—as a rule. Whether they are able to remain in control of their distraught nerves, or whether they are swept away by the impetuosity of uncontrollable compulsions, they are equally sufferers from an hereditary neurosis. By no method of reasoning can this be considered tantamount to insanity; nor justly can they be called insane, although at times they may appear irrational, or be irresponsible.

Lauvrière's inclusion of dipsomania, insanity, moral abnormalities, and genius in the same class is not one that can be supported by any alienistic theory with which I am familiar, however closely they may be related basically. That Lauvrière has widened his group so as to include men of genius is only in line with statements long ago made which never have been accepted by alienists. In no circumstances can their mental state come under the usually accepted definition of insanity: "A condition of intellectual disturbance characterized by delusions out of which the patient cannot be reasoned."

Yet Lauvrière furnishes a long list of names of those whom he includes in his classification, especially many English writers. Among them are Swift, Johnson, Blake, Burton, Rochester and others, and he adduces evidence of their mental unsoundness. That he excludes much of French literature from the taint of such origin is noteworthy\*

If French literature present less abnormal talent and genius, it is probably because the French spirit is more moderate and has been, for a long period, under the moral discipline of the XVII century.

Evidently a nation cannot judge of its susceptibility to such a charge more discriminatingly than can an individual. My own conception of French psychology is somewhat different.

\*Lauvrière. *Op. Cit.*, page 704.

It is true that many names mentioned by Lauvrière have legends associated with them that would indicate peculiarities of character or accentuated mental conditions in their possessors which would differentiate them from the standards we have adopted and by which we judge the average man. Abnormal development of one particular faculty is regarded as a "gift"; yet it presupposes a corresponding deficiency in some other mental quality. There is no such thing as a "universal genius." The brilliant orator, the musical genius, and the gifted painter are not, as a rule, characterized by "common sense"; and frequently they show a deficiency of mental poise because they lack some prosaic quality with which the average individual is endowed. An unbiased and unsympathetic investigation into the life history of most of our great men, whether of letters, science, or the arts, would exhibit many personal peculiarities, if not mental abnormalities. While, possibly, the "strict moral discipline of the XVII century" may have diminished this tendency among the French, Lauvrière finds it even there. Nor does he fail to adduce the authority of antiquity as proof of "the insanity of genius."\*

This question is as old as the world. The ancients saw no difference between the revelations of the wise-men and the ravings of the mad-men. For this reason they believed that the delusions induced by the gods were more trustworthy than were the deductions which were the result of human thought. . . . There is a third delirium, known as inspiration which, entirely enthusing a pure soul, animates and transports it. *Nullum magnum ingenium sine mixtura dementiae* was an adage evidencing the wisdom of the ancients.

Lauvrière gives this judgment of Poe and his writings:†

The important question of the relationship of genius to insanity comes so definitely in the case of Poe, that Poe himself has asked it. For this reason we cannot avoid it: let us treat it frankly, not with the expectation of an impossible solution but in the hope of casting on it the light of our own investigations and that of many others.

The whole monstrous work trembles beneath a wind of madness, and is only held together by some harmonious law of logic and by the

\*Lauvrière. *Op. Cit.* page 685.

†Lauvrière. *Op. Cit.* page 698.

secret virtue of marvelous artifice. But so great is his art, which triumphs over madness, that, from the coldest of judges, comes the verdict: 'No, this extraordinary man who, in a few works, has given to humanity some of its rarest thrills and supremest emotions, was indeed mad; or if the word genius really means originality, there was in his madness an inseparable as well as an undeniable mixture of genius.'

This is an outrage on the memory of Poe comparable only to the verbal assault of Griswold. That it is the result of ignorance and not of malevolence may abate the moral turpitude but it does not excuse the act. It is due the good name of Poe that this stigma cast on his memory be removed, provided a fair investigation of the facts of Poe's life show that it is undeserved. It is certain that Lauvrière's psychological studies do not justify him in passing this verdict.

Beyond the question of Poe's abnormal psychology, as expounded by Lauvrière, possibly I have no right to go. In his critical discussion of Poe's work, Lauvrière's special effort is to prove that they are the outpourings of a diseased brain, not the result of a logical comprehension and intelligent effort at producing effects worthy of the world's approval. However, there are certain comparisons with other writers which equally exhibit Lauvrière's critical capacity. For some unknown reason he links the name of Byron with that of Poe, and constantly refers to the influence Byron exerted over him, claiming that Poe's inspiration was due to "son maitre Byron," or that "enthousiaste de Childe Harold, ait voulu se melee de devenir l'emule de Byron autrement qu'en vers?" The repetition of these, and similar assertions, suggests that the general Byronic influence is an ascertained fact, although, as far as I can find, no attempt has been made to establish any such association. Again Lauvrière couples the name of Whitman with that of Poe, calling them the only two great poets America has produced. While it is true that other writers, usually those of European environment with a

leaning toward decadence, have put Whitman forward as our greatest contributor to poetic literature, a study of their other favorite writers, as well as of their own productions, hardly deserves a protest. It is certain that in the exhibition of the human body naked, or but slightly draped, and in the outspoken discussion of the human passions; in the lack of concealment, and in the absence of those refinements which differentiate the savage from the civilized man, Whitman stands without a peer, although many imitators rival him in vulgarity. To compare him, either as a poet or as a writer, with Poe, would seem to reflect more upon the critical capacity of Lauvrière than upon the literary reputation of Poe.

That this work of Lauvrière must possess merit as literature, irrespective of its scientific or critical value, is evident by the great reputation this study has achieved in France, and the tribute paid it when it was crowned by the French Academy. Whether or not it has been equally honored by French alienists, I do not know.

It is said that Lauvrière's period of preparation extended over six years. Judged by the psychopathic value of this labor seven months should have more than sufficed.

If the crown with which this work has been distinguished was bestowed for its literary merits, probably the award was just; if for its value as a contribution to the scientific study of Poe's psychology, I dissent. Further, as an alienist I claim that the jewels adorning this crown are either of synthetic manufacture or that they are composed of paste.

While there were many of Poe's old friends and former associates who were loyal to his memory and who, on numerous occasions, rallied to his defense, their kind recollections and assertions of his good qualities availed little. Their voices were drowned by the vehemence of Griswold's denunciations. In the "Psychopathic Study" I have

quoted many of these friends, but so forgotten are their statements, and so scattered are they in the pages of obsolete magazines, that only general reference can be made to their statements.

Lambert A. Wilmer, in a notable book published in 1859, now a bibliographical rarity, actively defended Poe.

OUR PRESS GANG; Or, A Complete Exposition of the Corruptions and Crimes of the American Newspapers. By Lambert A. Wilmer (Ex-editor). Philadelphia: J. T. Lloyd. London: Sampson Low, Son & Co. 1859.

This is the same Wilmer who was editor of the "Saturday Visiter," of Baltimore, in which Poe won a prize with his "Tales of the Folio Club." For many years afterward, Poe and Wilmer were more or less friendly, and corresponded with each other at irregular intervals. It was the "Quacks of Helicon," written by Wilmer, that Poe so ardently defended, and in a review of which he strongly upheld Wilmer's charges of literary corruption.

While Wilmer's book was not written for the specific purpose of rehabilitating Poe, it happens that it does strongly corroborate many of Poe's contentions, and justifies the stand Poe took toward many writers and much that they wrote. If conditions were such as this book asserts, it would have taken a flail longer and stronger than the one wielded by Poe to have cleared this desecrated temple.

In speaking of a newspaper attack on the memory of Poe, Wilmer quotes:

Several years ago I published the following article in a Philadelphia weekly paper:

'Edgar A. Poe and his Calumniators.—There is a spurious biography of Edgar A. Poe which has been extensively published in newspapers and magazines. It is a hypocritical, canting document, expressing commiseration for the follies and 'crimes' of that 'poor out-cast;' the writer being evidently just such an one as the Pharisee who

thanked God that he was a better fellow than the publican. But we can tell the slanderous and malicious miscreant who composed the aforesaid biography, that Edgar Poe was not the man described by this anonymous scribbler. Some circumstances mentioned by the slanderous hypocrite we *know* to be false, and we have no doubt in the world that nearly all of his statements, intended to throw odium and discredit on the character of the deceased, are scandalous inventions.

We have much more to say on this subject, and we pledge ourselves to show that the article we speak of is false and defamatory, when the skulking author of it becomes magnanimous enough to take the responsibility by fixing his *name* to his malignant publication. I do not know that this *vindication* was copied by a single paper; whereas the whole press of the country seemed desirous of giving circulation and authenticity to the slanders.

Again, under the title "Defamation of the Dead," Wilmer refers to the newspaper attacks on the memory of Poe:

The late Edgar A. Poe has been represented by the American newspapers in general as a reckless libertine and a confirmed inebriate. I do not recognize him by this description, though I was intimately acquainted with the man, and had every opportunity to study his character. I have been in company with him every day for many months together; and, within a period of twelve years, I did not see him inebriated; no, not in a single instance. I do not believe that he was ever habitually intemperate until he was made so by grief and many bitter disappointments. And, with respect to the charge of libertinism, I have similar testimony to offer. Of all men that I ever knew, he was the most *passionless*; and I appeal to his writings for confirmation of this report. Poets of ardent temperament, such as Anacreon, Ovid, Byron, and Tom Moore, will display their constitutional peculiarity in their literary compositions; but Edgar Poe never wrote a line that gives expression to a libidinous thought. The female creations of his fancy are all either statues or angels. His conversation, at all times, was as chaste as that of a vestal, and his conduct, while I knew him, was correspondingly blameless.

