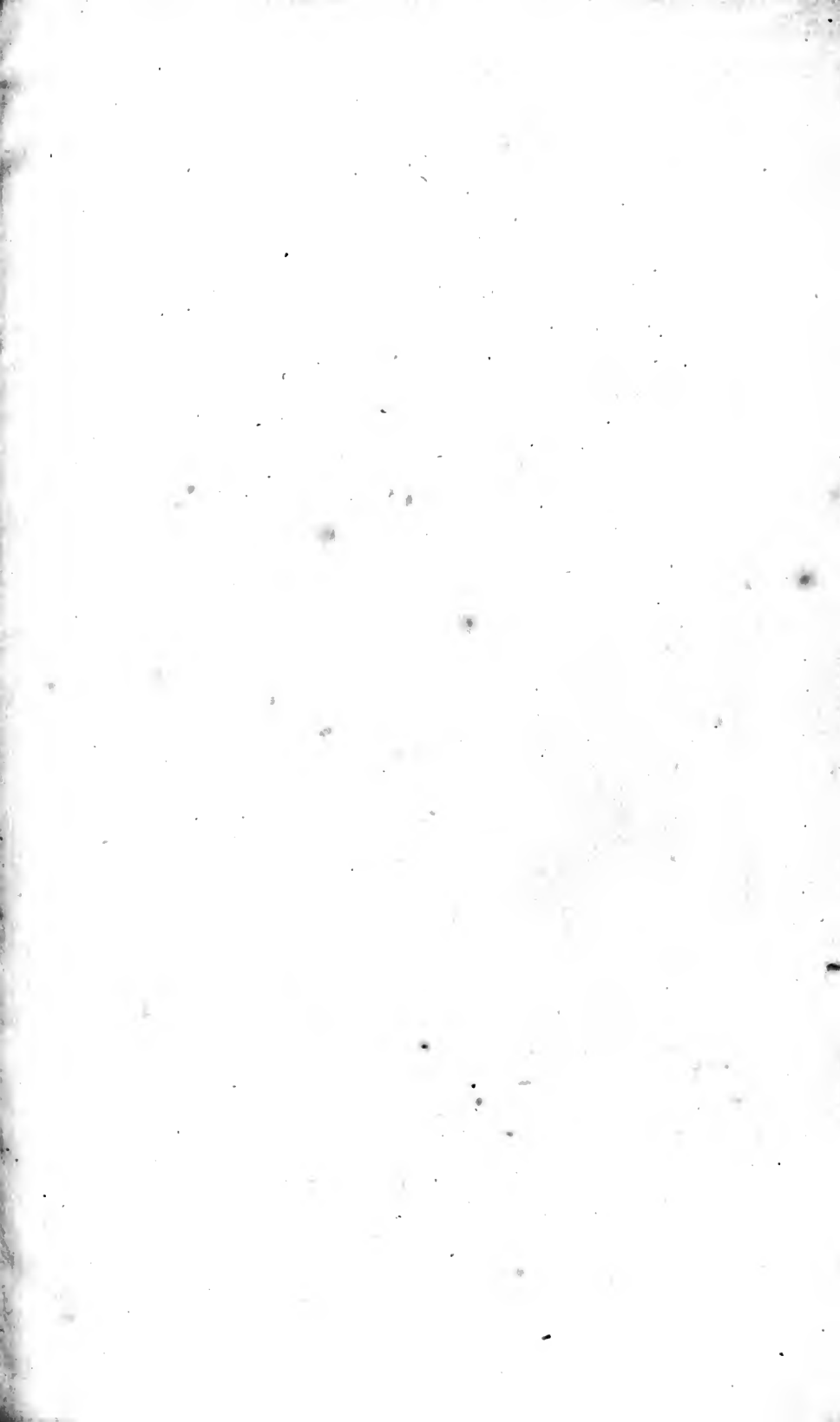




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THE  
L I F E  
OF  
OLIVER GOLDSMITH, M.B.

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VOL. II.

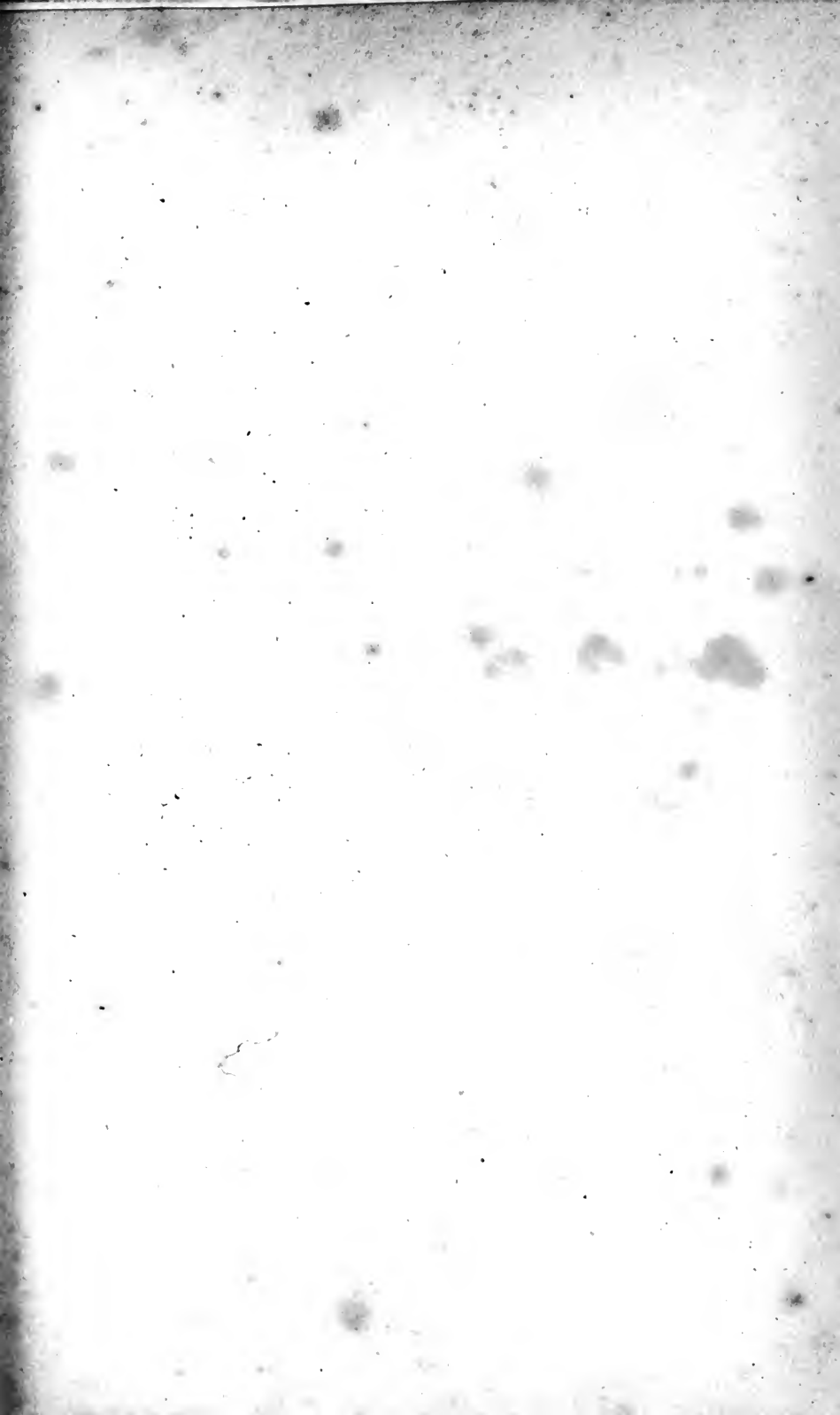


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**Hugh Anson-Cartwright**

LONDON:  
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New-Street-Square.



*Facsimile of Goldsmith's Hand-writing*

To the last moment of his breath  
On Hope the wretch relies  
And even the pang preceding death  
Bids Expectation rise.

Hope like the gleaming taper's light  
Adorns and cheers our way  
And still as darker grows the night  
Emits a brighter ray.

Oliver Goldsmith

October 31<sup>st</sup> 1764.

SPR. VOL. I. 25.

*Printed and sold by J. Murray, Albemarle Street*

THE  
L I F E  
OF  
OLIVER GOLDSMITH, M.B.

FROM  
A VARIETY OF ORIGINAL SOURCES.

BY  
JAMES PRIOR,  
FELLOW OF THE SOCIETY OF ANTIQUARIES; MEMBER OF THE  
ROYAL IRISH ACADEMY;  
AUTHOR OF THE LIFE OF BURKE, ETC.

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IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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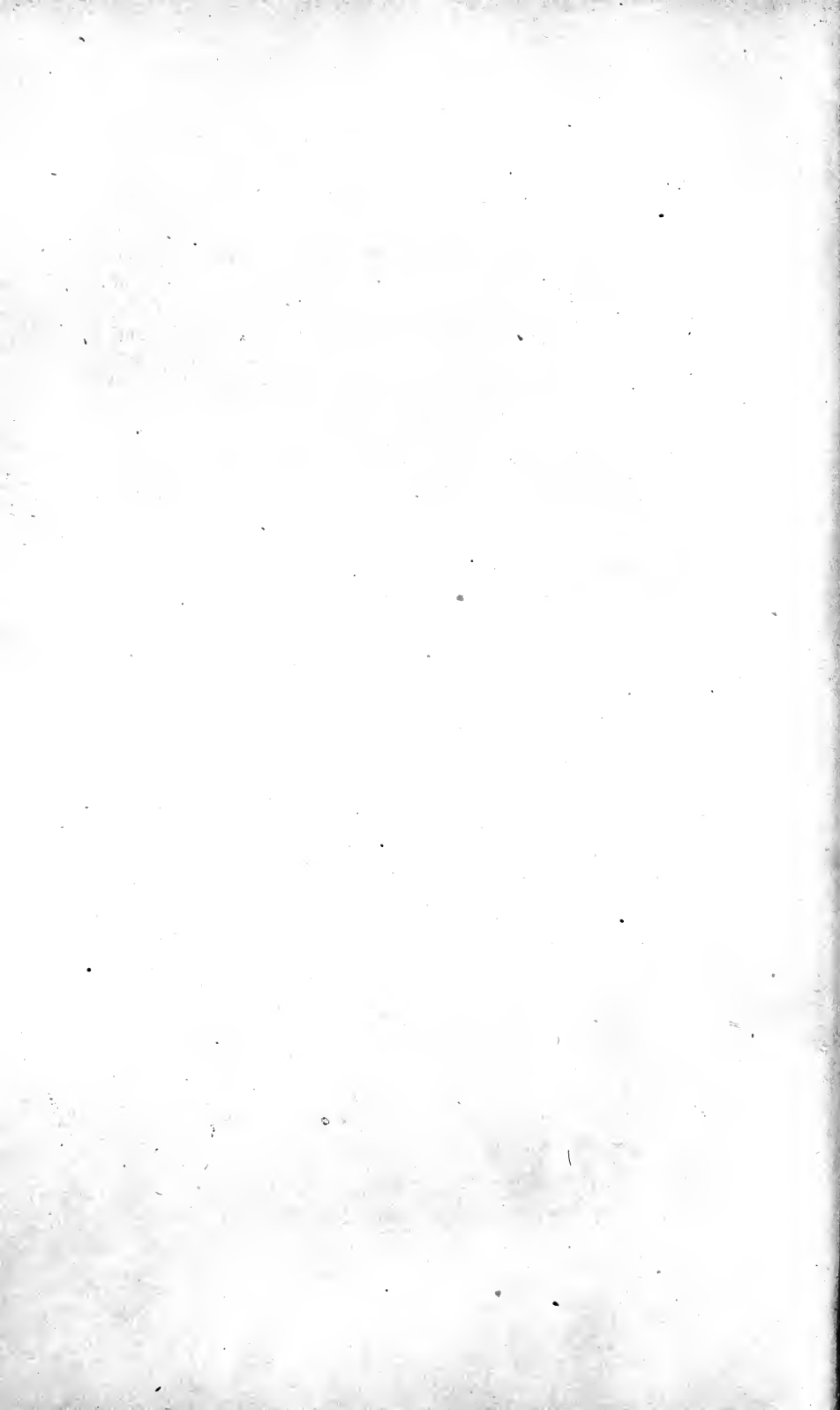
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L I F E  
OF  
OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

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CHAPTER XIV.

ORATORIO OF THE CAPTIVITY. — HIS THREATENED ARREST. —  
THE TRAVELLER.

HIS poetical powers, which had lain in some degree dormant at least in compositions of length, by the continued struggle for existence that works in prose enabled him better to maintain, were about this time called into action in the composition of an Oratorio. Two copies in his own hand-writing are still extant, though without a name, but it has been usually known to the few who possessed any information on the matter, as the "Captivity;" and that which appears the most correct transcript will be given in the edition of his Works that accompanies these volumes.

One of the inducements to the undertaking was the prevailing popularity of such performances, in consequence of the admiration excited by the music of Handel. Another was perhaps the success of his friend Christopher Smart, in a similar

composition named "Hannah," which with the music by Mr. Worgan, was performed at the King's Theatre on the 3d April 1764. A third and more probable cause, was an acquaintance formed shortly before with Doctor Boyce, the eminent musician, by whom he had been either promised, or led to expect, it would be set to music, and whose compositions in this way enjoyed a just celebrity. Whatever ground there may have been for this expectation it was not fulfilled, from what cause is not known. Neither is any notice taken of the work by his friends or by memoir writers, not even by Dr. Percy or by Isaac Reed, the latter of whom wrote two sketches of his life, one for the *Biographia Dramatica*, and another for the edition of the *Essays* collected by Wright; yet the fact of his having written it was well known to both. Their accounts indeed being cursory, it was not probably deemed necessary to enumerate all his productions.

The manuscript, now lying before the writer, seems to be a clean copy, having few erasures, but two of the songs vary slightly from what they appear in the first collection of his poetical works. To the Poet it probably proved, what he no doubt considered it from the labour employed and the little return received, an indifferent speculation. He retained it in his own possession for some months, when being either pressed for money, or despairing of having it introduced to the world in the manner originally designed, he sold the copy to Dodsley, with a right also to Newbery, as

appears by the following receipt, transcribed from the original, now in the possession of Mr. Murray. It thus became of no more value to him than the small sum which the mere copyright produced:—

“ Received from Mr. Dodsley ten guineas for an Oratorio, which he and Mr. Newbery are to share.

“ OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

“ Oct. 31st, 1764.”

The composition of an Oratorio is not perhaps a very difficult thing in itself, for though dramatic in form, it is not so in spirit; we expect no involvement of plot, exhibition of character, or working of passion; neither the pomp of tragedy, nor the verisimilitude of life expected from comedy; neither is the poetry usually of the highest order, because the first consideration in all such compositions is the music. Without this be excellent, or at least of a superior description, all efforts of the poet will be vain; and the consciousness of being dependent upon the labours of another for the success of his own, may render him more careless of excellence.

Besides, musicians think themselves authorised to take great liberties with verses; and no writer would willingly permit such as have cost him much thought and labour, to be excruciated upon even a musical bed of torture. Such works therefore seldom exhibit, and possibly do not require, the display of pre-eminent genius.

The subject is the captivity in Babylon, and the period of time that immediately preceding the capture of the city by Cyrus. It is in three acts; the persons are, — First and second Jewish Prophets— Israelitish Woman — First and second Chaldean Priests — Chaldean Woman — Chorus of Youths and Virgins. The Scene, — The Banks of the River Euphrates near Babylon.

It opens in a strain of lamentation for their lost country and captive state by the Jewish prophets, who although in bondage by a nation of idolaters, find consolation in the knowledge and worship of the true God. While occupied with their griefs, the Chaldean priests enter with an invitation to strike the lyre in honour of a festival day to their gods, and join in the general revelry; the invitation is scornfully declined.

The second act continues the attempt of the Chaldeans to persuade the Jews to join in their worship, when the chief prophet at length pouring a strain, imprecates the judgment of Heaven on the blasphemers of Babylon, and in return is threatened with more ponderous chains and a darker dungeon than such as encircle his blind and captive king Zedekiah.

In the third act the Chaldeans express assurance of the continuance of their empire, notwithstanding the Jewish denunciations of woe; in the meantime a corse is seen borne to the bank of the river, which proves to be that of Zedekiah, and while the Jews are praying for signal punishment on the

authors of his sufferings and death, a loud shout is heard, the army of Cyrus suddenly pours into the city, and the kingdom of Babylon is overthrown.

The two songs which were not so connected with the business of the piece as to prevent being detached from it, found their way into circulation previous to his death. By comparing their construction in the Oratorio with the state in which they were afterwards printed, it will be seen by the lines in Italics that the same judicious revision applied to more elaborate productions, was not neglected even in songs: on what occasion the alterations were made, does not appear, probably for some compilation of Davies, as he possessed the corrected copies.

“ O Memory, thou fond deceiver,  
     Still importunate and vain,  
 To former joys recurring ever,  
     And turning all the past to pain.

“ *Hence intruder, most distressing,*  
     *Seek the happy and the free ;*  
*The wretch who wants each other blessing,*  
     *Ever wants a friend in thee.*

\* \* \* \* \*

“ *To the last moment of his breath,*  
     *On Hope the wretch relies ;*  
*And e'en the pang preceding death*  
     Bids expectation rise.

“ Hope, like the *gleaming* taper's light,  
     Adorns and cheers *our* way ;  
 And still, as darker grows the night,  
     Emits a brighter ray.”

The silence of Bishop Percy regarding not only the Captivity but other works, is to be attributed to forgetfulness, or the displacement of his papers, as it appears he was fully informed on the subject by Mr. George Steevens. When directing the miscellaneous works to be prepared for the press, doubts had arisen in his mind, without reasonable cause as it proved, of the authenticity of one of the epilogues, although it had been put into his hands by the Poet himself, and under this impression he wrote to that gentleman to apply to Mrs. Bulkley, the actress, for whom it was written, to inquire whether she remembered the lines and the occasion for which they were intended, but that lady had long been dead. The Bishop likewise omits to notice the other productions mentioned in the reply of Steevens; as if having once finished the memoir, he was indisposed to make additions which might branch out into more extensive inquiries, and be productive of more labour than his plan, or leisure, or time of life permitted.

Another of his omissions, or what seems like such, is more unaccountable. In writing to Steevens, it will be observed, he says, "I have another unprinted poem of Dr. G.'s, in his own handwriting, that is undoubtedly his, which is of more consequence." No such additional poem appears in the edition of the works with which he was connected, except the quarrelling epilogue, intended at one time for *She Stoops to Conquer*, and to be spoken in dialogue by Mrs. Bulkley and Miss Catley. Had



he meant this epilogue by the "unprinted poem of more consequence," some allusion would probably have been made to its nature when inquiring respecting the origin of a similar composition from the same hands. But the subject of it is not mentioned, nor can an explanation be obtained now, the nearest relative\* of the Prelate declaring to the writer that nothing respecting Goldsmith either in letters or manuscript pieces exists among his papers; but had such a production been by accident omitted by him in the first edition of the works, it is not probable, from the unfortunate irritation which existed between him and the publishers, he would have given it in a second. The application to Mr. Steevens and his reply are dated September 1797.

The Bishop writes—

"Your obliging letter was received this morning and merits my best thanks, which I could not defer presenting a moment. Yet I fear you will have reason to repent of your readiness to serve your friends, when you find it has encouraged me to trouble you again.

"The epilogue of which I sent the exordium and conclusion I find (by an endorsement which escaped me when I copied them for you) was intended to be spoken by Mrs. Bulkley. I wish she

\* Mrs. Isted of Ecton, Northamptonshire, surviving daughter of Dr. Percy. — Since this was written her death has been announced.

could by some means be asked if she remembers for what play it was intended. It may possibly, after all, be not written by Goldsmith but only given for him to correct, though I think he would scarce have adopted the four lines in his epilogue to his printed comedy from it, had it not been his own.

“ He gave it me among a parcel of letters and papers some written by himself and some addressed to him without much explanation. But I have always considered it as his. Yet it would be awkward if after being inserted in his works, some other author should prove his claim to it, and therefore before I close with the booksellers who are impatiently pressing, I wish if possible to ascertain this point.

“ I have another unprinted Poem of Dr. G.’s, in his own handwriting that is undoubtedly his, which is of more consequence, together with many original and some very curious letters; so that I shall not abate of my terms with the booksellers even if this should be withdrawn. However, neither to them nor to the actress would I in the present stage of the business, excite any doubt concerning that epilogue of which I suppose the lines I sent you are sufficient to awake any recollection which she may have on the subject.”\*

The answer, much of which is omitted, though very characteristic of the satire and point of the writer, runs thus:—

\* MS. correspondence in the possession of Mr. Mason.

“ Since I received your favour, I have spent some hours in a fruitless inquiry about the epilogue you have quoted, but even the accurate Mr. Reed can supply no information on the subject. As there is nothing appropriate in this composition, perhaps the author produced it as a piece of sale work for the service of a chance customer, or for his own future use. Finding, however, no commodious vent or employment for his ware, he might afterwards have worked up some of its materials into another fabric. I may add, that several of his lines glance at the sentimental pieces of his dramatic rivals Kelly and Cumberland, and therefore on mature consideration might have been suppressed.

“ In the meantime it is fit you should learn that any present attempt to throw a ring-fence round the poetical demesnes of Goldsmith, will be ineffectual, as a late discovery has been made of a dramatic piece in his own handwriting; it turned up among the papers of the late Mr. Dodsley. \* \* \* The Oratorio in question entitled Captivity, was sold by the Doctor to Dodsley, Oct. 31st, 1764, for ten guineas, and Newbery was to have the option of a share in it. It is now setting to music by an eminent composer, and great expectations are formed of its success. One of the songs belonging to it has been already published in former editions of our little Poet’s works.\*

“ But a word or two more about them; for per-

\* It has been already noticed that *two* songs had been printed from the Oratorio.

haps you are unacquainted with a metrical production of his on the death of the Princess Dowager of Wales; it was spoken and sung at the celebrated public rooms of Mrs. Cornelys in Soho Square, and was afterwards printed.

“Several other pieces of the Doctor’s are still in MSS. in the hands of various people. The late Mr. Wright the printer who had been apprenticed to or in the service of Mr. Hamilton at a time when Goldsmith composed numerous essays for magazines, articles for reviews, &c. preserved a list of these fugitive pieces which are now reprinting, and will make their appearance in the course of next winter. Goldsmith likewise began a periodical paper, which being unsuccessful was laid aside after a few numbers of it had been issued out.” \*

The design intimated here of having the Oratorio set to music had been previously and has been since contemplated by the possessors of the MS., though hitherto without being carried into effect. By a letter from the late Mr. Francis Newbery to Isaac Reed, to whose possession it was consigned by the late Mr. Nicol of Pall Mall, who received it from Dodsley, it appears that in consequence of a conversation with Mr. Nicol, he wished to borrow the MS., having appointed a meeting for that morning (the letter was written in the spring of 1787) to submit it to the opinion of Mr.

\* From correspondence in the hands of Mr. Mason.

Steevens the composer. Nothing seems to have resulted from this project, and its success therefore remains to be tried; the MS. was returned to the custody of Mr. Reed.

Connected with its history there is a further coincidence deserving notice. On the 12th of April, 1764, about a week after the performance of Smart's piece which is supposed to have in part excited the desire of Goldsmith to pursue the same path, an Oratorio named "Israel in Babylon," was advertised to be performed at the Opera House for the benefit of decayed musicians and their families, the music to be selected from Handel. The same announcement mentioned the piece being then for sale by Griffin of Fetter Lane, and other booksellers. By a memorandum in the possession of the writer, it appears that early in the following month (May) Goldsmith drew a bill upon Griffin for thirteen guineas, although no previous connexion seems to have existed between them, and no trace of literary services performed for that publisher at that time has been found which might entitle him to such an accommodation. The similarity of subject between "Israel in Babylon" and the Oratorio of the poet; the period of their production; the connexion with Griffin; and the sum drawn for, circumstances which may be wholly accidental, seem nevertheless to point to some connexion between the performances.

During the summer we trace him to the same house at Islington as before, in another account of

his hostess still extant; to this is added the bill of his laundress, the whole being summed up by the charge for three months' board, viz. 12*l.* 10*s.*; and as Newbery had to pay the amount, the signature of the Poet at the bottom of the page on the left hand, forms a voucher for the accuracy of the items. Such things are not without interest as exhibiting the private habits of men who have delighted us by their talents. It is therefore sub-joined.\*

\* "1764. Doct. Goldsmith Dr. to Eliz. Fleming.

To the rent of the room from Dec. 25. to March 29. £1 17 6

April 2.	A post letter	-	-	-	-	0	0	1
3.	The stage coach to London	-	-	-	-	0	0	6
7.	Lent to pay the laundress	-	-	-	-	0	1	0
11.	A post letter	-	-	-	-	0	0	1
15.	A parcel by the coach	-	-	-	-	0	0	2
18.	A post letter	-	-	-	-	0	0	1
19.	Sassafras	-	-	-	-	0	0	6
25.	Sassafras	-	-	-	-	0	0	6
May 2.	Sassafras	-	-	-	-	0	0	6
3.	A post letter	-	-	-	-	0	0	1
7.	A post letter	-	-	-	-	0	0	1
	Sassafras	-	-	-	-	0	0	6
	Gave the boy for carrying the parcel to							
	Pall Mall	-	-	-	-	0	0	8
12.	Sassafras	-	-	-	-	0	0	6
16.	A post letter	-	-	-	-	0	0	4
17.	Pens and paper	-	-	-	-	0	1	3
21.	Sassafras	-	-	-	-	0	0	6
23.	A post letter	-	-	-	-	0	0	1
24.	Lent in cash	-	-	-	-	0	0	10
	A pint of ale	-	-	-	-	0	0	2
25.	Paper	-	-	-	-	0	0	6

£2 6 5

By another memorandum in the tailor's (Mr. William Filby) account book, it appears he was still at Islington in September, where however he did not continue long. Whether the removal thence was occasioned by his arrest or threatened arrest, which took place about this time by the landlady, as told by Dr. Johnson and repeated so variously by others, or whether this event oc-

	Brought forward	-	-	-	£2	6	5
June 28.	Sassafras	-	-	-	0	0	6
	Opodeldock	-	-	-	0	0	2
8.	A letter to the post	-	-	-	0	0	1
9.	Lent in cash	-	-	-	0	1	2
	Sassafras	-	-	-	0	0	6
21.	Lent in cash	-	-	-	0	0	6
27.	A post letter	-	-	-	0	0	1
28.	A post letter	-	-	-	0	0	1
30.	Sassafras	-	-	-	0	0	6
	To cleaning shoes	-	-	-	0	2	6
Washing and Mending.							
April 17.	3 Shirts, 3 neckcloths, 4 pair stockings	0	1	5½			
May 3.	2 Shirts, 2 neckcloths, 1 cap	-	-	0	0	9½	
12.	4 Shirts, 4 neckcloths, 3 pair stockings	0	1	9			
	To mending 3 pair stockings	-	-	0	0	3	
May 26.	3 Shirts, 3 neckcloths, 1 pair stockings	0	1	2½			
June 8.	4 Shirts, 4 neckcloths, 1 pair stockings,						
	1 cap	-	-	-	0	1	7½
	1 Pair stockings, mending	-	-	-	0	0	1
22.	4 Shirts, 4 neckcloths, 4 pair stockings	0	1	10			
	3 Pair stockings, mending	-	-	0	0	3	
	For cloth and wristing a shirt	-	-	0	0	6	
	To 3 months' board from March 29.				12	10	0
	to June 29.	-	-	-			
					£15 12 3		

curred subsequently in London, and of course in a different lodging, is doubtful; probably the latter; for it is not likely that having been an inmate so long, and with Newbery as responsible paymaster, she had recourse to the last resort of a severe creditor even if payment had been for a time delayed.

Mrs. Piozzi, Sir John Hawkins, Cumberland, and Boswell, all tell the story, and although professing to receive it from the same source, namely from Dr. Johnson, all differently.

Goldsmith, according to Boswell, having been arrested by his landlady for arrears of rent, and being at a loss how to extricate himself, sent a message to Johnson in the morning before he was up stating his distress and begging to see him. The latter, in order to obviate immediate difficulty, sent back a guinea by the messenger, and when dressed proceeded to his friend, whom he found violently incensed at the conduct of the mistress of the house, but with a bottle of madeira before him as a means of drowning his cares. This the visitor put to one side, begged him to be calm, and inquired what means he possessed of escaping from the difficulty; a novel was produced, stated to be ready for the press; Johnson discovering its merits, carried the work to a bookseller (Newbery) who gave sixty pounds for the copy, and returning with the money or a portion of it, the debtor discharged the demand, not without expostulating with his hostess in a high tone for using him so ill.



Mrs. Piozzi says that Johnson was called from her house after dinner and found the Poet getting drunk upon madeira ; that on the money being received for his book, he invited the woman of the house to drink punch and pass their time in merriment ; circumstances at variance with his usual habits which were temperate, and the indignation he would naturally feel on the occasion, and therefore requiring some corroborating authority to believe.

Sir John Hawkins tells us “ that for the clamours of a woman to whom he was indebted for lodging and for bailiffs that waited to arrest him, he was equally unable till he had made himself drunk, to stay within doors or to go abroad to hawk among the booksellers a piece of his writing, the title whereof my author does not remember. In this distress he sent for Johnson, who immediately went to one of them and brought back money for his relief.”

Cumberland taxes his invention still higher. The landlady, by his account, had made the staggering proposal to her lodger of either *marrying her* or paying the debt ; that Johnson found him meditating this alternative ; that he carried the novel to *Dodsley* and received *ten* pounds for it ; and prudently doled that sum out to him by a guinea at a time.

Nothing exhibits more the loose manner in which such anecdotes are received or told than these various versions of the same occurrence. The state-

ment of Boswell is simple and probable, taken from the mouth of Johnson when deliberately questioned on the subject, and therefore as nearly as possible we may believe exact. Mrs. Piozzi errs from carelessness, and perhaps from the desire of bringing her dinner table before the notice of the reader, as it is obvious from reference to minute circumstances that the summons of Johnson to the prisoner must have occurred in the forenoon. Hawkins colours the matter in stating that he wished to get drunk, according to his peculiar ill humour, or the inaccuracy of his informant, who it appears did not even know the name of the work the sale of which procured the release of the author. Cumberland's story seems wholly a fiction, or confounded with that of some other person, for none of the details agree with those of others or with fact, as we know that the sum received for the novel was sixty pounds, and that the purchaser was Newbery, not Dodsley; he knew nothing personally of Goldsmith for about eight or nine years afterwards; and the proposal of marriage seems doubly improbable from the hostess being said to be elderly, while to arrest the object of her passion seemed of all others the least dexterous mode of urging her suit.

The precise period at which this occurred is uncertain, neither of the narrators having recorded dates; Mrs. Piozzi says 1765 or 1766, but this vague account partakes of the loose inaccuracy of her anecdote. Dr. Johnson who being personally

concerned could not so well commit mistake, expressly says it preceded the publication of the "Traveller," and assigns that as a reason why less money was obtained for the copy than it would otherwise have been worth. He further relates that the bookseller thought so indifferently of his bargain as to keep it by him unprinted nearly two years after the purchase. These circumstances fix it beyond doubt in the year 1764. If it were previous to April, on the second of which month it will be seen the lodging bill just given commences, the time between the sale and the publication would be exactly two years; if in the autumn, it would be necessarily less; and as he was at the latter period with Mrs. Fleming, we may acquit her of the indignity inflicted upon her lodger, and infer that he was at temporary apartments in London; the probable date of the occurrence was therefore February or March 1764.

From several small sums of money received from Newbery about this period, he was doubtless engaged in the minor business of a professional author, such as revising short translations, and supplying papers for the "Christian's Magazine;" devoting such moments as he could spare to objects of a more imperishable character. To escape from the task-work of trade to the indulgence of the imagination, is one of the luxuries which an indigent man of genius enjoys with a zest unknown to his richer brethren who by happier circumstances are enabled to command their own time

and subject; and all who can appreciate the struggles of poverty with aspirations after excellence and reputation, will give him their sympathy. A large undertaking, the completion of the poem of "The Traveller," had been for some time before him; and this if successful, promised the gratification of his highest ambition.

It will be remembered that this work was commenced by his own account in Switzerland, whence a portion of it, the *disjecta membra* only we may believe, was transmitted to his brother in Ireland. For a time, the continued contest he had to sustain against want by such productions as were more profitable in the literary market precluded serious attention to it, but as he became more at ease, such additions were made as his plan or genius suggested; the original outline, said by his contemporaries to have been more extensive than now appears, was contracted and filled up; and in this state though still imperfect and without the title (that of "The Philosophical Wanderer" was first suggested) being positively fixed\*, it was submitted to Dr. Johnson. He saw its merit at once, recommended it to be retouched and finished for publication, and towards the conclusion, voluntarily added a few lines of his own. The advice though not immediately followed, was not forgotten. A poem is one of those hazardous adven-

\* According to Dr. M'Veagh M'Donnell, who had his information from Mr. Thomas English.

tures in literature in which failure seems the rule and success the exception ; we cannot therefore be surprised at his hesitation to publish, or the desire to give it all the benefit that time and care could impart ; fully aware of the risk of turning his venture adrift on the ocean of public opinion, the precaution he adopted displayed prudence ; for who would not, if he could, acquire the reputation not of a tolerable, but of a good poet ?

The state of poetry at this period was such that a fair opening appeared to offer to a new claimant for its honours. The great masters who had charmed the preceding age had passed away, and none of equal powers had arisen to take their place. Young was advanced in life and expired a few months afterwards ; Gray was indolent and fastidious ; and excepting in a few of his pieces, several of the wits and critics, among whom Johnson even at this time was one, declared against him. Mason and Glover were scarcely popular. Johnson himself was silent. Churchill had just expired ; one of those poets who though of such reputation among his contemporaries as to be termed in a memoir written in the preceding year “ the greatest English poet now living, or perhaps that this country ever produced,” is now if not forgotten at least neglected, his works rarely perused for the pleasure they afford, and even his genius indifferently estimated. Lloyd died nearly on the day of the publication of the new poem, but his reputation was not great. Falconer who

had printed the Shipwreck two years before, was scarcely yet enrolled among the body of poets. Akenside, Armstrong, Smollett, Grainger, and Bonnell Thornton, all members of the medical profession, were otherwise occupied; and to this respectable list of five of the "two-fold disciples of Apollo," a term not unfelicitously applied to the former, was now to be added a sixth in the person of Goldsmith.

In sitting down to the composition of his poem, as well as in his general views of poetry, he had his eye fixed on the most popular models of the preceding age, which having undergone the test of time and given pleasure to every description of reader, he thought might be safely followed as the best. So likewise thought Dr. Johnson. Public opinion sided with both; and public opinion, as Aristotle, and Cicero, and many others have told us, is after a moderate time for deliberation, rarely mistaken in matters of taste. The opinions of Goldsmith on the art as well as his practice, are on record. In the Life of Parnell we find; "He appears to me to be the last of that great school that had modelled itself upon the ancients, and taught English poetry to resemble what the generality of mankind have allowed to excel. A studious and correct observer of antiquity, he set himself to consider nature with the lights it lent him; and he found that the more aid he borrowed from the one, the more delightfully he resembled the other. To copy nature is a task

the most bungling workman is able to execute ; to select such parts as contribute to delight, is reserved only for those whom accident has blessed with uncommon talents, or such as have read the ancients with indefatigable industry. Parnell is ever happy in the selection of his images and scrupulously careful in the choice of his subjects. His productions bear no resemblance to those tawdry things which it has been for some time the fashion to admire ; in writing which the poet sits down without any plan, and heaps up splendid images without any selection ; where the reader grows dizzy with praise and admiration, and yet soon grows weary he can scarcely tell why.

\* \* \* \* \* It is indeed amazing, after what has been done by Dryden, Addison, and Pope, to improve and harmonise our native tongue, that their successors should have taken so much pains to involve it into pristine barbarity. These misguided innovators have not been content with restoring antiquated words and phrases, but have indulged themselves in the most licentious transpositions and the harshest constructions, vainly imagining, that the more their writings are unlike prose, the more they resemble poetry. They have adopted a language of their own and call upon mankind for admiration. All those who do not understand them are silent, and those who make out their meaning are willing to praise, to show they understand. From these follies and affectations

the poems of Parnell are free ; he has considered the language of poetry as the language of life, and conveys the warmest thoughts in the simplest expression."