Poe, during his lifetime, was feared and hated by many newspaper editors and other literary animalcules, some of whom, or their friends, had been the subjects of his scorching critiques; and others disliked him, naturally enough, because he was a man of superior intellect. While he lived, these resentful gentlemen were discreetly silent, but they nursed their wrath to keep it warm, and the first intelligence of his death was the signal for a general onslaught. The primal slander against the deceased bard was published in a leading journal of Philadelphia, the 'literary editor' of which [English] had formerly received not only a critical rebuke, but something like personal chastisement also, from the hands of the departed poet.

Since that time, by continued and well directed efforts, the news-

papers of our country have succeeded in giving Poe a character 'as black as Vulcan's stithy,' and in this hideous drapery, woven by demoniac malice, the unrivalled poet of America is now presented to the world.

It was the article published in the "Edinburgh Review," quoted by the editor of the "Ladies' Repository" that induced Mrs. Whitman to break her long silence. She took up the gauge of battle by publishing her monograph on Poe—the first book entirely devoted to a study of his morals and to the rehabilitation of his name.

EDGAR POE AND HIS CRITICS. By Sarah Helen Whitman.  
New York: Rudd & Carleton, 130 Grand Street,  
MDCCCLX.

In the preface Mrs. Whitman says:

Dr. Griswold's Memoir of Edgar Poe has been extensively read and circulated; its perverted facts and baseless assumptions have been adopted into every subsequent memoir and notice of the poet, and have been translated into many languages. For ten years this great wrong to the dead has passed unchallenged and unrebuked.

It has been assumed by a recent English critic that 'Edgar Poe had no friends.' As an index to a more equitable and intelligible theory of the idiosyncrasies of his life, and as an earnest protest against the spirit of Dr. Griswold's unjust memoir, these pages are submitted to his more candid readers and critics by One of his Friends.

This confession was one not easy to make, for it was to Mrs. Whitman that Poe was engaged to be married while he was still a resident of Fordham; and it was his reported actions with reference to breaking the engagement, of which Griswold made so foul a use in his attempt to blacken the character of Poe.

Quoting from Griswold's Memoir:

He said to an acquaintance in New York, who congratulated him upon the prospect of his union with a person of such genius and so many virtues, 'it is a mistake: I am not going to be married.' 'Why, Mr. Poe, I understand that the banns have been published.' 'I cannot help what you have heard, my dear Madam, but mark me, I will not marry her.' He left town the same evening and next day was reeling through the streets of the city which was the lady's home, and in the evening—that should have been the evening before the bridal,



in his drunkenness he committed such outrages as made it necessary to summon the police. Here was no insanity leading to indulgence: he went from New York with a determination thus to induce an ending of the engagement; and he succeeded.

Even had this story been true, the use of so prominent a woman's name to point a tale was not a chivalrous act. As a matter of fact the whole scene, so graphically painted, was a fabrication, and the proof that it was not true was at once offered, but Griswold never retracted it.

Mrs. Whitman did break her engagement with Poe because she found he had not kept his promise of abstinence. He was not rude in her presence nor did he exhibit any abnormality except as she has described. It was she who broke the engagement, in spite of Poe's protests and his promises of reform.

Mrs. Whitman, in a letter to Gill, declared what already had been offered in evidence, that:

No such scene as that described by Dr. Griswold ever took place in my presence. No one, certainly no woman who had the slightest acquaintance with Edgar Poe, could have credited the story for an instant. He was instinctively and essentially a gentleman, utterly incapable, even in moments of excitement and delirium, of such an outrage as Dr. Griswold has ascribed to him.

She dismissed the Griswold allegations very briefly:

It is not our purpose at present specially to review Dr. Griswold's numerous misrepresentations, and misstatements. Some of the more injurious of these anecdotes were disproved, during the life of Dr. Griswold, in the *New York Tribune*, and other leading journals, without eliciting from him any public statement in explanation or apology. Quite recently we have had, through the columns of the '*Home Journal*,' the refutation of another calumnious story, which for ten years has been going the rounds of the English and American periodicals.

We have authority for stating that many of the disgraceful anecdotes, so industriously collected by Dr. Griswold, are utterly fabulous, while others are perversions of the truth, more injurious in their effects than unmitigated fiction. We propose simply to point out some unformed critical estimates which have obtained currency among readers who have had but a partial acquaintance with Mr. Poe's more imaginative writings, and to record our own impressions of the character and genius of the poet, as derived from personal observation and from the testimony of those who knew him.

Mrs. Whitman was a woman of remarkable personality. John Hay (himself a marked example of a sane genius with depressive seizures) described the dominating influence she exerted over him while he was at Brown University.

Mrs. Whitman, knowing her subject and dealing with so many phases of it that were personally embarrassing, treated the whole matter as only a woman of great refinement could. It is true that the picture she draws is colored by an overweening tenderness; but one cannot too harshly criticise grief for a dead friend, and if tears of sorrow blind the eyes and mental reservations prevent over-full statements of matters essentially personal, can we wonder if the outline occasionally is blurred? She does not refer to her own close association with Poe, but describes, in a manner purely impersonal, not so much her admiration of Poe, the man, as her admiration for Poe, the man of letters.

She describes, as only a woman can, what there was in Poe that so strongly appealed to the women with whom he associated. Apparently, the basis of that appeal was the complete deference and the chivalrous attitude which, even in thought, characterized Poe's treatment of women. Never in the whole course of his life, either in what he wrote or what he said, did he treat woman other than as the angel embodiment of man. In Mrs. Whitman's sketch is to be noted especially an absolute freedom from any touch of jealousy as she couples Poe's name with that of other women with which it had been associated.

There is a quiet drawing room in ——— Street, New York,—a sort of fragrant and delicious 'clovernook' in the heart of the noisy city—where hung some three years ago, the original painting from which this engraving [referring to the portrait accompanying Poe's first volume of collected works] is a copy. Happening to meet there at the time a company of authors and poets, among whom were Mary Forest, Alice and Phoebe Cary, the Stoddards, T. B. Aldrich and others, we heard one of the party say, in speaking of the portrait, that its aspect was that of a beautiful and desolate shrine from which the Genius had departed. . . . Near this luminous but impassive face, with its sad and soulless eyes, was a portrait of Poe's unrelenting biographer.

In a recess opposite hung a picture of fascinating Mrs. ———, whose genius both had so fervently admired, and for whose coveted praise and friendship both had been competitors. Looking at the beautiful portrait of this lady—the face so full of enthusiasm, and dreamy tropical sunshine—remembering the eloquent words of her praise, as expressed in the prodigal and passionate exaggerations of her verse, one ceases to wonder at the rivalries and enmities enkindled in the hearts of those who admired her genius and her grace,—rivalries which the grave itself could not cancel or appease.

Again she wrote:

A woman of fine genius, who at this time made his acquaintance, says, in some recently published comments on his writings: 'It was in the brilliant circles that assembled in the winter of 1845-6 at the homes of Dr. Dewey, Miss Anna C. Lynch, Mr. Lawson, and others, that we first met Edgar Poe. His manners were at these reunions refined and pleasing, and his style and scope of conversation that of a gentleman and a scholar. Whatever may have been his previous career, there was nothing in his manner nor in his appearance to indicate excesses. He delighted in the society of superior women and had an exquisite perception of all the graces of manner, and shades of expression. He was an admiring listener, and an unobtrusive observer. We all recollect the interest felt at the time in everything emanating from his pen—the relief it was from the dullness of ordinary writers—the certainty of something fresh and suggestive. His critiques were read with avidity; not that he convinced the judgment, but that people felt their ability and their courage. Right or wrong he was terribly in earnest.'

Mrs. Whitman dissented from the frequently expressed view that Poe's own personality was infused into that of the characters which he often so vividly depicted in his weird tales and poems, but she did believe that his abnormal mentality was directly responsible for the character of his creative work.

His proud intellectual assumption of the supremacy of the individual soul was but an expression of his imperious longings for immortality and its recoil from the haunting phantasms of death and annihilation; while the theme of all his more imaginative writings is a love that survives the dissolution of the mortal body and oversweeps the grave. His mental and temperamental idiosyncracies fitted him to come readily into rapport with psychal and spiritual influences. Many of his strange narratives had a degree of truth in them which he was unwilling to avow. In one of this class he makes the narrator say, "I cannot even now regard these experiences as a dream, yet it is difficult for us now to say how otherwise they should be termed. *Let us suppose only that the soul of man, today, is on the brink of stupendous psychal*

*discoveries*. . . . He often spoke of the imageries and incidents of his inner life as more vivid and veritable than those of his outer experience. We find in some pencilled notes appended to a manuscript copy of one of his later poems—*Ligeia*—the words 'all that I have here expressed were actually present to me. Remember the mental condition which gave rise to *Ligeia*—recall the passage of which I spoke, and observe the coincidence!' With all the fine alchemy of his subtle intellect he sought to analyze the character and the conditions of this introverted life. 'I regard these visions,' he says, 'even as they arise, with an awe which in some measure moderates or tranquilizes the ecstasy—I so regard them through a conviction that this ecstasy, in itself, is of a character supernal to the human nature—is a glimpse of the spirit's outer world.' . . . His mind indeed was a 'Haunted Palace,' echoing to the footfalls of angels and demons. 'No man,' he says, 'has recorded, no man has dared to record, the wonders of his inner life.' Is there then, no significance in this 'supernatural soliciting?' Is there no evidence of a wise purpose, an epochal fitness, in the appearance, at this precise era, of a mind so rarely gifted, and accessible from peculiarities of psychal and physical organization to the subtle vibrations of an ethereal medium conveying but feeble impressions to the senses of ordinary persons?