Here, at a time when his judgment was matured, we find laid down the principles which in practice he so successfully carried into effect, and which form the great secret of his popularity. We see an utter rejection of all affectation ; the use of the language of life which is not necessarily either vulgar or prosaic ; and combined with these a warmth and simplicity that although constituting the chief charm of good writing, frequently passes unobserved by inattentive readers, because it wants show and glitter, has nothing to strike forcibly or take by surprise, and where the perfection of art is exhibited in leaving behind no trace of the labours employed by the writer. Upon principle therefore he carefully abstained from pursuing the path, or participating in what were considered the faults, of Gray ; faults of ambition, perhaps a lawful ambition ; faults certainly nearly akin to beauties, were not the labour used by the artist too obvious to escape the notice of the reader. To him, to Mason, Warton, and their imitators, his remarks were considered to apply, and they did not pass without notice and censure. With Gray more particularly, he was then and since brought into competition, and the honest expression of his poetical taste has been attributed to the passion of envy. But there seems no just cause for such imputation. On the con-



trary he had a high opinion of that poet, but occasionally felt bound to withhold the meed of applause less from his genius than from the manner in which it was exerted. Nor was this a recent opinion, advanced when his own poems differing so much in character had received nearly universal approbation and when a degree of rivalry might be supposed to influence his decision, but at the earliest period of his literary career, long before he was known, before he had any reputation to lose by comparison, and before he knew or could be influenced by the critical opinions of Johnson. Of this we have sufficient proof. When engaged in 1757 in the *Monthly Review*, he wrote the criticism in that journal on the *Bard and Progress of Poetry*; and there as an anonymous reviewer, had there existed hostile feelings to gratify they might have been safely indulged, even with the countenance of a large body of literary men who were less disposed then than subsequently, to admit the merits of Gray.\* But we find the same spirit in this notice as in the remarks in 1770; he objects to their elaborate character, to their approval being confined to a few, to their obscurities and abruptnesses, and emphatically advises him to aim at being more popular, or in other words to study the people. A complimentary notice of the Odes

\* The ridicule attempted to be cast upon him by Colman and other wits of the day in "Odes to Obscurity and Oblivion" will not be forgotten by the literary reader.

is thus introduced ; nor will even warm admirers of the lyric bard deny that there is not much truth in the criticism :

“ As this publication seems designed for those who have formed their taste by the models of antiquity, the generality of readers cannot be supposed adequate judges of its merits ; nor will the poet it is presumed, be greatly disappointed if he finds them backward in commending a performance not exactly suited to their apprehensions. We cannot however without some regret behold those talents so capable of giving pleasure to all, exerted in efforts that at best can amuse only the few ; we cannot behold this rising poet seeking fame among the learned, without hinting to him the same advice that Isocrates used to give his scholars, *study the people*. This study it is that has conducted the great masters of antiquity up to immortality. Pindar himself, of whom our modern lyricist is an imitator, appears entirely guided by it.”\*

\* \* \* \* \*

“ It is by no means our design to detract from the merit of our author’s present attempt ; we would only intimate that an English poet — one whom the muse has *marked for her own*† — could produce a more luxuriant bloom of flowers by cultivating such as are natives of the soil than by en-

\* Mr. Southey, in his *Life of Cowper*, quotes this passage : he was not aware, and indeed the fact is now for the first time disclosed, that Goldsmith was the writer.

† In italics in the Review.

deavouring to force the exotics of another climate; or to speak without a metaphor, such a genius as Mr. Gray might give greater pleasure and acquire a larger portion of fame, if, instead of being an imitator, he did justice to his talents and ventured to be more an original. These two odes, it must be confessed, breathe much of the spirit of Pindar, but then they have caught the seeming obscurity, the sudden transition, and hazardous epithet, of his mighty master."\*

Of the inattention paid to the literary history of Goldsmith we have proof in the erroneous dates assigned to nearly all his principal pieces, and this poem among the number. Bishop Percy, Malone in a note to Boswell's Johnson, and all the memoir writers give the date 1765, though the publication took place in the middle of December 1764, the error arising no doubt from 1765 being printed in the titlepage, the commencement of that year being at hand. The first announcement appears in the Public Advertiser, the 19th of that month; in the St. James's Chronicle on the 21st; and was repeated in others: it came out in the quarto form, and was the first production to which he put his name — "This day is published, price one shilling and sixpence: The Traveller; or a Prospect of Society, a Poem. By Oliver Goldsmith, M.B. Printed for J. Newbery in St. Paul's Church Yard."

A feeling worthy of all praise produced the de-

\* Monthly Review, September, 1757. See Works, vol. iv.

dication to his brother. Careless of any interests of his own which might be promoted by conciliating the powerful or the wealthy, it was intended not merely as a return of respect and attention for the kindness shown to his earlier years, but to bring into notice and perhaps preferment should the work become popular, a worthy though friendless clergyman. Allusions to the motive took place in conversation with his friends, and afterwards found its way into the newspapers; in a paragraph in imitation of a paper of Swift, where among other instances of men who have acted nobly, or as it is phrased, made great figures in the world, is the following — “ Dr. Goldsmith, when he dedicated his beautiful Poem the Traveller, to a man of no greater income than forty pounds a year.”

The plan of the poem is in great measure new, though it is possible that Addison's Letter from Italy suggested the idea. Travels in prose had been often told; but to array them for the first time in the garb of poetry, promised something of stronger interest to the reader, while the situation in which the Traveller was projected and commenced, entitles its author in all probability to the honours of originality. But it is in the execution of such things we must seek for the merit that gives them popular favour; to do this well requires poetical powers of a high order, good taste, a philosophical spirit of observation, and that nice discrimination which seizes only upon such points as mark national peculiarities in the strongest

manner, and are immediately intelligible to the general reader. It is so far different from what is called *local* poetry, such as Denham's Cooper's Hill, which may have given the hint to Addison, that it overlooks in great degree the scenery of countries to fix upon and describe the moral characteristics of the people. Human nature is always difficult to pourtray in poetry with condensation and accuracy ; but he who accomplishes this, is beyond question no ordinary poet.

We have proof at once of the judgment of Goldsmith, and of the plan being adapted to poetry of the highest order, in Lord Byron pursuing it in Childe Harold, which in all its leading points may be considered a kind of "Traveller" on a more extended scale. We find a similar survey of the people and countries through which they pass ; the same attention to their distinguishing moral features ; the same philosophical spirit of reflection, varying indeed with the opposite natures of the writers ; many noble sentiments, and ideas of great moral sublimity, mingled with what is still more peculiar, the same reference to personal circumstances, feelings and recollections ; both identifying themselves in a peculiar manner with their subject. Lord Byron, however, by amplifying the design, has gained a stronger hold upon the reader. Goldsmith looks down as from a height upon the countries under his eye, with the large and general views of a philosopher whose business is not with detail. Lord Byron travels more extensively and tells his

travels with more of the minuteness of a tourist ; he is more various and diversified, yet scarcely more vigorous, and certainly not more condensed : both are ethical ; and both indulge freely in their respective political views. In Goldsmith we find not one objectionable sentiment, nothing that assaults or pains the religious or moral feelings of the reader ; the same cannot be said of the author of *Childe Harold*. The main purpose of the former is to show that by the benevolent ordination of Providence, the sum of human happiness is in most countries, however varying in natural position, capabilities, or form of government, nearly the same ; that content belongs to the mind and disposition of the individual, more than to the circumstances by which he is surrounded. Lord Byron, who had probably set out with no fixed plan in view, is willing to tell of all that interested him ; not of moral characteristics only, but of manners, localities, and the associations derived from historical events ; he therefore perhaps carries with him general readers more. The one is general in his philosophy, the other more local and particular. If Lord Byron be more various and interesting, we find in Goldsmith purity of thought and that high moral feeling pervading all his writings, the want of which is so often to be lamented in those of his noble successor ; while in vigour and sublimity whenever occasion requires it, he is rarely inferior.

True poets probably differ little in their con-

ception of what should be good subjects for the exercise of their art, as Thomson, by another coincidence, appears to have thought well of the design which Goldsmith lived to execute. His opinion, contained in a letter to Bubb Doddington, written from Paris in 1730, when on the tour of Europe with Mr. Talbot, was not made known till long after the death of the Irish poet :

“ Your observation I find every day juster and juster, that one may profit more abroad by seeing than by hearing ; and yet there are scarce any travellers to be met with who have given a landscape of the countries through which they have travelled, *that have seen, as you express it, with the Muses' eye* ; though that is the first thing which strikes me, and what all readers and travellers in the first place demand. *It seems to me that such a poetical landscape of countries, mixed with moral observations on their countries and people, would not be an ill-judged undertaking.* But then the description of the different face of nature in different countries, must be particularly marked and characteristic ; the portrait painting of nature.”

So well do we find the idea thrown out in this passage fulfilled, that nothing appears in the Traveller but what is appropriate and distinct, or as the author of the Seasons says, marked and characteristic ; the terms applied to one country or people cannot well be transferred to another ; and it admits of doubt which of the nations, whether Italians, Swiss, French, Dutch or English, is most

happily drawn. By Dr. Johnson the latter seems to have been most prized ; he was known often to repeat with a fervour of animation which brought tears into his own eyes, that noble passage, one of the most powerful and yet accurate in modern poetry, which gives so high and not undue picture of our countrymen :—

“ Stern o'er each bosom reason holds her state,  
 With daring aims irregularly great ;  
 Pride in their port, defiance in their eye,  
 I see the lords of human kind pass by ;  
 Intent on high designs, a thoughtful band ;  
 By forms unfashion'd fresh from nature's hand,  
 Fierce in their native hardiness of soul,  
 True to imagin'd right, above controul ;  
 While e'en the peasant boasts these rights to scan,  
 And learns to venerate himself as man.”

A comparison between his description of Italy and that of Addison occurs immediately to the poetical reader ; and if the same thought was suggested to himself, no tone of depreciation or jealousy appears to have been the result. The “ Letter from Italy ” is thus fairly and judiciously characterised a few years afterwards in one of his compilations for youth, the “ Beauties of English Poesy : ”— “ Few poems have done more honour to English genius than this. There is in it a strain of political thinking that was, at that time, new in our poetry. Had the harmony of this been equal to Pope's versification, it would be incontestably the finest poem in our language ; but there is a dryness in the numbers which greatly lessens the pleasure



excited both by the poet's judgment and imagination."

To follow a good poet in the most admired of his pieces without losing ground by the attempt, forms no slight test of the merit of a writer; and Addison is so popular, that even his name becomes nearly a bar to competition. All the stronger points admitting of poetical description had been seized by him; the features of the country, her mountains, views, groves, and fields, none of which, as he says, were "unsung," had been appropriated; the diversity of her productions, where—

"Blossoms, and fruits, and flowers together rise,  
And the whole year in gay confusion lies,"

had been adverted to; and her ruins, as well as her triumphs in painting and sculpture, sufficiently brought into view to take away much of the charm of originality from any who should venture to tread the same ground.

Little therefore remained for the muse of Goldsmith but the character of the people, which like their modern literature and institutions, obtained no respect from his judgment and consequently little from his pen. Their predilections and pursuits as being supposed to tend to moral degeneracy, lead to a severe remark—

"And sensual bliss is all this nation knows."

And again, in allusion to their fallen political con-

dition he adds, in contrast to the natural products of the country —

“ Man seems the only growth that dwindles here.”

And carrying on the unfavourable picture, the following lines have great force and condensation —

“ Contrasted faults through all his manners reign,  
 Though poor, luxurious ; though submissive, vain ;  
 Though grave, yet trifling ; zealous, yet untrue,  
 And even in penance planning sins anew.”

Addison dwelt little on what Goldsmith has been compelled by the pre-occupation of topics to make his principal theme. In comparing the one hundred and sixty-eight lines of the former with the sixty of the latter, they will be found as the range of the former was unlimited, to display more imagination and vivacity. In Goldsmith as his purpose was more philosophical, we find more of the depth of such an observer, equal vigour of description, more condensation of thought, and infinitely more smoothness of versification. Both unaccountably neglect to notice the chief delight of modern Italy, its music ; for this in the hands of either, particularly of Goldsmith who had a taste for it, might have been made the vehicle of some fine poetical painting and pointed remark. But his ingenuity deserves praise in furnishing a sketch after such a master, at once philosophical, spirited, and original.

While engaged in putting a finishing hand to

the poem, an anecdote connected with the writing of one of the couplets and of his amusement at the same moment, told by Sir Joshua Reynolds to a lady more than once alluded to who forms the authority for the fact, exhibits the peculiarity of his humour; it shows also that elevated sentiments are not always the offspring of abstract thought.

Either Reynolds, or a mutual friend who immediately communicated the story to him, calling at the lodgings of the Poet opened the door without ceremony, and discovered him not in meditation, or in the throes of poetic birth, but in the boyish office of teaching a favourite dog to sit upright upon its haunches, or as is commonly said, to beg. Occasionally he glanced his eye over his desk, and occasionally shook his finger at the unwilling pupil in order to make him retain his position; while on the page before him was written that couplet, with the ink of the second line still wet, from the description of Italy—

“By sports like these are all their cares beguiled,  
The sports of children satisfy the child.”

The sentiment seemed so appropriate to the employment, that the visitor could not refrain from giving vent to his surprise in a strain of banter, which was received with characteristic good humour, and the admission at once made that the amusement in which he had been engaged had given birth to the idea.

The interval between the period of a publication issuing from the press, and the moment when public favour towards it seems no longer doubtful, is necessarily an anxious one for an author. To Goldsmith, notwithstanding some affected indifference expressed in the dedication, it could not be an unimportant matter; it was the first production to which he had put his name, as well as the greatest adventure in which he had hitherto embarked; and the stake was to him not merely reputation, but in some measure subsistence. Dr. Johnson, who knew the anxious feelings of his friend, made an immediate effort to relieve them by a recommendatory notice which appears in the *Critical Review* for December 1764.

Offices of this kind proceeding from kind intentions need not necessarily be laudatory; they are often more in the nature of advertisements to announce existence than to disseminate praise, and prove frequently useful to works of admitted merit. It is not that the public cannot unassisted discover and reward such productions without a director to guide its taste, but in the multiplicity of publications, some which are good may for awhile escape observation; and it is thus that the early notice of a judicious friend may do quickly for its fame what would otherwise be a work of time. This obviously was the idea of the great critic whom it may be interesting to trace in his friendly endeavours; he says indeed little, leaving the poem to speak for itself in the quo-

tations, which amount to a fourth part of its number of lines. It was evidently written in haste: the remarks are of the utmost possible brevity, and not being included in some editions of the works of its writer although enumerated by Boswell among his productions, will be found in a future volume.

The Gentleman's Magazine of the same month pronounces a favourable opinion on its merits. In January, the Monthly Review in the way of amends for previous treatment of their old associate, followed in the track of Johnson in the Critical:— "For the Traveller is one of those delightful poems that allure by the beauty of their scenery, a refined elegance of sentiment, and a correspondent happiness of expression." The assertion of the author in the dedication, of not being solicitous to know what would be its reception, is condemned as affectation; and if meant in a general sense, would be so: but the words seems to imply that he cares not how it shall be received by the lovers of personal satire, poetry, and blank verse. With less reason, exception is taken by the reviewer to the expression "untravellered heart," which yet drags at each remove "a lengthening chain," in the opening paragraph, as involving a contradiction. The objection is more apparent than real, for by the common licence of poetry it merely conveys the idea of the heart being unchanged, however removed by distance from the object of regard.

To the suffrage of the reviews and other journals, was added that of all private judges of good poetry;

until at length, when the author had been removed by death beyond the reach of partiality or the flattery of friends, it was pronounced "without one bad line — without one of Dryden's careless versés." When Sir Joshua Reynolds observed that he was glad to hear Charles Fox say it was one of the finest poems in the English language, and Mr. Langton replied, "Surely there was no doubt of this before," Johnson's remark was "No; the merit of the Traveller is so well established, that Mr. Fox's praise cannot augment it, nor his censure diminish it." Another remark from the same authority, in reply to an observation of Reynolds, that in giving it such a character his friends might be deemed partial, deserves notice, as furnishing a proof of the fact so obvious in Boswell, Sir John Hawkins, and others, of the writer when alive, not having justice done to his actual powers and attainments by the major part of his associates. "Nay, sir, the partiality of his friends was always against him. It was with difficulty we could give him a hearing."

The force of this remark is explained by the belief entertained by more than one of their mutual acquaintance, that to Johnson, not to the actual author, was the credit of many fine passages of the poem due. This we have long known had not the slightest foundation in truth. It is certain indeed he revised it; but who on such an occasion would not, and does not, take the advice of a judicious critic whenever it is to be procured? Such emendations are rarely of moment, and rather do credit

to his caution than detract from his genius or skill. In the revisal, it is true, Johnson introduced some lines of his own as substitutes for others deemed less pointed or explicit in the position attempted to be maintained; he marked them for Boswell in 1783; they are nine in number, being the 420th,

“ To stop too fearful, and too faint to go,”

and eight lines of the conclusion :—

“ How small of all that human hearts endure,  
 That part which kings or laws can cause or cure.  
 Still to ourselves in every place consign'd,  
 Our own felicity we make or find ;  
 With secret course which no loud storms annoy,  
 Glides the smooth current of domestic joy ;  
 \* \* \* \* \*  
 To men remote from power but rarely known,  
 Leave reason, faith, and conscience all our own.”

These, though vigorous and expressive, simply re-state the general doctrine urged in the poem, and present no material novelty of sentiment; few of those of Goldsmith will lose by comparison; and in fact much of the beauty of the passage would be impaired, were it not for the force of the illustration introduced by the author himself in the two lines which precede the concluding couplet—

“ The lifted axe, the agonizing wheel,  
 Luke's iron crown, and Damien's bed of steel.”

One of which allusions, that to the “Iron Crown,” occasioned some difficulty to readers, until it was recollected that in a rebellion in Hungary in 1514,

headed by two brothers named Zack, George and Luke, the former, not the latter, was punished on its suppression by having his head encircled with a red-hot iron crown. The short and obscure nature of the reference probably occasioned the Poet some trouble; to name the actual sufferer, George, might have been misconstrued by those who knew not the historical fact as implying some sneer or irreverence to his own sovereign, while it is certain the surname of "Zack" which would have suited his purpose in sense and sound was forgotten; the substitution of the latter for Luke would render the line historically correct.

A gratuitous supposition of Boswell, that much, "*no doubt*," of the sentiment and expression in this poem were derived by Goldsmith from conversation with Johnson, would deserve no remark, were it not indicative of that unfairness of which he is too often guilty. "The Traveller," observes Mr. Croker\* in noticing the remark, "is a poem which in a peculiar degree seems written from the personal observation and feelings of its author;" and no critic of even moderate skill but will arrive at the same conclusion. There is a reality in all the leading passages which cannot be mistaken for second-hand portraiture,—a view of localities and characteristics, of feelings and opinions arising from actual contemplation of the places and people described, that no other than an eyewitness, and that wit-

\* Ed. of Boswell's Johnson, 1831, vol. ii. p. 6.



ness a philosophical observer, could convey to the reader. Johnson never was in Switzerland, Italy, or Holland; and only in France long after the publication of the poem; he was therefore incapable of lending aid to its most forcible and characteristic passages.

Nothing can be more unjust or ungenerous than to attempt in this way to claim for one man of genius, who never dreamt of arrogating such distinction himself, the merit that is due to another, merely because they happened to be friends and associates. Were this practice to be encouraged, literary society must soon become extinct; no man of talents will associate with his fellow, for none will run the risk of having the laurels which ought to encircle his own head, capriciously wrested from him to adorn that of another. If Johnson furnished sentiment or expression to the Traveller, he may equally be said to have supplied them to the Deserted Village, to the Hermit, to the Vicar of Wakefield, and to She Stoops to Conquer; and if he is thus to be considered a storehouse of mind to one friend, why not to another? Why not from the same association, have supplied Burke with his oratory, Reynolds with his Discourses (which is in fact more than hinted by some), Beauclerk with his wit, Dyer with his learning, Malone with his criticism, and Hawkins with his ill-nature? Such accusations against the fair fame of authors, though frequently made, are in very few instances just. Johnson indeed, when younger in his literary career, became alarmed at

the thought of similar imputations being thrown out against his originality, and to prevent them, took the resolution of avoiding the society of such as he thought likely to advance the accusation.\* The remedy was desperate, and too unsocial to be always followed.

The perseverance of Boswell on another occasion in almost forcing him to assume a portion of the merits of his friends, is as amusing as the simplicity with which it is avowed:—“He (Johnson) owned,” says Boswell, “that he thought Hawkesworth was one of his imitators, but he did not think Goldsmith was. Goldsmith, he said, had great merit.” A disclaimer, at once so liberal and just, would not suit the purpose of his admiring biographer; he therefore would make him assume the merit of bestowing at least his patronage upon the Irish poet, if not of imparting to him his sentiments and language. “But sir,” continued Boswell, “he is much indebted to you for his getting so high in the public estimation.” *Johnson*. “Why sir, he has perhaps got *sooner* to it by his intimacy with me.”

An anecdote connected with this poem exhibiting that absence of mind and facility of temper in its author which occasionally led him to make admis-

\* “I used to go,” said the moralist, “pretty often to Campbell’s [Dr. John, author of the *Lives of the Admirals* and a variety of other works] on a Sunday evening, till I began to consider that the shoals of Scotchmen who flocked about him might probably say, when any thing of mine was well done, ‘Ay, ay, he has learnt this of Cawmell.’”

sions he did not really mean, and which were thence sometimes turned against himself, was told by Dr. Johnson. "I remember," said he, "Chamier, after talking with him some time, said, 'Well, I do believe he wrote this poem himself; and let me tell you, that is believing a great deal.' Chamier once asked him what he meant by *slow*, the last word in the first line of the Traveller,

' Remote, unfriended, melancholy, slow.'

Did he mean tardiness of locomotion? Goldsmith who would say something without consideration answered 'Yes.' I was sitting by and said, 'No sir, you did not mean tardiness of locomotion; you mean that sluggishness of mind which comes upon a man in solitude.' Chamier believed then that I had written the line, as much as if he had seen me write it." The Poet, however, was not the first of his calling who so imperfectly understood himself as to require a friend to interpret his meaning. Pope it is well known was confounded by the interpretation put upon passages in his Essay on Man, and not only expressed the greatest obligations to Warburton but as is said became the founder of his fortune, for becoming his commentator and explaining sentiments which were either misapprehended or he could not so well explain himself.

"What a useful study," says Spence in his Anecdotes, speaking of Pope, "might it be for a poet to compare in those parts what was written first with the successive alterations; to learn his

terms and arts in versification; and to consider the reasons why such and such an alteration was made." Every reader of taste feels something of a similar interest in tracing a popular poem in its progress to excellence; and in the instance of the Traveller it seems to be more necessary as no notice has hitherto been taken of the variations, though considerable.

The number of lines in the first edition was 416; in the last, being the ninth printed during the life of the author, 438; making an addition of twenty-two to the original number; but as fourteen of the first edition were thrown out, the total number of new lines amounted to thirty-six.

Such as may be strictly called additions, from conveying thoughts or illustrations not in the first edition, are the following: —

“With food as well the peasant is supply'd  
On Idra's cliffs, as Arno's shelvy side.

\* \* \* \* \*

“Where wealth and freedom reign contentment fails,  
And honour sinks where commerce long prevails.

\* \* \* \* \*

“While nought remain'd of all that riches gave,  
But towns unmann'd, and lords without a slave.

\* \* \* \* \*

“The self-dependent lordlings stand alone,  
All claims that bind and sweeten life unknown.”

And that animated apostrophe to freedom, of sixteen lines, commencing with

“And thou, fair Freedom, taught alike to feel  
The rabble’s rage, and tyrant’s angry steel :

and ending with

“Except when fast approaching danger warms.”

Those deemed less fit by the author to retain their station in the poem, and therefore finally rejected, were

“’Twere affectation all, and school-taught pride,  
To spurn the splendid things by heaven supply’d :”

for which he substituted

“Say, should the philosophic mind disdain  
That good which makes each humbler bosom vain ?”

For the following passage which was thrown out —

“And yet, perhaps, if states with states we scan,  
Or estimate their bliss on reason’s plan,  
Though patriots flatter and though fools contend,  
We still shall find uncertainty suspend ;  
Find that each good, by art or nature given,  
To these or those, but make the balance even ;  
Find that the bliss of all is much the same,  
And patriotic boasting reason’s shame :”

now appear six lines, commencing

“And yet, perhaps, if countries we compare,”

and ending with

“To different nations make their blessings even.”

Immediately succeeding the lines where by the anecdote previously related the Poet seemed to bestow divided attention between his verses and his dog, and which glance at the political apathy of Italy, a couplet, now omitted, continued the idea.

“ At sports like these while foreign arms advance,  
In passive ease they leave the world to chance.”

After the lines

“ Yet think not thus when Freedom’s ills I state,  
I mean to flatter kings or court the great,”

came

“ Perish the wish ; for inly satisfy’d,  
Above their pomps I hold my ragged pride :”

which were replaced in the amended edition by

“ Ye powers of truth that bid my soul aspire,  
Far from my bosom drive the low desire,” &c.

Among a variety of verbal alterations a few of the chief as indicating his care in the revision, may be noticed : —

“ A weary waste expanding to the skies,”

stood originally

“ *expanded* to the skies.”

“ Blest be those feasts with simple plenty crown’d,”

was

“ *where mirth and peace abound.*”

“ Amidst the store should thankless pride repine,”

was

“ *’twere thankless to repine.*”

“ Boldly proclaims that happiest spot his own,”

was

“ *Boldly asserts that country for his own.*”



stood

*“ And monarchs toil, and poets pant for fame.”*

Of America,

*“ And the brown Indian marks with murd’rous aim,”*

stood

*“ takes a deadly aim.”*

There are but two instances of the transposition of lines ; one in the description of Holland, where in allusion to her embankments to keep off the inroads of the sea, the lines

*“ Onward methinks and diligently slow,  
The firm connected bulwark seems to grow,”*

immediately follow the couplet which they are now made to precede.

The second is in the noble and animated sketch of our countrymen so much admired and repeated by every good judge of poetry and so great a favourite with Dr. Johnson. In the first edition it is —

*“ Stern o’er each bosom Reason holds her state :  
With daring aims irregularly great,  
I see the lords of human kind pass by,  
Pride in their port, defiance in their eye : ”—*

which on further consideration is more judiciously arranged —

*“ Pride in their port, defiance in their eye,  
I see the lords of human kind pass by.”*

In a few passages, thoughts are repeated which particularly pleased him in prose, and were thought



capable of strong poetic painting or expression, their previous use being probably forgotten. Thus the beautiful and affecting image —

“ And drags at each remove a lengthening chain,”

had been employed in the third letter of the *Citizen of the World* : —

“ The farther I travel, I feel the pain of separation with stronger force ; those ties that bind me to my native country and you are still unbroken. By every remove I only drag a greater length of chain.”

And the lines —

“ Each wanton judge new penal statutes draw,  
Laws grind the poor, and rich men rule the law,”

correspond with a passage in the *Vicar of Wakefield* : —

“ What they may then expect, may be seen by turning our eyes to Holland, Genoa, or Venice, where the laws govern the poor and the rich govern the law.”

And again the simile —

“ — like the circle bounding earth and skies,  
Allures from far, yet as I follow, flies,”

appears likewise in the novel : —

“ And though death, the only friend of the wretched, for a little while mocks the weary traveller with the view, and like his horizon still flies before him,” &c.

Again in speaking of the Dutch —

“ Heavens ! how unlike their Belgic sires of old,  
Rough, poor, content, ungovernably bold ;  
War in each breast and freedom on each brow.”

In the manuscript introduction to the History of the War, he concludes a passage on the supposed degeneracy of that people arising from their commercial habits and inattention to warlike deeds, in the same strain :—

“How unlike the brave peasants, their ancestors, who spread terror into either India, and always declared themselves the allies of those who drew the sword in defence of freedom !”

On another occasion in speaking of land gained from the sea, he repeats in prose what had been said in the poem, regarding Holland :—

“To men of other minds my fancy flies,  
Embosom'd in the deep where Holland lies.

\* \* \* \* \*

“Whilst the pent ocean rising o'er the pile,  
Sees an amphibious world beneath him smile.”

“But we need scarce mention these, when we find that the whole kingdom of Holland seems to be a conquest from the sea, and in a manner rescued from its bosom. The surface of the earth in this country, is below the level of the bed of the sea; and I remember, upon approaching the coast, to have looked down upon it from the sea, as into a valley.” \*

The obligations of the Poet either in matter or manner to his predecessors, appear to be few. No one seems to have written more immediately from himself, or to own less obligation to classical sources. His train of thought, as well as the mode of expressing his thoughts, which is natural and easy

\* Animated Nature, vol. i. p. 276.

without straining after the condensed terseness of Pope \* or the bold extravagance of Dryden, seem to be unborrowed. Neither do we find many of those coincidences which not unfrequently slide into poetry unconsciously on the part of the author, and sometimes indeed when pluming himself upon originality, yet are afterwards found in some previous writer. There are however two lines for which he must not be permitted to receive credit, although no doubt considered at the moment of composition to be purely his own.

In the second paragraph of the poem it is said—

“— press the bashful stranger to his food,  
And learn *the luxury of doing good.*”

Garth, in his poem on Claremont, speaking of the Druids, has preceded him both in sentiment and expression—

“Hard was their lodging, homely was their food,  
For all *their luxury was doing good.*”

In the succeeding passage, alluding to his wanderings, we find—

“My fortune leads to traverse realms alone,  
And *find no spot of all the world my own.*”

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\* Of the condensation shown in some of the lines, Mr. Campbell quotes an instance :—

“There is perhaps no couplet in English rhyme more perspicuously condensed than those two lines of the ‘Traveller,’ in which he describes the once flattering, vain, and happy character of the French—

‘They please, are pleas’d, they give to get esteem,  
Till seeming blest, they grow to what they seem.’”

Prior, in lines written in Robe's Geography, says —

“ My destin'd miles I shall have gone,  
By Thames or Maese, by Po or Rhone,  
And *found no foot of earth my own.*”

Accidental as such resemblances commonly are, it is to be regretted that they appear at all; to a man of undoubted original powers they were not worth the borrowing if intentionally taken; for on all such occasions the gain is small and temporary, the odium consequent upon discovery great and enduring. Imperfect recollections no doubt often float in the mind as original ideas, and deceive him by whom they are used; but one of the best apologies for Goldsmith on this occasion is, that they passed undetected by the critical eye and ear of Johnson, who revised the poem in manuscript, reviewed it in print, and read it aloud on more than one occasion to his friends. What therefore escaped him in the cooler moments of critical examination, may well have passed unobserved by the author in the ardour of composition.

Poetical coincidences indeed are usually dealt with very hardly by the critics, who willing as well to exalt the importance of their calling as to exhibit individual sagacity, fasten upon them like officers of justice upon thieves caught in the act of purloining, and treat the supposed offenders with little less mercy. Undue importance is attached to very trifling matters in this way; what may be a casual resemblance, or perhaps to the writer himself an

original thought, is often magnified by the severity of his judges into wilful theft or imitation. Yet looking at the vast number of poetical pieces, many upon the same or similar subjects, the real matter for wonder is that there are so few; and nothing perhaps can give us a higher idea of the art itself, or the infinite diversity of the human mind, than to trace the variety and ingenuity which appear in such productions. Poets certainly borrow much less than is usually supposed, for it can seldom be an object with a man of genius to do so. To appropriate even a happy expression, or a line, much less to seize upon a train of thought that belongs to one of his predecessors, is hazardous to his fame; the obligation is sure to be detected, and deprivation of his borrowed honours is not only the consequence, but a serious shock may be given to the credit he otherwise possesses for originality. No writer with even a moderate share of pride, but would sooner furnish a tolerable line himself than borrow a good one from another. And there is scarcely any man of fair talents who has accidentally fallen into such resemblances, that would not have been obliged to any critical friend for pointing out and expunging what never can be an advantage to retain. Justice therefore requires we should judge such things with more liberality than is commonly done. Let us not be alarmed at the prospect of seeming to open a wider door to the depredations of writers who possess little delicacy, or little genius; to prevent such a result it is at least

proper they should be noticed; and where the writer is really seen to possess native powers, we may on the disputed point, divest him of originality, yet not stigmatise him as a plagiarist.

It is different, perhaps, where we find a train of thought obviously followed, for wherever this occurs imitation may be more reasonably suspected; but this is seen rather among the younger than with the veteran order of poets; and proceeds less from the desire to borrow, than the admiration produced in an inexperienced mind by forcible passages in a favourite writer. Thus for example some of the ideas of Goldsmith in the poem under consideration occupied the mind of Kirke White in writing Clifton Grove, where however unintentionally meant, we find resemblance in sentiment and even in language. The passage in the Traveller concluding with —

“ For me your tributary stores combine,  
Creation’s heir, the world, the world, is mine ! ”

is closely followed in —

“ Happy is he who, though the cup of bliss  
Has ever shunn’d him when he thought to kiss ;  
Who still in abject poverty and pain,  
Can court with pleasure what small joys remain ;  
Though were his sight convey’d from zone to zone,  
*He would not find one spot of ground his own ;*  
*Yet as he looks around he cries with glee,*  
‘ *These bounding prospects all were made for me ;*  
*For me yon waving fields their burdens bear,*  
*For me yon labourer guides the shining share,’ &c.*

The opening and other portions of the same poem show that the youthful author had parts of the *Deserted Village* in his eye. Yet such imitations, as they are not meant to deceive, deserve no serious critical reprehension, but should be viewed as the involuntary homage of a young imagination to the merits of a distinguished predecessor in the art.

“Dear native grove! where'er my devious track,  
 To thee will memory lead the wanderer back.  
 Whether in Arno's polish'd vales I stray,  
 Or where Oswego's swamps obstruct the way,  
 Or wander lone, where wildering and wide,  
 The tumbling torrent laves St. Gothard's side;  
 Or by old Tejo's classic margent muse,  
 Or stand entranc'd with Pyrenean views;  
 Still, still to thee, where'er my footsteps roam,  
 My heart shall point and lead the wanderer home.”

Notwithstanding the suffrage of reviews, magazines, newspapers and private friends, to the merits of the Traveller, several admirers of the poem complained that it did not make way more rapidly in public favour; having in view, perhaps, the instantaneous popularity acquired not long before by the satires of Churchill. Allusions were even made to the neglect of the public, in a criticism said to be written by Bonnel Thornton, who as a friend of Churchill, while he reprehends Goldsmith for an obvious reference to that writer, gives, amid a variety of extracts, great praise to his production. “The beauties of this poem,” he says, “are so great and various that we cannot but be surprised

that they have not been able to recommend it to more general notice. The pictures of the several countries visited by the Traveller are warmly imagined and highly finished.\* Verses, as well as criticism, were not wanting in praise of the new candidate for poetical fame; of these the following "Lines on perusing the Traveller," may serve as a specimen rather of the zeal of the admirer than the skill of the writer in this line of composition: —

"Ye friends of verse, who much afflicted sigh'd,  
 Deploing genius dead when Churchill died;  
 Your fancied grief, your needless fears give o'er,  
 And let dejection urge your tears no more;  
 Since happier Goldsmith's every faultless page,  
 Scorning the transient fame of party rage,  
 On being read, must make e'en envy sigh,  
 Compell'd to own, though anxious to deny,  
 That genius still surviving marks his name,  
 To grace the honour'd list of deathless fame." †

In the "Race," a poem published some time

\* *St. James's Chronicle*, Feb. 7—9. 1765; then a favourite vehicle for literary criticism, and to which most of the wits of the day contributed. The passage alluding to Churchill, and another given in a preceding page, will give an idea of the extraordinary estimation in which his writings were held at this period. "The latter part of this paragraph (in the dedication of the Traveller) we cannot help considering as a reflection on the memory of the late Mr. Churchill whose talents as a poet were so greatly and so deservedly admired, that during his short reign, his merit in great measure eclipsed that of others; and we think it no mean acknowledgment of the excellencies of this poem to say that, like the stars, they appear the more brilliant now that *the sun of our poetry is gone down.*"

† Lloyd's Evening Post, Feb. 27. March 1. 1765.



afterward by Cuthbert Shaw, under the name of "Mercurius Spur," in which the chief poets of the day are made in the language of one of his lines, to

"Prove by their heels the prowess of the head;"

and where Churchill and Murphy are the heroes, he is just alluded to among others as being likely to exhibit in the lists on a future occasion —

"But, lo! a crowd upon the plain appear,  
With Descaizeau slow-pacing in the rear!  
Mason and Thomson, Ogilvy and Hayes,  
*And he whose hand has pluck'd a sprig of bays  
On Rhetia's barren hills.*"

A note appended to the latter part of the passage refers the reader to "The Traveller, a Poem."

One of the means adopted by the friendship of Johnson to make the new production known, was to read it in circles of his friends. An incident on one of these occasions evinces that turn for sarcasm which rarely spared friend or foe, and while honouring the poem, threw no little ridicule on the poet. Miss Reynolds, the sister of Sir Joshua, who tells the story in her *Recollections*\*, was the occasion of it; and though not celebrated for beauty herself, evinced on more than one occasion a strong lady-like aversion to the homely face and peculiarities, though harmless ones, of her brother's friend.

"Of Goldsmith's Traveller he (Johnson) used

\* Quoted in Mr. Croker's Boswell.

to speak in terms of the highest commendation. A lady (Miss Reynolds herself) I remember who had the pleasure of hearing Dr. Johnson read it from the beginning to the end on its first coming out, to testify her admiration of it, exclaimed, 'I never more shall think Dr. Goldsmith ugly.' In having thought so however she was by no means singular; an instance of which I am rather inclined to mention, because it involves a remarkable one of Dr. Johnson's ready wit: for this lady one evening being in a large party was called upon after supper for her toast, and seeming embarrassed, she was desired to give the ugliest man she knew; and she immediately mentioned Dr. Goldsmith; on which a lady (Mrs. Cholmondely) on the other side of the table rose up and reached across to shake hands with her, expressing some desire of being better acquainted with her, it being the first time they had met; on which Dr. Johnson said, 'Thus the ancients on the commencements of their friendships, used to sacrifice a beast betwixt them.'"