The peculiar character of his intellect seemed without a prototype in literature. He had more than De Quincey's power of analysis, with a constructive unity and completeness of which the great English essayist has given no indication. His pre-eminence in constructive and analytical skill was beginning to be universally admitted, and the fame and prestige of his genius were rapidly increasing. . . . A recent and not too lenient critic tells us that 'it was his sensitiveness to artistic imperfections, rather than any malignity of feeling, that made his criticisms so severe, and procured him a host of enemies among persons towards whom he entertained no personal ill-will.'

Mrs. Whitman's final estimate is characteristic of the woman:

We confess to a half faith in the old superstition of the significance of anagrams when we find, in the transposed letters of Edgar Poe's name, the words, *a God-peer*: words which, taken in connection with his daring speculations, seem to have in them a mocking and malign import which is not man's nor angel's.

The book is filled with personal reminiscences and is illustrated by many anecdotes showing Poe's lovable nature and the tender care he gave his wife. It barely touches on matters controversial, nor is there more than a sympathetic reference to his sins of commission. While she does not deny that Poe had occasional periods of intoxication,

she draws a picture of his sufferings following these outbreaks that make us, who know the compulsory nature of these seizures, more keenly realize the bitter sorrow that followed and how fully he expiated them.

Poe's private letters to his friends offer abundant evidence that he was not insensible to the keenest pangs of remorse. Again and again did he say to the Demon that tracked his path 'Anathema Maranatha' but again and again did it return to torture and subdue. He saw the handwriting on the wall but had no power to avert the impending doom.

Apparently the writings of Poe made a strong appeal to the psychical beliefs that are said to have dominated Mrs. Whitman. She was a student of the occult and strongly believed in spirit manifestations.

No subject of recent years has excited more interest among psychologists and men of science than has this question of a "sixth" sense.

Although eminent names recently have been added to those who acknowledge definite belief in spiritualistic phenomena, no answer can be made that may be considered final; nor has any proof been adduced that this "sixth sense," which I believe does exist, is more of a phenomenon than the other five, except that only certain highly organized "sensitives," or mediums, possess it and for this reason develop auto-hypnosis.

Mrs. J. K. Barney, who was an intimate friend of Mrs. Whitman, and who was invited to meet Poe during one of his visits, gives this remarkable account of an incident that is worth recording:

On one of his visits to Providence, Mrs. Whitman invited a number of literary people to her home that they might have the opportunity of seeing Poe and listening to his wonderful converse. The guests were assembled—all distinguished people—discussing books and the like. Poe and Mrs. Whitman sat across the room from each other. They were theorizing on the poetic principle. After a time the other voices ceased. All were drawn toward Poe, whose eyes were gleaming and whose utterance was most eloquent. His eyes were fixed on Mrs. Whitman. After another time Poe stopped talking, keeping his eyes on

Helen. Of a sudden the company perceived that Poe and Helen were greatly agitated. Simultaneously both rose from their chairs and walked toward the center of the room. Meeting he held her in his arms, kissed her; they stood for a moment, then he led her to her seat. There was a dead silence through all this strange proceeding.

While Poe did not so intend, it was a marvelous exhibition of the mesmeric power he unconsciously exerted over the "sensitives" whom he so strongly influenced.

Although Poe had many defenders, as a rule all that was written about him, because of the obscurity of the journals in which publication was made, was more or less ephemeral and difficult to collect.

The memoir by Griswold, published and republished in "Poe's Works," for long remained the standard and authentic declaration of the facts of Poe's life. Mrs. Whitman's was the first defense issued in book form, and it is an appreciation rather than a biography.

For these reasons, those who first attempted the rehabilitation of Poe found it a difficult matter to overcome the statements so confidently made, and were more or less at a loss to make an authoritative answer.

The first serious attempt to controvert Griswold's statements and to rehabilitate Poe's character, was the biography by Gill, published in 1877.

THE LIFE OF EDGAR ALLAN POE. By William Fearing Gill. Illustrated. New York: W. J. Widdleton. 1877.

Gill is not an artist, and must not be blamed because the outline of his delineation has not the fidelity of a Hogarth or the strength of Rembrandt. At least, he did the best he knew and he was the first biographer, after nearly thirty years of "consent," to attempt to gather the data and clearly to present the facts on which a biography of Poe should rest. That he was carried away by enthusiasm and a love for his subject, was a temperamental fault and, in

the circumstances, excusable. While his life of Poe cannot be accepted either as critical or unbiased, few biographies may be so judged; and, when they are thus written, they lose much of their charm, if not their value, as guides for our judgment

Although Hannay in his effort to rehabilitate Poe met with adverse criticism, and his statements, as against those of Griswold and Briggs, received slight credence, he continued a faithful, if unadvised, defender of the poet. Unable to deny certain allegations, and not in possession of facts that would controvert them, he regarded these acts as the result of a temporary mental disturbance rather than the consequence of a vicious life.

Another Englishman, John H. Ingram, wrote many papers dealing with Poe and his traducers, and he prefixed a memoir to an edition of Poe's works that attempted to disprove many of Griswold's statements. In 1880 he published an amplification of his former studies:

EDGAR ALLAN POE: His Life, Letters and Opinions. By John H. Ingram. (Quotation) With Portraits of Poe and his Mother. (In two volumes) London: John Hogg, Paternoster Row. 1880.

This work remains a valuable contribution to the life of Poe because in it a critical study was attempted and, for the first time, many of Griswold's allegations were questioned and certain of them were refuted. In his chapter on the "Biographies of Edgar Allan Poe," Ingram sharply criticised Didier, another Poe memorialist, for "forgetting in the hurry of publication, to acknowledge the chief source of his 'much fresh and interesting information.'" Ingram's memory proved to be equally treacherous in that he made no mention of Gill's "Life," although he discussed many of the same questions that Gill formerly had argued.

In March 1850 was published, in the *Southern Literary Messenger*, what Griswold styles an 'Eulogium' on Poe, but what really was a still more dastardly attack on the dead man than the unsavory 'Ludwig' article. It had evidently been written and printed in hot haste, and was so disgraceful and cowardly that the editorial proprietor of the magazine, Mr. John R. Thompson, deemed it necessary to append a short printed note, to the effect that had it not been inserted during his absence, and not been seen by him till too late to stop it, it should not have appeared in the *Messenger*. Who wrote this article? It is generally ascribed to Mr. J. M. Daniel; yet, strange to say, it not only uses lengthy passages of 'Ludwig's' sketch without inverted commas, or other signs of quotation, but, when Griswold's long 'Memoir of Poe' appeared in the *International Magazine*, he also made use of long extracts from the 'Eulogium' without acknowledgment. Certainly he does refer to it as his authority for one of the blackest crimes he charges Poe with, and which he himself not unaptly styles unfit for 'any register but that of hell.' Was not this miscalled 'defender' Griswold himself or some one acting under his inspiration?

The few delinquencies of Poe that Ingram accepted as true were explained in a manner that does credit to Ingram's ingenuity although they are not convincing answers. This extreme partisanship was unfortunate in that it did not aid rehabilitating Poe's reputation. To abuse Griswold and to ignore the delinquencies with which Poe was charged were not a sufficient answer to certain other serious accusations that had been made. Too much was known of Poe's eccentricities and of his alcoholic habits for them either to have been ignored or to have been passed over with a simple denial. Concessions and explanations given by former biographers were judged by Ingram to have been unwisely made.

The best known of these was the essay of Baudelaire, and it is chiefly remarkable as the attempt, by a man of genius, to explain Poe's character as described by Griswold, by an ingenious theory of his own. Of course he failed in that, however valuable his essay otherwise may be and truly is. Next in importance to the French critic's characterization of Poe, is that of James Hannay. It is a charming and appreciative sketch, but having no biographical details other than Griswold's to go by, and being as instinctively attracted to Poe as Baudelaire, Hannay also started a theory as ingenious and as unsatisfactory as his to account for the poet's presumed misdeeds.

Baudelaire's belief that alcohol and opium were the



basis of Poe's power of imagination and that from these he obtained his inspiration was rejected. Nor did he agree that temporary mental states, suggested by Hannay and known to have afflicted so many men of genius with recurring states of mental depression, was a satisfactory explanation. He regarded Poe as a maligned and misjudged author, and failed to recognize the nervous diathesis as the basis for certain of his vagaries.

From a study of these fragmentary and biased biographies it became evident that a new method of approach must be found in order to gain an intelligent understanding of Poe's life and character. The thing most necessary was a sifting of true statements from false as they related to Poe's neurosis, and a re-presentation of Poe facts as distinguished from the Poe myth. As frequently happens, when the necessity arises a man can be found capable of accomplishing the required task.

This work was assigned by Chales Dudley Warner, editor of the "American Men of Letters" series, to George E. Woodberry, at that time a young and unknown writer. Accordingly there was published:

AMERICAN MEN OF LETTERS: Edgar Allan Poe. By George E. Woodberry. Boston, Houghton, Mifflin and Company. The Riverside Press. Cambridge. 1885.

In this publication Woodberry made a dispassionate and careful study of all the known facts of Poe's life, and an intelligent effort to elucidate the many obscure points that had been controversial, or that were unknown. Much new information was furnished, and Woodberry believed that he discovered passages in Poe's life which further research may, or may not, uphold.

In the preface Woodberry discussed the difficulties under which he labored by reason of the many conflicting

statements and the diverse opinions still held, and he gave the data on which he relied for his expressed estimate.

The statements of fact in these sources are extremely conflicting, doubtful, and contested; and in view of this, as well as of the spirit of rancor excited in any discussion of Poe's character, the author has made this, so far as was possible, a documentary biography, has verified all facts positively stated at first hand, and has felt obliged to assign the authority followed, in any questionable assertions, in foot notes. . . . Notwithstanding the amount of printed matter regarding Poe, his life has not been exhaustively treated. The larger portion of the following pages consists of wholly new information, or of old statements so radically corrected as to become new.