All fears of its success entertained by impatient friends were dissipated by the demand for a second edition, which appeared on Thursday March 14th\*, just three months after the first; a third soon followed; and in the middle of August\* a fourth; a degree of approval calculated to gratify

\* London Chronicle. — St. James's Chronicle. — Lloyd's Evening Post.

reasonable expectation. The newspapers sounded his fame ; passages from his previous writings, the Enquiry into Polite Learning, the Bee, and Citizen of the World, were selected for republication ; and the poem preserving a steady popularity from that time forward, reached a ninth edition during his life, being at the rate of one annually ; and this, at a period when the number of readers of poetry did not amount to a sixth of those of the present day. No evidence of success could be more gratifying, and amply repaid any anxieties that the first few weeks may have occasioned.

The sum received by the author, for a work so long popular and profitable to others, forms an object of curiosity, but as usual exhibits the inadequacy of literary reward ; by the following account of the publisher it would appear to have been no more than twenty guineas ; the same item however occurs in one or two other memorandums, and therefore it is to be hoped, though the fact is by no means certain, that he profited by successive editions.

“Settle Dr. Goldsmith’s account, and give him credit for the following copies :

1. The Preface to the History of the World, and charge it to the Partners	-	-	-	} £3	3	0
3 Prefaces to the Natural History	-	-	-		6	6
Translation of the Life of Christ	-	-	-			
Ditto the Lives of the Fathers	-	-	-			
Ditto the Lives of the Philosophers	-	-	-			
Correcting 4 vols. Brookes’ Nat. History	-	-	-			
Carried forward	-	-	-		£9	6
						0

Brought forward	-	£	9	9	0
79 Leaves of the History of England	-				
<i>Copy of the Traveller, a Poem</i>	-		21	0	0
Lent in Fleet Street at Mr. Adams's to pay for	}		0	15	6
the instrument					
Lent him at the Society of Arts, and to pay arrears,			3	3	0
Get the Copy of Essays for which paid	-		10	10	0
as half, and Mr. Griffin to have the other."			<hr/>		
*	*	*	*	*	*

While these pages are passing through the press, the second volume of Mr. Southey's *Life of Cowper* has appeared. Should any coincidence of thought in passages relating to the past or present opinion of Churchill, or on the state of poetry at that period appear to exist, it may be necessary to say that it is accidental, the MS. of this work having been in the hands of the publisher more than a year.

In enumerating the poets who immediately preceded or were contemporary with Cowper, it seems remarkable that this eminent writer never once mentions the name of Goldsmith; an omission on which misconstructions may arise.

"Another proof," he says, "that the school of Pope was gradually losing its influence is, that almost every poem of any considerable length which obtained any celebrity during the half century between Pope and Cowper, was written in blank verse. With the single exception of Falconer's *Shipwreck*, it would be in vain to look for any rhymed poem of that age and of equal extent, which is held in equal estimation with the works of Young, Thomson, Glover, Somerville, Dyer, Akenside, and Armstrong." — Vol. ii. p. 176.

And again —

“Cowper’s Task appeared in the interval, when young minds were prepared to receive it, and at a juncture when there was no poet of any great ability, or distinguished name in the field. Gray and Akenside were dead. Mason was silent. Glover, brooding over his *Athenaid*, was regarded as belonging to an age that was past. Churchill was forgotten. Emily and Bampfylde had been cut off in the blossom of their youth. Crabbe having by the publication of his *Library*, his *Village*, and his *Newspaper*, accomplished his heart’s immediate desire, sought at that time for no farther publicity; and Hayley ambled over the course without a competitor.” — P. 181, 182.

The omission of the name of the author of the *Hermit*, the *Traveller*, and the *Deserted Village* in both these passages may be accidental; for it is difficult to conceive that so distinguished a professor of the art as he himself is, should intentionally seem to undervalue, by not noticing, such an author, even should his poems fall short of the “equal length” to which allusion is made. Certain theories of poetry have however almost produced a schism among the lovers, as well as among the professors of song, and the merits of a writer seem in danger of being forgotten in considering to what *school* he is supposed to belong. Yet after all, of what moment or of what use, is contention on this subject? Good poetry is of no sect or school. And provided it be *good*, the public care nothing

whence it comes ; whether Spenser, Milton, Dryden, or a more modern master, be the object of worship of the writer ; whether it be couched in the stanza of the former ; in the blank verse of Milton, of Young, or of Thomson ; in the vigorous rhymes of Dryden ; or in the terseness and music of Pope. All have their merits, and it would be strange if all had not, when the world has so long agreed in rendering them its tribute of admiration. It is however not the public but poets themselves who are chiefly guilty of injustice to each other. Thus Pope is said by Cowper in one of his letters, to be an indifferent poet ; Lord Byron in turn calls Cowper no poet ; and a great living master of the lyre is said to designate his lordship just in the same terms, *as no poet*. These opinions, or perversities of opinion, can mislead no one ; they may be supposed to spring rather from temper than from judgment, for every reader of taste or discrimination will rise in opposition to the decision and direct his resentment against the accusers.

With great deference to the opinion of Mr. Southey, whose decisions cannot be often safely controverted, it may be doubted whether the influence of the school of Pope can be considered to have declined, simply because as he seems to imply, blank verse had been employed by several writers of eminence. We may with equal reason infer that it was not their blank verse but their merits otherwise, that caused them to be esteemed ; and

had their poems been as well written in rhyme, whether of the school of Pope or of any other school, they would have acquired as great, perhaps greater popularity. Neither can the poets who are enumerated be considered so much the successors as the contemporaries of Pope. Young was born before him; Somerville two or three years after; Thomson and Dyer twelve years younger; Armstrong, Glover, and Akenside something later; and although several survived him, almost every one of the number had published their great works during his life. He can scarcely therefore be said to have established a school. There are strong reasons for believing that the poets in question afraid to follow in a track in which equal excellence was hopeless, struck out blank verse as being likely to lose less by the comparison.

Yet how few even of these, excepting the *Night Thoughts*, the *Seasons*, and (though less generally) the *Pleasures of Imagination*, are extensively read. Glover, Somerville, Dyer, and Armstrong are comparatively neglected. Without popularity what is a poet? He writes to be read or to what purpose does he write? It is in vain to contend as some resolutely attempt, against this criterion; the vanity of a neglected author may be soothed by sneering at or condemning what he cannot attain, but general approval must have its weight in literature as in every other pursuit in life; and when tested by the lapse of the whole or

greater part of a century, we can rarely dispute the justice of the decree which awards poetical fame.

Let us contrast these poets and many others with Goldsmith, who wrote neither long poems, nor blank verse, and who moreover may be suspected of being in some measure influenced by the "school of Pope." He is read universally; by the old and the young, by the learned and the unlearned, and to all, as his themes are from nature and therefore not likely to tire or become antiquated, gives pleasure on repeated perusals. You meet with his productions in every variety of form and in almost every place, from the best furnished repository of books to the humblest book-stall, adapted to the wants or the means of every description of readers, nor can even Gray or any other modern writer with whom he has been compared, dispute pre-eminence with him here. We cannot therefore fairly doubt his taste in the selection of his topics, or his genius in the execution of all that he attempted; but we may be permitted to doubt whether if he had written in blank verse, his poems would have pleased so generally as they have done.



## CHAPTER XV.

MR. NUGENT.—EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.—REV. THOMAS PERCY.—BALLAD OF EDWIN AND ANGELINA, OR “THE HERMIT.”—ESSAYS.—LITERARY LABOURS FOR NEWBERY.—ATTEMPTS TO PRACTISE AS PHYSICIAN.

AMONG the friends drawn to him by the reputation of the Traveller, although the acquaintance has been said to be of earlier date, was Mr. Robert Nugent, afterwards Lord Nugent, Viscount Clare, and Earl Nugent. He was a younger son of Michael Nugent, descended from the Nugents of Carlanstown in the county of Westmeath, by a daughter of Lord Trimlestown, and being therefore from the county where the relatives of Goldsmith resided, some previous knowledge of the family, as well as a sense of his merits or similarity of tastes, probably led to the introduction.

With little more than the usual patrimony of a younger brother on his entrance into life, this gentleman had talents and good fortune enough to acquire nearly all that ambition could desire. He came first into parliament for St. Mawe's, in Cornwall, in 1741; was appointed Comptroller of the Prince of Wales's household in 1747; a Lord of the Treasury in 1754; one of the Vice-Treasurers of Ireland in 1759; a Lord of Trade in 1766; became soon after Baron Nugent, and Viscount

Clare; and in 1776 was created Earl Nugent, with remainder to his son-in-law George Grenville, Marquis of Buckingham. He was thrice married, and by his second wife Anne, daughter and heiress of Secretary Craggs, celebrated as the friend of Addison and Pope, acquired a large fortune, which being increased from other sources, he is said on his death in 1788, to have left to his successors, in addition to large landed estates, above two hundred thousand pounds in money. Such success in worldly matters rarely awaits a votary of the muse; yet he was a poet, a man of wit and gallantry, and a facetious companion. A volume of his Odes and Epistles sent forth anonymously was published by Dodsley, and reached a second edition in 1739; several others are printed in the Collection of the same publisher, a few in the New Foundling Hospital for Wit, and an Epistle addressed to him by Dr. Dunkin appears in Swift's Works. But his poetry however approved at the time has not come down to us with claims to particular notice, for though not deficient in ease, it wants perhaps novelty of idea and vigour of expression. In the Beauties of English Poesy, Goldsmith has introduced one of his pieces, "An Epistle to a Lady," which is not undeserving of the praise bestowed upon it by him in the prefatory notice:—"This little poem by Mr. Nugent, is very pleasing. The easiness of the poetry, and the justice of the thoughts, constitute its principal beauty." Their acquaintance soon ripened into

intimacy, the Poet becoming a welcome guest in his house ; first in the vicinity of town, and afterwards at Gosfield Hall in Essex, where an elegant table and good society were to be found whenever tempted by leisure or inclination to quit London. To him, when he became Lord Clare, was addressed the humorous piece, the Haunch of Venison.\*

\* Horace Walpole, who seems to have viewed few of his contemporaries with a favourable eye, speaks as slightly of him ; he thus writes to Sir Horace Mann, 24th December, 1741.

“ You know or have heard of Mrs. Nugent, Newsham’s mother ; she went the other morning to Lord Chesterfield to beg ‘ he would encourage Mr. Nugent to speak in the house, for that really he was so bashful, she was afraid his abilities would be lost to the world.’ I don’t know who *has* encouraged him, but so it is, that this modest Irish converted Catholic does talk a prodigious deal of nonsense in behalf of English liberty.”

A few days afterwards, 7th January, in allusion to such as had wit, he writes (in mockery) : —

“ Then Mr. Nugent has had a great deal of wit till within this week ; but he is so busy and so witty, that even his own party grow tired of him. His plump wife, who talks of nothing else, says he entertained her all the way on the road with repeating his speeches.”

Again, May 20. 1742 : —

“ The great Mr. Nugent has been unfortunate too in Parliament ; besides being very ill heard, from being a very indifferent speaker : the other day on the place-bill (which, by the way, we have new modelled and softened, and to which the Lords have submitted to agree to humour Pultney), he rose and said — ‘ he would not vote, as he was not determined in his opinion ; but he would offer his sentiments ; which, were particularly, that the Bishops had been the cause of this bill being thrown out before.’ Winnington called him to order, desiring he would be tender of the Church of England. You know he was a papist. In answer to the beginning of his speech Velters Cornwall who is of the same side, said, ‘ he

By Mr. Nugent he is believed to have been first made known to the Earl of Northumberland, then in London but holding the office of Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, as a man of genius belonging to that country and deserving of his patronage. Willing to attend to the recommendation, the Earl invited him to an interview, of which a ludicrous story has long been told as the result. Mistaking by this account, the groom of the chambers for his Lordship, he addressed him in a set speech prepared for his master, who entering the room before the confusion occasioned by the error had been recovered, the Poet having lost his presence of mind, stammered out indistinct answers to the

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wondered that when that gentleman could not convince himself by his eloquence, he should expect to convince the majority.' ”

July 22d, 1744, in allusion to Nugent's marriages, — “ Lord Middlesex is going to be married to Miss Boyle, Lady Shannon's daughter ; she has thirty thousand pounds, and may have as much more, if her mother who is a plump widow don't happen to *Nugentize*.”

To his name in the first of these quotations Lord Dover appends a note :

“ Robert Nugent, a poet, a patriot, an author, a Lord of the Treasury, and finally an Irish peer by the titles of Lord Clare and Earl Nugent. He seems to have passed his long life in seeking lucrative places, and courting rich widows, in both of which pursuits he was eminently successful.”

It may be observed that having commenced life poor, and a Roman Catholic, he acquired wealth, titles, and offices of honour and trust as a Protestant ; and at the conclusion of his career, returned to his original (the Romish) faith, and also brought up his only daughter in it.

inquiries of his Excellency, and the meeting ended unsatisfactorily to both. Had this blunder really occurred, it could scarcely have transpired except through himself, and it is not probable he gave currency to what must have made him a subject of ridicule. If mistake, even in part, took place, the consequences, however diffident he may have been, could scarcely have deprived him so wholly of self-confidence as is said; and the Earl was too much a man of the world not to make allowance for the embarrassment, had there been such, of a visitor of whose merits he was aware and whose wants he sought to know. But the account appears wholly a fabrication taken, like another adventure that requires likewise to be mentioned, from his own writings of an earlier date than the supposed occurrence. The origin of the story seems to be in the Vicar of Wakefield, where George Primrose describes his visit to the house of a nobleman: —

“During this anxious interval I had full time to look round me. Every thing was grand and of happy contrivance; the paintings, the furniture, the gildings, petrified me with awe, and raised my idea of the owner. Ah, thought I to myself, how very great must the possessor of all these things be, who carries in his head the business of the state, and whose house displays half the wealth of a kingdom: sure his genius must be unfathomable! During these awful reflections, I heard a step come heavily forward. Ah, this is the great man himself! No, it was only a chambermaid. Another

foot was heard soon after. This must be he! No; it was only the great man's valet de chambre. At last his lordship actually made his appearance. Are you, cried he, the bearer of this here letter? I answered with a bow. I learn by this, continued he, as how that — But just at that instant the servant delivered him a card, and without taking farther notice, he went out of the room and left me to digest my own happiness at leisure.”

The real circumstances attending the interview we learn from Sir John Hawkins; his testimony admits of no doubt, being partly a witness on the occasion, while his prejudices acting rather against than in favour of Goldsmith, we have a guarantee if his account required any, that nothing which impeached the Poet's good sense or knowledge of the world is concealed.

“ Having one day,” says Sir John, “ a call to make on the late Duke, then Earl, of Northumberland, I found Goldsmith waiting for an audience in an outer room: I asked him what had brought him there; he told me an invitation from his lordship. I made my business as short as I could, and as a reason mentioned that Dr. Goldsmith was waiting without. The Earl asked me whether I was acquainted with him; I told him I was, adding what I thought likely to recommend him. I retired, and staid in the outer room to take him home. Upon his coming out I asked him the result of his conversation — ‘ His lordship,’ says he, ‘ told me he had read my poem (meaning the Traveller) and

was much delighted with it; that he was going Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, and that hearing I was a native of that country, he should be glad to do me any kindness.'—'And what did you answer,' asked I, 'to this gracious offer?' 'Why,' said he, 'I could say nothing but that I had a brother there, a clergyman, who stood in need of help: as for myself I have no dependence on the promises of great men: I look to the booksellers for support; they are my best friends, and I am not inclined to forsake them for others.' Thus did this idiot in the affairs of the world, trifle with his fortunes, and put back the hand that was held out to assist him! Other offers of a like kind he either rejected or failed to improve, contenting himself with the patronage of one nobleman, whose mansion afforded him the delights of a splendid table, and a retreat for a few days from the metropolis."

The harshness of these remarks is characteristic of Sir John's usual manner. Goldsmith, however he may have erred as a man of the world in attempting to divert the stream of official bounty from himself towards his brother, exhibits a disinterestedness and affection which every warm and benevolent mind will estimate as it deserves. Unfortunately his aim did not succeed, perhaps from the Earl not proceeding to Ireland as was anticipated, and the result may point a new proverb in selfishness, or strengthen an old one in proving, that the most effectual way of assist-

ing our friends, is first to assist ourselves. In this instance it might have been literally fulfilled, for had a small appointment, or pension, been assigned him sufficient to ward off the pressure of absolute want — and it is much to be regretted that nothing of this kind was ever done — the fruits of it might have been given to his brother in case he could not otherwise have succeeded in providing for him. But no doubt exists, of which we shall hereafter find proof, that a sturdy spirit of independence influenced him in part, from an erroneous idea perhaps that political services might be expected from his pen.

The Earl at a future period in conversation with Dr. Percy respecting him, said, that had he been informed at the time of the desire of Goldsmith to travel into Asia for the purposes contemplated, he would have taken care to furnish him with sufficient means by a salary on the Irish establishment; and in doing so, should have felt he was merely fulfilling a duty to that country in patronising its enterprise and genius.

The other story told of him in connexion with this of the Earl of Northumberland, is meant to support the general belief exaggerated probably or untrue, of his being frequently duped by impositions. A bailiff, according to the tale, having been frequently foiled in attempting to arrest our author, at length hit upon the device of writing a letter to him in the assumed character of a nobleman's steward, requesting a meeting at a certain coffee-



house previous to a formal introduction to the peer, who charmed with the merit of his poem, desired the pleasure of a personal acquaintance. Goldsmith is represented to have been entrapped into this snare; and further, that he was released from its unpleasant consequences by the friendship of Mr. Archibald Hamilton, the printer.

Rigid examination into circumstances impairs or destroys the effect of many amusing anecdotes, and this, when closely scrutinised, proves no better founded than many others. Instead of being the subject of such a stratagem, he had himself five years previously, invented and applied it to the supposed circumstances of an unlucky author pursued by creditors, who is made to narrate the story in a club of brother authors in the following manner; and in this likewise we find another allusion to a 'set introductory speech' prepared for an imaginary nobleman. Thus the humour and ingenuity exerted for the amusement of his readers, were without even the merit of invention in the incidents, borrowed by the retailers of anecdotes from his own writings, and applied to his own conduct.

“‘A nobleman,’ cries a member (of the supposed club) who had hitherto been silent, ‘is created as much for the confusion of us authors as the catch-pole. I’ll tell you a story, gentlemen, which is as true as this pipe is made of clay. When I was delivered of my first book, I owed my taylor for a suit of clothes, and hearing

that my book took very well he sent for his money and insisted upon being paid immediately; though I was at that time rich in fame, for my book run like wild-fire, yet I was very short in money, and being unable to satisfy his demand, prudently resolved to keep my chamber, preferring a prison of my own chusing at home to one of my taylor's chusing abroad. In vain the bailiffs used all their arts to decoy me from my citadel; in vain they sent to let me know that a gentleman wanted to speak with me; in vain they came with an urgent message from my aunt in the country: in vain I was told that a particular friend was at the point of death, and desired to take his last farewell; I was deaf, insensible, rock, adamant; the bailiffs could make no impression on my hard heart, for I effectually kept my liberty by never stirring out of my room.

“ ‘ This was very well for a fortnight; when one morning I received a most splendid message from the Earl of Doomsday, importing that he had read my book, and was in raptures with every line of it; he impatiently longed to see the author, and had some designs which might turn out greatly to my advantage. I paused upon the contents of this message, and found there could be no deceit, for the card was gilt at the edges, and the bearer I was told had all the looks of a gentleman. Witness ye powers how my heart triumphed at my own importance; I saw a long prospective of felicity before me; I applauded the taste of the times which never saw genius forsaken; *I had prepared*

*a set introductory speech for the occasion, five glaring compliments for his lordship, and two more modest for myself.*

““ The next morning therefore in order to be punctual to my appointment, I took coach, and ordered the fellow to drive to the street and house mentioned in his lordship’s address. I had the precaution to pull up the window as I went along to keep off the busy part of mankind, and big with expectation, fancied the coach never went fast enough. At length however the wished-for moment of its stopping arrived ; this for some time I impatiently expected, and letting down the window in a transport in order to take a previous view of his lordship’s magnificent palace and situation, I found, poison to my sight ! I found myself not in an elegant street, but a paltry lane, not at a nobleman’s door, but at the door of a spunging house ; I found the coachman had all this while been just driving me to jail, and I saw the bailiff with a devil’s face coming out to secure me.’ ”\*

Notwithstanding the seeming indifference to Lord Northumberland’s offer of assistance, his intercourse with that noble family did not cease. The Countess who possessed a cultivated taste, was a distinguished patroness of literary merit, and poetry particularly found in her a judicious admirer. Christopher Smart had already invoked his muse in celebration of the house of Percy, and

\* Citizen of the World.—Letter xxx. See Works, vol. ii.

in common with other men of genius, experienced her bounty ; while the publication of the *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* in February 1765, drew her attention not only to a new and interesting branch of the subject, but to the ingenious editor, who thenceforward had the good fortune to enjoy as much from his literary deserts as his name, the patronage of that noble house.

The Rev. Thomas Percy, it has been mentioned, was introduced to Goldsmith by Grainger in 1758 or 1759 during an occasional visit from his rectory of Easton Mauduit, Northamptonshire, to London. He had been previously known to Dr. Johnson, Shenstone, Reynolds and other men already of eminence, or on the high road to attain it, and during a long life mingled either personally or by correspondence with the literary circles of the metropolis more extensively perhaps than any of his contemporaries. At an early period he evinced that strong love of letters which furnishes presumptive evidence of an ingenuous mind, and which though it may lead to no distinction, gives its possessor a favourable place in the estimation of the liberal classes of society. In the country, in addition to his proper duties, and as one of the most honourable means of aiding in the support of a young family, he devoted himself to literary pursuits.\*

\* By Dr. Percy's receipts now before the writer it appears he received for the *Reliques of Ancient Poetry*, March 25. 1763, (this must have been previous to publication) one hundred guineas ; for *Hau Kiou Choan*, June 10. 1761, fifty pounds ;

These were of a varied character;—being projected editions of the Earl of Surrey's, and Villiers, Duke of Buckingham's Poems; the Spectator and Guardian, with notes; Hau Kiou Choan, a Chinese romance; five pieces of Runic Poetry, translated from the Icelandic; the Song of Solomon, newly translated from the Hebrew; a Key to the New Testament—and his chief and well known work in three volumes, octavo, the Reliques already mentioned, a curious and valuable publication, which rescued from obscurity or utter oblivion, a variety of pieces honourable to the ancient poetical genius of our country. He produced likewise the "Northumberland Household Book," and a translation of "Mallet's Northern Antiquities;" he was the author of the "Hermit of Warkworth;" of the popular song of "O Nanny wilt thou gang with me;" and of several detached pieces of poetry, two of which in addition to a Latin poem, appear in the Grand Magazine for 1758.

The ingenuity and learning shown in his various pieces, added to his personal merits, caused him to be made chaplain to Lord Northumberland; in 1769 he was nominated to the same office in

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for Chinese Proverbs, Poetry, &c., June 10. 1761, ten guineas; for the new version of Solomon's Song, June 10. 1761, ten guineas; for Runic Poetry, March 25. 1763, ten guineas, being the first payment.—The subsequent editions of the Reliques were more profitable. In March 1775, he received forty pounds for permitting five hundred copies to be printed, in addition to one thousand previously agreed for, of the third edition.

ordinary to his Majesty ; in 1778 to the Deanery of Carlisle ; and in 1782 to the Bishoprick of Dromore in Ireland.

The mitre which made him rich, did not make him idle ; for much of the attention hitherto bestowed upon literature, was now devoted to the necessary but unostentatious duties of his diocese. Here, from a feeling of duty he fixed his constant residence, visiting England only occasionally. Ireland, in addition to many other disadvantages, was then thought by no means desirable as a place of abode, from the want of that systematic arrangement in matters of public convenience and internal detail which supply to civilised life some of its chief wants and many of its pleasures. Thus he complains in a letter to Malone (October 17th, 1786) of the negligence of an important public department — “ I received only three days ago your very obliging favour of September 28th ; nor did your former shorter letter which you mention, ever come to hand ; a misfortune which I fear often happens to letters to and from me ; for our post-office here is not well conducted.” And again (July 13th, 1802) “ Having reason to believe by some strange irregularity in the post-office that both letters to and from me have miscarried, I begin to suspect that you never received mine of June 18th.” Another serious deprivation to a literary man, the effect of imperfect facility of communication, is thus mentioned to the same correspondent (July 3d, 1785) — “ I am leaving Dublin

to return for the summer to Dromore, where in a very agreeable situation in all other respects, I only have to regret my great distance from the literary world. I see new publications about as soon as they would reach the East Indies. Although I endeavour to get the Reviews, Magazines, &c. &c., I am often eight months in arrear. But I am endeavouring to open a communication through Liverpool and Newry for a supply of these necessary publications, and if I can accomplish it, will beg leave to inform you of the mode, &c. ; for I find it often as difficult to get parcels sent me from Dublin as from London itself. Thus circumstanced I must feel double gratitude for a letter full of literary intelligence like your last.”\*

Notwithstanding these and other annoyances, inseparable from a less advanced state of social organisation, he did not find his abode in the sister kingdom so irksome a task as many seem to consider it, who deriving their wealth and honours from that country, decline to make it their residence. As an ecclesiastic, he justly considered himself imperatively bound to the spot where his charge was placed, and whence his income was derived. He thus fulfilled the truest duties of such an important station in a temporal as well as spiritual sense ; became an example to his neighbourhood, and an ornament to his church.

\* From MS. letters to Mr. Malone politely communicated by Dr. H. U. Thomson.

He assisted and instructed the poor of whatever faith, and gained all the respect which such conduct deserves ; he was hospitable in his habits ; warm, frequently irritable in temper ; full of anecdote ; and became so impressed towards the decline of life, with the necessity of appropriating every disposable moment to the duties of his calling, as to deem the time devoted to the work on which alone his fame rests, although executed when young, misapplied. When solicited by several correspondents of literary eminence, to prepare a new edition of the *Reliques*\* for the press

\* Upon this work it appears Sir Walter Scott formed his ballad taste. The following passage in a letter from Dr. Anderson, Editor of the *British Poets*, to Bishop Percy will interest the reader ; it is dated 21st June, 1800.

“Knowing that your Lordship was to embark for England soon after the date of your letter to me, I intended to offer you my early congratulations on the happiness of being reunited to your family in Northamptonshire, after a long period of separation, anxiety and alarm, imperiously exacted by the high considerations of public duty. I communicated my intention to an ingenious friend here, who wished to avail himself of the opportunity, to submit to your Lordship’s inspection one or two of his compositions in the style of the ancient Scottish Ballad ; in testimony of his high respect for your character, and of his gratitude to the Editor of ‘the *Reliques*,’ upon which he formed his taste for ballad thinking and expression. He happened soon after to go into the country, where he has been detained till now ; when he does himself the honour he intended, by transmitting two ballads ‘The Eve of St. John’ and ‘Glenfinlass’ for your Lordship’s opinion, and desires me to offer you the testimony of his sincerest esteem and veneration. The name of my friend is Walter Scott, Esq. a native of Tiviotdale, of the Harden family, an Advocate, Sheriff of



about the year 1800, he peremptorily declined; assigning his sacred calling as utterly incompatible with such an undertaking. The care of it was therefore consigned to a relative.

To find a friend in a worthy man, is some testimony to the merit of him who makes the acquisition; and nothing of more moment than occasional differences of opinion on literary matters, sometimes sufficiently vehement, occurred to interrupt their regard. Goldsmith confessed to have profited by his learning and friendship; and Mr. Percy had too much discernment not to value one whose qualities as a man, and ingenuity and judgment as a writer, had won the esteem of the great literary names of the day.

Willing perhaps to profit by such suggestions as the taste of Goldsmith might throw out, it appears that portions of the *Reliques* were submitted to him previous to publication, and these by their simplicity and truth ensured his sincere applause. Admiration of the style produced one of its frequent effects, imitation; for to this and to the desire of gratifying the taste of the Countess of Northumberland, we owe the "Hermit," the most

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Selkirkshire. He is the translator of Burger's 'Leonore' and 'Earl Walter,' and Goethe's 'Goetz,' and will soon appear as Editor of a collection of Border Ballads, to be entitled 'The Minstrelsy of the Border,' in one vol. printing at Kelso, upon the plan of the 'Reliques;' which will be followed by two vols. of 'Illustrations of Border History, Poetry, and Popular Antiquities.'" *MS. Correspondence in possession of Mr. Mason.*

beautiful ballad in our own, or perhaps in any language.

The minute history of such things being always interesting, it may be mentioned that it was written in 1764; and for the pleasure of perusing it in print rather than in manuscript by the lady who was the immediate cause of its production, a few copies were printed off in the octodecimo form, which are now rarely met with, or even known, among the collectors of scarce tracts in poetry. None is to be found, as a communication on this subject from his Grace the Duke of Northumberland intimates, in the Library of Sion House, nor is it in any of the public libraries of London. A copy however has been procured after a tedious search by the writer of these pages, which belonged to the industrious Isaac Reed\*, to whose name, and the date of the year when it appears to have been obtained, 1773, is added the following memorandum—“Of this ballad, which is different from the copy printed in Goldsmith’s works, a few copies only were printed.” The name also differs from that by which it is now known, as appears in the heading or title: “Edwin and Angelina. A Ballad. By Mr. Goldsmith. Printed for the amusement of the Countess of Northumberland.”

In this, which forms the original poem, the

\* Purchased in the sale of the library of the late Richard Heber, Esq., who had, however, previously lent it for the use of this Work.

number of stanzas is forty-one ; when reprinted in the Vicar of Wakefield these were reduced to thirty-nine ; to which some years afterward he added another, or wrote one at least with that view, which was presented in manuscript to Richard Archdal, Esq. of Ireland, and now stands the thirtieth in the ballad ; it renders the number of stanzas forty, and is beautiful in itself, though being merely descriptive it does not tend to advance the action of the poem.

“ And when beside me in the dale,  
 He carol'd lays of love,  
 His breath lent fragrance to the gale,  
 And music to the grove.”

The stanzas of Edwin and Angelina, for which no substitutes are provided in the Hermit, are the last two ; the conclusion of the poem as it now stands, being considered by him more complete without than with their aid —

“ No, never from this hour to part,  
 We 'll live and love so true,  
 The sigh that rends thy constant heart,  
 Shall break thy Edwin's too.”

Those however which are omitted, possess too much merit, as well as from being fragments of Goldsmith, to be lost to the reader of taste: —

“ Here amidst sylvan bowers we 'll rove,  
 From lawn to woodland stray,  
 Blest as the songsters of the grove,  
 And innocent as they.

“ To all that want, and all that wail,  
 Our pity shall be given,  
 And when this life of love shall fail,  
 We ’ll love again in heaven.”

Three other stanzas in the body of the tale, part of the self-accusation of Angelina, are replaced by others which he deemed better, but as of none would we willingly be deprived, they are these : —

“ Whene’er he spoke amidst the train,  
 How would my heart attend ;  
 And still delighted ev’n to pain,  
 How sigh for such a friend !

“ And when a little rest I sought  
 In sleep’s refreshing arms,  
 How have I mended what he taught,  
 And lent him fancied charms.

“ Yet still (and woe betide the hour)  
 I spurn’d him from my side,  
 And still with ill-dissembled power  
 Repaid his love with pride.”

Even the opening lines are varied, for instead of the present —

“ Turn, gentle hermit of the dale,  
 And guide my lonely way  
 To where yon taper cheers the vale,  
 With hospitable ray —”

we find when first printed —

“ Deign saint-like tenant of the dale  
 To guide my nightly way  
 To yonder fire that cheers the vale  
 With hospitable ray :”

alterations obviously for the better ; but for the satisfaction of the reader the whole of the original

poem will be given in the Works. It may be remarked likewise that in addition to its improvements when introduced into the first edition of the Vicar of Wakefield, a few, though less important alterations chiefly verbal, occur between that and the copy as it now stands; so that much care was devoted to its polish and correctness. These things are not unworthy of notice; we are so rarely admitted into the laboratory of genius to see all, or nearly all the extent and variety of her operations, that whenever a glimpse however slight, can be obtained, we seize the opportunity with avidity.

A charge has been advanced against him of transferring to his ballad without acknowledgment, the following thought of Young,

“Man wants but little, nor that little long,”

which in the ballad runs —

“Man wants but little here below  
Nor wants that little long.”

The accusation happens to be satisfactorily disproved by finding in the original copy the passage given with inverted commas, in the usual manner of quotations; and the subsequent change appears to have arisen from the whole of the dialogue between the Hermit and the Wanderer being when reprinted, marked in a similar manner, which was not at first the case. The omission therefore of a third comma, a fault much more likely to proceed from the printer than the writer, forms the only ground for the imputation.

When the popularity of the Vicar of Wakefield gave the Hermit extensive circulation, (for the copy addressed to Lady Northumberland seems to have been unknown to the public) its originality and merit were both assailed. Error or envy is so quick to detect supposed faults, or to take from one writer in order to appropriate to another, that a man of genius is not always permitted to retain without a struggle the credit of what is nevertheless his own. In the St. James's Chronicle, then a favourite journal of criticism for several chief writers of the day, July 18—21. 1767, appeared the following letter:—

*“ To the Printer of the St. James's Chronicle.*

“ SIR,

“ In the Reliques of Ancient Poetry published about two years ago, is a very beautiful little ballad called ‘ A Friar of Orders Grey.’ The ingenious editor, Mr. Percy, supposes that the stanzas sung by Ophelia in the play of Hamlet, were parts of some ballad well known in Shakspeare's time, and from these stanzas, with the addition of one or two of his own to connect them, he has formed the above-mentioned ballad ; the subject of which is, a lady comes to a convent to inquire for her love who had been driven there by her disdain. She is answered by a friar that he is dead —

‘ No, no he is dead, gone to his death's bed.  
He never will come again.’

The lady weeps and laments her cruelty ; the friar endeavours to comfort her with morality and religion, but all in vain ; she expresses the deepest grief and the most tender sentiments of love, till at last the friar discovers himself—

*‘ And lo ! beneath this gown of grey  
Thy own true love appears.’*

“ This catastrophe is very fine, and the whole, joined with the greatest tenderness has the greatest simplicity ; yet though this ballad was so recently published in the *Ancient Reliques*, Dr. Goldsmith has been hardy enough to publish a poem called the *Hermit*, where the circumstances and catastrophe are exactly the same, only with this difference, that the natural simplicity and tenderness of the original is almost entirely lost in the languid smoothness and tedious paraphrase of the copy, which is as short of the merits of Mr. Percy’s ballad as the insipidity of negus is to the genuine flavour of Champagne. I am, Sir,

“ Yours, &c.

“ DETECTOR.”

Kenrick, always a persecutor of the Poet, who laboured more diligently to pull down the reputation of others than to elevate his own, was supposed to be the writer. The taste displayed in the criticism might well have been left to its fate ; but to the charge of being an unblushing plagiarist, and likewise to another accusation in the same journal of erroneously recommending a book of

travels as new, which had been published some time before, a reply from him came out in a few days.\*

“SIR,

“As there is nothing I dislike so much as newspaper controversy, particularly upon trifles, permit me to be as concise as possible in informing a correspondent of yours, that I recommended Blainville’s travels because I thought the book was a good one; and I think so still. I said I was told by the bookseller that it was then first published; but in that it seems I was misinformed, and my reading was not extensive enough to set me right.

“Another correspondent of yours accuses me of having taken a ballad I published some time ago from one by the ingenious Mr. Percy. I do not think there is any great resemblance between the two pieces in question. If there be any, his ballad was taken from mine. I read it to Mr. Percy some years ago; and he, as we both considered these things as trifles at best, told me with his usual good-humour the next time I saw him, that he had taken my plan to form the fragments of Shakspeare into a ballad of his own. He then read me his little Cento, if I may so call it, and I highly approved it. Such petty anecdotes as these are scarcely worth printing; and were it not for the busy disposition of some of your corre-

\* July 23...25. 1767. In the memoir of him published in 1801, this is erroneously said to have been *June* 1767.



spondents, the public should never have known that he owes me the hint of his ballad, or that I am obliged to his friendship and learning for communications of a much more important nature.

“ I am, Sir, yours, &c.

“ OLIVER GOLDSMITH.”

Of the correctness of this statement we have the following admission by a member of the Bishop's family in the last edition of the Reliques, appended to the “ Friar of Orders Gray ”— “ As the foregoing song has been thought to have suggested to our late excellent poet Dr. Goldsmith, the plan of his beautiful ballad of ‘ Edwin and Emma \*, ’ first printed in his Vicar of Wakefield, it is but justice to his memory to declare that his poem was written first, and that if there is any imitation in the case, they will be found both to be indebted to the beautiful old ballad ‘ Gentle Herdsman, ’ &c. printed in Series II., Book i., No. 14. of this work, which the Doctor had much admired in manuscript, and has finely improved.”

A portion of the remark in this note is incorrect, so far as stating that the *plan* of the Hermit is derived from the Gentle Herdsman. On reference

\* This misnomer is repeated in a note to Gentle Herdsman ; no doubt from defective memory. The erroneous assertion of being *first* printed in the Vicar of Wakefield, is owing to want of accurate information from the Bishop, who was perfectly acquainted with the previous copy printed for Lady Northumberland.

to that ballad no other similarity of plan will be found than simply that of a female pilgrim in male disguise, which she makes no scruple to acknowledge, inquiring her way of a herdsman whom she meets to Walsingham in Norfolk, where there appears to have been a celebrated image of the Virgin Mary, in order to do penance for that neglect of a former lover, which she details; and with the herdsman's direction to the town —

“ Now go thy wayes, and God before !  
For he must ever guide thee still ;  
Turne downe that dale, the right-hand path,  
And soe, fair pilgrim, fare thee well !”

the ballad concludes.

This very simple coincidence can scarcely be considered as diminishing his claim to originality in the design and conduct of the story; neither does the *Friar of Orders Gray* written in part by Dr. Percy appear to be a close imitation of the *Hermit* although the latter preceded it in order of time. The real resemblance of the ballad of Goldsmith to the *Gentle Herdsman* is rather in one or two of the *thoughts* than in plan, where in two or three stanzas the lady describing her waywardness towards her lover, expresses regret for her conduct. The following is the passage. If compared with the thirty-first and three following stanzas of *Edwin and Angelina*, the chief similarity to the ancient ballad will be found in the lines printed in *Italics*, and the obligation is certainly slight —

“ And grew soe coy and nice to please,  
 As women's looks are often soe,  
 He might not kisse, nor hand forsooth,  
 Unlesse I willed him soe to do.

“ Thus being wearyed with delayes,  
 To see I pittyed not his greeffe,  
*He gott him to a secret place,*  
*And there he dyed without releeffe.* 21

“ And for his sake these weeds I weare,  
 And sacrifice my tender age ;  
 And every day Ile begg my bread,  
 To undergoe this pilgrimage.

“ Thus every day I fast and pray,  
 And ever will doe till I dye ;  
*And gett me to some secret place,*  
*For soe did he, and soe will I.”*

Thirty years after this attempt to detract from his credit, another, and for the moment more formidable, attack upon his originality appeared ; but though no longer able to defend himself, there were friends qualified and willing to vindicate his fame.

In the year 1797 came out a small volume of Essays of ordinary character, under the name of ‘The Quiz,’ in which appeared a French poem, *Raimond et Angéline*, said to be transcribed from an old and scarce novel in that language, called ‘*Les Deux Habitants de Lozanne* ;’ and this the writers asserted, was the original from which Goldsmith had taken his ballad. A notice in the Monthly Review for September of the same year

drew attention to the charge; the writer of the criticism though doubtful as he says of this "pretended original" was so much at a loss to decide the matter, as to add in another passage, "After all it is possible (we mean barely possible) that Goldsmith was innocent of the theft with which he is here charged." And reference is then made to previous rumour, meaning the attack and defence just mentioned, of the poem *not* being the composition of Goldsmith, but in the words of the critic, of "an ingenious friend, whose name we now spare to repeat, from respect to a character which is deservedly held in high estimation in the republic of letters."

The allusion to all acquainted with literary history plainly pointed to Bishop Percy, who too just to permit the reputation of a departed friend to be sacrificed either to himself, or to a foreign production that bore little traces of being an original, addressed the following letter to the Review. Without directly avowing his name, no secrecy was affected, and Dr. Griffiths at once knew the writer, to whose critical discernment and friendship it is equally creditable.

"You owe the trouble of a letter from an unknown correspondent to a motive which you have too much candour not to approve. The subject requires no farther introduction and will speak for itself.

"In your account of the Quiz (Review, Sept. Art. 66.) you insert a French poem given by the

authors as the original of Goldsmith's Edwin and Angelina and which seems to be considered by you as such. As the English Poet unfortunately for the world and for himself cannot assert his claim to his own work, it is a necessary duty of an old acquaintance and friend of his to do it for him.

"To judge only from internal evidence there is no need of any profound judgment to discover at once, that the French is a translation from the English; and as it is possible the translator is living and may read this, he would do better to acknowledge his imitation than take to himself the silent enjoyment of an honour not his due;—perhaps an honour unsought and unapproved.

"As I would wish that this point should be determined upon principles of taste and judgment (for the assertion of an anonymous correspondent that other proof could be obtained cannot be supposed to have much weight), it may be observed that the title of Raymond and Angelina does as well for an English as a French poem; but as Edwin and Angelina would not be so well in French, the translator rejected the original title and adopted another. Let it also be remembered that the French were once in the habit of making popular English poems of this kind their own. *Old Robin Gray* was translated by Florian; to whom from mere circumstances I should attribute the poem in question;—but I may be mistaken, and as is above-mentioned, the author may be living to own his agreeable imitation, which I

should be glad to see without the faults that at present disfigure it.

“ My zeal for the honour of an original English Poet has occasioned the above remarks, which I have purposely contracted out of a proper regard to your limits for insertion.”

A note of the Reviewer in reply\* denied having been really imposed upon by the French piece, and its apologetical tone sufficiently indicates the knowledge of his correspondent, whose hint that further proof of the originality of the English ballad could be obtained if necessary, was immediately understood as proceeding from the Prelate, to whom so many years before it had been ascribed.

The subject however was not permitted to rest. Nearly a year afterward (July 1798) another correspondent of the Review zealous for the honour of English poetry, or possibly the Bishop writing through a friend, traces the imitation to its source; by this we find that it was taken not from an old, but from a recent novel, the title of which by some

\* “ Begging our correspondent’s pardon we did not consider the French poem as really the original of Goldsmith’s Edwin and Angelina. The parenthesis (‘barely possible’) in our observation pointed *another way*; and perhaps our delicacy has occasioned our being misunderstood; but we did apprehend that we had sufficiently manifested our scepticism, without presuming to decide on a point which required more examination than we had leisure to afford to the subject. On the whole our ideas and those of our correspondent seem to be nearly the same. We shall be happy to hear again from him on any future occasion.”— *Monthly Review*, Oct. 1797.

error, or in order to draw attention to the volume in which the story appeared and at the same time prevent detection by furnishing a wrong clue to inquiry, was mis-stated ; the following is the communication.

“ In the Review for Sept. 1797, p. 113. in the critique on a publication entitled *The Quiz* is given a French poem which the writers of the Quiz have ventured to tell the public is taken ‘from an old and scarce French novel’ and which they have the effrontery to add, is the original of Goldsmith’s charming ballad. The title which they give to the work is *Les deux Habitants de Lozanne*.

“ For the honour of Goldsmith and from the love of truth, I beg leave to inform you that the poem literally as these writers have given it, is to be found in so modern a book as ‘*Lettres de deux Amans, Habitans de Lyon*’ by M. Léonard, 1792. Their accusation of Goldsmith being probably the only part of this work which has been deemed worth notice, and much inquiry having been ineffectually made for a book under the title which they have given to it, this notice may not be unnecessary.

“ M. Léonard is the author of some pastorals and a young writer ; and probably had he seen our English journals, would have corrected the ignorance or the malignity of the anonymous writers above-mentioned.”

Other correspondents of the same critical journal were led to the same conclusion ; among these was

M. Bisset a Frenchman and a scholar, and translator of the Vicar of Wakefield into that language, who from internal evidence only, pronounced *Raimond et Angéline* without doubt, a translation or imitation of the Hermit, of which it appears there are at least four known in French literature, this of M. Léonard being of the number.\* The fame of Goldsmith therefore remains unimpaired; nor would it be necessary to advert to the matter at length, were not the accusation as too often happens remembered, while its refutation is forgotten or unknown. Even in the last and hitherto best edition of his poems, brought out under the superintendence of a gentleman whose taste and knowledge of poetry are acknowledged, the priority of the English poem, from his not having seen the whole of the facts, is left in some degree of doubt.†

\* “L’Erémite, ballade (ou romance) charmante, tirée du *Vicaire de Wakefield*, et dont nous connoissons au moins quatre imitations françaises, dont l’une, par Léonard est intitulée *Angéline et Raymond*.” *Biog. Universelle*, tom. 18. — 1817. *Art. Goldsmith*.

† Long after this was written, the subject occurred in conversation with a lady celebrated for the success of her writings in fiction, when the writer heard from her that she, when very young, along with others, were the writers of the Quiz. The French poem certainly attracted much of their attention, and they believed it at the moment the original whence Goldsmith had taken his ballad. The volume which contained it, had been brought from France as she informed the writer by the Duke de Levis and given to Sir Abraham Hume, from whom it came into her hands, and was, as she was informed and believed, an *old*, not a recent novel. On stating to her a few of the cir-



The reputation derived from the Traveller, led him about this time to contemplate, in imitation of some great poetical predecessors, the translation into our language of a foreign work of standard merit, and with this view he mentioned to some friends the *Lusiad* of Camoens. Dr. Johnson it appears entertained a similar design in the earlier part of his literary career, from whom possibly the hint may have been taken. Whether it went farther with Goldsmith than mere preliminary consideration, may be doubted. Want of knowledge of the language, which with application might have been surmounted in a few months, formed probably the least objection. The real difficulties were total want of the means of support during its execution, the length of time it promised to occupy, and the laborious perseverance required in a long poem by one whose taste was confessedly fastidious in the construction and polishing of his verses.

It is on such occasions that the disadvantages of a professional author, destitute of fixed means of support, are most acutely felt; with his eye eagerly fixed on immortality and with powers of an order capable of attaining to it, he may be doomed to experience while toiling for fame, the want of daily bread. Such in some measure, is said to have been

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cumstances detailed above, she admitted that some mistake must have occurred. No design certainly existed of *wantonly* assailing the fame of Goldsmith.

the case with Mickle, who afterwards undertook and completed a translation of the same work which continues to keep its hold on public esteem; but his habits were more provident and his temperament more calm than those of Goldsmith, though in other points, particularly in absence, and simplicity of manner in general society, their characters bore some resemblance. During the progress of the version it was avowedly submitted to the author of the Traveller, and experienced the benefit of his corrections.

Willing to profit by the current of approbation running in his favour, a volume of scattered papers hitherto but little productive of fame or profit, were drawn from their anonymous shelter and assigned to the right owner. On the 3d June 1765 appeared in a duodecimo volume printed for Newbery and Griffin, "Essays by Mr. Goldsmith \*," with the motto in allusion to their resuscitation, *Collecta Revirescunt*. Aided by his poetical reputation, they received immediate notice in the daily journals, of which one, in introducing the

\* Lloyd's Evening Post, June 3...5. 1765, — "Price three shillings bound." In the title-page of the second edition, the Christian name 'Oliver' is used instead of 'Mr.' Goldsmith.— It may be worthy of notice, that in another newspaper (St. James's Chronicle, June 11...13.) where the Essays are advertised for the first time, appears the announcement of a book "The Generous Briton, or Authentic Memoirs of William Goldsmith, Esq.," though this probably had no reference to the Bard. The name however, and the term *generous*, so often and justly applied to him, present a curious coincidence.

amusing preface to the volume, may serve as a specimen of the whole; these articles were then contributed by the first writers of the day. "Dr. Goldsmith the so justly admired author of the Traveller, having this week published a volume of Essays we thought we could not entertain our readers better than by an extract from these excellent pieces, in which a redundancy of the most natural humour, together with the deepest strength of judgment, and the widest range of understanding, are all united to render one of the first poets in the English language, one of the first essayists too. In a preface written with uncommon vivacity the Doctor acquaints us, that the different Essays which compose this volume have appeared at different times and in different publications." \*

The papers now reproduced were twenty-seven in number. The first, second, third, fifth, sixth, seventh, eighth, and fifteenth, were from the Bee; the fourth from the Busy Body; the tenth, eleventh, twelfth, thirteenth, fourteenth, eighteenth, twentieth, and twenty-third, from the Citizen of the World; the seventeenth and twenty-second from the Lady's Magazine; the nineteenth, twenty-first, and twenty-fourth, from the British Magazine. Of the latter, the first, a Reverie at the Boar's Head Tavern in East Cheap, formed three papers in that work, and the last had already been transferred by himself into the Citizen of the World on

\* Lloyd's Evening Post. — June 5th...7th, 1765.

its appearance in volumes. The original sources whence the ninth, sixteenth, twenty-fifth, twenty-sixth, and twenty-seventh were taken, are difficult to be traced, from being copied like so many of the others, without acknowledgment into a variety of the publications of the time. Of the extent of this depredation to which allusion has been made, we may form some idea from his own account — “If there be a pride in multiplied editions, I have seen some of my labours sixteen times reprinted, and claimed by different parents as their own. I have seen them flourished at the beginning with praise, and signed at the end with the names of Philautos, Philalethes, Philelutheros, and Philanthropos.”

That he should have taken so many papers from the *Citizen of the World*, appears to confirm the remark already made, that in the collected form and under its new title that work had sold indifferently, or that he must have formed a very high idea of their excellence by re-introducing them to notice; several were altered a little, including those from the *Bee*, in their introductory matter; and names and circumstances changed or omitted the better to suit their new position. A politer air was also assumed in a few of the local allusions; thus in the fifth paper, taken from the *Bee*, one of the characters talked of procuring an appetite by a walk in the gardens of White Conduit House, which in the *Essays* is changed to a walk in the Park. The selection which seems to have been done in haste, is perhaps less interesting than might have

been easily made, but it served probably all he intended, a momentary exigency. A second edition with slight alterations, appeared in the following year.

In France, as at home, these Essays acquired considerable popularity; translations appeared by Prince Boris de Galitzin in 1787, reprinted in 1805 under the title of *Contes Moraux de Goldsmith*; by M. Castena in 1788; by M. Dampmartin in 1803; and again anonymously in 1808 under the inappropriate title of *Essais d'Education et de Morale à l'Usage de la Jeunesse*. The paper detailing the 'Distresses of a disabled Soldier' seemed to remind that nation of one of the personages introduced for the purpose of ridicule in a well known story of Voltaire. "Those," says one of their writers, "who would have in a few pages, an idea of the genius, at once national and sprightly, of Goldsmith, should read his story of a poor fellow, an old disabled soldier, the most diverting kind of optimist that can be imagined."

The sum received for the volume was twenty guineas; ten from each of the publishers, as appears by the receipt given in a preceding page. One of them indeed, Newbery, from his constant disbursements of various sums from the very moderate amount of two shillings to many pounds, might be called his cash-keeper in ordinary; and may remind the reader of a passage in one of his letters alluding to the humour of Scarron, who in jocular reference to the sums drawn from his bookseller,

called himself Marquis of *Quenault* ; so now had he been disposed to pursue the jest, he might have called himself Marquis of *Newbery*. The following is a list still in existence, of several of these items, supplied at various times without regular dates being kept; and a few, noted at the moment they seem to have been given, in pencil, remain so.

		£ s. d.				
Lent Dr. Goldsmith for his instrument ( <i>in pencil</i> )		-	0	10	6	
Doctor Goldsmith, Dr.						
Money lent at the Society of Arts ( <i>in pencil</i> )		3	3	0		
Feb.	14. Lent Dr. Goldsmith ( <i>in pencil</i> )	-	-	1	1	0
March	5. Dr. Goldsmith	-	-	15	15	0
May	1. Lent Dr. Goldsmith	-	-	0	10	6
	Ditto	-	-	0	2	6
July	14. Dr. Goldsmith	-	-	29	8	0
Aug.	15. Ditto	-	-	4	4	0
Sept.	1. Ditto	-	-	5	5	0
Nov.	17. Lent Dr. Goldsmith	-	-	0	5	3
July 7th, 1764. Lent Dr. Goldsmith ( <i>in pencil</i> )		-	-	0	2	0
Lent before ( <i>in pencil</i> )		-	-	0	2	6
April 30. 1765.						
Lent Dr. Goldsmith at the Society (of Arts)						
<i>(in pencil)</i>		-	-	3	3	0

Among his other labours for this useful and friendly publisher, it is suggested to the writer by a gentleman\* whose literary eminence entitles his opinions to every attention, whether Goldsmith may not have written for him in its present form, the nursery tale of *Goody Two Shoes*; a story

\* Mr. William Godwin; whose death is just announced almost at the moment of passing this page through the press; he was urgent with the writer to endeavour to ascertain the truth of his conjecture, and no reasonable means have been spared for that purpose.

which however seemingly beneath the dignity of his powers, exhibits as he remarks the skill, ingenuity, good taste, and good feeling of a practised writer of no inferior order. In pursuing the hint, the date became a primary object to ascertain. The newspapers, after many vain inquiries in other quarters, supplied the necessary information by diligent search; by these it appears to have issued from the publisher early in the year 1765, when the pecuniary means of the Poet were known to be at a low ebb, and no employment would probably have been refused, although such was his occasional pride that he would not be known to give his pen to what seemed a childish subject. No certain proof however exists of his connexion with a tale which far from lowering, would add to the versatility and ingenuity of his pen; the reader must therefore be left to form his own judgment. The humourous advertisement of the publisher by which it was introduced to the notice of his young friends is subjoined.\*

\* "We are also desired to give notice that there is in the press and speedily will be published either by subscription or otherwise as the public shall please to determine —

"The History of Little Goody Two Shoes, otherwise Mrs. Margery Two Shoes.

"With the means by which she acquired her learning and wisdom, and in consequence thereof, her estate; set forth at large for the benefit of those —

"Who from a state of rags and care  
And having shoes but half a pair  
Their fortune and their fame should fix  
And gallop in a coach and six."

*Public Advertiser, December 27. 1764.*

Nearly at the same period he contemplated, or rather perhaps Newbery for him, short biographies of the Philosophers, fitted for monthly publication in the *Christian's Magazine*, a subject which he afterwards entered into more fully in a translation from the French. An intimation of the design was thus conveyed to the readers of that work in its announcements. "We are much obliged to our correspondent for the hint respecting the lives of the most eminent Philosophers, which we think with him may be rendered extremely useful as well as entertaining. They shall therefore be given regularly in the next volume of our Magazine, after we have written the life of St. Athanasius, and so completed our design of laying before the Reader the lives of the most eminent Fathers and Christians of the third and fourth centuries."

By the following memorandum, his compilation on *Experimental Philosophy* appears to have been finished as far as it was at first meant to be carried; but the subject requiring additions and extension of plan, he was furnished with another supply of books for that purpose, treating on such subjects as were necessary to notice. This no doubt was the work, or rudiments of the work, published after his death in two volumes octavo, under the title of "*A Survey of Experimental Philosophy, considered in its Present State of Improvement.*"

"Sent to Dr. Goldsmith Sept. 11th, 1765, from Canbery (Canonbury) House the copy of the *Philosophy* to be revised,



with the Abbé Nollet's Philosophy, and to have an account added of Hale's Ventilation, together with the following books:—

1. Pemberton's Newton, 4to.
2. Two pamphlets of Mr. Franklin's on Electricity.
3. 1 of Ferguson's Astronomy, 4to.
4. D'Alembert's Treatise of Fluids, 4to.
5. Martin's Philosophy, 3 vols. 8vo.
6. Ferguson's Lectures, ditto.
7. Helsham's, ditto.
8. Kiel's Introduction, ditto.
9. Kiel's Astronomy, ditto.
10. Nature displayed, 7 vols. 12mo.
11. Nollet's Philosophy, 3 vols. 12mo."

To a periodical journal issuing from the same publisher "Museum Rusticum et Commerciale" he is believed to have furnished contributions of a miscellaneous nature. It was announced to be "Revised and Digested by several Members of the Society of Arts," and reports of its proceedings and papers would, as a frequent attendant on their meetings, come well from his hand. On this account Newbery may have given him (or lent) those sums at their rooms given in a preceding page.

The precarious nature of his finances, induced several well-meaning friends to propose to him to take advantage of the publicity of his name, and like Akenside, endeavour to procure a more certain income from his original profession of physic.

Among others who recommended this step and took some interest in promoting it, was Sir Joshua, then Mr., Reynolds and some ladies, Mrs. Montagu, to whom he had recently become known, being as the writer has been informed among the

number. They were not aware that a name for poetry, far from promoting commonly marts, though for no sufficient reason, the practice of a physician. Mankind seem to have agreed that no individual shall be permitted to possess excellence in two pursuits, and he who is dependent on such prejudice had better submit to than contend with it. Willing to make the experiment, he assumed a more conspicuous and expensive, though as appears from the fashion of that day, not at all an unusual medical garb. A professional wig, a cane, purple silk small clothes, a scarlet roquelaure buttoned to the chin, and charged as we find in his tailor's account book in June 1765 at four guineas and a half, made him an exceedingly smart physician. Transformations of this kind in men who are more familiar with books than with common life, are often in extremes; a few of his friends amused themselves with the change; and as if to satisfy others, or please himself with the experiment whether variety of dress could acquire practice, three other suits are charged to him within the short space of six months. A man servant likewise was soon afterward added to his establishment.

It is remembered that he was occasionally employed by his acquaintance during illness; the fees however were not sufficiently numerous to be an object of serious pursuit, and the restrictions, as he considered them, so many upon his time and amusements as to become irksome. The gravity of a practising physician required he should abstain

from scenes of familiar resort formerly sought and enjoyed, and with something of regret he avowed that "he was now shut out from many places where he had formerly played the fool very agreeably." The caprice of patients, and differences of opinion with some of his brethren, tended to increase distaste towards his calling, an instance of which is remembered by the lady to whom these volumes are indebted for several anecdotes, and which was told her by Sir Joshua Reynolds.

He had been called in to a Mrs. Sidebotham, an acquaintance, labouring under illness, and having examined and considered the case, wrote his prescription. The quality or quantity of the medicine ordered, exciting the notice of the apothecary in attendance, he demurred to administer it to the patient; an argument ensued which had no effect in convincing either party of error, and some heat being produced by the contention, an appeal was at length made to the patient to know by whose opinion and practice she chose to abide. She, deeming the apothecary the better judge of the two from being longer in attendance, decided for him; and Goldsmith quitted the house highly indignant, declaring to Sir Joshua he would leave off prescribing for friends. "Do so, my dear Doctor;" replied Topham Beauclerk when he heard the story and afterwards jested with him on the subject, "whenever you undertake to kill, let it be only your enemies."

## CHAPTER XVI.

DR. JOSEPH WARTON. — VICAR OF WAKEFIELD. — HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY AND PHILOSOPHERS. — POEMS FOR YOUNG LADIES. — BEAUTIES OF ENGLISH POESY. — ENGLISH GRAMMAR. — BYRON'S VOYAGE. — RESIDENCE IN THE TEMPLE. — ANECDOTES. — MR. WILLIAM HODSON.

IN the literary societies of the metropolis about this time, as well as in those private assemblages to which nearly all persons of talents found ready admission, Goldsmith added largely to his acquaintance. In one of these he met Dr. Joseph Warton, probably for the first time, who thus expresses his opinion of him to his brother in January 1766, with something of the severity of a rival wit and author: "Of all solemn coxcombs, Goldsmith is the first; yet sensible; — but affects to use Johnson's hard words in conversation."

There is a disposition in human nature to scrutinize into the manners of contemporaries, particularly those of men of reputation, much more severely than such as are seen through the medium of time or distance; and this perhaps is the reason why we are more just to dead than to living excellence; we permit too often the imperfections and frailties of the man to cloud our view of his merits, and it is only when time mellows the prospect that he is contemplated in his

true position with that reasonable allowance for infirmity which all human beings require. The remark of Warton seems to imply a little vanity in the behaviour of his new acquaintance ; and if this is all that can be alleged against a successful poet, fresh in the enjoyment of his honours, the offence is not very heinous. But if he were really guilty of assuming some momentary importance of manner, it may not have been without cause. Persons had been attracted to him by the fame of the poem, who expecting in the companion of Johnson, to find the same point or energy in conversation, felt disposed in their disappointment to underrate such merit as he really possessed : while he in renewed efforts to retain his due station in social intercourse, may have overshot the mark, and in throwing off natural simplicity of character, fell into, as would appear in this instance, occasional pedantry ; this indeed appears to be sometimes the only escape of a really diffident man from absolute taciturnity among associates where he observes some jealous or considerable pretension.

One of his pecuniary obligations in the nature of loan, bears date about this time, the immediate object of which was said to have been a short journey into the country, whither, or for what purpose, does not appear.

“ Received from Mr. Newbery eleven guineas, which I promise to pay.

“ OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

“ Jan. 8. 1766.”

The illness of Dr. Johnson about this time, attended with hypochondriacal symptoms difficult to shake off, exercised his friendship in cheering the sufferer by frequent visits, a duty in which he had the aid of Mr. Murphy; and both being cheerful, their endeavours produced the best effects. Mr. and Mrs. Thrale who had but recently formed the acquaintance of the lexicographer, united in the same friendly object, and to the care of this lady Goldsmith gave due praise. "To her attention," he said, "Johnson owed his recovery."

Soon afterward, Boswell who had been travelling on the Continent since 1763, returned to London, when the evening meetings with Johnson and Goldsmith at the Mitre were occasionally resumed. The former having now ceased to drink wine, sometimes refused to go; on these occasions they passed the evening in his rooms, trying to give a new direction to the broodings of a melancholy spirit by amusing conversation, they being supplied with wine, and the moralist confining himself to water.

"Doctor," said he to Goldsmith in allusion to his own former efforts in, and subsequent neglect of poetry, "I am not quite idle; I made one line t'other day; but I made no more." "Let us hear it," replied Goldsmith, "we'll put a bad one to it." "No, sir," returned Johnson, "I have forgotten it."

By a letter from the latter to Mr. Langton written early in March, it appears that Goldsmith seldom failed in attending their weekly evening

meetings. "Dyer," he says, "is constant at the club; Hawkins is remiss; I am not over diligent; Dr. Nugent, Dr. Goldsmith, and Mr. Reynolds are very constant."

On the 27th March, 1766, came out the Vicar of Wakefield, which immediately received the applause due to merits of a great and original kind.\*

Nothing more strongly exemplifies the different estimates occasionally formed of a literary work by the publisher or his advisers, and by the public, than the fate of this beautiful tale, which to the former appeared so doubtful of popular favour as to be retained by him in manuscript for two, or nearly two years, after the purchase, afraid as it should seem, of risking the expence of publication. Of this opinion also by his own confession was Dr. Johnson; and he adduced it afterward in conversation in proof of the little dependence to be placed on individual judgment regarding a work of imagination. We are told however that on a previous occasion, when disposing of it in order to relieve the author from his difficulties, he saw its merits; this might very well be, without implying contradiction; he saw much in it to admire, but doubted whether similar taste or opinion was likely to influence general readers;

\* The following is the first advertisement. "In a few days will be published in two volumes twelves, The Vicar of Wakefield. A tale; supposed to be written by himself. Printed for F. Newbery in Paternoster Row."—*Lloyd's Evening Post*, March 19...21. 1766.

it could not however be slightly valued even at first to secure for the author the sum of sixty guineas.

One of the causes of lying dormant so long, may have arisen from not being sold, as it would appear, to John Newbery, in whose books and papers there is no record of the transaction. His nephew, Francis Newbery, residing at the Crown (as booksellers had then their signs), in Paternoster Row, was the publisher; and he having had no previous connexion with the Poet, may have had less confidence in the success of the work. It may have been delayed likewise with the expectation of undergoing careful revision, and altering objectionable circumstances in the story; a task which however the author declined, alleging as is said,—and the argument must be considered powerful in the estimate of an author militant, — that whatever time or labour should be expended on the alterations, no increase would be made to the purchase money. That he corrected the language afterwards appears by the variations between the first and subsequent editions.

The Vicar of Wakefield secured friends among every description of readers; with the old by the purity of its moral lessons, and with the young by the interest of the story. It had the merit of originality by differing from nearly all its predecessors. With the popular productions before him of Fielding and Smollett, he studiously avoided their track by excluding variety of adventures, immoral



scenes, and licentious intrigues, which under the plausible plea of exhibiting human nature, give us not only the worst parts of it, but almost necessarily corrupt the minds of youth by familiarising what it is never prudent wantonly to display. He was equally regardless of the example of Richardson, of his prolixity and sentimental refinements, however he may have honoured his morality. He had determined that his novel should not be too long to be perused with ease, and what was read should leave no taint of impurity behind.

But its great charm, as of all the productions of Goldsmith, is close adherence to nature; nature in its commendable, not vicious, points of view; we find little in incident or character overstrained, excepting perhaps the moral turpitude of Thornhill, and this scarcely exceeds what was common among fashionable rakes in the novels of the time. The Primrose family is a great creation of genius; such a picture of warm-hearted simplicity, mingled with the little foibles and weaknesses common to the best specimens of humanity, that we find nothing like it in the whole range of fiction. Each of the individuals is nicely discriminated without apparent art or effort; we can anticipate what either will do, and almost will say, on any given occasion. The unwearied benevolence and submission to the will of Providence under all his distresses of the good pastor; the self-satisfied cleverness and little female devices to accomplish favourite purposes, of his wife; the liveliness and indiscretion of Olivia;

the more considerate and sedate turn of Sophia ; the pedantry yet simplicity of Moses ; and goodness of heart of all, present a piece of moral painting of great beauty and of rare skill.

The other characters as they interest us less, please us less, from the disguised Burchell down to Jenkins the instrument of young Thornhill's vices. The conduct of the story has the merit of never once leading us from the main design of exhibiting the family in all their trials from the commencement to the conclusion, excepting the episode of the adventures of the son. The style is peculiarly easy, perspicuous, and simple, free from all attempt at fine writing or ambitious ornament, and without even one of those epigrammatic smartnesses which the apprehension of being considered dull led him occasionally to introduce into his Essays. This, among its other merits, has contributed to render the Vicar of Wakefield perhaps the most popular of all English books on the continent of Europe.

Few tests of the merit of a work of fiction are probably better than the admiration of foreigners, for it forms pretty good evidence that in the characters or circumstances of the story, our general nature, not the mere manners of a country, is happily pourtrayed. Fictions may be written and acquire a large share of success among ourselves, yet signally fail in securing favour among other nations ; but popularity abroad as well as at home leaves less doubt of the existence of true genius in the writer.

It is thus with the romances of Cervantes and Le Sage ; and if we seek for higher examples they are to be found in the writings of Homer and other great masters in poetry. So likewise with the tale of Goldsmith. In France they enumerate seven different translations which have passed through innumerable editions ; in Germany it is little less popular ; in Italy also familiarly known ; and in these countries, as well as in the north of Europe, it is the first English book put into the hands of such as learn our language.

Critical wisdom however is seldom satisfied without discovering defects ; and as we fancy ourselves privileged to speak freely of all we love, this may be done in the present instance without diminishing our regard. Of the existence of such he himself had obvious misgivings. "There are a hundred faults in this thing," he tells us in the advertisement, "and a hundred things might be said to prove them beauties. But it is needless. A book may be amusing with numerous errors, or it may be dull without a single absurdity."

The character of Mrs. Primrose though rendered amusing by her foibles, is drawn in education and manners beneath what is usual in an intelligent clergyman's wife, but this objection seems anticipated by the words put into her husband's mouth, that he chose her, "as she did her wedding gown, not for a fine glossy surface, but such qualities as would wear well." Olivia's conduct in submitting to be married by a popish priest, which she is

injudiciously made to admit she knew not to be binding, is not satisfactory. Sophia comes less frequently forward to exhibit her good sense and prudence in conversation than we wish. About Sir William Thornhill there is a coldness that wins little of our regard; possessed of power, wealth, and reputed benevolence, he takes no steps to assist a worthy and benevolent man struggling with poverty, whose hospitality he enjoys and to whose daughter he exhibits attachment, but leaves the family to the machinations of his nephew, in consequence of an error on their part, arising as he must have understood, from justifiable indignation towards him whom they conceived guilty of treachery and ingratitude. His disguise near his own estates, cannot be reconciled with probability. Neither can we believe that one so avowedly virtuous, would entrust a large portion of his fortune to a nephew capable of appropriating it to the worst purposes, and of whose character he could not, from previous admissions and the report of the country, be ignorant. A few inadvertencies and legal errors, though of no moment, required little trouble to amend. Thus George Primrose is told on departing to join his regiment, to emulate his grandfather who fell in the same field with Lord Falkland; this if taken literally would make the Vicar more than a century old. In a threat of Burchell it is assumed, that simply breaking the lock of a pocket book found near their habitation, subjected the parties upon complaint

to a justice of peace, to be "all hanged up at their own door." We find also that sending a challenge though it be not accepted, is a capital offence; that a justice of peace on his sole authority can free a culprit from a criminal charge by representing it in a different light to the committing magistrate; and that a gaoler would permit a coiner imprisoned for trial, to quit his custody on verbal authority from the same magistrate; mistakes which as they may mislead foreigners, would have been better avoided. But when criticism enumerates these, it has done its worst; the feelings of the reader rise up in judgment against the critic, he throws aside the lucubration, and turns to re-peruse what has given him so much pleasure.

The origin of the tale, or rather the reason for fixing the scene near Wakefield, is said\* to have arisen from an excursion made into Yorkshire about the period at which it was written; with what view we are unacquainted; but there is reason to believe he spent some months in that county at some previous period. Its foundation seems shadowed out in the story alluded to among the papers printed in the British Magazine. The name of the vicarage however is probably fanciful, but by a curious coincidence it has been ascertained from contemporary statements, that the daughter of the actual Vicar of Wakefield, the Rev. Dr. W., married about this period a Cap-

\* By Mr. Cradock, in his Memoirs; but the assertion is vaguely made.

tain M. of the militia, without, as is said, having previously obtained the parental sanction; hence rumour induced a suspicion, unfounded no doubt, that with such additions as imagination supplied he had touched upon circumstances in real life.\*

We need not however refer to such an accidental occurrence for its origin. The fact no doubt really was, that having sketched an innocent family less acquainted with the world than their station in life implied, he chose a scene pointing to a distant county as more likely to favour the illusion by the presumed simpler manners of the people. For some of the incidents he unquestionably taxed his recollections of early life. The primitive habits of Lissoy and Kilkenny West furnished hints which when applied to the interior of an English Vicarage were thought, and perhaps truly, inappropriate or overcharged, but

\* Another coincidence may be mentioned. The Vicar's wife is made to speak of "The family of the Blenkinsops," known for a physical peculiarity of which the name is indicative. Yet a family so called, though it is scarcely necessary to say not distinguished in the manner described in the novel, lived in this part of the country, and in some of its descendants Miss Jane, Anna Maria, Sir Robert Kerr, and Dr. Ogilvie Porter, of Bristol, have exhibited talents of a high order. To three of these names no commendation is necessary; of the fourth, Dr. Porter, it may be necessary to say that the labours of an anxious profession have alone prevented him from pursuing the tastes of his youth and displaying equal literary talent with that which obtains in his family. Their father who was descended from a respectable family in the north of Ireland, while serving in the Enniskillen Dragoons married a Miss Blenkinsop of an ancient family in the north of England.

this no doubt formed the real source of some of its characters and scenes. As usual also we find much of himself. The adventures of George Primrose were without doubt nearly similar to his own. He makes Sir William Thornhill also travel over the continent of Europe on foot and return about the age of thirty, his own age nearly when the same feat was performed. He makes him talk of his "sickly sensibility of the miseries of others," his good nature, bounties, and improvidences, "his conversation that of a man of sense, his actions those of a fool;" his giving promises in lieu of money, when the latter was exhausted, and experiencing in consequence from needy dependants little but contempt and reproaches; circumstances which are known to have occurred, or were applied, to himself. The character of the Vicar is a more extended draught of the Pastor in the Deserted Village, and meant, as was said by the family, for his father. The private marriages of two of his sisters may have supplied hints in detailing the conduct of Olivia. Burchell was the name of one of his connexions by marriage.

The time at which it was written seems to have been earlier than is commonly supposed, the better part probably in 1762. In the nineteenth chapter we find the supposed "parliament man" in his violent effusion of political zeal asking the Vicar whether he had seen "the last *Auditor*?" the first number of which paper, carried on by Mr. Murphy, was advertised to appear on the 10th

June in that year, and continued some months. It is certain that the novel was not a hasty production, written as is said with the immediate view of extrication from pecuniary difficulty, but like his poems, the product of moments stolen from the ordinary labours of compilation.

Toward the end of May a second edition was called for; on the 25th August a third; and preserving its popularity, a sixth appeared about the time of his death. Some further pecuniary advantage may have been derived from these successive reprints, but probably not much, as in June we find him by a memorandum now before the writer in want of money, a bill drawn upon Newbery for fifteen guineas being returned dishonoured. We may account therefore for his declining to make alterations which were likely to be profitable only to the bookseller.

Dr. Johnson tells us of two omissions made previous to publication. "I remember," said he, "a passage in Goldsmith's *Vicar of Wakefield* which he was afterwards fool enough to expunge. 'I do not love a man who is zealous for nothing.' There was another fine passage too which he struck out. 'When I was a young man being anxious to distinguish myself, I was perpetually starting new propositions. But I soon gave this over; for I found that generally what was new was false.'" This was probably said in the character of the *Vicar*, for we find retained in the adventures of his son an allusion to the same subject when he com-



mences author in London — “ I therefore drest up three paradoxes with some ingenuity. They were false indeed but they were new. The jewels of truth have been so often imported by others, that nothing was left for me to import but some splendid things that at a distance looked every bit as well.”

A few other passages which were also struck out and have been hitherto unnoticed may not be uninteresting to the reader. The Vicar speaking of his wife's behaviour to Burchell says, “ One almost at the verge of beggary thus to assume language of the most insulting affluence, might excite the ridicule of ill-nature.” “ For he (Moses) always ascribed to his wit that laughter which was lavished on his simplicity.” When Thornhill, in the eyes of the zealous mother, seems likely to prove a husband to one of her daughters the Vicar thus checks her anticipations — “ But those who either aim at husbands greater than themselves or at the ten thousand pound prize, have been fools for their ridiculous claims, whether successful or not.” In allusion to Thornhill's supposed free-thinking opinions, and the apology made for them by Moses that men could not be answerable for their thoughts, part of the Vicar's reply is — “ Like corrupt judges on a bench they determine right on that part of the evidence they hear, but they will not hear all the evidence. Thus my son,” &c. Of those who are advancing in guilt it is said — “ They no longer continue to have shame at doing evil, and shame attends only upon their virtues.”