Woodberry referred to this as a "Documentary Life," as it was founded on contemporary evidence usually of a documentary nature. He does not overstate its value as a study. Nothing better has been offered and while, in my judgment, it is deficient because of a failure to understand and exhibit the underlying neurosis on which many of Poe's erratic acts were based, at least these were not magnified. Possibly it was not to be expected that Woodberry either could fully comprehend, or could scientifically demonstrate the underlying compulsions which were the basis of these actions.

Woodberry later revised and amplified this documentary statement, converting it into a biography in which he furnished a compendious study of Poe's writings, and in which he delineated his own conception of Poe's personality.

THE LIFE OF EDGAR ALLAN POE, Personal and Literary: With his chief Correspondence with Men of Letters. By George E. Woodberry. (Two Volumes.) Boston and New York: Houghton, Mifflin and Company. The Riverside Press. Cambridge, 1909.

This was an unfortunate attempt of Woodberry to extend his documentary study of Poe into a biography that should exhibit a sympathetic understanding of the morbid

and diseased personality, inherent in Poe, which so frequently influenced and which occasionally dominated his life.

Because of his former study of Poe, possibly also by reason of his college association with the younger Griswold, Woodberry was given access to all Poe material that was still in possession of the Griswold family, and he was employed by them to edit certain Poe correspondence. In this way he had personal knowledge of all the manuscripts remaining in Griswold's possession, and he is our authority as to their contents. His references to these papers are only incidental and not such as fully to elucidate them. Occasionally only enlightening statements are found such as, when referring to the Poe letters Griswold prefixed to his "Memoir," he states in his Notes: "Both varied materially from the printed text." While he could not have specified those things destroyed by Griswold—provided there was such destruction—so accurate a transcriber should have given us the details, rather than the general statement:—"However garbled the letters." Apparently nothing that was found unfavorably influenced Woodberry's high estimate of Griswold. Nowhere does he criticize Griswold's action in publishing, as a preface to Poe's works, the derogatory "Memoir," even though his own researches contradicted so many of its statements; nor does he hold Griswold blamable because of his assumption and retention of all of Poe's literary possessions. On the other hand it is to be assumed that personal study of these letters, and of other Poe material, unfavorably influenced his conception of Poe's character, and that, unconsciously, there developed an antipathetic mental attitude that is most evident in his life of Poe. This accounts for Woodberry's statement with reference to this investigation: "Though contact may have bred prejudice, I had none at the outset, so far as I can remember."

The documentary biography, as a source of Poe reference, has been overshadowed by this more recent and greatly amplified "Literary Biography," with which Woodberry's name is now so definitely associated. This is regrettable because, while the first study made no pretense of being other than a compilation, and a special research into the facts of Poe's life, and attempted no personal estimate, the latter work specialized not only on all Poe wrote, but attempted a character study which would elucidate the personal equation—a thing for which Woodberry was in no way temperamentally fitted. He wrote in his introduction: "In the former biography I excluded much, and suppressed much, of what I thought the world would willingly let die; but this proved a fruitless attempt to assist oblivion, and I have in the present work, at least noticed all that has been said or alleged on the subject." While this biography does possess much of both literary and biographical interest, it is deficient in certain qualities which I believe to be necessary for the successful delineation of Poe's puzzling and ill-understood personality.

Woodberry further explained his reason for writing this second biography: "I have aimed to make this a literary biography; as such it has two special interests, in that it is a life led outside New England, and that it embodies much contemporaneous literary history not involved in any life of our great writers. I have aimed also to present in the text the facts of Poe's career as they lay in my own mind; in the Notes I have allowed others to speak freely, for praise or dispraise, in order that all may have a fair field where there is so great a controversy." Nothing that Poe wrote and nothing in Poe's career had attracted Woodberry. "My attention had never been drawn to Poe, nor my interest specially excited by his works," is his explanatory statement of the personal attitude he bore to Poe. Nor, after his documentary biography, did his interest

grow; neither did he continue his investigations, except incidentally. "Through these years information naturally came to me, also, from other sources, [this is a probable reference to his editorship of the Poe MSS.] though I have never engaged in personal investigation since writing the former biography."

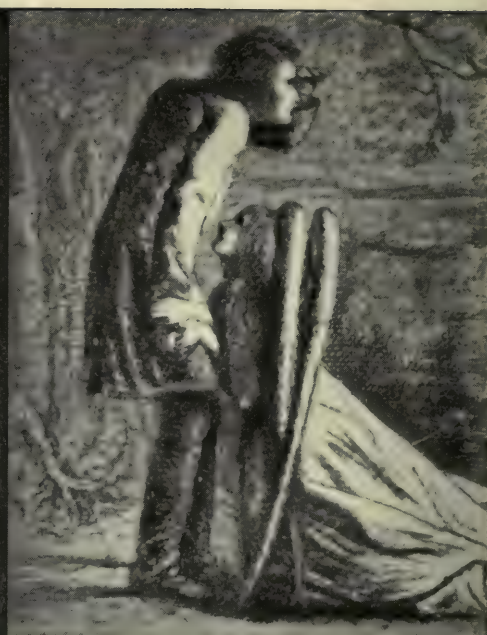
While, beyond question, this literary biography possessed many admirable features, it failed because in his "Creation" there was a malformation of the most important of the vital organs. Like Frankenstein who attempted to create a man perfect in symmetry, marvelously articulated with every muscle, nerve and organ properly placed, and with a mind so keen in its perceptions, and endowed with such intelligence that it was able to circumvent, and, in time, to overwhelm its creator, so does Woodberry reconstruct a Poe who possesses a brain that functioned normally with a mental capacity unequalled by any of his contemporaries; yet somewhere there was a fatal flaw, for none of the generous impulses and humanitarian qualities animated it. Like the pallid, blotched, ill-fitting skin of Frankenstein's "Daemon," and the livid-lipped mouth with its shining teeth, which rendered it so abhorrent a monster, so does this Poe construction fail in recalling to us a human possessing amiable traits and loving consideration for those around him. It may be asked, as it was in the discussion of Griswold's "Memoir," could Woodberry find "no cheeriness in the boy—no casual acts of kindness—no adhesion to old friendships—no sympathy with the poor and unhappy?" The picture drawn of Poe haunting the spot where his mother-love lay buried is laughed to scorn; his devotion to his wife, to his mother, and his indefatigable efforts to provide a home for them, while mentioned in the Notes are principally discussed with reference to his derelictions; his friendship for his associates, as well as their loyal defense of him after his death, are referred

to—but not fully quoted—in Woodberry's Notes. The delineation is that of a cold, misanthropic, dissipated, and immoral individual influenced by no human passion, warmed by none of the genial qualities necessary for friendly intercourse, swayed by none of the finer impulses that differentiate us from the lower creations—an intellectual monster. In his reconstruction, the organ Woodberry omitted was a "heart." With such an omission no life-like delineation can be successfully made. Poe, the Man, is ignored. It is only Poe, the Writer, who is described. Although admiration is expressed for Poe's literary capacity, and the things he wrote received due praise, Woodberry exhibits no love for his subject, nor any understanding of the world in which Poe lived. As was suggested, had Poe not "led a life outside New England," Woodberry would have been far better fitted for the task. His sympathetic treatment of Hawthorne required no effort of the imagination, nor did it call for personal tributes because, inherently, these qualities were a part of the subject. But the task Woodberry successfully accomplished in transfiguring the frigid personality and "transcendental emotionality" of Emerson into the semblance of a jovial human being, makes it certain that, had Poe remained in Boston, and had he become acclimated to the ozone of its literary atmosphere, his name, so far as his reputation is concerned, would have received more sympathetic consideration at the hands of Woodberry. As this biography stands, no glossing love, nor personal admiration, translates this construction into a vital representation. No responsive chord was touched by reason of the physical agony that Poe suffered, or because of the mental torture that, by heredity, was a part of him. Had Woodberry reversed his creation, had he drawn his conclusions from the Notes rather than from the text, it would have been a more lovable delineation. Certainly his work is valuable for the facts it con-





BERENICE



ULALUME



ELEONORA



LIGEIA



tains. When the standard biography of Poe is written, at least Woodberry's researches will constitute valuable building material, and he will realize his ambition: "Whatever shall be the fortune of this work, I am amply rewarded by the conviction that I have, at least, made the way easier for that ideal biographer who, when he comes, shall be perfect in good-sense, good-will, and discretion."

Another feature of this book that deserves criticism are the illustrations intended for the elucidation of the text. In conception and in execution they typify the grotesque and repulsive features which certain artists adopt when they attempt to portray Poe characters. They are strongly reminiscent of the "quagmire phosphorescence" through which certain commentators have visioned some of Poe's finest work, and which they have denominated "Germanic Horrors." Poe's own explanation of these horrors has never received the consideration which is its due: "If in many of my productions terror has been the thesis, I maintain that terror is not of Germany, but of the soul—that I have deduced this terror only from its legitimate sources, and urged it only to its legitimate results"

Such grotesque conceptions as *Berenice*, *Ligeia*, the skeletonized *Eleonora*, and *Ulalume* give no pleasure to the reader and they do not fairly illustrate the text. Nor does it seem right to resurrect the horror of a dead romance by reproducing the face of Poe's fiancée, except as an added demonstration of his irresponsible mental state.

The last biography that will be discussed, and that one which should be consulted by those desiring a personal view of the Man, is that of Harrison. Because of his sympathetic treatment it is not, in all ways, reliable.

LIFE AND LETTERS OF EDGAR ALLAN POE: By James A. Harrison, of the University of Virginia. (Two Volumes.) New York, Thomas Y. Crowell & Co. Publishers.