George Primrose when dragged into prison is made to exclaim in reply to his father's lamentations—"It is my last happiness that I have committed no murder though I have lost all hopes of pardon."

The verbal alterations made on revisal are very numerous; the additions amount to only a few sentences of no moment, but among these are the well-known word *Fudge*\*, ejaculated by Burchell at the conclusion of each paragraph of the conversation of Miss Wilhelmina Skeggs and her companion; in the first edition it is only quoted once. That edition though published in London was printed at Salisbury.

Nearly on the same day as the Vicar of Wakefield, appeared Miss Anna Williams's volume of Miscellanies, to which Johnson furnished the chief pieces. Goldsmith in common with others of her acquaintance was likewise pledged to assist, and in discussing the matter, usually replied "leave it to me." But it may be doubted whether he contributed to the volume; nothing certainly is to be found there of which we are informed, though from his carelessness regarding short pieces this forms no proof to the contrary. His own necessities may have had too many urgent claims upon

\* Rendered more remarkable by the public attention lately drawn to it in consequence of a trial for libel against a newspaper in the Court of King's Bench, when many opinions were given on its exact signification; and particular reference made to its use by Goldsmith.

his time to permit attention to those of another; and in looking over the articles, no sufficient clue to a production of his is afforded by internal evidence. The jest passed upon her and his own homeliness of face, when in toasting the ugliest man and woman their names were coupled, and which some one mischievously communicated, is said to have estranged him from her society before or about this period.

Translations from the French formed one of his occasional resources, which were seldom acknowledged by himself; and information was therefore chiefly derived from his employers when death had removed any scruples regarding the disclosure. One of these, executed for Mr. Francis Newbery and which appeared toward the end of June, was "A Concise History of Philosophy and Philosophers. By M. Formey, M.D.E.S. Member of the Academy of Sciences of Berlin."

A duodecimo volume cannot be supposed to furnish very ample information on the speculative opinions of distinguished men of all countries since nearly the creation of the world. The outline of their theories is therefore as short as it is possible to make it. We have little more than an enumeration of names and systems, from Zoroaster and Belus to Leibnitz and Newton; and more was scarcely necessary to the general reader, who soon discovers that many of the systems and some of the maxims of ancient philosophy, are erroneous, or admit of little practical application to the chief

duties of men ; that a few pages of the sacred volume of Christianity contains more moral truth, beauty, and excellence, than all the subtle or fanciful speculations of Pythagoreans and Eclectics, Academics and Peripatetics, Cynics and Stoics, Epicureans and Sceptics, or of all the sects of all antiquity ; and that their physical philosophy has vanished before the light of modern investigation and experiment. But the detail is curious as evidence of the extraordinary application, and yet limited powers of the human mind applied to such a subject, when destitute of the lights of Revelation. For here we see the intense meditation, the laborious devotion, the sacrifice of all other earthly considerations to this one pursuit by the most refined and acute intellects of the most enlightened countries for more than a thousand years, exerted in a fruitless search for an unobjectionable system of morals, which Scripture reveals to us in a small space and in the simplest forms.

The original seems to be rendered with characteristic spirit, though from inadvertence either in author or translator not free from errors ; thus speaking of the peripatetic system we are told, " From the death of its author in the first century of the Christian era, this philosophy was but little regarded," whereas Aristotle died above three centuries before Christ.

For this he appears to have received by the following account, in his own hand-writing, rendered to Newbery, twenty pounds ; and for another short

piece, known only by this memorandum to be from his pen, the Preface to Wiseman's Grammar, two guineas. The "Natural Philosophy" is no doubt the first volume of the work already mentioned, published ten years afterward.

<i>" Mr. Newbery Dr.</i>			
Brookes's 4 vols. correcting	-	-	£21 0 0
Natural Philosophy	.	-	- 63 0 0
Traveller	-	-	- 21 0 0
Translation of Philosophy	-	-	- 20 0 0
Preface to Wiseman's Grammar	-	-	- 2 2 0
			£127 2 0

" June 7. 1766.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH."

In the summer of this year he first seriously contemplated writing for the stage. One of the inducements to this may have been the success of many of his countrymen, living and dead, as dramatists; of Southerne, Farquhar, A. Phillips, and Sir Richard Steele; of Bickerstaffe, Murphy, Brooke, and Henry Jones, besides the witty but loose Mrs. Centlivre. But from the period of settling in London, the theatres, managers, performers, and the state of dramatic literature generally, as they contributed to his amusement occupied much of his attention and sometimes his pen. To a literary man, more especially a poet, destitute of domestic ties and thrown loosely upon the surface of society in the metropolis, the theatre was then an object of primary interest. Many appear to have thought the pro-

duction of a play necessary in order to establish their reputation in polite letters; the emolument likewise attending upon success was then considerable; and to a poor and ambitious man the temptation at once of profit and honour was irresistible. He had formed an intimacy with some of the principal performers, more particularly Barry, Woodward, Shuter, Quick, and Mr. and Mrs. Yates at whose house he was a frequent visitor; and a favourable moment seemed only wanting to try his powers in this new though precarious department of writing. That he was revolving this project in the previous March, seems probable from a conversation with Dr. Johnson, mentioned by Boswell, though no hint appears to have been dropped at the moment of his purpose.

“I think Mr. Johnson,” said Goldsmith, “you don’t go near the theatres now. You give yourself no more concern about a new play, than if you had never had any thing to do with the stage.” “Why Sir,” was the reply, “our tastes greatly alter. The lad does not care for the child’s rattle, and the old man does not care for the young man’s prostitute.” “Nay, Sir,” rejoined Goldsmith, “but your muse was not a prostitute.” “Sir, I do not think she was,” returned Johnson; and some further observations ensued, Goldsmith insisting “they had a claim upon him,” and the moralist maintaining he had done enough.

When preparing the outline of his play, he undertook in September one of those compilations

for the booksellers, which requiring little time, and a moderate portion of taste for its arrangement, he familiarly termed "building a book." This was a duodecimo volume — "Poems for Young Ladies. In Three Parts: Devotional, Moral, and Entertaining: The whole being a collection of the best pieces in our language." The first announcement took place early in October, although not published for two months afterward\*; and to some of the advertisements were affixed the following lines, which we are probably to understand rather as the recommendation of the bookseller, than the product of Goldsmith's muse —

" External graces all decay,  
 Their power is quickly past,  
 A well-formed mind extends their sway,  
 And bids each beauty last."

The devotional part contains Boyce's Deity; the Morning Hymn of Adam from Paradise Lost; Pope's Messiah and Universal Prayer; the first and third of the Night Thoughts; three Hymns of Addison; and the first book of Ogilvie's Day of Judgment. The Moral: his own ballad of Edwin and Angelina; three fables of Moore; the story of Lavinia from the Seasons; Advice to a Lady by the Hon. Mr. N—— (Nugent); Fairy Tale and Night Piece on Death, by Parnell. The Enter-

\* St. James's Chronicle, December 12—15. 1766. — Lloyd's Evening Post.—Gazetteer.—It was erroneously stated by Bishop Percy to be printed in 1767.

taining division, has the parting of Hector and Andromache from the Iliad; the Death of Dido from the Æneid; the stories of Narcissus, and of Ceyx and Alcyone, from Ovid; Baucis and Philemon, by Swift; Teribazus and Ariana, by Glover; Marriage, by Dr. Cotton; the Fan, by Gay; a Winter Piece, by Philips; two short pieces by Waller; Collins's Oriental Eclogues; and Addison's Letter from Italy.

For this selection, which is unobjectionable and to which he gave a preface but in the first instance not his name, credit is claimed. "Care has been taken to select not only such pieces as innocence may read without a blush, but such as will even tend to strengthen that innocence. In this little work a lady may find the most exquisite pleasure, while she is at the same time learning the duties of life; and while she courts only entertainment, be deceived into wisdom."

By a memorandum in the possession of the writer, the sum obtained for it from Payne in Paternoster Row, was ten guineas; enough perhaps as literature was then rewarded, for the labour. But as compilations derive their chief credit from the editor, his name in the titlepage would have been worth double that sum to the publisher, who had additional interest in its success from having brought out in the preceding May, Fordyce's Sermons to Young Women, the success of which work as the preface avows, gave birth to the compilation. A third edition, according to the titlepage, was



printed in 1770 by a different publisher where his name appears at length, probably without his sanction. "By Dr. Goldsmith, Author of the Traveller."

Shortly after its publication he was visited by Mr. Hoole, the well-known translator of Tasso and Ariosto, who carried with him on a visit to the Poet, his son, now the Rev. Samuel Hoole of Poplar, who though then very young, perfectly remembers the circumstances of the interview. Goldsmith being in good humour, and willing as usual, to court intimacy with juvenile visitors, after a playful and bantering address and some jocular admonitions, presented him with this little volume of poems, which was long retained as a memorial of the giver. His face, person, and manner in consequence of being a frequent visitor at the house of Mr. Hoole, are still fresh in the recollection of the survivor, although time has swept from memory nearly all that personal anecdote which contemporaries supply, and of which he once heard much.

One remark of Dr. Johnson on Goldsmith is still retained by this gentleman. The former having been taken up by Mr. and Mrs. Hoole to accompany them to a dinner party, proved as usual dilatory in dressing, and to make up for the delay, the coachman was ordered to drive fast. Johnson who delighted in rapidity of pace and had been speaking of Goldsmith whom they expected to meet, put his head out of one of the

windows to see they were going right, and rubbing his hands with an air of satisfaction exclaimed — “ This man drives fast and well ; were Goldsmith here now he would tell us he could do better.”

Another anecdote of about this period indicative of his habitual attention to children, is stated on the authority of the late Mr. Charles Lamb. The first instructress of that gentleman in the rudiments of letters, a Mrs. Reynolds, used to relate that when little more than a child she resided in a house where Goldsmith occasionally visited, and on his entrance on one occasion he found her reading one of his volumes, it is believed the poems for young ladies. Patting her on the head and applauding her occupation, he said she should have something more when that was finished, and soon afterwards sent a present of one of his own poems.

Whatever credit accrued from the preceding compilation, was lost by another of a similar kind in two volumes which appeared in April 1767, with his name affixed. “ The Beauties of English Poesy. Selected by Oliver Goldsmith.”

In this were inconsiderately included two indelicate tales of Prior, unfit for the class of readers for whom the volumes were intended ; an indiscretion so obvious that many disposed to think favourably of his judgment, fancied they had been introduced by mistake, though from the introductory remarks such appears not to have been the

case. In extenuation of his fault it must be remembered that Dr. Johnson, whose opinion probably influenced him, maintained that Prior might be read by the modest and the delicate. The error however proved a bar to the complete success of the work, though otherwise comprising many of the shorter and more beautiful pieces of our poetry.

In the first volume are the Rape of the Lock, the Hermit (by Parnell), Il Penseroso, L'Allegro, Gray's Elegy, London (by Johnson), The Schoolmistress, Cooper's Hill, Eloisa to Abelard, Epistle to Lord Dorset by Philips, Addison's Letter from Italy, Odes to St. Cecilia's Day by Dryden and Pope, The Shepherd's Week, Mac Flecknoe, Swift's Rhapsody on Poetry, On the Use of Riches, Sixth Canto of the Dispensary, Oriental Eclogues, Splendid Shilling, Pipe of Tobacco.

In the second we find Night Piece on Death and Fairy Tales (by Parnell), Palemon and Lavinia, The Bastard, The Poet and his Patron, The Wolf, Sheep, and Lamb, The Female Seducers, Epistles to a Lady (by Mr. Nugent, already mentioned), Hans Carvel, The Ladle, Baucis and Philemon, On the Death of Addison, and Colin and Lucy (by Tickell), The Tears of Scotland (by Smollett), On the Death of Cromwell (by Waller), Phœbus and Daphne, Night Thoughts first and second, with the First Satire (by Young), Pastoral Ballads (by Shenstone), Phœbe (by Dr. Byrom), Song by Rowe, Essay on Poetry (by the Duke of

Buckingham), Cadenus and Vanessa, and Alma, or the Progress of the Mind.

Two hundred pounds were said to be the price of this compilation, and the use of his name in the title page, to Griffin the publisher; an exaggeration which though not circulated by himself, he took no pains as in other instances of reputed large sums, to contradict. A more moderate estimate makes it fifty pounds; for excepting a preface and a few remarks prefixed to each piece, the remainder became an exercise of critical taste, which no doubt like other qualities of authorship deserves its reward. When the magnitude of the sum was mentioned, his usual reply in substance was: "Why sir, it may seem large; but then a man may be many years working in obscurity before his taste and reputation are fixed, or estimated, and then he is, as in other professions, only paid for his previous labours."

Shortly before this, he had been occupied on another compilation of a graver and more useful description, intended however for the same class of readers. From poetry to matter of fact, the transition, as appears by the following acknowledgment, was sufficiently rapid:—

"Received from Mr. Newbery five guineas for writing a short English Grammar.

"OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

"December 28. 1766."

Another memorandum soon afterward in the

same papers, exhibits him as borrower of a small sum.

“*Doctor Goldsmith* Dr.

“ To Cash lent January 6. 1767 - - £1 1 0”

A third account of the same publisher at this time is the restatement of a few of the sums paid for works already mentioned, with an intimation not seemingly verified by subsequent papers, that a settlement had taken place shortly before.

“*J. N.*

*To Dr. Goldsmith.*

Writing Natural Philosophy	-	-	-	£63	0	0
The Traveller	-	-	-	21	0	0
The Translation of Philosophy	-	-	-	20	0	0
Correcting 4 vols. Brookes's	-	-	-	21	0	0
Preface to the History of the World	-	-	-	3	3	0
Preface to Wiseman's Grammar	-	-	-	2	2	0

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The last settlement was the 11th of October, 1766.

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Query—Whether the money had at the Society was £4 4 0.  
 Paid for Copy of the Essays - - - £10 10 0”

In April 1767 came out from Newbery and passed to a second edition, “A Voyage round the World in his Majesty's Ship the *Dolphin*, commanded by the Hon. Commodore Byron.” In this, Goldsmith was supposed (by Mr. English) to have had a share, either by revising, or putting it into some degree of shape for the literary market, from blotted loose sheets having been seen in his rooms; but perusal of the work renders this improbable, as the style and descriptions bear no traces of his skill. The name of the author,

though said to be an officer of the ship, was suppressed, and an exaggerated account of the size of the people of Patagonia occasioning some ridicule in the newspapers, and ultimately a denial from the officers that it came from any of their number, the publisher replied in a long advertisement re-asserting his original statement. Goldsmith though he may have contributed little, if any, assistance to the writer, at least knew him, as appears by a passage in *Animated Nature* when speaking of the various races of men.

“The last voyager we have had, that has seen this enormous race is Commodore Byron. I have talked with the person who first gave the relation of that voyage, and who was carpenter of the Commodore’s ship, he was a sensible, understanding man, and I believe extremely faithful. By him, therefore, I was assured, in the most solemn manner, of the truth of his relation; and this account has since been confirmed by one or two publications; in all which, the particulars are pretty nearly the same.”\*

His name being now considered among booksellers a kind of passport to public favour, was at this time used to aid the sale of a re-issue of *Blainville’s Travels*, which drew forth a variety of remarks in the daily journals †, where however an

\* *Animated Nature*, vol. ii. p. 261. Svo. Lond. 1774.

† Besides other letters the following appeared in the *St. James’s Chronicle*, May 12—14. 1767.

“SIR,

“In this age of literary curiosity not content with the real merit of authors living or dead, or with such compilations as

error which he fell into was treated with consideration. It appeared they had been published several years before without success, and the proprietors desirous of trying the public taste again in the form of weekly numbers, attached a recommendation by Goldsmith to the advertisements, seeming to speak of it as coming out then for the first time. Of the artifice used it appears he was ignorant. His reply frankly acknowledging the mistake, appears in the letter given in a preceding page, vindicating the originality of Edwin and Angelina.

The interview in the early part of this year, of

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they can pass upon the eager public even without any author's name at all, our publishers have recourse to a new artifice, borrowing the recommendation of some person eminent in the republic of letters, after first imposing on him.

“This must be the case with regard to the new edition of Blainville's Travels now publishing in weekly numbers: Dr. Goldsmith is made to say in recommendation of it—‘I am told they are now first translated from the author's MS. in the French language, which has never yet been published.’ Allow me by your means to inform the Doctor that I have read a printed translation of them in three volumes quarto, made about that time; and that the truth is, the republishers have now first drawn out of an old warehouse a number of copies thrust there for want of a quick sale. I mean not to disparage Mr. Blainville's work; but hope you will join with me in this sacrifice to truth, as I have too much respect for Dr. Goldsmith to suffer him to authorise so pitiful an artifice. I am, Sir, yours, &c.

“D. H.”

Another correspondent, a Mr. Turnbull, likewise writes on the subject of the error committed by the “ingenious Dr. Goldsmith.”

Dr. Johnson with the King in the library of Buckingham House, occasioned much conversation in literary circles, and when Johnson was solicited to repeat the particulars at Sir Joshua Reynolds's, Goldsmith, we are told, was observed to be silent and inattentive.

Boswell attributes this in his usual way, to envy and chagrin at the honour conferred on a brother author; but adds in something of a better spirit, "At length the frankness and simplicity of his natural character prevailed. He sprung from the sofa, advanced to Johnson, and in a kind of flutter from imagining himself in the situation which he had just been hearing described, exclaimed; 'Well, you acquitted yourself in this conversation better than I should have done; for I should have bowed and stammered through the whole of it.'"

This very natural and true picture of his diffidence, to which there are several allusions in his writings, was nevertheless conjoined with perfect consciousness of desert. Modesty, and justifiable pride, are not always so widely separated as they seem; both may be tenants of the same breast. The contrast of his own situation, poor, and as he considered neglected, with that of his friend, enjoying not only the bounty but the conversation of his Sovereign, may have given birth to a momentary feeling of dissatisfaction, just as Johnson is supposed to have felt, although disclaiming the feeling in a Latin sentence, on first viewing Burke's handsome residence at Beaconsfield, "*Non equi-*



*dem invideo ; miror magis.*" It would be harsh to designate the emotions of either on the success of their friends by the term envy ; the reason assigned by Goldsmith for his apparent inattention, that he feared Johnson had relinquished the design of furnishing a prologue to his play, may have been true ; it is certain he had made such a request some time before, and while in expectation of a favour from him was not likely to evince in his presence, discourtesy or envy.

That his fits of abstraction were neither unusual nor slight, we have ample evidence. The following remarkable instance which occurred some time afterward, was related to Dr. Percy with some humour by the Duchess of Northumberland.

During one of the annual excursions of this noble family to Bath, they occupied a house on one of the parades next door to Lord Clare, with whom Goldsmith was on a visit. While preparing one morning to sit down to breakfast, the Duke and Duchess were surprised by the entrance of the Poet, who was well known to both, into the dining-room, when he flung himself on a sofa in a manner the most unconcerned. Suspecting some mistake though too well bred to hint at the visit being unexpected, they entered into conversation on the topics of the place, desirous of displaying as little embarrassment as their visitor, till breakfast being served up, they requested him to stay and partake of it. The invitation dissipated his reverie ; he declared he

thought he had been in the house of his friend Lord Nugent, and in much confusion hastily withdrew ; but not till they had good-naturedly exacted a promise that he should give them his company to dinner.

He had been now resident for a considerable time in the Temple, a favourite abode then, as it appears, of several men of letters, among whom were Francis, the translator of Horace, Fawkes, already mentioned, Bickerstaffe, Kelly, Woty, Elphinston (author of a forgotten poem on Education), and Dr. Arne, who by his proficiency in a sister art, and as author of a drama, "The Guardian outwitted," claimed affinity with poets. The first apartments of Goldsmith were on the library staircase, now pulled down and on the site of which stands No. 2. Garden Court, being then an inmate with the butler of the Society, named Jeffs. Afterwards he removed to the King's Bench Walk. No record of his occupation in either place exists in the books of the society, and the rooms therefore were doubtless rented from a private owner.

Here he was visited by Dr. Johnson, who prying round the room with that earnestness characteristic of near-sighted persons, Goldsmith's pride took the alarm, suspecting the motive to be to observe whatever was defective in elegance or in comfort, and he immediately said ; "I shall soon be in better chambers than these." The moralist gently rebuked this ambition by paying him a most

flattering compliment, implying that a man of his reputation need care little for external distinctions. "Nay, Sir, never mind that; '*Nil te quæsiveris extra.*'" Such was the conviction and practice of Johnson himself; for Miss Reynolds tells us, though perhaps with some little exaggeration, that previous to the grant of his pension he was liable to be mistaken, in dress at least, for a beggarman.

The final remove of Goldsmith took place not long afterward to the second floor, not the first as Bishop Percy erroneously states, of No. 2. Brick Court; his rooms were on the right hand ascending the staircase, consisting of three apartments sufficiently airy and pleasant, where the view towards the gardens supplied him with an observation given in *Animated Nature*, respecting the natural history of Rooks:—"I have often amused myself with observing their plan of policy from my window in the Temple, that looks upon a grove where they have made a colony in the midst of the city. At the commencement of spring the rookery which during the continuance of winter seemed to have been deserted, or only guarded by about five or six, like old soldiers in a garrison, now begins to be once more frequented; and in a short time all the bustle and hurry of business is fairly commenced."\*

These chambers were likewise private property; and his name therefore appears no where as tenant to the members of this Inn of Court. By means

\* *Animated Nature*, vol. v. p. 231, 232. 8vo. 1774.

of advances from booksellers and from private friends, he furnished them in an expensive manner, to the amount it is said, though this no doubt included either the purchase or a lease of the rooms, of four hundred pounds; an imprudence which added to an increasing turn for expense, involved him in difficulties he never surmounted, and is said to have embittered the last hours of his life. About twenty years after his death they became the scene of a tragical adventure, by a Miss Broderick shooting a Mr. Eddington with whom she had formerly lived, and who took this desperate means of punishing his desertion. Among the friends who assisted him with the loan of money, was Mr. Edmund Bott, a barrister, author of a work on the Poor Laws, said to be revised in its style and arrangement by Goldsmith, and afterwards edited, with additions, by the venerable Chairman of the Middlesex Quarter Sessions who had also some slight knowledge of the Poet.\* Mr. Bott lived in the opposite rooms on the same floor, enjoyed much of his regard, was a frequent companion in amusement, and at the death of the latter became as his chief creditor, the possessor of his papers. Below Goldsmith, on the first floor, and where some of his works are said to have been written, was Sir William Blackstone. He was succeeded by Mr. Children, father of the present Secretary of the Royal Society, who occasionally amused his friends with details of the visitors and

\* Mr. Const.

parties, sometimes neither very early nor regular, of the sociable poet.

One of the persons resident in the Temple admitted to considerable intimacy with him, was Mr. William Cooke, a barrister, known as the writer of a work on dramatic genius, and of a poem from the title of which he was frequently termed "Conversation Cooke." He had arrived about this time from Ireland, to pass the customary term in an Inn of Court in London, recommended to Goldsmith by his old friend Dr. Sleigh of Cork. He was fond of the theatre, social in his habits, and settling in the English metropolis, became known among its clubs and societies as more devoted to letters than to law; he related many amusing anecdotes of the Poet from personal knowledge, sufficiently marking his simplicity and general benevolence of conduct.

To this gentleman, while yet but a stranger in town and his supplies occasionally short, Goldsmith had more than once offered the use of his purse, which Cooke at length accepted, the temptation of an evening at Marylebone or Ranelagh Gardens with several companions being irresistible; although at the moment destitute of necessary funds for the occasion. On applying to the Poet however he was told very seriously and no doubt truly, that he had not a guinea in his possession. This being considered an evasion, something like a reproach escaped the applicant, that he regretted having made such a

request where notwithstanding voluntary offers of assistance there existed so little disposition to afford it. Nettled by the remark, Goldsmith as evidence of his desire to oblige, borrowed the money. In the mean time Cooke provided from another quarter, had locked his chambers and proceeded to his amusement, but returning at an early hour in the morning, found a difficulty in opening the door, which on examination proved to arise from the sum he had requested, in silver, being wrapped in paper and thrust underneath. On being thanked for this proof of sincerity on the following day, but told that the money might as readily have fallen into strange hands as of him for whom it was meant, he characteristically replied "In truth my dear fellow I did not think of that." \*

On another occasion, entering a coffee-house near Temple Bar, hungry and fatigued from a journey, and ordering supper, it was no sooner brought in than by a jocular scheme, promptly but quietly devised by several of his acquaintance present, such significant looks and gestures were displayed as to lead to the belief that something was wrong; and on pressing for an explanation, the dish was pronounced to have an unsavoury odour and unfit to be eaten. Thrown off his guard by the seeming gravity of the decision, it was sent away; while a hint to the waiter from the party

\* This story was corroborated to the writer by the late Richard Sharpe, Esq. to whom Mr. Cooke told it more than once.

practising the jest, silenced his replies to the reproaches of the disappointed guest, who by several other tricks dexterously played off, was compelled to wait to a late hour for his repast.

To these may be added another of later date, known also to a contemporary still living, who was then an occasional visitor at the house where it occurred.

The Poet belonged to a card club that assembled at the Devil Tavern near Temple Bar, and having dined on the day of its meeting with Davies the bookseller in Covent Garden, took a hackney coach to his evening destination, paying the driver by mistake with a guinea instead of a shilling. Discovering the blunder when in the room, he mentioned it to those present with the remark, that as there was little honesty among such persons, he had no expectation of recovering it. On the next evening of meeting while full of good humour and hilarity, he was summoned by a message down stairs, when a person, seemingly a coachman, after a plausible excuse for not discovering and rectifying the error at the moment, begged to return the guinea which no doubt had been unintentionally given him the preceding week. The Doctor delighted with the occurrence, returned to the company extolling such an unusual instance of honesty, and proposing some token of reward; "for in truth," he added, "the honest man deserves it." A small sum was raised, with which he returned to the coachman

and dismissed him. But some one desiring to see the returned guinea, it was discovered, as may be anticipated, to be a counterfeit, when an explosion of mirth succeeded which so disconcerted him, that an early opportunity was taken of quitting the house. It is scarcely necessary to add that the scene was got up in the spirit of tavern waggery, a man being employed by the company to personate the coachman.

The same good nature, unwilling to return a negative to any request, and even his professional character of author though so rarely the owner of wealth, subjected him to deceptions of a graver kind from persons professing the cultivation of letters.

Among these was a foreigner at this time in London, countenanced by the Bavarian Ambassador and others, under the name of Colonel Chevalier de Champigny, soliciting subscriptions for a History of England in French, partly translated and partly original, to be comprised in fifteen volumes at the price of seven guineas and a half, to be paid in advance. The roll of names in his subscription list which was frequently advertised in 1766\*, comprised crowned heads, ambassadors,

\* These, occupying half a column of a newspaper, are too tedious to be transcribed. Another production of this person was advertised soon afterwards. —

“Supplement to the Ministry of Mr. Pitt, with an exact recapitulation of the entire conduct of that sage Politician from the 5th September 1761 when he quitted the Ministry, to the 30th July 1766 when he was created Earl of Chatham, &c. By the Chevalier Colonel Champigny (8vo. 6s.) Williams.” This was said likewise to be in French and printed at Cologne.



and many other persons of rank. Among these Goldsmith was solicited to be one; the honour of participating in the patronage bestowed by such persons was not to be resisted; and although long familiar with the tricks of adventurers in subscriptions, he paid the whole of the money at a time when perhaps he had not another guinea at his disposal.

Another claim upon his scanty resources occurred some time afterward by the arrival in London of his nephew, Mr. William Hodson, the son of his elder sister, whose spirit displayed something of the eccentricity of the family.

He was educated by his uncle the Rev. Henry Goldsmith, and entered Trinity College Dublin in February 1762.\* Participating in some irregularities here toward the conclusion of his term, and unwilling to encounter parental reproach, or as some relatives assert, desirous like his uncle Oliver of seeing the world, he set out without intimating his design to any one, to pay him a visit in London, and for a time acted there as his amanuensis. Becoming tired of this occupation, he wished to go abroad, but the means were wanting; and having no taste to follow the example of his uncle by travelling the continent of Europe on foot, another project was adopted of securing

\* The entry is, contrary to the usual practice, in English; and the name erroneously spelt, as is common in their own neighbourhood. "*William Hudson Pens. admitted into College Feb. 1st, 1762. — Schoolmaster Mr. Goldsmith. — Tutor Dr. Hudson.*"

a still wider sphere of observation without the necessity of incurring expense. While in Dublin he had attended anatomical lectures, induced by curiosity or desire to follow the profession of physic, though the paternal estate was sufficient in those days and on the borders of Connaught, to keep an Irish gentleman (and Irish gentlemen are said to have no taste for steady industry) from the exercise of professional occupation. The knowledge thus acquired was now turned to account; he embarked in a medical capacity in an Indiaman, made a voyage to China, and by his own account was fortunate enough while the ship remained in that country, to cure the child of an opulent Chinese of a dangerous complaint, for which among other proofs of gratitude, he received a present of a small dinner service of porcelain, part of which was shown to the writer in the family of one of his descendants. A more curious circumstance, the truth of which is attested by his daughter and others, occurred on his return to London. Having formerly incurred pecuniary obligation to one of his college friends, a Mr. Cowan, member of a respectable family in the county of Donegal, it was reclaimed on their meeting in England; but Hodson being at the moment without money, offered in discharge of the debt a lottery ticket, which was accepted. To the surprise of both parties and the mortification of the original holder, it turned up a prize of twenty thousand pounds. No portion of this large sum was,

it is said given him, neither did it materially benefit the receiver, who having spent part of it in a county election, lost his life afterwards by the upsetting of a boat on one of the lakes in Ireland.

It is believed he made a second, if not third, voyage to India, being for a few years found occasionally resident in London, where probably he practised professionally, as Mr. Cradock states in his memoirs, that Oliver some time before his death had a nephew, an apothecary, residing in Newman Street. This seems so far correct, that in the tailor's account book for 1770 and 1772, more than fifty pounds charged to Mr. Hodson, "of No. 41. Newman Street," were afterwards put down to the account of his uncle, who by the same memorandum seems to have made himself accountable for apparel supplied to others. Succeeding some years afterwards to the paternal estate, he led the life of a country gentleman, his medical skill being frequently called into gratuitous exercise by the neighbouring peasantry; occasionally for health or amusement he made excursions to Portugal; was twice married; first to Miss Longworth of Creggan in Westmeath, by whom he left issue three sons and two daughters; and again to Miss Isdell, a distant relative, by whom he had two daughters.\*

\* The sons (in order to satisfy some curiosity regarding this branch of the family) were Daniel, Oliver Goldsmith, and George Longworth Hodson, of whom the second survives, occupying the family property near Athlone. The daughters were Elizabeth married to the Rev. Alexander Gunning of Alicant near Castle-Blakeney, in Galway, and

Mr. Hodson received credit for the possession of talents, and appears to have exercised them occasionally in poetry; one of his productions has been communicated by the Rev. John Graham, who received it from one of his daughters, and which is subjoined.\* He was no great master

Catherine married to Mr. George Meham of Athlone. By his second wife the daughters were, Jane married to Mr. Maurice Neligan of Bellmount near Navan; and Anne, still living, widow of Mr. Edward Denniston of Coxheath, formerly Captain in the Donegal Militia.

\* STANZAS.

*By the late William Hodson, Esq.,*

OF ST. JOHN'S, NEAR ATHLONE.

“ Stern winter's rage the field deforms,  
 And strips the trees of green,  
 Its howling winds, its rustling storms,  
 Now sadden every scene.  
 Or now its gurgling torrents flow,  
 And swell th' extended lake,  
 Or battering hail and driving snow,  
 Wild devastations make.

“ On yon known hill forlorn I stand,  
 Where oft I've stood before,  
 And pensive view my native land,  
 Its lake and winding shore.  
 Where yonder turrets meet my view,  
 Now mouldering to decay,  
 If legendary tales be true,  
 An ancient city lay.

[Here two Stanzas intervened which were forgotten by the reciter.]

“ And there embosom'd in the grove,  
 Fast by yon watery waste,  
 Late the retreat of peace and love,  
 My mouldering mansion 's placed.

in the art, though some of the allusions seeming to come from the heart, possess pathos; that to

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The ruin'd church with ivy crown'd,  
 Marks to my streaming eye,  
 The hallow'd, venerable ground,  
 Where my dear kindred lie.

“ There lie the relics of a sire,  
 Compassionate and just,  
 Whom my sad eyes beheld expire,  
 And mingle with the dust.  
 A sister too whose spotless life  
 Was like the clear noon day,  
 Bless'd as a daughter, mother, wife,  
 Untimely snatch'd away.

“ And there beneath the lime-tree shade,  
 The cold turf on her breast,  
 Are a loved wife's sad ashes laid,  
 And there my own shall rest.  
 Her beauteous form consign'd to earth,  
 That form which charm'd each eye,  
 Her innocence and modest worth  
 Have sought their kindred sky.

“ *But buried in a foreign land,  
 The tuneful Goldsmith lies,  
 No kinsman grasp'd his stiffening hand,  
 Or closed his dying eyes.  
 Consign'd to death that levels all,  
 My uncle met his doom,  
 And BURKE and REYNOLDS wept his fall,  
 And JOHNSON grav'd his tomb.*

“ As nipping frost in luckless hour,  
 Oft blights the blooming rose,  
 While many a weed and baneful flower,  
 Beneath its influence grows.

his uncle, if not happily introduced or so well expressed as might be wished, is not devoid of interest. The scenery described is that which adjoins the family residence, named St. John's, near Athlone.

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When thoughts like these invade my mind,  
As winter's rage assails,  
Oh what are clouds or howling winds,  
To what my bosom feels ! ”

## CHAPTER XVII.

NEGOTIATION WITH GARRICK. — HISTORICAL WRITING. — MR. ROACH. — GOOD-NATURED MAN. — HUGH KELLY. — COUNTRY EXCURSIONS. — DR. GLOVER.

IN the spring of 1767, his play, to the completion of which some anxious months had been devoted, was finished ; but the greater difficulty remained to introduce it to the stage.

There are perhaps few writers of lively imagination and versatile powers who have not at some period of their lives wished to write for the theatre, influenced by the variety of excitements which commonly attend its representations. A successful dramatist if shorn of some former honours in our own days, still occupies a large space in the public eye, his reputation spreads more rapidly than that of any other writer, and his name, which is frequently bandied with a familiarity implying regard, forms a passport to the favour of that large class of society, who in a great metropolis find in the amusements of the theatre relaxation from the cares of life. He identifies himself not merely with the literature but with the enjoyments of the people ; with one of the most social, and certainly not least intellectual, of their recreations. Like the orator, he has the gratification of wit-

nessing his own triumphs ; of seeing in the plaudits, tears, or smiles of delighted spectators, the strongest testimony to his own powers. The author of a good book hears of his success, but the writer of a good play may night after night witness it.

On the other hand, the discouragements are of a serious description ; so great as to cause some wonder how such as possess reputation in another department of writing can commit it to the caprice of managers, actors, and audiences ; and the risks they must necessarily run, has kept many proud or sensitive minds not otherwise indisposed to dramatic composition, from trusting their labours to the stage. The composition of a good play we know is no ordinary effort of mind ; its requisites of plot, incident, character and dialogue, their combinations and developments so as to produce an agreeable whole, require genius of a high and varied order. When the piece is completed, interest is commonly necessary to secure its representation. Friends for this purpose are to be sought, especially by such as are poor and unknown. The private judgment of the manager may be unfavourable, or the actors dissatisfied with their parts ; alterations are suggested in order to satisfy caprice or unreasonable pretension, which sometimes have the effect either of obscuring the author's original design, or impairing his sense. The delay of months or seasons in bringing it forward even when all other obstacles are surmounted ; the annoyance of being



brought forward at a late or unfavourable period of the season ; the chance of being finally rejected by the audience, often as capricious and uncertain as either manager or performers, but from whom there lies no appeal ; the consequent extinction of all hopes of fame or profit, the annoyance of having taxed his ingenuity in vain, and the mortification, if not ridicule, consequent upon ill success—these form very solid reasons for men of high reach of mind frequently declining to write for the stage.

All these obstacles were very well known to Goldsmith, but some he fancied might be obviated by his reputation, and others by personal knowledge of theatrical persons. It serves to heighten our dislike to embark labour and genius in such a calling, to know that however popular as a poet, though familiar with the tastes of the town, and well acquainted with the manager of at least one of the theatres, besides being introduced by friends of influence and celebrity to another, he was fated to experience them all.

His first interview with Garrick some years before, led, as may be supposed, to no further intercourse, but his interests rendering such an acquaintance now desirable, Sir Joshua Reynolds, by a letter still in existence, appears to have brought them together. Goldsmith wished to have the manager's opinion of his play ; the latter at the first glance is said to have approved it, but in his usual manner, took care not to express himself so frankly as to be unable to retreat from any rash

inferences of the author of receiving it for representation. This habitual indecision gave rise to frequent charges against him of insincerity by the dramatists of the day; Murphy and Bickerstaffe were sometimes loud in his condemnation; and Goldsmith heard enough to believe that less was to be expected from the civilities of the manager, than from what he believed his own reputation and the influence of literary friends. From the first therefore, without wholly disregarding Drury Lane, it is certain he contemplated Covent Garden Theatre as more likely to prove favourable to his views.