In the first volume Harrison gave all of the known facts of Poe's life so far as definite knowledge allowed. He did not enter into controversial subjects further than to intelligibly relate all that it is necessary for us to know, or that is really known. He does not discuss those doubtful life incidents suggested by Woodberry that have not yet been definitely settled. He wisely eliminated Poe's letters; these he reserved for the second volume. This omission was not in all ways wise, for it occasionally happens that full reproduction of the text of these letters would have forced upon him a reconstruction of certain phases of Poe's life. Like Ingram he failed to take into consideration the morbid and depressive states freely referred to by Poe himself.

The tender personal consideration, and the evident sympathy so apparent in Harrison's delineation of Poe, should make this a standard Life for those who appreciate Poe's work. It appeals to those who desire to look beneath his intellectual mask and to find the human and lovable qualities of the man.

A feature of this biography which makes it of value to the collector is the bibliography. Because of the many changes both in titles and substance, references to the early contributions of Poe are often puzzling. It is true that in the later volumes of "Graham's" and in the "Broadway Journal", as well as in the collections published in 1845, Poe's poems and stories were given their final revision. While these should be regarded as definitive, their gradual evolution, as exhibited in Harrison's "Virginia Poe", is of interest to all students of Poe's method of literary composition.

For this assemblage of bibliographical items, Harrison went to the original sources. His conclusions as to their earlier publications, as a whole, seem to be accurate. Although by reason of careless compilation there are a few errors and, at times, his assignment of particular criticisms and even

of more pretentious contributions, must be questioned. While, in the original two-volume life, only dates of publication are given, he later used these as a supplement to his "Virginia Poe," a very complete republication of all that Poe wrote. In these volumes he made an elaborate study of the many emendations through which Poe's works were evolved into the standard and now accepted form. These are the result of Poe's matured literary judgment, except in those criticisms edited by Griswold that related to himself or to his personal friends, such as Briggs and English; or where his heart was touched, as was the case with Mrs. Osgood and with Mrs. Hewitt. Possibly in the latter case, as in some others, it was a matter of pocket rather than of heart. By all reports, the *quid pro quo* was not lacking in Griswold's estimates. Harrison's index, although elaborate and made with evident care, is most irritating in that it fails to function. There are no cross references, and Poe's writings in their many reproductions have been republished under so many titles, that, in the use of this index, very accurate knowledge is required; so accurate that, if possessed, one hardly requires an index. This is the more unfortunate because Harrison's work is by no means systematized, and the same subject is discussed under many phases. In this particular, both the text and the index compare unfavorably with the carefully considered and intelligently framed work of Woodberry. On the other hand, Woodberry's bibliography is worthless. He has made no investigation into the original sources of Poe's writings, and has been content to rest on Griswold's four-volume edition, together with a faulty adoption of Harrison's bibliography.

In the early 70's there was a Poe revival, partly caused by the many American and English biographies, but mainly due to Poe's increasing literary renown. There were many still living—a few, unfortunately, the posses-

sors of senile memories—who insisted on recalling Poe as they remembered him. They had entertained an “angel unawares” and they believed this to be a good reason for recalling, thirty years later, all the facts, and occasionally reenforcing these with imaginary reconstructions.

The most flagrant offender was the physician who cared for Poe at the time of his death, although he had many prolix confrères; the remarkable thing was that none of these remembered anything to Poe’s discredit—with one noticeable exception. Time had erased all that was based on personal bitterness due to critical severity or to literary jealousy.

Among others, Richard Henry Stoddard published his “Personal Recollections.” This was later inserted as the preface of a collected edition of Poe’s works. It is, in the main, unexceptional in tone, and it avoids all reiteration of the charges made by Griswold, adopting the attitude of benevolently ignoring all disagreeable comments. However it was impossible for Stoddard to forget a certain early experience—his one association with Poe that he recalled in its Jekyll and Hyde aspect. Evidently Stoddard took pride in the connection he once established with Poe, even if it was that relation which the door-mat bears to the foot with which it comes in contact. Such repulsive details have no more right to be inserted into Poe’s works than had the Griswold Memoir. Stoddard dwells on the resemblance Poe’s poems bear to Byron and asserts that Byron strongly influenced Poe’s early poetry. This assertion, which I believe is not justified by facts, deserves a fuller investigation than has been given. It is a matter assumed rather than proved by any full discussion.

While, in my opinion, Byron will rank higher as a universal poet than will Poe, and while he exhibits a mastery of melodious phrases equal to the best of Poe’s poems with a far wider latitude of thought, and a greater grasp of rhythm and themes, no similarity of construction or method

of composition has been alleged. Many poets excell Poe in the felicity of rhyme. Scott with his hippity-hop, and Pope with his sonorous verbiage, in some respects can be regarded, if not the superiors, at least as equal masters in their particular styles. Byron's poems exhibit a spontaneity and a variety of subject matter that Poe never possessed, nor could Poe approach him in verbal imagery, except in his own narrow domain. The frequent references certain writers make to "the cloak of Byron" Poe is assumed to have worn are without justification. If there be any evidence of this derivation of Poe's early or later poems, no proofs have been furnished. If there ever was an "inspired" poet it was Poe. These published reminiscences were indicative of the pride America was beginning to take in the name of Poe, and of her desire publicly to honor Poe's memory. The culmination of this movement was the public monument erected over the remains of Poe at Baltimore in 1875. Later other evidences of the appreciation in which Poe was held were made manifest. Probably the greatest honor conferred was the Actor's Monument sculptured by Richard H. Park, for this was the first honor of a national, and not sectional, character.

Boston, with its New England clientele, never bowed the knee. To them it seemed incomprehensible that one could have arisen who did not belong to their local cult, strangely ignoring the fact that in spite of their ostracism Poe really was Boston born. Woodberry had reason to congratulate himself on his liberality of spirit in recognizing a "literary life led outside New England."

While many other writers have attempted to delineate Poe, and while they have recognized that, even had Poe exhibited faults, they were not uncommon in the lives of other great writers, and especially that, in the case of Poe, he had fully expiated them, none have taken a more just or a more kindly view than was that of Edmund Clarence

Stedman. This literary estimate was first published as an essay on "Poets of America," in "Scribner's Magazine," and was later reprinted.

EDGAR ALLAN POE: By Edmund Clarence Stedman. Privately printed. Cedar Rapids, Iowa. 1909.

This copy is one of a limited edition printed by the Torch Press. The beauty of its typography, the excellence of the paper, and the immaculate press work, almost justify the modern custom of limiting and numbering such issues.

The picture of Poe, which serves as an introduction, is indicative of a face matured by thought and sobered by the struggles and the unhappy contact with that abnormal phase of life which was the ill-fortune of Poe. As such I have selected it as an ideal representation of the man, neither grotesquely caricatured nor unduly idealized.

Stedman's biography is a just presentation of Poe. While no attempt is made to unduly glorify him, or in any way to apotheosize him, and while his abnormal characteristics are not altogether ignored—or for that matter fully comprehended—it is a human document that should pass to posterity as a fair estimate of Poe, and such as should have originally been prefixed to his works. Necessarily this estimate is literary rather than personal, and the following extract is representative of Stedman's literary acumen, as well as of his critical method.

I shall add but little here to all that has been written about *Ulalume*. It is so strange, so unlike anything that preceded it, so vague and yet so full of meaning, that of itself it might establish a new method. To me it seems an improvisation, such as a violinist might play upon the instrument which had become his one thing of worth after the death of a companion had left him alone with his own soul.

Even Stedman's synopsis and criticism of "Eureka", that work which has proved such a stumbling-block to Poe's critics, shows excellent comprehension in that it does

not conceive this as a scientific statement but treats it as a literary curiosity, although he gives credence to Poe's realization of a failure in performance—a conclusion with which Poe certainly would not have acquiesced.

In writing *Eureka* he was unquestionably sincere, and forgot himself more nearly than in any other act of his professional life. But here his inexact learning betrayed him. What was begun as a conviction grew to be so far beyond the data at his command, or so inconsistent with them, that he finally saw that he had written little else than a prose poem, and desired that it should be so regarded.

Among others who contributed these Poe recollections was John Sartain, the artist. In his "Reminiscences of a Very Old Man," published in 1900, Sartain recalled the facts of his Poe association. Apparently he was one of the few friends who actively assisted Poe during his last sickness and he was familiar with the morbid nervous state that preceded Poe's death.

It was to him that Poe came during one of these seizures, when he believed that he was being pursued, and that enemies had formed a plot against his life.

'Mr. Sartain, I have come to you for refuge and protection; will you let me stay with you? It is necessary for my safety that I lie concealed for a time.' He said it would be difficult for me to believe what he had to tell, or that such things were possible in this nineteenth century. . . . He told me that he had been on his way to New York, but he had heard some men who sat a few seats back of him plotting how they should kill him and then throw him off from the platform of the car. He said they spoke so low that it would have been impossible for him to hear and understand the meaning of their words, had it not been that his sense of hearing was so wonderfully acute. . . . From his fear of assassination his mind gradually veered around to an idea of self-destruction, and his words clearly indicated this tendency. . . . After a long silence he said suddenly, 'If this mustache of mine was removed I should not be so easily recognized; will you lend me a razor, that I may shave it off?'

He also related to Sartain his Moyamensing hallucinations and, in addition to those already detailed, he suffered from other delusions characteristic of the alcoholic delirium which unquestionably was the basis of his mental state.

'An attendant asked me if I would like to take a stroll about the place. I might see something interesting and I agreed. In the course of our rounds on the ramparts we saw a cauldron of burning spirits. He asked me if I would not like to take a drink. I declined, but, had I said yes, I should have been lifted over the brim and dipped into the hot liquid, up to the lips like Tantalus. . . . So at last as a means to torture me and to wring my heart, they brought out my mother, Mrs. Clemm, to blast my sight by seeing them first saw off her feet to the ankles, then her legs to the knees, her thighs at the hips.'

On the second morning he appeared to have become so much like his old self that I trusted him to go out alone. After an hour or two he returned, and then told me that he had come to the conclusion that what I said was true, and that the whole thing was a delusion. He said his mind began to clear as he laid on the grass. While he lay thus the words he had heard kept running in his thoughts, but he tried in vain to connect them with the speaker, and so the light gradually broke in on his dazed mind and he saw that he had come out of a dream.

Woodberry, without justification, has aspersed Sartain's memory of these events. While Sartain's statements are recalled with undue precision, the nature of Poe's delusions and hallucinations were such as give evidence of their truth. The suddenness of so serious an attack following the brief period of intoxication makes it most probable that the congested state of Poe's brain was primarily responsible, although the character of his mental symptoms are pathognomonic of delirium tremens. Insanity is not so precipitate either in its onset or in its recovery. Sartain also bears testimony to the small amount of intoxicant required to produce a mental disturbance.

Sartain, as an artist, could speak with authority as to Poe's facial characteristics, and his pronouncement bears out the judgment of those other associates and friends of Poe, previously quoted.

Poe's face was handsome. Although his forehead when seen in profile showed a receding line from the brow up, viewed from the front it presented a broad and noble expanse, very large at and above the temples. His lips were thin and very delicately modelled.

While the interview described in the following quotation is not definitely fixed as to time, it probably occurred during Poe's life-time, and is evidence that, even as be-



tween Griswold and English, relations were not always harmonious.

Speaking of Poe recalls to me an amusing scene I witnessed in my office between two of the literary fraternity, Rufus W. Griswold and the well-known author of *Ben Bolt* [Thomas Dunn English.] The latter was chatting delightfully with me when in walked Griswold. I knew of course that they must be acquainted, and yet noticing that they acted like strangers I apologized for neglecting to introduce them and for assuming that they knew each other. 'Oh yes,' said one grimly, 'we know one another.' So I saw there was bad blood between them. A cheerless talk ensued for a time, when a name was spoken by chance that had a magical effect. It was Poe, and they fraternized at once, giving it to him right and left, agreeing that he was a most unjust critic and a bad fellow in every way. The fact is Poe made himself enemies all around by the cutting severity of his criticisms.

Since Woodberry's exhaustive study, little can be added to the known facts of Poe's life. The controversial matters necessarily give wide range for speculation, but it is not probable that much of material importance will be discovered. I regret that I have not been able to consult the *data* that have been gathered by Mary E. Phillips, whose *Life of Poe* now is being published. Her study of letters and records, hitherto unavailable for publication in their entirety, may clear some of the illy understood facts of Poe's inheritance and of his early life, although other biographers have had access to these documents.

Ancestral details have been lacking; all biographers having been satisfied to mention the eminent General Poe, and respectfully refer to the legend of Admiral MacBride. Nothing definite is known of the ancestry of Mrs. Poe. Apparently she contributed her full share to the personal characteristics and mental qualities of her son. As far as the father is concerned, the little we know about him does not justify our tracing any of the son's genius, or those good qualities we know Edgar Poe possessed, to the paternal parent. Yet, for some reason the paternal branch of the family has been widely and fantastically exploited.

Misled by an excellently worded title-page—Poe, him-

self, could not have excelled it—I was induced to order a book that gave every promise of containing valuable information. It was entitled:

THE ORIGIN AND EARLY HISTORY OF THE FAMILY OF POE OR POE, With full Pedigrees of the Irish Branch of the Family, and a Discussion of the true Ancestry of Edgar Allan Poe, The American Poet. By Sir Edmond Thomas Bewley M.A. LL.D. F.R.S.A.I. Author of "The Bewleys of Cumberland," "The Family of Mulock," and Other Works. Dublin. Printed for the Author by Ponsonby and Gibbs, at the University Press. 1906.

Ponsonby and Gibbs deserve credit for the paper selected, and for the great beauty of their press work. As befitting the offspring of an author who not only inherited, but acquired, so many and such desirable titles, this volume is impressive in appearance. It is quarto in size, it is numbered, and it bears Bewley's signature, as well as every other mark that a *de luxe* volume should possess. It is a valuable contribution to bibliopoesy. However, in so far as it throws light either on John Poe (who came from Ireland, and for whom no befitting title or profession has been found, but who probably was a day laborer, as his children are known to have been) or on his progenitors, it is valueless and a blank. Yet the search was diligent, and the ground covered was wide. At least, by deduction, it allows us to arrive at very positive conclusions concerning John Poe's place of birth. Evidently Bewley took great pleasure in delving deeply for the root of derivation. He carefully nurtured this ancestral tree, which gave promise of such rich fruiting, but in the end he failed to specify just which branch bore the escutcheon, and from which the ancestors of Edgar Poe traced their lineage.

There are three genealogical tables. The first, covering five pages, is an account of the "First Two Generations of

the Irish Poes, and the Pedigrees of the Poes of Bellen of the Co. Tipperary, and of Dromgooldtown, otherwise Poe's Court, Co. Louth." This begins with one Anthony Poe, who, with Alice Frost, preceding the years 1605-6, begat a numerous family of Poes; but, although traced to a date as late as the year 1821, they are not brought into any relationship with Edgar Poe.

The second table, consisting of eight pages, is a formidable document. It is devoted to the "Pedigrees of the Poes of Knock, otherwise Bettsborough, Donnybrook, Solsborough, Moyroe, Derrinvohill, Riverston, Curraghmore, Heywood, etc., etc." These Poes apparently did not commence until about 1650. Bewley traces them to 1902, but in no way connects them with Edgar Poe.

The last pedigree Bewley traces, although covering only five pages, is equally thorough, and apparently comes closer to the subject in hand. In it, he traces the line of the "Poes of Rosenharley, otherwise Harley Park, and of Kilkenny." While this pedigree does not contain a reference to the American branch of the Poe family, it is certain, judging from inherent characteristics of this family, that it must have come directly from the Kilkenny branch, its characteristics possibly intensified by inbreeding with the Donnybrook strain.

In none of these tables, nor elsewhere in the book, is information given as to Edgar Poe's ancestry. He is mentioned in the title and in the preface, but there is only one direct reference to him in the body of the book. This is contained in a passage which asserts: "Edgar Allan Poe, the famous American poet and writer, was undoubtedly descended from John Poe, of Dring, who emigrated to Pennsylvania about the year 1749 or 1750, with his wife, and such of his children as were then born." So far as I can discover, this is the only reference to Dring, and there is nothing to indicate which of the three pedigreed families

named has the right to be regarded as Edgar Poe's ancestral group. This John Poe, who was an immigrant, apparently paid small heed to the tree from which he sprang. At best the bough he brought with him was only a shillalah; had it been of "the seed of Elach," it would have availed but little. It is certain that this particular branch had not blossomed for many a year, and that John Poe never boasted of his lineage. He had never heard of the De La Poers, nor did he ever sign himself Poë, and, so far as we know, he made no claim to noble ancestry. He was dependent upon his own exertions, and, if related to Admiral MacBride, he did not presume on this relationship.

While this completes the description of all books that are properly a part of this study, and that may be considered either as having been written by Poe or as of special interest in elucidating Poe legends, a few other publications must be mentioned because they have been so positively ascribed to Poe as to have aroused curiosity, even while they have failed to establish conviction.

In the year 1821, when Poe was 12 years old, there was printed in Baltimore, by Matchett (evidently the same Matchett who, in 1829, published Poe's *Al Aaraaf, Tamerlane and Other Poems*), a collection of prose and verse, entitled "Miscellaneous Selections," edited by Elizabeth Chase. It has been alleged that several of these poems were written by Poe because of the fact that they were signed "Edgar." Poe is known to have written poems at a most immature age, and it has been asserted that Allan at one time contemplated printing them. To associate these poems with Edgar Poe was an inspiration of some booksellers' cataloguer. No possible relation between this book and Poe, other than the name, has been established. Baltimore at this time was somewhat populous, and possibly contained other Edgars. Whether or not it was

FEMALE VIRTUE.

There is whene'er it meets my view,  
A radiance in that eye of blue,

That I would fain explain ;

But tho' I've strove to find the cause,  
And ransack'd all dame nature's laws,  
My search has been in vain.

Presumptuous youth, henceforth forbear  
The cause my Muse can well declare ;

In that fine eye of blue,

*Majestic Virtue* holds her throne,  
And when we see we can but own,  
Her power, and tremble too.

EDGAR.

TWILIGHT.

What lustre decks the azure plains,  
Streak after streak in long drawn strains,  
The sizzling glory runs in veins,  
Althwart the heaven's wide canopy.

The forest seems to leave the land,  
And in the firmament to stand,  
And through the leaves with lustre grand,  
The stars of eve burn brilliantly.

How light the landscape on the view,  
As if on yonder cloud of blue,  
A fairy touch an angel drew  
With all a seraph's ecstasy ;

And by such transformation rare,  
The verdant foliage floats in air,  
As if the heavens and earth would share  
A part in this grand jubilee.

This is the silent teeming hour,  
When Fancy works with all her power,  
The poet feels a sacred shower,  
Of thoughts that bathe his fantasy.

The moon just peering up the hill,  
Slides o'er the firmament so still,  
As if she felt the magic thrill,  
And join'd the solemn revelry.

EDGAR.

TO DESPONDENCY.