That no reasonable precaution should be neglected in case of being refused at one house, it was however submitted to Garrick in form for his stage, and the result turned out as had been anticipated. He at first hesitated to give so decided an opinion to the author as to his friends, for Reynolds and Johnson were soon told it would not succeed in representation. In one of the interviews succeeding this communication of his sentiments, Garrick after some discussion, finally offered to submit the piece to Mr. Whitehead, which Goldsmith thought proper to decline, believing that its condemnation was already resolved upon in that quarter; another person of no critical or dramatic note was then named, at which the Poet exhibited some warmth, influenced by an impression that the friends of the manager had been canvassed for unfavourable opinions of his play. In this temper they parted, when

in a few weeks Garrick, who had proceeded to his native city, received the following letter, which makes the withdrawal of the piece rather the act of the author than direct rejection on his part. Traces of wounded feeling are obvious in the disappointed author; but we must fairly attribute them as much to the vexations occasioned by pecuniary embarrassment as to the offended pride of authorship; for by several notes written about this time, which have been seen by the writer, he was urgently in want of money. The conviction therefore that at least one channel of probable relief was closed against him, sufficiently explains his dissatisfaction.

“ London, July 20. 1767.

“ SIR,

“ A few days ago Mr. Beard renewed his claim to the piece which I had written for his stage, and had as a friend submitted to your perusal. As I found you had very great difficulties about that piece, I complied with his desire, thinking it wrong to take up the attention of my friends with such petty concerns as mine, or to load your good nature by a compliance rather with their requests than my merits. I am extremely sorry that you should think me warm at our last meeting; your judgment certainly ought to be free, especially in a matter which must in some measure concern your own credit and interest. I assure you, Sir, I have no disposition to differ with you on this or any

other account, but am with an high opinion of your abilities and with a very real esteem, Sir,

“Your most obedient humble servant,

“OLIVER GOLDSMITH.”

“To David Garrick, Esq., at Litchfield.”

To this the following reply was promptly returned—

“Litchfield, July 25. 1767.

“SIR,

“I was at Birmingham when your letter came to this place, or I should have answered and thanked you for it immediately. I was indeed much hurt that your warmth at our last meeting mistook my sincere and friendly attention to your play for the remains of a former misunderstanding which I had as much forgot as if it never had existed. What I said to you at my own house I now repeat, that I felt more pain in giving my sentiments than you possibly would in receiving them. It has been the business, and ever will be, of my life, to live on the best terms with men of genius, and I know that Dr. Goldsmith will have no reason to change his previous friendly disposition towards me, as I shall be glad of every future opportunity to convince him how much I am

“His obedient servant and well-wisher,

“D. GARRICK.”\*

The play was therefore withdrawn to try its fortune at Covent Garden.

\* Communicated by — Smith, Esq.

A memorandum of Newbery about this time, points to compilations in which Goldsmith appears to have been engaged, though after diligent search no trace of these works, or more certain information on the matter, has been gained. By this it appears that the promissory note of 1763 remained still unpaid.

“ 1764. Oct. 29.

Dr. Goldsmith on account of

	English Lives	-	-	£8	8	0
	Taylor's Works	-	-	0	12	0
1765. Sept. 12th.	For half the copy of Essays	10	10	0		
1767. July 13th.	For British Empire	-	-	10	0	0
	Promissory note. Oct. 11th, 1763.	-	-	48	1	6
	Ditto July 7th, 1767	-	-	10	0	0
	£87...11...6”					

Part of the summer (1767) he resided at Islington, occupying apartments as traditionary accounts state, in the old turret of Canonbury house, in which it appears several literary men, publishers, and printers, his friend Newbery for one, had at various times fixed their abode.\* Here he had as

\* Humphreys, author of “Canons, a Poem,” “Ulysses, an Opera,” &c. &c.; Chambers, editor of the Cyclopædia; Smart, the poet; and several others of minor note.

“ Here Humphreys breath'd his last, the muse's friend,  
And Chambers found his mighty labours end.”

“ See on the distant slope, majestic shows  
Old Canonbury's tower, an ancient pile  
To various fates assign'd; and where by turns  
Meanness and grandeur have alternate reign'd.  
Thither, in latter days, hath genius fled  
From yonder city, to respire and die.  
There the sweet Bard of Auburn sat, and tuned

visitors or resident acquaintance, besides others whose names are forgotten, the Rev. Mr. Rider, the Rev. Mr. Sellon, known for eccentricity and absence of mind, and who in consequence became the subject of many jocular tricks, Beaufort, editor of the *Town and Country Magazine*, Woty, Huddleston Wynne, Mr. Robinson the publisher, Mr. Hamilton and Mr. William Baker, printers. The Crown tavern, in the lower road, formed the scene of many of their social dinners, and Goldsmith, according to accounts furnished by surviving relatives of some of these parties, was not the least convivial.

It was stated by Isaac Reed, and by Seward, the friend of Johnson and the *Thrales* and author of some volumes of anecdotes, that in this year he attempted to secure some more certain provision than literature afforded, by becoming a candidate for the Gresham lectureship on Civil Law, vacant by the death of Mr. William Mace. No trace of his application with this view is extant, as appears by reference to the proper authority.\* He found

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The plaintive moanings of his village dirge.  
There learned Chambers treasured lore for *men*  
And Newbery there his A B C's for *babes*."

\* The following polite answer to the inquiry at Mercer's Hall is creditable to the writer and seems conclusive on the subject:—

“SIR,

“In reply to your inquiry as to whether Dr. Goldsmith was a candidate for one of the Gresham Lectureships, I beg to state that I believe he was not. In the year 1767 there was an election to the Civil Law Lectureship in the room of Mr. Mace

perhaps on inquiry, as in the case of the Secretaryship to the Society of Arts, that private influence which commonly determines such appointments, rendered the chance of success small, and therefore decided him not to risk a repulse by the ballot. Genius is too often but a secondary recommendation to fill such situations in England; interest is commonly the first; and by some unhappy mischance, we rarely find genius and interest in conjunction.

Such hours as he deemed unfavourable to composition in works of genius, were occupied by productions of less original character, the materials for which were at hand, and required only his taste, to string skilfully together. He had thus, as constant labour was necessary, at least the pleasure of variety. History at this period fixed his attention, more no doubt, as a source of profit, than of fame. The subject is indeed one which whenever treated by a writer of talent, may earn both, as he saw in the instances of Hume, Robertson, and Smollett; and having already in the Letters of a Nobleman

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deceased; there are only two persons entered as candidates — Dr. Dawson and Mr. Jeffries, the latter of whom obtained the appointment. Neither in the election preceding or subsequent to the one above alluded to, is any mention made of Goldsmith being a candidate, and I conclude that if his intentions had at any time been directed to that object, he must have abandoned them previous to the period of election. I should have been happy if I could have afforded you any information on the subject and equally gratified in the knowledge of the circumstance.

“I am, Sir,

“Your very obedient servant,

“W. H. LANE.”

to his Son, tried his hand with success, was led to think there was still room for another labourer in the same field. No rivalry was intended by what he had undertaken, as his plan differed materially from theirs.

He appears to have thought that history, as it is usually treated, tells more than it is necessary to tell, and much more than is true. Sir Robert Walpole, and Dr. Johnson, the one a practical statesman, and the other an acute and profound philosopher, were of the same opinion. Yet on all questions connected with the conduct of preceding ages and individuals, we lean to the desire of fulness of information as the great source of wisdom to ourselves; and indeed in every great emergency connected with the political or social condition of men, the only safe guide to follow. We feel not only that nothing should be concealed on such an occasion, but that nothing should be left untold that can lead to the knowledge of truth; we are not afraid so much of tediousness as uncertainty; not of the accumulation of evidence, but of its scantiness. We can frequently spare speculations concerning motives, conceiving we may believe them or not as we think proper, and knowing that at best they are matters of opinion; but we cannot submit to be deprived of the knowledge of even minute facts. On the number and importance of these, chiefly depend our deductions; and many such must be omitted in short or unskilful histories. From this cause we are disposed rather to have our



patience taxed with details, than run the risk of being left unacquainted with circumstances, sometimes apparently trifling, which serve to throw light upon the springs of human conduct.

Readers of a different description, however, require likewise to have their tastes consulted; and for these, he began about this time, by an agreement with Thomas Davies, the bookseller so often mentioned by Boswell, and afterwards the biographer of Garrick, to write the Roman History. It was to be completed within two years, or less if it could be accomplished, and the sum to be paid was 250 guineas.

Early in the month of January 1768, a Mr. Roach, one of his countrymen who died in London about 1795, dined with him at his chambers in the Temple,—introduced by letters from Ireland. Several particulars of this interview he afterwards, by the aid of a good memory repeated with much interest to his friends, but being a commercial, not a literary man, not with that fulness which they, or he himself as he said, could have wished. From one of the persons thus favoured, who heard him describe this evening, on more than one occasion, a brief abstract of the chief topics of conversation has been gleaned.

Two other persons beside the host and this gentleman, formed the party; one a Mr. Higgins, unconnected with literature, the other whose name was forgotten, an author, though of no note. The dinner was of an expensive description. During a

portion of the evening the conversation turned upon literary topics, and the visitor remembered a very animated comparison drawn by the Poet, between Shakspeare and Milton, censuring the latter most sharply for all his writings excepting his poetry. Otway, he considered the greatest dramatic genius which England had produced after Shakspeare. Farquhar, he said, was truer to nature and possessed the spirit of genuine comedy in a superior degree to any other modern writer; because people were rarely so witty in their dialogue as Congreve makes them, whereas they frequently displayed that life, spirit, and vivacity, which is so conspicuous in Farquhar, though unhappily he was often coarse and licentious, as much from the taste of the age as probably from being less accustomed to good society than his contemporaries. Several other popular writers passed under review, the particulars of which are forgotten. Thomson's poetry he approved; there were many natural pictures and descriptions in it, but involved in an unnecessary parade of words. To Shenstone, Mason, Gray, and other modern writers, he gave a very qualified degree of admiration.

Having indulged in this strain for some time, he at length as if recollecting himself, burst into a fit of laughter, and addressing the literary gentleman present said—"And what do you think of our friend Boswell having the courage to venture upon poetry? Nay here are the lines;" and a newspaper was produced from which he recited several verses with a mock solemnity of manner productive

of no little amusement to his auditors, adding a running commentary as he proceeded couched in a ludicrous or satirical strain. Mr. Roach remembered that the piece began with "Scotland!" "Ay, ay," said he, "Scotland is ever the burden of a Scotchman's song." "Why," he resumed, "how simple the man must be to write such lines, and call them poetry! And then to advertise them in the newspapers as his own by a formal letter to the printer! What were his friends about to let him expose himself?" Here he read the letter, and after some humourous animadversions, remarked that Dr. Johnson would be "either very angry, or very witty with Boswell's verses." The evening which had passed very pleasantly, terminated by the party adjourning to the theatre.

The lines so fruitful of mirth to Goldsmith, of which the name could not be remembered by the relator of the anecdote, have since been discovered by the writer in a newspaper of the day; and with the introductory letter are subjoined for the information of the reader.\* It is a prologue on the open-

\* (Public Advertiser, Jan. 12. 1768.)

*"To the Printer.*

"SIR,

"I observed in your paper lately a very incorrect copy of the Prologue which was spoken at the opening of our Theatre Royal. As I know you are always ready to oblige your old correspondents, I doubt not but you will do me the favour to insert a genuine copy.

I am, Sir,

"Your humble servant,

"J. B."

ing of the Edinburgh Theatre. Johnson, as Boswell remembered, had acquired great reputation by a similar composition for Drury Lane, and there was

“ Prologue, *at the opening of the Theatre Royal in Edinburgh.*

*Written by James Boswell, Esq. Spoken by Mr. Ross.*”

“ Scotland, for learning and for arms renown’d  
In ancient annals, is with lustre crown’d ;  
And still she shares whate’er the world can yield  
Of letter’d fame, or glory in the field ;  
In every distant clime Great Britain knows,  
The Thistle springs promiscuous with the Rose.

“ While in all points with other lands she vied,  
The stage alone to Scotland was denied ;  
Mistaken zeal, in times of darkness bred,  
O’er the best minds its gloomy vapours spread ;  
Taste and Religion were supposed at strife,  
And ’t was a sin — to view this glass of life !  
When the muse ventured the ungracious task,  
To play elusive with unlicensed mask,  
Mirth was restrain’d by statutory awe,  
And tragic genius fear’d the scourge of law,  
Illustrious heroes arrant vagrants seem’d,  
And gentlest nymphs were sturdy beggars deem’d.

“ This night, loved George’s free enlighten’d age  
Bids royal favour shield the Scottish stage.  
His royal favour every bosom cheers,  
The Drama now with dignity appears.  
Hard is *my* fate, if murmurings there be,  
Because the Favour is announced by me.

“ Anxious, alarm’d, and awed by every frown,  
May I intreat the candour of the Town ?  
You see me here by no unworthy art ;  
My *all* I venture — where I’ve fix’d my heart.  
Fondly ambitious of an honest fame,  
My humble hopes your kind indulgence claim.  
I wish to hold no right but by your choice ;  
I’ll risk my Patent on the Public Voice.”

something of his characteristic presumption, or love of imitation, in attempting to follow in the track of his great master; he mistook his powers indeed in venturing on verse. Whether Johnson ridiculed the lines does not appear, but Boswell seems to have been willing to forget them. What he would have submitted to from him, would have been resented coming from Goldsmith; and the opinion of his verses by the latter, prone at all times to speak his sentiments freely, probably reached his ears and had its effect in producing distaste towards his critic.

Dissensions arising among the proprietors of Covent Garden Theatre which produced harassing appeals to courts of law, retarded the appearance of his comedy more than two months beyond the period originally intended, namely November 1767; and at one time, by the account of the author, almost made it the innocent victim of their squabbles by threatened postponement till the following season. These quarrels being at length appeased for a time, the “Good Natured Man” was produced on Friday the 29th January 1768. A few preliminary though modest announcements then customary in the newspapers, hinted the fact to the friends of the writer in the following terms: — “Those ladies and gentlemen who have taken places at the Theatre Royal in Covent Garden for the new comedy of *The Good Natured Man*, are desired to take notice, that it will be performed for the first time to-morrow evening.”

Dr. Johnson according to promise furnished the Prologue, several of his acquaintance attended to give it their support, and the performers were not remiss in their exertions. The play notwithstanding these aids, met with less warmth of applause than most of his friends anticipated; the taste of the town had become sentimental; and the scene of the bailiffs in the opening of the third act, appeared so broad in its humour as to keep the fate of the piece some time in suspense; nor was its safety fully assured till that scene in the fourth act, where Shuter in the character of Croaker read the supposed incendiary letter.

On the second night of representation, Monday the 1st of February, there being no intermediate performance, this scene was retrenched; other slight alterations made in the interval rendered the audience more favourably disposed, and by these means it ran ten nights in succession, the fifth being by command of their Majesties. On the 20th March it was selected by Shuter for his benefit, when the author, grateful for the assistance rendered by the comedian, presented him with ten guineas, a not unfrequent instance of generosity when perhaps suffering from want of the sum he gave away. No sufficient hold on public favour had however been secured by the play to call for its farther repetition during the season, nor though occasionally performed, has it ever been considered what is theatrically termed a

stock piece ; when repeated at intervals and for benefits, the scene of the bailiffs was successfully revived. The fastidiousness of the audience on this point excites some surprise at the present day, when similar characters are introduced to the stage not only without objection as objects open to the comic muse, but with great effect ; so dangerous is it sometimes, though so honourable, for genius to start into an untrodden track.

The third, sixth, and ninth nights, according to the custom of the time, were advertised as appropriated to the author, a convenient hint to such as felt disposed to advance his interests by their attendance. The profits it is supposed did not exceed 350*l.* or 400*l.* ; a sum less than that assigned by rumour, though comparing it with other receipts of the theatre about the same period, and the expenses, probably nearer the truth.

Copyright however was then of considerable value to a dramatist ; a good reception at the theatre promised corresponding advantages from the press, but at present this source of emolument is said to be unproductive. The play was published on the 5th February ; on the following day a memorandum still in existence shews that through the medium of a Mr. Geeve, he drew for 50*l.* upon Griffin the publisher, whose advertisements implied considerable public attention to the piece ; one of these exhibiting the rapidity of sale on such occasions may be transcribed. “The first large impression of the

new comedy of the *Good Natured Man*, written by Dr. Goldsmith, being sold off on Saturday last (the 6th, the day after publication), a new edition will be published this afternoon, at three o'clock; when those ladies and gentlemen that were then disappointed of their books may be supplied by W. Griffin, in Catherine Street in the Strand." On the 22nd of the same month a fourth edition appeared, as the advertisement states, "By Mr. Goldsmith;" it is therefore probable he profited to some amount through this channel.

On the whole therefore if not received with all the ardour satisfactory to sanguine expectation, it could not be considered a failure, though such appears to have been the impression left on the mind of the author. His mortification on the first night of its appearance was not only extreme, but the efforts made to conceal his feelings before others at the moment were scarcely less painful. All this he afterwards confessed with a candour exhibiting his characteristic want of reserve, while the little credit gained by the acknowledgment from at least one of his auditors, shews that in justice to ourselves, such confessions should be rarely made. Dr. Johnson who had been in his company the evening on which the play was performed and witnessed his distress, heard the avowal of that distress with surprise at the Chaplain's table at St. James's Palace when both were dining with Dr. Percy, and censured it as silly, saying that "no man should be expected to sympa-



thise with the sorrows of vanity," a harsher remark than the matter deserved. Most dramatic writers would have felt as acutely as Goldsmith, though few might so unreservedly have avowed it; after all however there was something of moral courage in the disclosure; the matter was then over, and his reputation could withstand the acknowledgment of what, with an author, is scarcely a weakness.

"Returning home one day from dining at the Chaplain's table," says Mrs. Piozzi who tells the story, "he (Johnson) told me that Dr. Goldsmith had given a very comical and unnecessarily exact recital there of his own feelings when his play was hissed; telling the company how he went to the Literary Club at night" (it will be remembered that the representation took place on Friday,) "and chatted gaily among his friends as if nothing had happened amiss; that to impress them still more forcibly with an idea of his magnanimity, he even sung his favourite song about '*an old woman tossed in a blanket seventeen times as high as the moon;*' but 'all this while I was suffering horrid tortures,' said he, 'and verily believe that if I had put a bit into my mouth it would have strangled me on the spot, I was so excessively ill; but I made more noise than usual to cover all that; and so they never perceived my not eating, nor I believe at all imaged to themselves the anguish of my heart; but when all were gone except Johnson here I burst out a-crying, and even *swore* that I would never write

again.' 'All which Doctor,' said Dr. Johnson, amazed at his odd frankness, 'I thought had been a secret between you and me; and I am sure I would not have said any thing about it for the world.'"

It has been justly remarked that the first lines of Johnson's prologue, commenced probably in one of his frequent fits of despondency, form an inappropriate introduction to a comedy.

"Prest by the load of life, the weary mind,  
Surveys the general toil of human kind!"

But it has escaped the research of Boswell that two lines, originally forming the fifth and sixth, were omitted on the second or third night of representation, lest they might be misconstrued and give offence; the allusion was to the general election—

"Amidst the toils of this returning year,  
When senators and nobles learn to fear!"

It would likewise appear that the four following lines, which serve to carry on the parallel between the candidates for parliamentary and dramatic honours, were not in the original copy as spoken at the theatre.

" 'This day the powder'd curls and golden coat,  
Says swelling Crispin 'begg'd a cobbler's vote.'  
'This night the wit' the pert apprentice cries,  
'Lies at my feet, I hiss him, and he dies.'"

Several minor emendations evince that the great critic while quick in discerning errors in the verses of others, was not inattentive to the defects of his

own, and gave them, when an opportunity offered, careful revision. One of these, made chiefly perhaps to save the dignity of the Poet, improved the elegance of the line. For however admissible in the familiar intercourse of private life to allude to the personal appearance of an author, there is some want of taste in introducing it to an audience, few of whom ever have, or ever may, see him, and cannot therefore if it be a joke, enjoy it. The seventh line originally ran "Our *little* bard without complaint may share," which epithet in the amended copy was changed to *anxious*, as being at once more poetical and appropriate to the feelings of an author brought before his judges for sentence. In the original stood —

"Uncheck'd on both *caprice may vent its rage,*  
As *children fret* the lion in a cage,"

which are now changed to

"Uncheck'd on both loud rabbles vent their rage,  
As mongrels bay the lion in a cage."

In the first copy the words of the line —

"The poet's foes their schemes of spite dismiss,"

are now slightly transposed and stand

"Their schemes of spite the poet's foes dismiss

The concluding line stood —

"Trusts without fear, to *candour*, and to you."

But as candour cannot well be separated from the person displaying it, there appears something like

repetition in the thought, and it was therefore judiciously changed to —

“Trusts without fear, to *merit*, and to you.”

The epilogue came from his own pen. He had expected one as he informs us, from a friend at Oxford, and in this hope, deferred writing it till the last moment; and under the circumstances of being produced in haste and anxiety, possesses great merit. In this likewise we find a few alterations, two lines being added in the present copy, which do not appear in what was addressed to the audience —

“No, no, I've other contests to maintain,  
To-night I head our troops at Warwick Lane.”

Two others which stood originally the last but four, were afterwards transposed by him, and now appear the twenty-first and second.

“Our Author's friends thus placed at happy distance,  
Give him good words indeed, but no assistance.”

The prologue and epilogue in their original state will be found in the *Public Advertiser*, 3d February 1768.

The merit of this comedy, in the judgment of persons the most competent to form an opinion, is superior to its success at the moment, or since. But there seems to exist a law of the English stage, become from frequency almost irreversible, that what has once been rejected, or coolly received, is never again to be taken into public favour, though that decree we are

assured from the materials that go to make up an audience, must often be the result of the caprice, or humour of the moment. There is however no appeal; critics may question the justice, but there is no disputing the tastes, of the multitude. And as a dramatic author writes for the express gratification of these tastes, if he fails, he can scarcely condemn, however he may lament, the decision of his judges.

Examined in the closet as a dramatic composition, it will not be found deficient in the usual sources of interest, plot, business, humour, and character; the delineation of the latter he says in the preface, having been his principal aim. We have therefore three which seem in great measure new to the stage; Lofty who promises favours to his friends from his alleged intimacy with the great of whom he knows nothing; Croaker always anticipating evil from trifling occurrences, yet selfish and arbitrary, a character borrowed from that of *Suspicious* in the *Rambler*; and Honeywood, drawn in the extreme of inconsiderate and almost insipid good nature, who is incapable of giving a negative to an application from his friends, whether it be for his mistress or his money; and in many of whose characteristics Goldsmith is supposed to have had his own peculiarities in view. Burke applauded the play as one of the best of the time, and took some interest in its success. Dr. Johnson said that "The Good Natured Man" was the best comedy that had appeared since the "Provoked Husband;"

while "False Delicacy" the rival, and more successful performance at Drury Lane, he considered devoid of character. Theatrical critics differed with him so far that while the merit of the former was allowed, equal praise was claimed for the latter; but the prevailing taste of the town will be better estimated by the opinion one of its chief leaders at this period, whose approbation is divided with more seeming impartiality. "We cannot help expressing how much satisfaction it gives us, to see the public at once in possession of two such comedies, as *False Delicacy* and *The Good Natured Man*; each of which notwithstanding their respective imperfections, must be allowed to be the productions of genius. If the Drury Lane comedy is more refined, correct, and sentimental, the Covent Garden performance is more bold, more comic, and more characteristic; and if the former, from the chaste accuracy and duly-tempered spirit of the author, has less need of pardon, the latter from having hazarded more has more title to mercy and forgiveness. The merit of both is great, and we are happy that the beauties of each piece are of a different complexion from that of the other; for in an age of good writers each several author will have a manner peculiar to himself; but when contemporary poets all fall into the same vein, such a similarity of style denotes a barrenness of invention in them all; not but the two writers in question have shewn themselves equal to the efforts of the other. The character of

Cecil in *False Delicacy* is drawn to the true spirit of comedy, and many scenes of the *Good Natured Man* abound with the most elegant sentiments. The first of these pieces needed no alteration ; and we are pleased to find that the only amendments which were necessary have been made in the latter.”

“ *False Delicacy*,” so extolled at the moment though long since forgotten by readers as well as play-goers, appeared at Drury Lane on the 23d of January, nearly a week before the play of *Goldsmith* at the other house. So great was the applause as to cause Garrick nearly to break through a regulation announced only that morning in the journals that “ the managers of Drury Lane Theatre intend for the future not to run any new piece nine nights successively, but to perform other pieces occasionally that they may give a greater variety of entertainments to the public.” Whether doubts of success were implied by this announcement does not appear, but a reception so unequivocal decided him to run it *eight* nights in succession, thus keeping just within the line of his engagement, and he repeated it not unfrequently during the season. When published, it had equal success if we are to believe the following announcement. “ The new comedy, called ‘ *False Delicacy*,’ published yesterday morning, was so rapidly bought, that the proprietors had sold the first impression of three thousand copies before two o’clock.” It passed to a fourth edition within two or three weeks, and ten

thousand copies were sold in the season; a public breakfast was given to the author, at the Chapter Coffee House; and a piece of plate, value twenty pounds, presented to him by the publishers.

Two comedies appearing nearly at the same moment at the two houses, of professedly opposite styles and merits, necessarily involved a kind of rivalry between the authors; and the continual discussions to which they gave rise when theatrical affairs were of general interest, their publication within three days of each other, their progress step by step through the press, a fourth edition of each being called for about the same time, produced at length something like jealousy. Rumour insinuated that the *Good Natured Man* had been seen by Kelly, while in the hands of Garrick or of some of his friends; and that hints from its situations and sentiments had been taken to improve his own piece. For this charge there seems no foundation, excepting the slight coincidence of the offer of *Miss Marchmont* in *False Delicacy* to surrender her lover, be supposed similar to *Honeywood's* design of surrendering his mistress.

The report however increased the unpleasant feelings arising between the parties. Goldsmith was induced to speak freely of his opponent's play by the remarks and flattery of several of the lower order of writers, who surrounded and preyed upon him; men who too often when their own attacks fail upon a work of genius, take delight in making greater wits assail each other.



Kelly is said to have retaliated. When they met however on one occasion behind the scenes of Covent Garden, Goldsmith thought it necessary to congratulate him on the success of his play, to which the other, who was well aware of his opinion, replied with sufficient spirit and readiness—"If I thought you sincere, Mr. Goldsmith, I should thank you." Thenceforward their intercourse which had assumed some degree of intimacy, ceased; it had commenced at Newbery's about 1765, and gave rise to a story, that Goldsmith once entertained the design of marrying the sister of Kelly's wife, a rumour for which the late Mr. John Taylor, who knew her, informed the writer there was no foundation. After the quarrel, Kelly was commonly numbered among the anonymous assailants of the Poet, of whom there were always many in the newspapers; an assertion never proved against him, and probably from the emotion, much to his credit, evinced at the funeral of his dramatic opponent which he attended, untrue; yet even this tribute of tears, shed over the grave of a former friend, became a handle for abuse in some lines, of which the following are a sufficient specimen.

"Hence K.....y who years, without honor or shame,  
 Had been sticking his *bodkin* \* in Oliver's fame,  
 Who thought, like the Tartar, by this to inherit  
 His genius, his learning, simplicity, spirit;  
 Now sets every feature to weep o'er his fate,  
 And acts as a mourner to blubber in state," &c.

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\* In allusion to his original calling of stay-maker.

Hugh Kelly was one of those men, of whom there are several in the history of letters, who starting into life under serious disadvantages, found nothing in his progress through it but his own industry to help him on his way, and who unable to attain a place in the first rank of genius, received little credit for the talents he really possessed, or the difficulties he overcame. Born in Ireland, in an humble station of life and apprenticed to a stay-maker, but feeling his mind superior to his occupation, he transferred himself to London at the age of twenty-one. Here he experienced much of that distress which awaits the poor and unfriended; from occasional employment in his trade he became a writer in an attorney's office, then a contributor to magazines and newspapers, afterwards an editor, and finally appeared as an original writer in essays called the "Babbler," the "History of Louisa Mildmay," and "Thespis," a poem, on the plan of the *Rosciad* of Churchill. *False Delicacy* was his first comedy, followed by *a Word to the Wise*, *Clementina*, a Tragedy, the *School for Wives*, *Romance of an Hour*, and the *Man of Reason*. He had entered himself of one of the Inns of Court, was called to the bar, and had some chance of succeeding in this new career when disease, contracted by the sedentary habits inseparable from literature, terminated an industrious and inoffensive, if not meritorious life.

Circumstances made it a kind of fashion to depreciate Kelly while alive, for no reason that can

be discovered excepting the original sins of poverty and the calling to which he had been brought up, the latter furnishing a handle for the wit of such as assailed him. The learned treated him lightly from the limited nature of his acquirements, though this defect he remedied in part by sedulous study; men of the first genius denied his claims to equality; inferior writers questioned his superiority and could at least abuse what they failed to equal, for with this class the supposed use of his power as editor of periodical works, kept him in continual conflict. And having written largely in support of the ministers, those who disliked their politics thought it necessary to condemn his plays in order to exhibit their patriotism. Between parties so unfriendly or hostile there was little hope of meeting an unbiassed judgment, and it is doubtful whether he ever received it. His political writings were shrewd and sensible, and from the anger excited in opponents, may be supposed to have had their effect; his dramatic pieces much above mediocrity and commonly successful; his essays, though destitute of the depth of Johnson or the humour of Goldsmith, touch upon manners very agreeably; his novel is still perused; and *Thespis*, if inferior to Churchill's satire, is not without pungency and power. All these and others not avowed were written amid the cares of providing for a young family wholly dependent on his pen for support; his life was therefore laborious, and his morals it is said blameless; and if

we decline placing him in the first rank among the writers of his day, we cannot withhold the praise of variety and ingenuity.

The disagreement of Kelly and Goldsmith became a source of amusement to several who had assisted to foment it; among others to Kenrick who at once envied and aimed to be a competitor of both. He had lately produced a comedy called the *Widowed Wife*, with indifferent credit. The greater applause bestowed on the productions of his rivals, followed within a few weeks by the success of Bickerstaffe's opera of *Lionel and Clarissa*, and Murphy's tragedy of *Zenobia*, which seemed to throw the three departments of the drama exclusively into the hands of Irish writers, excited his spleen, and it found vent in the following parody on Dryden's lines on Milton; they are preserved as evidence that he "whose hand was against every man" and who never hesitated to use it in a hostile manner, had nothing worse to say. Murphy seems to have escaped, not from particular favour, but from having no niche in the verses properly adapted to receive him.

*"The Poetical Triumvirate.*

"Three poets in three distant ages born," &c.—*Dryden.*

"Poor Dryden! what a theme had'st thou,  
Compared with that which offers now?  
What are your Britons — Romans — Grecians,  
Compared with thorough bred Milesians,  
Step into G...ff...n's \* shop, he'll tell you,  
Of G..ds..th, B...k...rs...ffe, and K...ll... ;

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\* Griffin, the bookseller, in Catherine Street in the Strand.

Three poets of one age and nation,  
 Whose more than mortal reputation,  
 Mounting in trio, to the skies,  
 O'er Milton's fame and Virgil's flies,  
 While take one Irish evidence for t'other,  
 Ev'n Homer's self is but their foster-brother."

In May this year he lost his brother, the Rev. Henry Goldsmith, for whom he had been unable to obtain preferment in the church; a failure which among his relatives less acquainted with the world, as fame was erroneously supposed by them to be influence, incurred the reproach of negligence. They knew not the terms on which an author usually lives with the great, who are often willing to admire in him what deserves admiration, but seldom think it necessary to evince their consideration in the form of patronage or reward. Neither will the honest pride of a man of genius always permit him to solicit favours, either for himself or his friends; he shrinks from being considered a dependent, where nature has in some respects made him an equal; and he may have been observant enough to discover that the assumption of independence commands respect from the most supercilious. He is not then suspected of being likely to be a tax upon his acquaintance possessed of rank or power, and is thus enabled to retain their society, if not their esteem, without suspicion of his motives.

To the curacy of Kilkenny West, the moderate stipend of which, forty pounds a year, is suffi-

ciently celebrated by his brother's lines, it has been stated that Mr. Goldsmith added a school, which after having been held at more than one place in the vicinity, was finally fixed at Lissoy. Here his talents and industry gave it celebrity, and under his care the sons of many of the neighbouring gentry received their education. A fever breaking out among the boys about 1765, they dispersed for a time; but re-assembling at Athlone, he continued his scholastic labours there until the time of his death, which happened like that of his brother, about the forty-fifth year of his age. He was a man of an excellent heart and amiable disposition. The late Mr. John Goldsmith of Stephen's Green, Dublin, one of the family of Ballyoughter, and his pupil, communicated to the writer several anecdotes of his unaffected goodness. His views of the duties of his sacred office were strict, and his piety unfeigned. It is recorded of him by his brother, that he once saw, or believed he saw, an apparition; under what circumstances is not mentioned, nor could inquiry of the relatives of the family glean traditional notices of the story; but he was not a weak man, and firmly believed, beyond doubt, what he told. Of his descendants some particulars will be hereafter given.

In the spring of this year, the Poet visited Derbyshire, one of those occasional excursions made into the country whenever his literary occupations permitted. In this county it was said he was a

visitant at Ilam, situated near the entrance of Dove Dale, where a seat in the garden was shown some years ago as his, but no positive trace of his residence there or intimacy with the proprietor has been found. Hampshire, Sussex, Suffolk, Yorkshire, Leicestershire, and Lincolnshire are remembered to have been favourite counties for similar journeys; sometimes for health or recreation, at other periods with the design of visiting friends, or in order to examine such objects of nature or art as they afforded. Often at such times he was alone; occasionally with a companion whenever an agreeable one equally unoccupied could be found willing to enter upon such an excursion.

When unable to proceed to a distance from town by the necessity of fulfilling a literary engagement, he retired a few miles into the vicinity, often on the Harrow or Edgware roads, working diligently at his task, and not being seen for two or three months together although his place of retreat was known. At such places his chief amusement when not occupied at the desk, was, as he said, a stroll along the shady hedges in the neighbourhood, seating himself in the most agreeable spots, furnished with paper and pencil, and taking notes of occasional thoughts which were afterwards expanded and corrected at home; or sometimes when engaged upon plays and poems he wrote the lines or dialogues off at once. In this way several sketches for the poem of the *Deserted Village* were made; and about

this period indeed he first set himself seriously to work upon that production, not prosecuting it constantly, but at intervals as his genius inclined, or his mind felt at ease. Bishop Percy in conversation frequently alluded to these habits.

While resident in town, his sedentary habits were usually relieved by a walk to one of the villages in the neighbourhood, the enjoyment of a moderate though convivial dinner, the conversation of such friends as chose to be of the party, and a quiet return in the evening. Blackheath, Wandsworth, Fulham, Chelsea, Hampstead, Highgate, Highbury and others were thus frequently visited, air and exercise enjoyed, and the excursion jocularly termed by him a tradesman's holiday. A few persons survive who remember these excursions, or heard them dwelt upon by their acquaintance who had participated in their enjoyment. The party, which seldom consisted of more than four or five persons, chiefly connected with literature, the legal or medical professions, always assembled at his chambers to a remarkably plentiful and rather expensive breakfast; and when finished, he had usually some poor women in attendance to whom the fragments were consigned. On one occasion a wealthy city acquaintance not remarkable for elegance of mind or manners, who observed this liberality, said with some degree of freedom, "Why Doctor, you must be a rich man; *I* cannot afford to do this?" "It is not wealth, my dear sir," was the reply of the Doctor, willing to rebuke



without offending his guest, "but inclination. I have only to suppose that a few more friends than usual have been of our party, and then it amounts to the same thing."

One of the number not unfrequently, was an amanuensis occasionally in his employment still remembered and familiarly known as "Peter Barlow," a person offering some peculiarities of manner, and thence an object of wit to several friends of the Poet. He always wore the same dress, never gave more than a certain sum, a trifle, for his dinner, but insisted upon paying this punctually; and as the expense of the repast always exceeded considerably the stipulated amount he chose to contribute, his employer paid the difference; the peculiarities of "Peter" affording in return, a fund of amusement to the party. One of their frequent retreats was the well-known Chelsea Bun-house.

Another of these persons, selected chiefly for his facetious qualities, was an humble dependent on literature named Glover, who having been educated for the medical profession usually received the appellation of Doctor. He had relinquished it however for the stage, and while performing at Cork, being accidentally taken into a house where lay the body of a malefactor just executed, he was induced to attempt to restore life, and to the astonishment of perhaps himself as much as the friends of the criminal, succeeded. His fame rapidly spread, he had again recourse to his ori-

ginal calling, though with less success than was expected, from the success of his experiment as restorer of the apparently dead, and ultimately proceeding to London, found between physic and writing for the booksellers, a scanty subsistence. Goldsmith formed then a leading object of interest to all similar adventurers from Ireland; he was easy of access, his nature, particularly to those who sought his good offices, unsuspecting, his purse open to demands upon it, and his vanity perhaps flattered by having a levee of needy authors at his breakfast table, soliciting advice upon literary projects, and pouring out their admiration in return for his fare and his counsel. Among these he soon found a place, being taken into some degree of favour; and as the following idea of the company, and of the claims thereby engendered on the patron, is said to be written by him, though anonymously, we have no reason to doubt its accuracy: "Our Doctor, as Goldsmith was now universally called, had a constant levee of his distressed countrymen, whose wants as far as he was able, he always relieved; and he has been often known to leave himself even without a guinea, in order to supply the necessities of others."