Say, what's the world to me,  
For I have seen,  
Life in its green,  
And sun light glow—  
But shades of sorrow spread  
O'er this devoted head

Edgar Poe who wrote these poems the item has proved a boon to book-auctioneers. It is possibly unique, and it has been sold and resold so frequently that its history reminds one of the story of Daniel Boone and his coon-skin. Whether it be possible to trace, in a boy of ten or twelve, the germ of later accomplishment, I cannot say. A reproduction may aid others to solve this question.

Although Poe was necessarily in his nonage, not yet having reached the age of ten, it is not right to attribute such poems to him, nor that he should be held responsible for their authorship.

Another book, persistently advertised as having been written by Poe, is a satire by an anonymous author signing himself "Lavante." It would not require more serious consideration than has been given other alleged Poe compositions had not Harrison given it semi-recognition by mentioning it as a possible Poe production and approvingly quoting this critical passage: "The fact of Poe's authorship was pretty clearly shown a few years ago by an enterprising gentleman, hiding himself behind the *nom de plume* of 'Geoffrey Quarles,' who unearthed the original Philadelphia edition, in some out of the way place, and carefully edited a reprint."

This item is entitled:

THE POETS AND POETRY OF AMERICA. A Satire by "Lavante," reprinted from the original, Published in Philadelphia in 1847. With an introductory argument by Geoffrey Quarles, to show that it was written by Edgar Allan Poe. New York: Benjamin & Bell. 1887.

It is strange that any one, after reading the introductory stanzas, and understanding the personal relations that for years had existed between Poe and Griswold, by the wildest flight of imagination could have attributed this

"satire" to Poe. Nothing, either in versification or rhythmic effect, reminds me of anything that Poe published, and I am not willing to believe that it was done in one of those periods when it is known that he was irresponsible. A foot-note to this volume reproduces a note found in the original: "It is in the invaluable collection of Griswold that I have found the plot and the groundwork of the Tale." This note would have been written only by some admirer of Griswold. Assuredly Poe could not be so classed.

Judged by this standard, and knowing the estimation in which Griswold was held, one naturally would assume that it was either Griswold himself who wrote these verses, or that it was the work of "Harry Franco," or some other Griswold satellite. Various writers are discussed, but the serio-comic conceptions of this mock-heroic poem bear no relation to any existing work—possibly excepting the "Fable for Critics." It is not to be presumed that Lowell would have written two such poems.

The following passages are selected as illustrative of this poem:

Clime of the brave! entire from sea to sea!  
 Vain is thy boast that thou art blest and free!  
 Oh servile slaves to eastern rules and rhyme,  
 Almost from Milton's blank to Chaucer's chime!  
 Thy own proud bards behold! a motley band  
 To lead the music of their native land.  
 Immortal GRISWOLD thine the deathless name  
 Shall bear the palm of more than mortal fame.  
 For thine the lofty boast at once to save  
 The humble bard perchance from hapless grave,  
 Weave with his crown thy fadeless laurel bays,  
 And with thy nursling gain undying praise.  
 Yea, thine alone to search o'er Delphian height  
 That which shall give to gods and men delight;  
 At once to snatch from each lone wandering muse  
 All which on earth could profit or amuse,  
 Then rise and soar o'er loftier peaks away,  
 And bask in Phoebus' pure effulgent ray!  
 Blest be thy name! nor grief thy pleasure mar,  
 Nor fade thy life but with the morning star!

Awake satiric muse! awake in might  
 To strike for poesy's insulted right!  
 The night was up, when all serene and glad  
 Each tuneful was for the banquet clad,  
 While Griswold's self, like Jeffrey on his throne,  
 Was raised sublime, and to a god was blown.  
 No mortal sign to mar that awful face  
 Where still appear the hues of wrath or grace;  
 All care, in calm composure sunk to rest,  
 A gracious smile betrays him greatly blest,  
 While trembling bards in eager strife appear  
 That nod to gain, the end of hope and fear.

\* \* \* \* \*  
 First comes great WILLIS trembling to his heels,  
 Invokes the god, and for his country feels.

\* \* \* \* \*  
 Approaching next with incense in each hand,  
 Proud DOANE and DANA take their reverent stand;  
 One famed for moral, one for ghostly song,  
 While one might pray to help the tune along.

\* \* \* \* \*  
 There bend meek BURLEIGH, CLIO, and SIR PIKE.  
 All goosquill armed, all friends to goose alike;  
 Great masters of the pen, who ne'er may flag  
 Till Pegasus his tail shall cease to wag!

\* \* \* \* \*  
 Then spoke the god. 'Some farther test I name,  
 The loftier name to win, and life to claim;  
 Who highest soars when Phoebus shines afar,  
 By light unhurt, himself a living star,  
 Ascends Parnassus and o'er tops its head,  
 Shall gain the prize—a life beyond the dead!'

\* \* \* \* \*  
 Then swiftly sweep by distance dim and vague,  
 Almost unseen poor DANA, DOANE, and SPRAGUE,  
 Lost to thy sight and just beneath the moon,  
 Our day stars CLIO, HOFF, are at their noon.

\* \* \* \* \*  
 Once I could bend or feign to bend the knee,  
 When conscience told 'twas order's just decree,  
 I could dissemble scorn, and strive to seem  
 As calm as love embracing in a dream;  
 No change could drag resentment from its rest,  
 My brow was smooth, my heart was well possess'd,  
 What now is done, not prudence would recall,  
 If pain ensue What sooner might befall?  
 Should public hate upon my pen react,  
 No matter this—I will not aught retract.

—LAVANTE.



While "Geoffrey Quarles," by several pages of close reasoning and careful analysis, has selected Poe as the probable author of these lines, it is difficult fully to comprehend his reasons, although he clearly states the premise on which he based them. This he summarizes: "Either Poe wrote this satire, or somebody else still unknown, wrote it with Poe's experience, Poe's doctrines, Poe's animus, and in Poe's language." The selected passages make plain the "animus" and the "language," and to a certain extent show "experience," but there is nowhere evidence of Poe's "doctrines." Poe did have some rather set opinions as to what constituted poetry, and he gave striking proof that he was experienced in the use of language. This heroic meter, and the long (it extends to nearly 1000 lines of such versification as the extracts indicate) Pope-like, allegorical allusions, are not characteristic of Poe.

"Quarles," encouraged by the reception of the "Lavante" reprint, brought forth a new study of Poe with the title "Edgar Allan Poe. The Man: The Master: The Martyr." As the basis of this study, he presented several sectional portraits of Poe which he divided into halves, and subdivided into quarters, in order to demonstrate a theory of buttons. So far as the title is concerned, the work is misleading, for it makes no reference to Poe, either as Man, Master, or Martyr, and, to this extent, it is more disappointing than was Bewley's genealogical study. Like its prototype, "Sartor Resartus," it playfully deals with appendages to our outer coverings, and with equal obscurity does "Quarles" apply his discovery. In some way he connects up "buttons" with the dismembered portraits of Poe. In the belief that I am not altogether responsible for my inability to understand the existing relation on which "Quarles" so originally and insistently dwells, and that others may attempt to solve the conundrum, I briefly quote some of his conclusions:

The faces here presented are offered as charts rather than pictures, the intent being to get at, if at all possible by rule of thumb guided by this and that light of the eye, the sum of Poe's contradictory characteristics, of face and mind. One can pick out a line here and a twist there from the various daguerreotypes, and construct a fairly probable index of Poe's makeup, but the feature that bothered pure intellect was—the Button. The great button problem is not to be ignored in this field of scientific research. Some of these absolutely faithful—because photographic—portraits show us that Poe had this among his peculiarities of genius, his coat buttons were on the left side. This trait indicated, of course, that the gentle Poe inherited the feminine temperament, as women never wear the buttons right. In analyzing these portraits, as reproduced in book plates, it was puzzling to be sure whether Poe parted his hair on the right side or the left. So much in character depends on the turn of a hair. But for fear of inspiring fond mothers with a new and cruel intellectual fad I might remark in passing that more men of uncommon abilities have their natural parting on the right side than I have noticed among the lefts, in proportion to numbers. On the principle, doubtless, by which black sheep are the distinguished minority of their, and often of our flock. Poe had the brand of wig that any one could part anywhere and itself everywhere, as witness these painful efforts to depict the hue, sheen, style, corkscreuity of each separate lock. . . . Here came the grand solution of the differential button calculus. If in this portrait Poe's hair is parted on the right side, and in that one on the left, he evidently did it for the gratification of his topheavy brain that bred and fed on eerie fancies, strange monstrosities, grotesques and arabesques, of the unbalanced mind that "laughs but smiles no more." This head will reel at the sight of even a pencil drawing of Cork, with the bottle a hundred miles away. Happily all around, including a biographer or two, Poe had no more, at most, than half a head like this, the typical poet-head of the common hydrocephalic species.

More than twenty pages are given to these and other manifestations of his theory.

The second part of this volume contains a restatement and an amplification of the proofs that Poe was "Lavante." Probably the strongest argument that "Quarles" adduces is an original and skillful rendition of the cryptogram contained in the final lines of Lavante.

#### POE'S CRYPTOGRAMS

Remembering his love of mystery and genius for cryptographic writing it appeared possible that if Poe had versified his lecture, he might have hidden the authorship in the last couplet:

SHOULD PUBLIC HATE UPON MY PEN REACT,  
NO MATTER THIS—I WILL NOT AUGHT RETRACT.

I find the four following sentences are contained in this couplet:

EDGAR ALLAN POE;  
 AMERICAN POETS AND POETRY. A SATIRE.  
 A SATIRE, EVERY WORD TRUE; EDGAR ALLAN POE.  
 A TRUE AND HONEST SATIRE. BY EDGAR ALLAN POE.

Take this for what it is worth. Curiously enough the titles of the two Satires reviewed by Poe, 'The Quacks of Helicon' and 'The Vision of Rubeta,' can not be got out of this couplet. Neither can the names of those poets in the satire who just possibly might be suspected of its authorship, Griswold, Lowell, Holmes, Pike, Benjamin, Longfellow, Dawes, Pinkney, Willis, Whittier, Clarke, Halleck, Tucker, Hoffman, Parker.

Lastly the very first man to be satirized by any brother poet, and the last one to be omitted from a general round-up, would have been Edgar Allan Poe. The absence of his name it was that started me on this quest.

Surely had "Quarles" devoted his attention to deciphering the Bacon cryptograms, he would have ranked high among the commentators. With equal facility and assurance he could have demonstrated that either Poe or Bacon wrote the Declaration of Independence.

Another section of this book "Quarles" calls the "Philosophy of Composition," and it serves as an introduction to a composition of his own called, "The Organ, A Fantasia in the Manner of Poe's 'Raven' suggested by an avowal of his Method." It bears out the high promise that his preceding analysis justifies us in expecting.

There is a fitting conclusion to this book, entitled "His Monument," which, to the full, exhibits the artistic capacity of "Quarles," first indicated by his study and dissection of photographs. It measures the reverence that such a critic might be expected to accord the name of Poe. Surely, the whole fully justified the "Martyr" suggestion in the title.

There is evidence that at least the spirit of "Quarles," is still at large. Judging by circulars now being distributed in an effort to prove that Poe wrote "English Notes, by

Quarles Quickens." Why "Quarles," or his imitators, wish to shoulder this absurdity on Poe, and why publishers\* so confidently advertise this work as a Poe production, can only be explained by the assumption that authority rests on some such inspired investigator. Whether or not another cryptogram has been found establishing the identity of Poe as the writer, I have not been informed. It is time that some movement was started to prevent these profiteers from fattening on the name of Poe. The circular states that \$15.00 will be demanded for this reprint of a "discovery." In the words of Poe, "Don't you wish you could get it?"

The final item worthy of mention—and typographically it is worthy—is a book issued by the Caxton Club of Chicago.

SOME LETTERS OF EDGAR ALLAN POE TO E. H. N. PATTERSON OF OQUAWKA, ILLINOIS. With comments by Eugene Field. The Caxton Club. 1898.

While this is an issue by a club whose productions are worthy of respect, and is edited by a man whom all love, it is an unfortunate reminder of Poe because its contents again force on us the memory of those abnormalities that so seriously affected Poe during his last years.

Reference has been made to the fact that Poe, "in his latter evil days," was obsessed with the idea of founding a journal "for the personal expression of individual opinions," and that "The Stylus" had been selected as a name.

\*NOTE—During the last few months numerous circulars have been received advising me of the publication of a newly discovered work by Poe. It is called 'English Notes, Intended for very Extensive Circulation: By Quarles Quickens.' For some reason this has been very largely advertised by the publishers, and occasionally, friends have added to the liberal supply of circulars already in my possession. I could ignore the publishers but I must acknowledge the courtesy of my friends. For this reason I take this unique, and possibly original, method of making my acknowledgments. I would warn them, further, not to afflict me, during the approaching holidays, with the consummation of this discovery. I further advise them to avoid this item as they would a 'clock-work' package. It may prove a Chelsea, but it appears to me that its tick resembles far more that of an Ingersoll.

It is evident that this decision of Poe must have been widely advertised, for a young man named Patterson, living in Oquawka, Illinois, entered into correspondence with him, and proposed to finance the projected journal. Ordinarily judged, it would seem that Poe, at this time at the zenith of his literary achievement, would not have been willing to cooperate in the establishment and conduct of an essentially literary and critical magazine in a remote and far distant village that was difficult of access and that possessed the mirth-compelling name of Oquawka. It consisted of "two warehouses, one store, one grocery, two taverns, and several dwelling houses." In spite of this isolation and these poverty-begotten surroundings, Poe accepted this offer, and business arrangements were made.

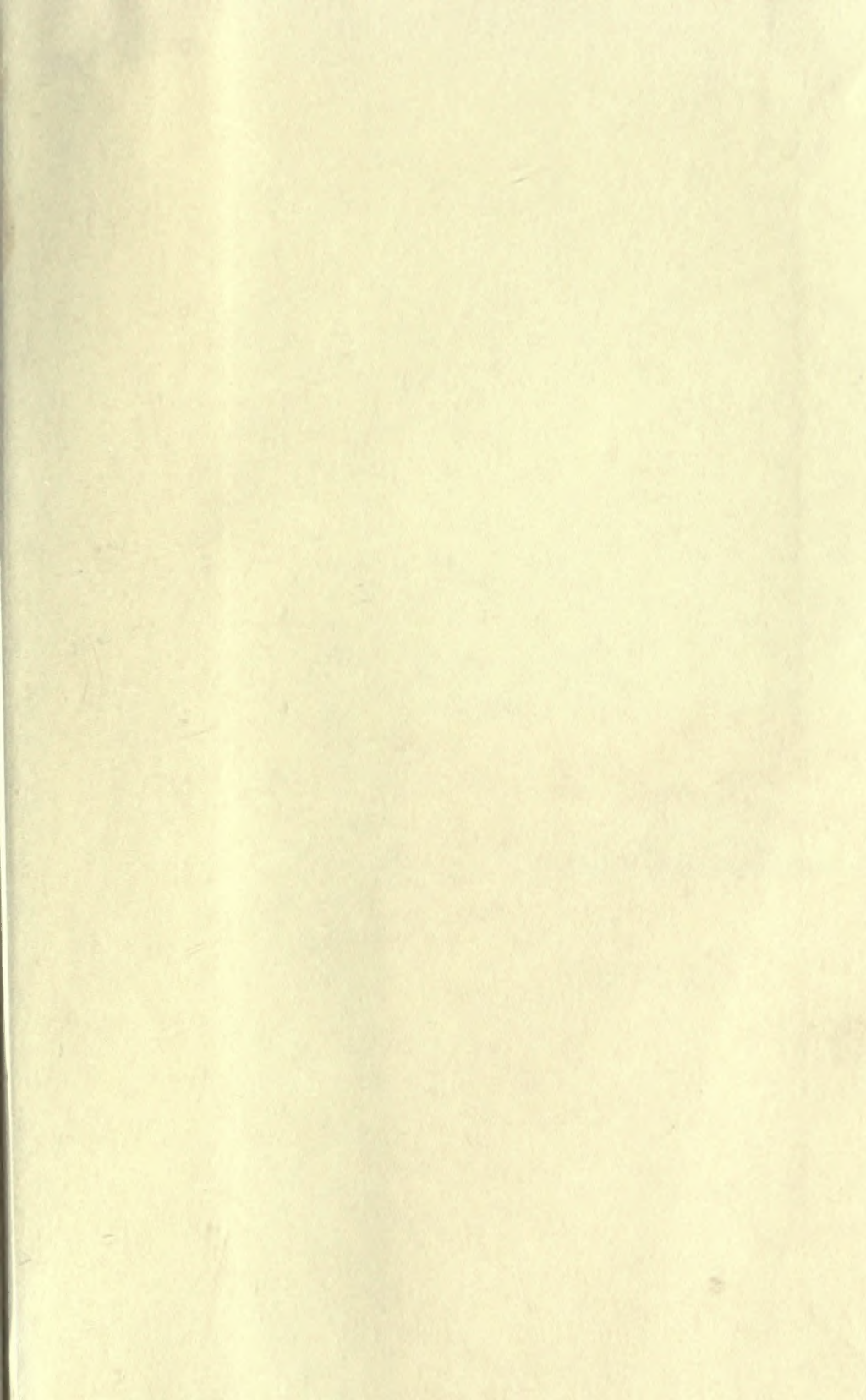
That Poe saw nothing ridiculous either in the location or the name is somewhat surprising. It is possible that such a name does not impress all alike. I suppose there are many excellent people living in Oshkosh, and I know a worthy and eminently respectable family in Kalamazoo. I remember, too, once upon a time, passing through Keokuk and observing with amazement that this name was publicly announced by a sign of blazing letters. And I am certain that somewhere Podunk has a real existence.

One can only regret that Field should have exploited this incident in a manner that reflects on Poe's mental state, or that tends to cast ridicule on him, and that, in this, the Caxton Club should have abetted him.

While a few other books dealing with special phases of Poe's life have been published, their contents do not justify a full review. No new facts have been added to those assembled in Woodberry's life of Poe, nor is it probable that any new discoveries will be made; rather, it is possible that a critical biographer will omit certain of the doubtful passages relating to Poe's early life which Woodberry claims to have cleared up.

Special magazine articles dealing with psychological problems based on Poe's morbid heredity, or containing assumptions as to Poe's use of alcohol and drugs, with deductions as to their effect on Poe's life and the things he wrote, are of frequent appearance. As a rule they are the result of misinformation or they are contributed by those who possess no special knowledge of either normal or morbid mental processes. At best this knowledge is limited; in venturing any opinion it should be given with the full understanding of the difficulties that confront us in the study even of normal psychology.

The ill understood facts of brain anatomy and the incomprehensible phenomenon of brain functioning by which perceptions of external objects are produced because of afferent *stimuli* are subjects that, in spite of the many hypothesis advanced, remain undetermined. The more recondite study of brain cells in relation to memory and to that quality they possess which enables them to initiate and formulate mental processes, is still more unexplainable and mysterious. Secretion of thought remains our most interesting problem. For these reasons I have made no attempt to explain the unknowable. This study is based entirely on a long experience with that special form of neurosis which obsessed Poe and which is a part of the empirical knowledge possessed by all psychiatrists.







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