Glover, who as a teller of stories amused the frequenters of the Globe and Devil Taverns, and thence, as his own finances seldom permitted such disbursements, had his reckoning commonly paid by the visitors, was not a man of sufficient talents to profit by opportunities and furnish any

new or striking views of Goldsmith. It may be doubted whether he was so intimate as he said, or that he did not forfeit by misconduct further claim to consideration ; for in an early copy of *Retaliation* G——, which was probably meant for him, stood where Woodfall's name now stands. He wrote a short biography of his patron, published after his death, which is defective in facts, as well as in anecdote ; several of the latter he recalled to memory afterward and told in conversation, but any higher effort was beyond his powers. It requires a clever man, to speak instructively of clever men ; he must be qualified to analyse mind, or to estimate character ; for it will be observed that of the numbers that chance to know a man of genius, how few there are, when they tell any thing, who have more than his foibles and frailties to tell.

A few of his anecdotes, as they were also known to others, were doubtless true, some certainly more questionable, and others probably the mere coinage of imagination, but his powers of mimicry, it appears added greatly to their effect. "Besides being a great humourist," says Sir William Beechey, in a communication by which the writer is obliged, "the stories related by Glover of his acquaintance were told so well, with a humour so peculiar, and with such a knowledge of their customary phrases and manner in conversation, that none who ventured to repeat them could hope to produce equal effect. He usually selected their peculiarities for illustra-

tion; thus of Goldsmith, Foote, Garrick, Colman, Sterne whom he professed to have known, and others, he gave a vivid representation in voice, gesture, and phraseology, so as to produce universal mirth."

Goldsmith, according to this person, when his reputation became high sought a kind of privacy in his country walks, desiring to be taken out of frequented neighbourhoods so as not to be recognised; and on one occasion expressed displeasure to the person who accompanied him, for proceeding through a village where the latter happened to be known. Pride could scarcely be the object here as was insinuated, whatever wish he might otherwise have for temporary concealment.

Another story from the same quarter is still more improbable.

Having extended their walk, for Glover was as he said with him, from the Kilburn road through West End to Hampstead, Goldsmith who had dined, felt fatigued in descending the hill homeward, and observing a cottage with the window open where the inmates were at tea, remarked to his companion, "I should be glad to be of the party." "That can be immediately accomplished," was the reply; "allow me to introduce you." Without hesitation, Glover, who really knew nothing of the parties, entered the house with an air of familiarity followed by the unconscious Poet, made his way to the room, shook hands cordially with the owner who rose to receive him, but fixing

his eyes upon what he conceived the most good-natured countenance in company, muttered some indistinct words of recognition, and instantly commenced a jocular story invented for the occasion, of an amusing adventure on the road. This he followed by others of a similar kind, so as to produce the effect intended, that of persuading the master of the house they were intimate with his guests, and the guests that they were friends of the host; an hour was thus pleasantly spent, tea was offered and accepted, and with the same affectation of familiarity and good humour they withdrew. Some misgivings of the trick had in the mean time arisen in the mind of Goldsmith, who the moment he quitted the house, inquired whether any of the party were really known to his companion, who replied with as little ceremony that he had never seen one of them before. The mortification of the former, who attributed their escape from summary ejection by force only to his own person being known, was extreme; and a wish was expressed to return and apologise for the jest. From this he was persuaded by his companion remarking, "Doctor, we are unknown; you quite as much as I; if you return and tell the story, it will be in the newspapers to-morrow; nay, upon recollection, I remember in one of their offices the face of that squinting fellow who sat in the corner as if he was treasuring up my stories for future use, and we shall be sure of being exposed; let us therefore keep our own counsel." The skill with which

this tale of his own assurance was told by Glover, the repetition of the dialogues, and the descriptions of the occasional embarrassments and surprise of Goldsmith during the adventure, formed no inconsiderable part of the humour of the story.

His carelessness of money according to the same authority, and of which there was little doubt, exhibited an unusual, if not ostentatious negligence. Whenever a sum was procured and the most pressing demands paid, the remainder was thrown by in an open drawer, to be disbursed either by himself or his servant, as occasion required. When a friend once called at an earlier hour than usual, the bill of the laundress chanced to lie on the table for payment, and the footman received orders to "pay the poor woman." A sum of moment happened to be in the drawer from which the domestic after turning it over with seeming care, though evidently no adept at calculation, took the amount, and the remainder was replaced. The visitor, who had observed the proceeding, at length inquired whether as a matter of prudence it was right to place such a temptation in the way of a person in his station of life, who in some unhappy moment might be tempted to abuse his trust. The only reply was, with an expression of surprise, "What, my dear friend, do you take Dennis for a thief?"

This servant in whom he reposed great confidence, was some time afterwards taken extremely ill, to the great regret of his master, and the case

requiring surgical aid, Mr. (now Sir William) Blizard \*, whom he had met at the table of Doctor Grant, in Fenchurch Street, and who had just commenced practice, was called in. Sir William informs the writer that he was obliged to perform the operation for empyema, that is, to make an opening into the cavity of the chest, for the dislodgment of matter accumulated there in consequence of previous inflammation; the result was successful, and excited a degree of attention highly advantageous to the reputation of the then young surgeon.

\* Since this was written Sir William has expired, at a very advanced age.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

ANECDOTES. — GENTLEMAN'S JOURNAL. — EPILOGUE TO "THE SISTER." — AGREEMENT FOR HISTORY OF ANIMATED NATURE. — ROMAN HISTORY. — AGREEMENT FOR HISTORY OF ENGLAND. — ACQUAINTANCE WITH MR. BUNBURY AND FAMILY. — VERSES ATTRIBUTED TO HIM. — APPOINTED PROFESSOR OF HISTORY TO ROYAL ACADEMY. — MAURICE GOLDSMITH.

IN the summer of 1768, in order to have leisure to proceed with the History of Rome, free from the interruptions common to a residence in town, he took a cottage near Edgeware, in the vicinity of Canons, in conjunction with Mr. Bott, the gentleman already mentioned whose chambers adjoined his own. This abode though small, possessed a good garden, and had been occupied as a country retreat by a shoemaker of wealth in Piccadilly, who having expended some trouble and money in its decoration, was thence called by the new tenants "The Shoemaker's Paradise." Here he and his friend found air and retirement, and the distance being no more than eight miles from town, occasional engagements to dinner there were still indulged, the usual dinner hour being then four o'clock, or earlier; and in the evening they found it agreeable to return to their retreat.

This appears to have been a work of occasional



peril when his companion, who drove a gig, happened to indulge too freely in the pleasures of the table. There is a letter still extant, written by the Poet to this gentleman some time subsequently, in reply to a letter of invitation to visit him in the Isle of Wight, in which there is allusion to one of their escapes. It commences with acknowledgments to Bott, to whom he was under frequent pecuniary obligations, for assistance rendered in a moment of difficulty, as he could now sit down in his chambers in safety without the terrors of arrest hanging momentarily over his head; and proceeds to recall a scene they had experienced together in driving at night down the Edgware Road, when his companion having driven against a post to the imminent danger of their necks, sturdily maintained that he was in the centre of the road.

An anonymous writer in one of the useful minor publications of the day\*, states another of his temporary residences to have been a small wooden cottage, on the north side of the Edgware Road, about a mile from Paddington, near what is called Kilburn Priory. No authority however is adduced for this statement; nor is it probable, since the cottage seems too small to contain besides the family, an inmate in the character of a lodger. The same account states that here was written "Animated Nature;" it is therefore probably confounded with the farm-house at Hyde, of which notice will be taken hereafter.

\* Mirror, vol. xix. p. 147.

Among several Irish acquaintance settled in London, was a Mr. Seguin, a mercantile man of some literary tastes, who having taken country lodgings for his family in the vicinity of this residence, frequently visited and was visited by its occupant. A considerable intimacy it appears existed between him and this gentleman, to two of whose children he stood godfather; and from a surviving member of the family in Dublin, a few slight notices of his habits have been gleaned from parental recollection.

While in London, they dined with him on several occasions, in the Temple, and met at different periods Bickerstaffe, Kelly, Dr. Percy, a variety of authors of minor note, and on one occasion Dr. Johnson, who was invited in order to gratify two others of his Irish friends, a Mr. and Mrs. Pollard, of Castle Pollard, who having heard so much of the celebrated moralist, were very desirous to see him before they quitted the English metropolis. Goldsmith was enabled to gratify their curiosity, but impressed a preliminary caution on the strangers present to talk only on such subjects, Irish matters for instance, as they perfectly understood, and above all, when he had begun to talk, not to interrupt him. This was punctually obeyed; Johnson proved to be in good humour, and the day passed off pleasantly. These entertainments he gave in an expensive manner, but was so little disposed personally to what is called high living, that his constant supper, as they had

opportunities of observing, and did not forget to tell in Ireland, was boiled milk.

The impression handed down in this family of his personal demeanour is that he was a very guileless, or as it is phrased in the sister country, an innocent man ; cheerful and playful in society where he was known ; fond of conversation, music, or any amusement going forward. One of the accomplishments on which he prided himself was dancing, but in going through a minuet with Mrs. Seguin, his manner once excited her risibility as well as that of the more juvenile spectators, in an uncontrollable manner, which however was borne by him with great good humour. He amused them with several Irish songs ; and one of his chief favourites was the Scotch ballad of Johnny Armstrong. He unbent without reserve to the level of whoever were his companions. In all their youthful diversions, he took such interest as to become rather a leader than merely a participator, and joined in such as were most familiar ; whether blind man's buff, romping, forfeits, or the more trivial games at cards in which by affecting to cheat, or showing an eagerness to win, his companions were always rendered very mirthful and boisterous. With associates of a still more juvenile class, he did not hesitate to exhibit still more familiarity, putting the front of his wig behind, or any other trick calculated to excite their merriment.

Of his attention to children Mr. Colman, whose

memory may have been refreshed by repetitions of the anecdote, as he was very young at the time, tells the following story, which occurred in this year, and about the same period.

“Oliver Goldsmith, several years before my luckless presentation to Johnson, proved how ‘doctors differ.’ I was only five years old when Goldsmith took me on his knee, while he was drinking coffee, one evening with my father, and began to play with me; which amiable act I returned with the ingratitude of a peevish brat, by giving him a very smart slap in the face; it must have been a tingler, for I left the marks of my little spiteful paw upon his cheek. This infantile outrage was followed by summary justice, and I was locked up by my indignant father in an adjoining room to undergo solitary imprisonment in the dark.

“Here I began to howl and scream most abominably, which was no bad step towards liberation, since those who were not inclined to pity me, might be likely to set me free, for the purpose of abating a nuisance.

“At length a friend appeared to extricate me from jeopardy, and that generous friend was no other than the man I had so wantonly molested, by assault and battery—it was the tender hearted Doctor himself, with a lighted candle in his hand, and a smile upon his countenance, which was still partially red from the effects of my petulance. I sulked and sobbed, and he fondled and soothed,

till I began to brighten. Goldsmith who in regard to children was like the village preacher he has so beautifully described, for

‘ Their welfare pleased him, and their cares distress’d,’

seized the propitious moment of returning good humour, so he put down the candle and began to conjure. He placed three hats which happened to be in the room, upon the carpet, and a shilling under each ; — the shillings he told me were England, France and Spain. ‘ Hey, presto, cockolorum !’ cried the Doctor, and lo ! on uncovering the shillings, which had been dispersed, each beneath a separate hat, they were all found congregated under one. I was no politician at the time, and therefore might not have wondered at the sudden revolution which brought England, France and Spain all under one crown ; but as I was also no conjurer, it amazed me beyond measure. Astonishment might have amounted to awe for one who appeared to me gifted with the power of performing miracles, if the good-nature of the man, had not obviated my dread of the magician ; but from that time whenever the Doctor came to visit my father,

‘ I pluck’d his gown, to share the good man’s smile,’

a game of romps constantly ensued, and we were always cordial friends, and merry playfellows.

“ Our unequal companionship varied somewhat in point of sports, as I grew older, but it did not

last long ; my senior playfellow died, alas ! in his forty-fifth year, some months after I had attained my eleventh. His death it has been thought was hastened by mental inquietude ; if this supposition be true, never did the turmoils of life subdue a mind more warm with sympathy for the misfortunes of our fellow-creatures ; but his character is familiar to every one who reads ; in all the numberless accounts of his virtues and his foibles, his genius and absurdities, his knowledge of nature, and his ignorance of the world ; his ‘compassion for another’s woe’ was always predominant ; and any trivial thing of his humouring a froward child weighs but a feather in the recorded scale of his benevolence.”

In November 1768\* appeared a new periodical

\* In Nicholl’s *Literary Anecdotes* the date 1760 is erroneously assigned to this work. The following is the first advertisement.

“Saturday Nov. 19th will be published, in octavo, price sixpence, a new pamphlet, to be continued every Saturday called ‘The Gentleman’s Journal, or Weekly Register of News, Politics, Literature, and Amusements.’

“Upon these occasions it is usual to offer something by way of address to the public ; and frequent experience convinces us that a great deal may be said in an advertisement, whatever is done in the work it is intended to introduce. But though to perform more than other publishers of periodical pamphlets may be thought no very difficult task, to promise so is certainly impossible. The proprietor of *The Gentleman’s Journal*, therefore begs leave to refer such as may be willing to encourage this undertaking, to his first number, where they will at once be judges of the design, and execution. Printed for W. Griffin, at Garrick’s Head, in Catherine Street in the Strand.”—*Public Advertiser*, Nov. 11th, 1768.

work published by Griffin, called "The Gentleman's Journal or Weekly Register of News, Politics, Literature, and Amusements," changed after the second number, from being weekly to appear once a fortnight. To this Goldsmith was said to have contributed several articles. What they were are unknown; his connexion with the publisher renders the matter probable, but the tables of contents of each number, still extant, although the paper itself has not been found, furnish no clew to indicate their nature. He was not however as has been erroneously asserted, the editor; Kenrick, Kelly, and others are likewise said to have been contributors; and a jest of the Poet was repeated by Mr. Cooke, when in reply to a remark made on the premature termination of its career he said, "No uncommon cause, my dear sir; it died of too many doctors."

In February 1769 was represented the comedy of "The Sister\*," by Mrs. Charlotte Lennox, taken from one of her novels called *Henrietta*, to which Colman contributed the prologue and Goldsmith an excellent epilogue, the best perhaps he has written. Neither of these however could save the piece; for meeting with opposition the first night, it was, although announced for a second representation, voluntarily withdrawn by the authoress, who by an anecdote related by Mr.

\* Usually called in theatrical history, "The Sisters," though the bills of the day use the singular number and correctly, for it was afterwards published by Davies.

Langton seems to have been the victim of some ill nature.

“ Dr. Goldsmith,” according to that gentleman, “ upon the occasion of Mrs. Lennox’s bringing out a play, said to Dr. Johnson, at the club, that a person had advised him to go and hiss it because she had attacked Shakspeare in her book, called ‘ Shakspeare Illustrated.’ ‘ And did you not tell him,’ returned Johnson, ‘ that he was a rascal?’ ‘ No, sir,’ rejoined Goldsmith, ‘ I did not. Perhaps he might not mean what he said.’ ‘ Nay, sir,’ was the reply, ‘ if he lied, it is a different thing.’ Colman, who was present, slyly said (but it is believed Dr. Johnson did not hear him) ‘ Then the proper expression should have been— Sir, if you don’t lie, you’re a rascal.’ ” Some error may have occurred in the story as to the play, for it seems strange he should be asked to hiss a piece for which he had written the epilogue.

At this period, not in 1771 as is commonly supposed, he first formed the design of writing a History of Animated Nature, to which there were several inducements. He possessed a taste for the more amusing if not for the scientific parts of the pursuit ; a popular compilation on the subject was wanting, as that of Brookes, his connexion with which has been noticed, had failed ; as a literary speculation he thought it admitted of being executed by the aid of books without much original research, and would thus afford time and means for the composition of works on which he



meant to rest his fame. No pretensions to originality were assumed; but to give elegance, animation, and interest to the book, he thought it necessary to write the articles directly from the impressions of his own mind, rather than in the character of editor of the labours of another.

Natural history is not merely an amusing but a useful study; one in which all are interested and with which all would be gladly acquainted, were it not to the majority of persons too much labour to learn. We are surrounded by living objects whose existence is obvious, but of whose history and habits we know little; our curiosity becomes continually excited by what we see, but as individual observation can embrace only a small portion of the vast volume of nature spread out before us, books are required for this necessary information by numbers who care more for the facts communicated than for scientific detail or arrangement. The simplification of such works therefore by an attractive writer not only commands popularity but is productive of real utility. His first design, was to translate Pliny with such additional notices as subsequent observation had supplied. Further consideration altered this project; it seemed inexpedient to attempt to re-introduce even with the projected additions a writer so long before the world, upon subjects many of which were not only of the most familiar kind, but within range of the daily observation of all persons, and upon which more fulness of remark

and novelty of matter would be expected than so ancient an author could be supposed to furnish.

A work therefore new, or new in arrangement and detail, seemed in every respect preferable; the state of public taste and information demanded something better than we possessed; and the addition of his name, promised at least that the most amusing species of information should be selected from an amusing subject, and introduced with all the attraction of an elegant and perspicuous style.

An agreement for such work being settled with Griffin, the bookseller, the following memorandum was drawn up.

“ MEMORANDUM.

“ Feb. 29th, 1769.

“ It is this day agreed between Dr. Goldsmith, of Brick Court, in the Temple, and William Griffin, of Catherine Street in the Strand, as follows, that is to say, Dr. Goldsmith agrees to write a new Natural History of Animals, &c. to be comprised in eight volumes, octavo, each volume to contain from twenty-five, to twenty-seven sheets of pica print, for which Mr. Griffin agrees to pay Dr. Goldsmith eight hundred guineas in the following manner, viz. one hundred guineas, upon the delivery of each volume of the copy, in manuscript; and Dr. Goldsmith in consideration of the one hundred guineas per volume, hereby agrees to make over all his right, and title, to, and in, the

copy of the said Natural History, to William Griffin, for ever, and to execute an assignment of the said copy on demand. It is understood by both parties that Dr. Goldsmith is to set about the work immediately and to finish the whole as soon as he conveniently can. To the above agreement both parties have set their names.

“ OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

“ WM. GRIFFIN.

“ If the work makes less than eight volumes the Doctor is to be paid in proportion.

“ OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

“ WM. GRIFFIN.”

In the spring of 1769, February according to Bishop Percy, though more probably March, he visited Oxford in company with Dr. Johnson, and is said to have had granted, *ad eundem*, the degree of M.B. No notice of it however occurs in the records of the University, although by the subjoined extract of a note from the Rev. Dr. Bliss, the registrar, to the writer, the fact may have been as stated.\*

“ Oxford, Feb. 24. 1834.

\* “ DEAR SIR,

“ I have now fully ascertained that no record of Goldsmith's admission *ad eundem* exists upon the registers of this University; but I have by no means ascertained that the Poet was not so admitted; on the contrary I incline to believe that the Bishop of Dromore's impression was correct. It is a singular fact that there is a chasm in the Register of Convocation for 1769 from March 14th to March 18th, which was the last day

In the middle of May appeared his "Roman History" \*, so impatiently expected by the publishers as to have been announced the preceding August. It gives us within the compass of two octavo volumes containing a thousand pages, the history of that state from the earliest period to the fall of the western empire. The preface displays sufficient humility ; he disclaims all affectation of new discoveries, or ambition to compete with more laborious writers, while the preliminary advertisements in the newspapers stated it to be, "for the use of schools, and colleges." He likewise informs us, "that there are some subjects, on which a writer must decline all attempts to acquire fame, satisfied with being obscurely useful." But with these modest intimations the book soon took higher ground, and even acquired a degree of reputation beyond perhaps the expectations of the writer. It became the companion not only of the young who could not be induced to peruse more

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of Lent term, and it is possible certainly that the admission of Goldsmith might have taken place in that interval. I told you I would mention the subject to the venerable President of Magdalen. I have done so, and the result is that he does not remember to have heard any thing relative to Goldsmith's visit to Oxford."

\* "This day is published ; in two volumes 8vo., Price 10s. 6d. in boards, or 12s. bound. The Roman History ; from the foundation of the city of Rome, to the destruction of the Western Empire. Written by Dr. Goldsmith. Printed for S. Baker and C. Leigh in York Street ; S. Davies in Russel Street, Covent Garden ; and L. Davies, in Holborn." *Public Advertiser*, May 18th, 1769.

voluminous historians, but of the elder and better informed persons, who wished to grasp at knowledge with the slightest labour, or to renew what had been previously learnt, in the shortest form. Books of this kind well executed, are sure to win their own way to public favour. To the applause of the multitude, he added the countenance of the critics, who in a measure anticipated the judgment of Dr. Johnson by, using nearly his words in allusion to the author of the Traveller. Some pronounced it “seasonable and well-timed,” “an excellent digest of the Roman History,” and the “most complete abridgment of the kind, for the use of gentlemen, and even of those who are more than cursory readers, that has been yet published.” While others in pointing out errors of haste, or grammar, and defects perhaps inseparable from the plan, admit “that after all, it is better for common readers to be content with the knowledge it contains, than to drudge through the voluminous works of other writers for more;” and pertinently add, “It is surely to be regretted that the author of the Traveller, one of the best poems that has appeared since those of Mr. Pope, should not apply wholly to works of imagination.”

The preference given to Goldsmith over Robertson as an historian by Dr. Johnson, Boswell attributes though with no sufficient cause as far as we know, to his friendship for the former, or some presumed dislike to Scotland, or Scotsmen. Robertson

is no doubt an elegant author deserving of all his reputation, who however aims so much at effect in many of his details, that we are tempted to think we have before us rather the orator ambitious of displaying his eloquence, than the simple narrator of past events. He falls likewise into the error of occasionally making speeches for his characters, a practice which if countenanced by antiquity, is scarcely desirable in a modern writer; the substance of the remarks made by eminent persons long dead in particular situations may reach us, but not the precise words, which can be rarely caught in a speech of length; in fact whenever we meet with such, suspicion is apt to arise that the writer may have drawn for the matter as well as the manner, upon his imagination.

Goldsmith's qualities exhibit nothing of labour or pretension; he is brief, natural, and perspicuous, presenting as his chief claim to favour, that charm of ease so difficult to acquire, and which nature bestows only on the favoured few. Had he sat down to the composition of extended history by choice, instead of its being an affair of necessity, as a source of fame to be acquired not as a task to be performed, we cannot doubt from what has been accomplished, that he would have attained great eminence. On this subject Dr. Johnson has given a strong opinion in the comparison drawn between him and Robertson, which if even tinged with prejudice as his biographer insinuates, though without sufficient cause, must have some foundation in

truth. We have here at least the grounds of preference stated, and may judge for ourselves of their force; yet it may be fairly inferred from the broad manner in which Goldsmith's deficiencies otherwise are asserted by the great critic on the same occasion, that there is little room for the charge of undue partiality. The conversation took place at the house of Mr. Topham Beauclerk, in April 1773.

Goldsmith being mentioned, Johnson (after some further remarks) said, "Take him as a poet, his 'Traveller' is a very fine performance; ay, and so is his 'Deserted Village,' were it not sometimes too much the echo of his 'Traveller.' Whether indeed we take him as a poet, — as a comic writer, — or as an historian, he stands in the first class." Boswell. "An historian! my dear Sir, you surely will not rank his compilation of the Roman History, with the works of other historians of this age." Johnson. "Why, who are before him?" Boswell. "Hume, — Robertson, — Lord Lyttleton." Johnson (his antipathy against the Scotch beginning to rise). "I have not read Hume; but doubtless Goldsmith's History is better than the *verbiage* of Robertson, or the foppery of Dalrymple." Boswell. "Will you not admit the superiority of Robertson, in whose history we find such penetration, such painting?" Johnson. "Sir, you must consider how that penetration, and that painting, are employed. It is not history, it is imagination. He who describes what he never saw draws from fancy.

Robertson paints minds, as Sir Joshua paints faces, in a history-piece; he imagines an heroic countenance. You must look upon Robertson's work as romance, and try it by that standard. History it is not. Besides, Sir, it is the great excellence of a writer, to put into his book as much as his book will hold. Goldsmith has done this in his history. Now Robertson might have put twice as much in his book. Robertson is like a man who has packed gold in wool; the wool takes up more room than the gold. No, Sir; I always thought Robertson would be crushed with his own weight,—would be buried under his own ornaments. Goldsmith tells you shortly all you want to know: Robertson detains you a great deal too long. No man will read Robertson's cumbrous detail a second time; but Goldsmith's plain narrative will please again and again. I would say to Robertson, what an old tutor of a college said to one of his pupils, 'Read over your compositions, and whenever you meet with a passage which you think is particularly fine, strike it out!' Goldsmith's abridgment is better than that of Lucius Florus, or Eutropius; and I will venture to say that if you compare him with Vertot, in the same places of the Roman History, you will find that he excels Vertot. Sir, he has the art of compiling, and of saying every thing he has to say, in a pleasing manner. He is now writing a Natural History, and will make it as entertaining as a Persian tale."

A translation of the Roman History into French,



appeared many years ago ; and in 1805, a second with some engravings, and a map after D'Anville.

One proof of its immediate success was a new agreement entered into within three weeks of its appearance with the same publishers for a History of England ; to extend to four volumes. The following drawn up by himself, is a copy.

“ MEMORANDUM.

“ Russel Street, Covent Garden.

“ It is agreed between Oliver Goldsmith, M.B. on the one hand ; and Thomas Davies, bookseller, of Russell Street, Covent Garden, on the other, that Oliver Goldsmith shall write for Thomas Davies an History of England, from the birth of the British empire, to the death of George the Second, in four volumes octavo, of the size and letter of the Roman History, written by Oliver Goldsmith. The said History of England shall be written and compiled in the space of two years from the date hereof. And when the said history is written, and delivered in manuscript, the printer giving his opinion that the quantity above mentioned is completed, that then Oliver Goldsmith shall be paid by Thomas Davies, the sum of five hundred pounds sterling, for having written and compiled the same. It is agreed also, that Oliver Goldsmith shall print his name to the said work. In witness thereof we have set our names, this 13th of June, 1769.

“ OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

“ THOMAS DAVIES.”

Some of his most agreeable hours at this time, were spent in the family of Captain Horneck, whose lady and daughters in addition to great personal beauty, secured attention by their elegance and taste from several distinguished men of the time. They first met at the house of Sir Joshua Reynolds who had known Mrs. Horneck in Devonshire, of which county she was a native, when the honest simplicity of Goldsmith, his acknowledged genius and celebrity, and their attractive manners and conversation, induced the desire for greater intimacy on the part of both, which for the remainder of his life continued uninterrupted. After the marriage of one of the young ladies, with the celebrated Henry Bunbury, he became a frequent guest at their residence, Barton in Suffolk; here in agreeable society he found relief from the toils of study, and the occasional dissipation of a town life. In this family are preserved some of those familiar verses, which written in the spirit of whim or good humour, answered the purpose of exciting a smile among those to whom they are addressed. One of these sent about this period, is a reply to an invitation to dinner at Sir George Baker's to meet the Misses Horneck, Sir Joshua Reynolds, Miss Reynolds, Angelica Kauffman, and others, and is jocularly headed, in apology for their extreme homeliness, which renders it necessary to explain what he meant to write —

“ This is a poem ! this is a copy of verses ! ”

It will be found in the Works, and the reader is indebted for it to Major-General Sir Henry Bunbury, Bart.

Several such sportive pieces appear to have been addressed to his acquaintance, of which three or four were known to be extant about 1790, but of which all memory is lost; others of a more complimentary character, volunteered to compliment his female friends may exist, though few or none can be satisfactorily traced. Of such things it appears he kept no copies, and none were therefore found among his papers; whatever may be discovered, and we may believe that several still linger among the descendants of former friends, were preserved first from regard, and afterwards by his reputation. Among these we know was the song, now included in his Works, commencing,

“ Ah me ! when shall I marry me ? ”

accidentally preserved by Boswell; he was fond of the air and procured a copy from the author, who sang it himself in private companies, very agreeably. It was written for the character of Miss Hardcastle, in *She Stoops to Conquer*, but omitted, because Mrs. Bulkley, who performed the part, did not sing.

A copy of verses, addressed to a lady going to Ranelagh, was once in the possession of Mr. Malone, but even during his life was lost in all probability irrecoverably though not by negligence;

he thus alludes to them in a letter, to Bishop Percy, dated June 5th, 1802.

“I have a strong recollection of having got, I know not how, some verses addressed by Goldsmith, to a lady going to Ranelagh, or going to a masquerade, and of having given them to you for insertion; but I do not find them any where.” Again, July 20th, he says, “I cannot recollect what I have done with the unpublished verses of Goldsmith, nor from whom I got them. They remained for a long while folded in the Irish edition of his works, and are there no longer; so I suppose I have deposited them somewhere so *safely*, that I shall never find them. One often loses things in this way, by too much care.”\*

Several verses affiliated upon him, and supposed to be written about this time, cannot be passed over without notice, though of very questionable origin; no guarantee of authenticity can be found, and this necessarily excludes them from the Works, but the reader may not be displeased to examine their pretensions here.

In the commencement of the present century, a short letter, dated from the Isle of Wight, signed with the letter D. and addressed to the Editor of a Newspaper †, introduced the following lines, as a

\* From Mr. Mason's collection of MS. correspondence.

† “Mr. Editor,

“You have my thanks for your early attention to the lines I sent you from Goldsmith, the other day. If you will be equally so by inserting another quotation you will oblige me.

“Yours very sincerely,

(*Morning Chronicle*, April 3. 1800.)

“D.”

production of Goldsmith, and they have in consequence been included in some late editions of his works, though the authority being anonymous they are not admitted into that which accompanies these volumes.

“E'en have you seen, bath'd in the morning dew,  
The budding rose, its infant bloom display ;  
When first its virgin tints unfold to view,  
It shrinks, and scarcely trusts the blaze of day.

“So soft, so delicate, so sweet she came,  
Youth's damask glow, just dawning on her cheek,  
I gaz'd, I sigh'd, I caught the tender flame,  
Felt the fond pang, and droop'd with passion weak.”

The author of this communication being unknown, all we have to guide us is internal evidence, which if of any weight in such matters, is against its reputed origin. In the construction of the verses, there is a want of skill which Goldsmith, even in his careless moments, seldom displayed ; words are introduced little better than expletives ; and the free use made of epithets he not only never practised, but in his critical strictures condemned, as one of the most objectionable peculiarities of modern poetry. This may be seen in the remarks introducing his ballad in the Vicar of Wakefield,

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The previous communication alluded to, was signed “C. D.” dated Portchester, and inclosed the song “Oh, Memory ! thou fond intruder !” the latter word should be *deceiver* ; but the reason of the communication does not appear, for the song had been printed in all the editions of his works, and was therefore as well known as his other printed pieces.

and those in the Beauties of English Poesy, prefixed to Gray's Elegy, which he characterises as "a fine poem, but overloaded with epithets." Neither has he, as far as we know, written any thing else in the elegiac measure, excepting the stanzas on the taking of Quebec.

The succeeding piece is claimed in Ireland for Goldsmith; and in England for Charles Wyndham, Earl of Egremont, who died in 1763.\* Its Irish history is as follows. About the year 1769, or 1770, a Mr. Robert Nugent, from Westmeath, a relation it is believed of Lord Clare, being in London, received a copy of it from Goldsmith, who had written the lines upon a young lady, their mutual acquaintance, whom the former particularly admired.

This gentleman on his return to Ireland some time afterwards, met his death by accident, when this among other papers fell into the hands of a person living in the house, but unconnected with the family, and thence passing into those of others, came at length into possession of the late Mr. Edkins, of Dublin. He published it in a collection of inedited Irish poetry, in which is also to be found an early poem of Edmund Burke, which the

\* By a correspondent of the European Magazine, as the writer was informed by the Rev. Alexander Dyce, whose acquaintance with poetry is known to be extensive; it was thence copied into Park's "Royal and Noble Authors." On examining the Magazine, the copy was found deficient in the two first lines; so consequently is the work just mentioned into which it was introduced.

present writer who procured it from another quarter has printed elsewhere ; and a few others of some merit by writers unknown in England. The claim for Goldsmith will be at once disproved if it be found in print before 1757 ; it resembles his livelier manner, and appears to come from a practised pen, having more finish than an occasional writer of verses, if Lord Egremont was really such, would probably give it.

“ THE FAIR THIEF.

“ I tell, and tell with truth and grief,  
That Chloe is an arrant thief ;  
Before the urchin well could go,  
She stole the whiteness of the snow ;  
And more, that whiteness to adorn,  
She stole the blushes of the morn ;  
Stole all the sweetness Æther sheds  
On primrose banks or violet beds.  
Still to conceal her artful wiles,  
She stole the Graces' silken smiles ;  
'Twas quickly seen she robbed the sky  
To plant a star in either eye ;  
She stole Aurora's balmy breath,  
And pilfered orient pearls for teeth ;  
The cherry dipp'd in morning dew,  
Gave moisture to her lips and hue.

“ These were the infant spoils ; a store  
To which in time she pilfered more ;  
At twelve she stole from Cyprus' Queen  
Her air and love-commanding mien ;  
Stole Juno's dignity, and stole  
From Pallas sense to charm the soul.  
She sung ;— the Syrens all appear'd,  
And warbling— she stole all she heard.  
She play'd ;— the Muses from their hill  
Wonder'd who thus had stolen their skill.

Apollo's wit was next her prey,  
 Her next the beams that brighten day.  
 Great Jove her pilferings to crown,  
 Pronounced these treasures all her own ;  
 Pardon'd her crimes and prais'd her art,  
 And — t'other day she stole my heart.

“Cupid, if lovers are your care,  
 Exert your power on this fair,  
 To trial bring her stolen charms,  
 And let her prison be — my arms.”

The following verses rest chiefly on the authority of the late Mr. Quick, the comedian. When applied to a few years ago on the subject of Goldsmith, he mentioned, among other things, the Poet having written two or three songs for Mrs. Pinto, formerly Miss Brent, between 1766 and 1768, which he had seen printed in a magazine, and also in a collection of songs published as he believed by one of the Newberys; one of these publications has been traced, but it may be doubted whether either of the pieces stand as he wrote them.

## SONG.

“Love 's a fever of the mind,  
 Kindling fierce consuming fires,  
 Sweet its first approach we find,  
 Raising new and soft desires.  
 “Soon it fills with hopes and fears,  
 Sighs and tremblings break the rest,  
 Glowing wishes, wasting tears,  
 Night and day distract the breast.”

## SONG.

“How softly the zephyrs awaken the grove,  
 In this season, the Spring both of nature and love ;  
 Yet let no delights on our moments intrude,  
 But such as are simple and such as are good.



“Far hence be the love that’s by wantonness bred,  
 Or pleasures by folly or vanity fed ;  
 But joys which both reason and virtue approve,  
 We hail as the charm and the pride of the grove.”

Of a still more apocryphal character are the verses first printed in 1774 in an Irish magazine, it is believed Exshaw’s (for the work, since the transcription was made, has been mislaid), and said to have been transmitted to a friend in that country in 1769. They seem a tissue of imitations, disconnected and obscure in subject, thrown out as the germ of thoughts rather than thoughts developed, or made intelligible ; and this probably gave origin to the rumour of their having constituted part of the first rude draught of portions of the *Deserted Village*, altered by the author nearly as soon as written, but afterwards strung together by some admirer of more zeal than judgment who saved the manuscript. An examination of these lines can leave no doubt they are spurious ; but being published as his, the reader might be tempted to suppose, were he to meet them elsewhere, that the omission arose from being unknown to the writer. They will be found beneath.\*

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\* “VERSES

“*Addressed to a Friend in 1769 ;*

“BY OLIVER GOLDSMITH, M.B.

“O firm in virtue, as of soul sincere,  
 Lov’d by the Muse to friendship ever dear !  
 Among the thousand ills of thousand climes,  
 To name the worst that loads the worst of times,

In September, he received a large advance of money on the faith of the Natural History being

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Is sure a task displeasing to pursue,  
Trackless the maze, uncertain is the clew ;  
The ruling passion still by all confess'd,  
The master key that opes the human breast  
Here fails ; this darling child of nature's school,  
Submits to custom's more resistless rule."

" Should I recount the vast and various train,  
Who own but vice or folly's motley reign ;  
An heedless multitude, a giddy throng,  
The theme of satire and the scorn of song ;  
To scan their wild excesses, or to name  
Their crimes, would put the modest muse to shame ;  
Yet may her power endeavour to controul,  
That leading vice which animates the whole.

" While chief among the dissipated train,  
Who shall insidious luxury disdain ?  
Alas ! what refuge can fair virtue find ?  
The soul corrupt what laws or ties can bind ?  
Us'd to deceive and tutor'd to beguile,  
Death in her charms and ruin in her smile ;  
Like some trim harlot who our love demands,  
And binds our youth in Philistean bands,—  
'Tis she that bids enervate arts arise,  
That swells the dome to emulate the skies ;  
That fills the city and the crowded port,  
And bids her thousands to the mart resort.  
While meagre want, resistless fiend ! invades  
The rural seats and hospitable shades ;  
While the poor peasant the sad change deploues,  
In secret pines, or quits his native shores,  
Seeks better seats in other climes to gain,  
And dares for bread the savage and the main.

" Is not refinement still the source of care,  
E'en to the best that breathe the vital air ?  
E'en learning's self corrupted by her art,  
The mind enlarging oft corrupts the heart ;

diligently proceeded with, from the publisher with whom the agreement had been made, no less than five volumes being paid for, although from the

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How small the gain improvement can bestow,  
When taste refin'd but brings refined woe !

“ Simplicity ! ador'd, celestial maid,  
Still at thy shrine my constant vows are paid ;  
Do thou and Nature still direct my way,  
Guides whom I seek and own thy sovereign sway.  
Nor let the great, or gay, or rich, despise  
The humbler blessings from thy reign that rise ;  
No joys like thine from pomp or learning springs,  
The boast of schoolmen or the pride of kings !

“ What if we rove where rigid winter reigns,  
O'er Zembla's wastes, or Lapland's dreary plains ;  
Where luxury has no soft art display'd,  
No meretricious lures as yet array'd ;  
Where no choice stores the steril lands afford,  
But just can rear the rein-deer and his lord,—  
O'er moss-grown deserts *these* content to stray,  
*Those* wait in caves the wish'd return of day.  
Yet nature feeds them, and alike they prove,  
The gracious hand of all sustaining love.

“ How sparkles joy in every savage face,  
When brightening morn invites them to the chace !  
Well may their hearts with purest transports glow,  
If few their wants, so small their source of woe ;  
While wealth's soft sons, a hapless race, remain,  
Nurs'd in the lap of ease to many a pain ;  
Ev'n in enjoyments pine their hours away,  
And of those joys they sought become the prey ;  
When for the slothful couch they quit the field,  
Where various labours health and comfort yield,  
Till life's dull day with many a cloud o'ercast,  
Gives but the wish its hated hour were past.”

\* \* \* \* \*

short time elapsed since the agreement, not more than one, or perhaps not even one, was completed. The cause probably arose from being pressed for repayment of the amount of money which he had borrowed (said to be 400*l.*) to take and furnish his chambers; the acknowledgment to the bookseller is in his own handwriting.\*

“Received, September 26th, 1769, of William Griffin the sum of five hundred guineas for the copyright of the first five volumes of my Natural History, as by agreement; and for which I promise an assignment on demand.

“OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

“No. 2, Brick Court, Temple.”

Griffin, it appears, not being a wealthy man, was enabled to advance the money only by disposing at first of half the property and finally of the whole though as it seems without increase of profit, to another bookseller named Nourse, who eventually became its sole possessor and publisher. The various receipts and agreements connected with this transfer are still extant, and for the information of the reader curious in such matters, one or two of the first and last are subjoined. †

\* In the collection of William Upcott, Esq.

† “Sept. 23d, 1769.

“Received of Mr. Nourse one hundred pounds on account for the Copy Money of his half share of Goldsmith’s Natural History.

“WM. GRIFFIN.

“£100...0...0.”

Toward the end of the preceding year (1768), the Royal Academy had been instituted. "His Majesty," according to a long account of the proceedings which appeared at the time, "ever ready to encourage useful improvements, and always intent upon promoting every branch of polite knowledge, hath been graciously pleased to institute in this metropolis a Royal Academy of Arts, to be under his own immediate patronage, and under the direction of forty artists of the first rank in their several professions."\* A list of the official officers of the institution is added to the statement; those which were merely honorary were

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"Sept. 26th, 1769.

"Received of Mr. Nourse one hundred and sixty-two pounds ten shillings for his share of the five volumes of the Copy-Money for Dr. Goldsmith's Natural History.

"£162...10...0.

"WM. GRIFFIN."

"June 22d, 1772.

"Received of Mr. John Nourse fifty pounds on account of the Eighth Volume of Dr. Goldsmith's Natural History.

"£50...0...0.

"WM. GRIFFIN."

"June 30th, 1772.

"Received of Mr. John Nourse fifty-five pounds being the last payment for the Eighth Volume of Dr. Goldsmith's History of Animated Nature, and in full for that Work.

"£55...0...0.

"WM. GRIFFIN."

These, and a general receipt of this date on the back of the assignment from Griffin, making the property solely that of Nourse, are in the possession of Mr. Upcott.

\* Public Advertiser, December 20th, 1768.

added afterwards, and became known from the following announcement in December of this year, 1769.\* — “ Dr. Johnson is appointed Professor of Ancient Literature, and Dr. Goldsmith Professor of History to the Royal Academy. These titles are merely honorary, no salary being annexed to them.” Both nominations were made through the intervention of Reynolds, and imparted to the Institution which had the honour of reckoning such men among her officers, certainly not less honour than the individuals enjoyed by the appointment ; these offices gave the privilege merely of a seat at the occasional meetings, and at the annual dinner of the Academicians.

To this appointment allusion is made in the following letter, written to one of his brothers in the ensuing month. A small legacy had been left him by his good uncle Contarine, whose death would appear to have taken place shortly before ; and in disposing of it, we find allusions to his own situation and that of his “ shattered family,” for whom, being without provision or power himself, he could do nothing. To the original of this letter there was annexed a receipt, showing that 15*l.* had been paid to Maurice Goldsmith for a bequest of the late Rev. Thos. Contarine to Oliver Goldsmith, dated 4th Feb. 1770.

\* Public Advertiser, December 22d, 1769.

*“ To Mr. Maurice Goldsmith, at James Lawder’s,  
Esq., at Kilmore, near Carrick-on-Shannon.*

“ January, 1770.

“ DEAR BROTHER,

“ I should have answered your letter sooner, but in truth I am not fond of thinking of the necessities of those I love, when it is so very little in my power to help them. I am sorry to find you are every way unprovided for ; and what adds to my uneasiness is, that I have received a letter from my sister Johnson by which I learn that she is pretty much in the same circumstances. As to myself, I believe I could get both you and my poor brother-in-law something like that which you desire, but I am determined never to ask for little things, nor exhaust any little interest I may have, until I can serve you, him, and myself more effectually. As yet no opportunity has offered, but I believe you are pretty well convinced that I will not be remiss when it arrives.

“ The King has lately been pleased to make me professor of Ancient History in a Royal Academy of Painting, which he has just established, but there is no salary annexed ; and I took it rather as a compliment to the institution than any benefit to to myself. Honours to one in my situation, are something like ruffles to one that wants a shirt.

“ You tell me that there are fourteen or fifteen pounds left me in the hands of my cousin Lawder, and you ask me what I would have done with

them. My dear brother, I would by no means give any directions to my dear worthy relations at Kilmore, how to dispose of money, which is, properly speaking, more theirs than mine. All that I can say is, that I entirely, and this letter will serve to witness, give up any right and title to it; and I am sure they will dispose of it to the best advantage. To them I entirely leave it; whether they or you may think the whole necessary to fit you out, or whether our poor sister Johnson may not want the half, I leave entirely to their and your discretion. The kindness of that good couple to our shattered family demands our sincerest gratitude; and though they have almost forgot me, yet if good things at last arrive, I hope one day to return and increase their good humour by adding to my own.

“ I have sent my cousin Jenny a miniature picture of myself, as I believe it is the most acceptable present I can offer. I have ordered it to be left for her at George Faulkner’s, folded in a letter. The face you well know is ugly enough, but it is finely painted. I will shortly also send my friends over the Shannon some Mezzotinto prints of myself, and some more of my friends here, such as Burke, Johnson, Reynolds, and Coleman. I believe I have written an hundred letters to different friends in your country, and never received an answer to any of them. I do not know how to account for this, or why they are unwilling to keep up for me those regards which I must ever retain for them.



“ If then you have a mind to oblige me you will write often, whether I answer you or not. Let me particularly have the news of our family and old acquaintances. For instance, you may begin by telling me about the family where you reside, how they spend their time, and whether they ever make mention of me. Tell me about my mother, my brother Hodson and his son\* ; my brother Harry’s son and daughter, my sister Johnson, the family of Ballyoughter, what is become of them, where they live, and how they do. You talked of being my only brother.— I don’t understand you.— Where is Charles? A sheet of paper occasionally filled with the news of this kind would make me very happy, and would keep you nearer my mind. As it is, my dear brother, believe me to be

“ Yours most affectionately,

“ OLIVER GOLDSMITH.”

Maurice, who it will be remembered was a younger brother, had been brought up to no occupation, but found support in occasional visits to his relatives. He was at this period, the inmate of Mr. Lawder, who it has been mentioned had married his cousin Miss Contarine, and the fitting out mentioned in his brother’s letter, alludes to a project for trying his fortune in some capacity abroad.

\* It is remarkable that he does not mention his sister Mrs. Hodson ; the omission seems to imply the continuance of some disagreement which there are several reasons for suspecting had existed from an early period.

This, from disinclination, or that indolence arising from want of fixed occupation and not turning the mind of youth to some specific pursuit at an earlier period of life, was relinquished; and having some time afterwards complained to the Poet that he found it difficult to live like a gentleman, was told by him in reply, by all means to quit such an unprofitable calling, and betake himself to some handicraft employment. This advice as the most suited to his education and habits was adopted; he bound himself to a cabinet-maker in Drumsna in the county of Leitrim; and afterwards removing to Dublin, kept a shop many years in Hendrick Street.\* He partook of the peculiarities of the family; was honest, good-humoured, social, giddy, and careless; and the possession of such qualities seldom indicates a prosperous tradesman. Bishop Percy discovered him labouring in poverty about 1785, and to relieve his wants, which appear to have been urgent, first projected that edition of his brother's works, which failed in its immediate object by not appearing till long after his death. His situation is thus described by that prelate in a letter written to Malone from Dublin, June 16th, 1785.

“ He (Goldsmith) has an only brother living, a

\* As the relatives of eminent men derive some importance from their connexion, so honest Maurice is still mentioned in Drumsna, and a table of his workmanship shown to strangers; as the writer is informed by one who, as having a large share of genius himself, takes an interest in all that relates to the genius of a mutual country, Mr. Charles Phillips.

cabinet-maker, who has been a decent tradesman, a very honest, worthy man, but he has been very unfortunate, and is at this time in great indigence. It has occurred to such of us here as were acquainted with the doctor, to print an edition of his poems chiefly under the direction of the Bishop of Killaloe and myself, and prefix a new, correct life of the author, for the poor man's benefit, and to get you and Sir Joshua Reynolds, Mr. Steevens, &c., to recommend the same in England; especially among the members of the club." After a lengthened detail of the best mode of negotiating this work with the booksellers, and pushing it among the former friends of the Poet, he thus concludes a subject which much interested him: — "If we can but subsist this poor man at present, and relieve him from immediate indigence, Mr. Orde our Secretary of State has given us hope that he will procure him some little place that will make him easy for life; and thus we will have shown our regard for the departed bard by relieving his only brother, and so far as I hear, the only one of his family that wants relief."

"In the meantime," he writes in the following year, 1786, Oct. 17th, "I must entreat you to exert all your influence among the gentlemen of the club, and particularly urge it to Sir Joshua Reynolds, to procure subscriptions for the present relief of poor Maurice Goldsmith, who is suffering great penury and distress, being not only poor, but very unhealthy. I procured him a present supply of

between thirty and forty guineas last year ; but I fear his creditors did not suffer much of that money to remain with him. Their demands being so far satisfied, further relief would probably reach himself and remain with him to his great comfort. Our new Society of Arts and Sciences \* have made him mace-bearer ; but without present subsistence, I fear he will not live to derive the future emoluments. A guinea a piece from the members of the club would be a great relief to him."

It evinces the little attention paid to claims of this kind, that no subscription even at the moderate amount of a guinea, could be procured from members of the club, most of whom it may be presumed could sufficiently afford so moderate a tax upon their generosity. Malone in a packet of MS. correspondence submitted to the writer, complains much of this difficulty ; and also of the backwardness which he found to pay the amount nominally subscribed by the members on another matter, namely for the monument to Dr. Johnson. When the works of Goldsmith at length appeared, and he was written to by the bishop to dispose of a copy to each member, the same objection of the difficulty of getting the sale price occurred ; on mentioning the matter at the club dinner, several talked vaguely about it, but only one actually produced his contribution, and without others had done the same on the instant, Malone who was zealous in

\* Royal Irish Academy, then recently instituted.

the business adds, it would be useless to send the books, as payment would be forgotten, and it would be impossible to *press gentlemen for money*.

Maurice however was not wholly neglected in Ireland — “ I reminded Mr. Orde,” writes the bishop, Feb. 12th, 1787, “ to-day of his promise to give some little place to Goldsmith’s poor brother, and he kindly engaged to do something for him soon. In the meantime however the poor creature is starving. Lord Charlemont made him mace-bearer to the Academy, but he has yet got no salary.

The object was at length accomplished. — “ Mr. Orde,” says the prelate April 14th 1787, “ has lately done a handsome thing which ought to be mentioned to his honour, and we have accordingly reported it in the Freeman’s Journal. He has given a snug little place in the License Office to Maurice Goldsmith, in honour of his brother’s literary merit, which with the mace-bearer’s office in the Royal Academy, and the money we hope to get by subscription to his brother’s works, we hope will make the poor man easy for life.”\*

This situation he filled with integrity and diligence, and became the means of discovering a fraud upon the revenue, from which had he been of a different character, considerable personal advantages might have been derived. He visited London shortly after his brother’s death, of which

\* From MS. correspondence obligingly supplied by Dr. H. U. Thomson.

notice will be hereafter taken, and died in the latter part of 1792 without issue, his widow who survived many years having afterwards married a person named Macdonnell. His death is thus mentioned by Dr. Thos. Campbell in a letter to Bishop Percy in allusion to their joint endeavours for his benefit, dated June 12th, 1793:—" I am glad to hear that you have brought the affair of Goldsmith to so good an issue—but, alas! poor Maurice. He is to receive no comfort from your Lordship's labours in his behalf. He departed from a miserable life early last winter and luckily has left no children."

## CHAPTER XIX.

HIS DRESS. — BARETTI. — PERCIVAL STOCKDALE. — DESERTED VILLAGE. — ITS LOCALITIES TAKEN FROM HIS FATHER'S RESIDENCE.

TOWARDS the conclusion of 1769 and the commencement of the following year, his literary occupations appear to have been multifarious. By his engagement with Griffin, he should seem to have been employed on the Natural History; by that with Davies, upon the History of England; he was avowedly at work in finishing and polishing the *Deserted Village*, for two advertisements stating its speedy publication appeared in November\*; and these were followed in a few days, by similar announcements of a new edition being in preparation, of the “*Poems of Dr. Parnell, with a life of the author by Dr. Goldsmith.*”† With the respective publishers it seemed to be a struggle, who should have the credit, or advantage, of first ushering his writings into the world.

An amusing anecdote of his taste in dress at this moment is told by Boswell, who having just

\* Public Advertiser, Nov. 16th—17th, 1769.

† Id. Nov. 22d—27th, 1769.

returned from the Stratford Jubilee, where he had incurred no little ridicule by exhibiting himself in the character of a Corsican, by publicly reciting verses upon the occasion\*, and by wearing the placard of "Corsica Boswell" in his hat, was willing perhaps to conceal his own follies, by pointing out what he considered those of his acquaintance. He had invited Goldsmith, Johnson, Reynolds, Garrick and others to dinner, when the party were kept waiting by the non-arrival of one of the guests. "Goldsmith" (in the words of the biographer, who however seems to overcharge the description), "to divert the tedious minutes, strutted about bragging of his dress, and I believe was seriously vain of it, for his mind was wonderfully prone to such impressions. 'Come, come (said Garrick), talk no more of that. You are perhaps the worst — eh, eh?' Goldsmith was eagerly attempting to interrupt him, when Garrick went on laughing ironically. 'Nay, you will always *look* like a gentleman; but I am talking of being well or *ill drest*.' 'Well, let me tell you (said Goldsmith), when my tailor brought home my bloom-coloured coat, he said, 'Sir, I have a favour to beg of you, when any body asks you who made your clothes, be pleased to mention John Filby at the Harrow in Water-lane.' Johnson: 'Why, Sir, that was because he knew the strange colour

\* Public Advertiser, Sept. 11th, 1769. — Croker's Boswell's Johnson, vol. ii. p. 71.



would attract crowds to gaze at it, and thus they might hear of him, and see how well he could make a coat of so absurd a colour.’”

The date of this dinner, October 16th, is creditable to Boswell's accuracy, as on reference to the tailor's account books already mentioned, it appears that a new suit of clothes of an expensive kind, is charged to Goldsmith on that day; the entry terms it “a half dress suit of ratteen, lined with silk,” and the price twelve guineas. But his dress has been so often alluded to by contemporaries who either wrote or spoke of him, that it may amuse the reader and assist the future antiquary in tracing the fleeting and most changeable peculiarities of our garb, to subjoin a few of his bills.\* By these it clearly appears he was by no means an economist in the article of dress any more

\* “*Mr. Oliver Goldsmith,*      *Dr.*

Brick Court, Temple, No. 2, up two pair of stairs.

1767.		Brought from fol. 26.	-	-	£25	19	2½
March	4.	To superfine suit complete	-	-	6	0	9
June	19.	To suit complete	-	-	6	1	6
Sept.	8.	To superfine cloth breeches	-	-	1	2	0
Oct.	2.	To suit of state mourning	-	-	6	8	9
Dec.	26.	To black thickset breeches	-	-	1	1	0
	28.	To superfine frock suit	-	-	5	12	0
					<hr/>		
					£52	5	2½
					<hr/>		

(Paid by a draft on Griffin, Feb. 6. 1768.)

than in other matters; yet the obligations thus incurred were pretty punctually paid until a short

1768.

Jan.	21.	To Tyrian bloom satin grain and garter blue silk breeches	}	£8	2	7
March	17.	To suit of clothes — colour, lined with silk, and gold buttons	}	9	7	0
June	16.	To suit of mourning	- - -	5	12	6
July	22.	To 2 yards of green livery cloth	- - -	1	2	0
Aug.	29.	To suit cleaned	- - -	0	6	0
Sept.	24.	To coat and waistcoat cleaned and made up	}	0	14	0
	30.	To fine worsted breeches	- - -	1	0	0
Nov.	29.	To suit of grain mixture	- - -	5	14	6
		To man	- - -	0	1	0
				<u>£32</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>

(Paid Oct. 9. 1769, by a note on Mr. Griffin three months after date for £33...0...0.)

1769.

Jan.	6.	To calico waistcoats	- - -	£0	7	0
Feb.	9.	To suit of clothes	- - -	8	14	8
	11.	To altering two pair of breeches for man	}	0	2	0
	17.	To mending ditto	- - -	0	1	6
Sept.	19.	To pair of silk breeches	- - -	2	3	0
	24.	To making frock suit of cloth	- - -	6	3	9
Oct.	16.	To making a half-dress suit of rat- teen, lined with satin	}	12	12	0
		To a pair of silk stocking breeches	- - -	2	5	0
		To a pair of bloom-coloured ditto	- - -	1	4	6

1770.

April	21.	To Bath coating surtout	- - -	1	10	0
		To dress suit	- - -	9	19	3
May	3.	To suit	- - -	5	17	7 $\frac{3}{4}$
				<u>£51</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>3<math>\frac{3}{4}</math></u>

time before his death, at which period he proved to be 79*l.* in debt, and this appears to have been lost

		Brought over	-	-	£51	0	3 $\frac{3}{4}$		
July	4.	To suit	-	-	-	7	13	9	
Sept.	8.	To suit of mourning	-	-	-	5	12	0	
(Paid £40 February 8. 1771, by a note of hand on Mr. Thos. Davies; and £23 Oct. 2d, by part of a note of hand on Griffin.)									
1771.									
Jan.	3.	To clothes' scouring and mending	}		0	4	6		
		and pressing							
	3.	To pair of best silk stocking breeches			2	5	6		
	24.	To suit of clothes, lined with silk,	}		9	17	6		
		gold buttons, &c.							
Feb.	8.	To best silk breeches	-	-	2	5	6		
April	11.	To frock suit, lined with ( <i>illegible</i> )	}		8	13	5		
		half trimmed with gold sprig but-							
		tons							
	17.	To Queen's-blue dress suit	-	-	11	17	0		
Oct.	3.	To suit, plain	-	-	5	13	0		
Dec.	5.	To silk breeches	-	-	2	2	9		
		To jobs, mending, &c.	-	-	0	5	0		
1772.									
Jan.	4.	To half-trimmed frock suit	-	-	5	15	0		
	31.	To suit of mourning	-	-	5	12	0		
March	18.	To fine ratteen surtout, in grain	-	-	3	5	6		
April	28.	To Princess stuff breeches	-	-	1	7	0		
May	1.	To superfine cloth ditto	-	-	1	3	0		
	2.	To suit of livery	-	-	4	10	6		
	5.	To ditto frock and waistcoat	-	-	2	12	6		
		To jacket	-	-	1	1	0		
	21.	To your blue velvet suit	-	-	21	10	9		
		To crimson collar for man	-	-	0	2	6		
June	8.	To altering two coats	-	-	0	3	0		
	19.	To velvet suit new-coloured	-	-	1	1	0		
July	18.	To mending, &c.	-	-	0	2	6		
Nov.	13.	To making velvet waistcoat	-	-	1	1	0		
Dec.	17.	To jobs, &c.	-	-	1	5	8		
Carried forward					-	-	£93	17	3

to the tradesman, the remark of whose son shows their joint opinion of the debtor: — “ My father,

1773.		Brought over	-	£93	17	3
March	4.	To Princess stuff breeches	-	..	1	7 6
	11.	To suit	- - -	-	10	0 0
April	12.	To mending, &c.	- - -	-	0	1 6
May	7.	To velvet waistcoat, cleaning, &c.	-	-	0	15 9
	10.	To altering suit, and for serge de soy for waistcoat and skirts, &c.	- }	0	12	6
	13.	To rich straw silk tamboured waistcoat	-	4	4	0
June	2.	Tamboured waistcoat cleaned	- -	0	1	6
		To green half-trimmed frock and breeches, lined with silk, &c. &c.	- }	6	0	0
		To silver grey silk tamboured waist- coat	- - - }	4	0	0
	17.	To fine brown cambric waistcoat, tamboured	- - - }	2	1	6
		Mr. Hodson's bill per order	- -	35	3	0
		Bill delivered	-	£158	4	6

(Of this, £50 was paid the 5th April, and £60 the 14th September, 1773.)

		Balance	- -	£48	4	6
July	23.	To tamboured buff waistcoat cleaned and great coat ditto	- }	0	4	0
Sept.	23.	To under waistcoat	-	0	5	9
Oct.	2.	To Princes stuff breeches	-	1	7	0
	8.	To suit of clothes	- -	9	15	6
	16.	To stuff waistcoat	- -	1	9	0
Dec.	3.	To mending, &c.	- - -	0	5	9
		To great coat	- - -	2	19	3
	8.	To suit	- - -	5	13	0
	18.	To stuff breeches	- -	1	7	6
	24.	To flannel waistcoat with sleeves	-	0	8	0
				£71	18	3
1774.						
March	18.	To suit	- - -	7	14	9
				£79	13	0

though a loser to that amount, attributed no blame to Goldsmith; he had been a good customer; and had he lived would have paid every farthing." Half the sum owing by him was for clothes supplied to his nephew Hodson, of which he had taken upon himself the payment.

A few days previous to the dinner at Boswell's, his goodnature was shown on an occasion when the assistance of zealous friends is most kind, and is most wanted, towards a person for whom he had nevertheless no cordial regard. This was Baretti; whose name is sufficiently familiar to readers of the literary history of the day. He had been, as is well known, apprehended for the death of a man killed in a brawl in the street, when Goldsmith hearing of his misfortune hurried next morning before the committing magistrate, and bail being at first refused, accompanied him to Newgate, offering likewise the free use of his purse towards his subsistence and defence. This conduct exemplifies that benevolent impulse of which he has conveyed a better idea in a line, than others perhaps could accomplish in a paragraph—

“His pity gave ere charity began.”

He did not admire Baretti, and Baretti knew and resented the slight; Goldsmith had formed a low estimate of the literature and morals of Italy from what he had seen during his stay in that country, and this opinion of the nation at large extended to several individuals settled in England. He thought that Baretti and Martinelli, another li-

terary adventurer of the same nation, were over estimated by their literary acquaintance ; that with some talents and learning, and a great deal of pretension, a degree of consideration had been awarded them, denied to many of our countrymen of equal or superior attainments ; that goodnature towards foreigners had, as is sometimes the case in England, assigned them the places due only to distinguished merit. He disliked Baretti also from an impression that he contemned religion ; and on this subject talking once to Mr. Ridge, whose name occurs in *Retaliation*, is said to have observed, "I never feel confidence in such men ; I am far from being what I ought to be, or what I wish to be ; but whatever be my follies my mind has never been tainted by unbelief."\*

Among his acquaintance, occasioned by the publication of the *Aminta* of Tasso, in April 1770, appears to have been its translator, the Rev. Percival Stockdale, who having been an officer in the army, relinquished it for the church ; accepted a curacy in London, where he figured variously, and with some success as poet, reviewer, and miscel-

\* Baretti was acquitted of the charge. It is rarely that names of equal celebrity with the following are to be found as guarantees for the personal appearance of a prisoner arraigned on such a charge. — "On Friday Sir Joshua Reynolds, William Fitzherbert, Esq., Edmund Burke, Esq., and David Garrick, Esq., gave bail before Lord Mansfield for Mr. Joseph Baretti's appearance at the ensuing sessions." (*Public Advertiser*, Oct. 16th, 1769.) Dr. Johnson's interest was exerted to procure this array of names.

laneous writer ; became then a chaplain in the navy ; and after a life of many changes of scene, finally settled on the living of Lesbury in Northumberland, on the presentation of Lord Thurlow, where his attachment to literature continued to be displayed. His productions were of various merit ; the best perhaps is "The Poet," a poem published in 1773. The last, his "Memoirs" in 1809, exhibit a querulous and discontented spirit. His character seems to have been ardent, vain, and versatile ; and thinking more highly of his own genius for poetry than he could persuade the world to believe, was disappointed and soured by not acquiring that distinction to which he thought his talents were entitled. During his career in London he enjoyed the friendship of Dr. Johnson, who in allusion to his obvious vanity and anxieties on the subject of his writings, is believed to have applied to him the observation recorded by Boswell, "Sir, there is not a young sapling upon Parnassus, more severely blown about by every wind of criticism than that poor fellow."\*

His autobiography, said to be incorrect in several of its statements, particularly that where he represents himself as being originally engaged to write the lives of the poets instead of Dr. Johnson, furnishes scarcely an allusion to Goldsmith. His papers however supply an anecdote communicated by a lady eminent for her writings in fiction, his

\* Mr. Croker's edition, vol. v. p. 215.

friend, and whom the writer has likewise the honour to number among his acquaintance, Miss Jane Porter, who having spent some time at the vicarage of Lesbury preserves a warm regard for the memory of her then venerable host. The story is not very complimentary to the personal appearance of the poet, though possibly heightened by Mr. Stockdale in the telling; and may have been suggested by an anecdote something similar, of a stranger mistaking him for an inferior kind of person, mentioned by Miss Reynolds.

“About this period,” writes Miss Porter, in her communication, “a circumstance rather ludicrous occurred relative to Goldsmith, which I shall copy from Mr. Stockdale’s own account of the matter; I having occupied much of my time, while visiting the Vicar of Lesbury, in transcribing from his biographical note-book.

“Oliver Goldsmith was a feeling and an elegant writer both in poetry and prose, but especially in the former species of composition. My first acquaintance with him commenced at Davies the bookseller’s, where I dined in his company, and was much struck by the opposition between the beauty of his mind and the mean appearance of his person and manner. A few days after this, and soon after my friend Davies had published my translation of Tasso’s *Aminta*, I called on him one afternoon, and was with him in his parlour when Dr. Goldsmith entered; and remaining with us conversed most agreeably for about an hour. Just



before he had joined us, Davies asked me what I thought of some of his party at the dinner he had given me, and amongst these he mentioned the poet of the 'Deserted Village.' I replied that I held his genius in due estimation, but that I had never seen a man look more like a tailor. This was fresh in our heads when Goldsmith entered, and before he left us he desired our friend the bookseller to let him have my translation of the *Aminta*. As he put it into his pocket he turned to me and said, 'Mr. Stockdale, I shall soon take measure of you.'—I observed with a smile I could not repress, that 'I hoped he would not pinch me.' From what had passed before he came in and afterwards, Davies and I, as soon as he quitted the house, gave a full indulgence to our risible faculties; the odd coincidence of Goldsmith's metaphor and my comparison having been quite irresistible.' '\*

\* Miss Porter adds some anecdotes of this gentleman, whom she knew in the decline of life and saw reason to esteem, which do honour to her friendship, although the object of it has not acquired from critical judgments the honours he is disposed to assume on account of his literary merits.

"The Reverend Percival Stockdale was a literary worthy of the days of Dr. Johnson, and not only enjoyed his intimacy, but that of several others of the distinguished men of the time, Lord Lyttleton, Burke, Garrick, and many more who kept up with him an occasional correspondence. I remember his showing some of their letters to me during a visit to Lesbury in his latter years, and he then said with much emphatic feeling (for his character was all energy to his latest page and hour) 'I am proud, and ever will be proud of such honours from such men. I will preserve them as a miser would his gold till

Towards the end of May 1770\*, the Deserted Village, announced so long before as being in pre-

I die, and then will resign them to some elegant and distinguished soul who may be worthy of them.' These letters he afterwards did me the honour of saying should be mine on his decease; and by the tenor of his will which named me residuary legatee, the possession of such cherished memorials was anticipated. But on the amount of the legacies to other persons falling short, the residuary legatee lost even these few relics of her venerable friend; they being sold, with every thing else of his personals, to complete the sum for the legacies. Who purchased them I never heard.

"He was in London during the spring and vigour of life, and some of his works were supposed to possess great merit; the tragedy of Ximenes he told me was thought to approach in merit Addison's Cato. It was in the library of Garrick at his beautiful villa on the banks of the Thames that Mr. Stockdale conceived the idea of writing another of his most esteemed works, his Vindication of the Genius of Pope. It was excited by his chancing to peruse in that library Warton's 'Essay on the Writings and Genius of Pope,' which by derogating from the powers of the bard of Twickenham, so provoked the young poet of the Tweed, that as he said he 'threw out this volunteer of his heart, with all the force of indignant justice.' A day or two after its publication he happened to meet Mr. Burke, who instantly took him by the arm and entered on the subject of the vindication with great spirit and commendation. 'Stockdale,' said he, 'you write with great fire and with a poet's light into your subject which falls to the lot of very few

\* "This day, at twelve, will be published, price two shillings—The Deserted Village, a Poem. By Dr. Goldsmith. Printed for W. Griffin, at Garrick's Head in Catherine Street, Strand."—*Public Advertiser*, May 26. 1770.

In the memoir prefixed to the Miscellaneous Works, the date of the poem is said to be 1769; an error that escaped Bishop Percy, the Rev. Mr. Boyd, and Mr. Rose.

paration, appeared, and at once obtained a place in popular esteem though not perhaps with the critics, superior even to that of the Traveller. On the seventh of June came out a second edition; on the fourteenth a third; on the twenty-eighth a fourth; and on the sixteenth of August a fifth, being a run of success such as few poems of the time had experienced within so short a period. The journals devoted to literature hailed it with the warmest applause; the author was gratified by his good fortune; the public pleased by the ad-

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men. But I wish you had been a little more sparing of my friend Warton.'

"In the same week he received a similar suffrage from Dr. Johnson, through a mutual acquaintance, Mr. Thomas Davies the bookseller. The latter, on Mr. Stockdale entering his shop one morning, ardently took him by the hand exclaiming 'I give you joy.' 'Of what?' returned the young Poet. 'Of the high praise which Dr. Johnson has bestowed on your defence of Pope. I drank tea with him yesterday; the whole of the usual Sunday evening party were there; he read a great part of your observations, though so severe against poor Warton, aloud to us, and observed as he went along 'Stockey is perfectly right; he has defended the cause of Pope with incontrovertible arguments and a most victorious eloquence. He must be supported in this worthy act of justice to that great poet.' Mr. Stockdale even at 70 years of age when he told me this anecdote with sparkling eyes exclaimed, 'He must have been made of more phlegmatic stuff than that of which I was composed who would not have taken fresh fire from such commendation.'

"Amongst the early productions of Mr. Stockdale was his 'Life of Waller,' who like himself had been a soldier and a poet; and Dr. Johnson thought so well of it, that when he was writing his Lives of the Poets he took the opportunity of making honourable mention of it."

dition made to its sources of pleasure ; and if some of the newspaper writers used their customary privilege of finding fault on some unimportant points, others were as loud in its praise ; and attention was more drawn to a work which possessed merit enough to find a few enemies among a multitude of friends.

The previous reputation of the author as a man of unquestioned genius, tended no doubt to aid its immediate rise into notice ; but in addition to intrinsic merits there were other causes which had effect in accelerating its success. The subject was domestic ; the supposed evils to which it adverted, easy of comprehension ; the scenes and incidents, more particularly those allusive to youth, such as almost all men have participated in and fondly remember ; while the characters were of that familiar description that we could easily believe we had seen or known the individuals, and they came therefore before us with all the claims of old friends. The feelings were interested by a tale of grievances so eloquently and pathetically lamented, although few as he admits in his preface, had seen or could believe the fact of their existence. The distresses of the poor and their supposed oppression by the rich, which whether true or otherwise is ever a popular theme, on this occasion enlisted all the generous feelings on the side of their advocate. By designing men this is sometimes made a source of mischief by nurturing something of unjust prejudice among such as are lower in the scale of wealth against those who are higher ; by

Goldsmith it was merely another evidence of that amiable yet morbid sensibility which kept him in all his writings tremblingly alive to any scene or tale of distress in the humbler classes of life. There were likewise those pictures of rural life which always please in the description; sentiments of a generous and benevolent character; a tone of pathos and melancholy in the recollections of favourite scenes regretted as having fled for ever; similes of high beauty; a versification singularly easy and natural, perfectly musical to the ear without any straining or inversion of language to obtain it; and several of those personal allusions that always add to the interest of a poem, such as the reference to his wanderings—his cares and griefs—and even his poverty. These, amid other admitted excellencies, contributed to give it not merely momentary but permanent favour; for in all the fluctuations of taste since, it has never for a moment declined in public esteem.

Two years are commonly said to have been employed in its composition and correction; an error if meant that he was exclusively devoted to the work sufficiently obvious, as in that period we have seen he had written several volumes. Occasional hints, as he seems to admit in the dedication, might have been gleaned in country excursions during a few previous years; but the chief parts were written and the arrangement and revision no doubt effected by snatches, the result more of moments of ease of mind and of such as he deemed

favourable circumstances, than of constant application. Even in this way the labour bestowed upon it was very considerable; the aim of a Poet beyond every other description of writer is excellence; and any degree of labour by which this quality which is essential to his being is obtained cannot be considered misapplied. The mode of composition in this as in all his poems, was to write his first thoughts in lines so widely apart as to leave ample room for future emendations. Bishop Percy used to say that so great was his industry or fastidiousness, that these spaces were wholly filled up, so that scarcely an original line of the poem remained.

The fruit of his application was great uniformity of excellence; for we find in it no unfinished passages, none of that obscurity of thought or expression forming one of the greatest and yet most general faults of poetry; no inversion of language; no weak, rugged, or unmusical lines; and no objectionable rhymes, excepting we be permitted to advert to one instance where sketching the village schoolmaster we are told —

“ Yet he was kind, or if severe in aught,  
The love he bore to learning was in fault.”

But this may have been merely a remnant of that provincialism which occasionally clung to him in manner, accent, and in pronunciation; for in Ireland the word *fault* is frequently sounded without the letter l; a peculiarity which like many other pronunciations in that country, remains

popularly unchanged since the reign of Elizabeth. It must be also admitted that he had a great example before him in Pope, who uses a similar rhyme more than once —

‘ Before his sacred name flies every fault  
And each exalted stanza teems with thought.’

•            \*            \*            \*            \*

‘ Then say not man’s imperfect, God’s in fault —  
Say rather man’s as perfect as he ought.’

And Johnson in his Dictionary selects another couplet from the Essay on Criticism where *fault* and *thought* rhyme, so that he must have considered it unobjectionable although less relished by a modern ear.

An error in natural history was objected to in the line —

“ Where crouching tigers, wait their hapless prey,”

as in America, to which it applies, that animal is not found; this was met by an appeal to the usual license of poetry\*, and by a quotation from

\* “The poet is not on all occasions to be confined within the precise boundaries of truth. What writer of lively fancy, in describing a morning walk on the banks of Keswick, would not embellish the beauty of the scene by the melody of birds, and thus add the charms of music to all the enchantments of vision? Yet I believe there is not a feathered songster to be found in those delightful vales; probably owing to the terrors inspired by the birds of prey which abound on the mountains that surround them. The same observation will perhaps justify the author of the Deserted Village when he attempts to magnify the terrors of an American wilderness by introducing the *tiger* into the tremendous group, though this animal has never yet been found in the British trans-Atlantic settlements.”—*Dr. Percival’s Works*, 1807. v. ii. p. 170.

Anson's Voyage, where in one of the American islands some reference is made to the presence of tigers ; a species of which though not so fierce or powerful as that of Asia, is common on that continent. The importance given to this description of criticism, would imply there was little in the detail of the poem with which to find fault.

Against the general positions taken by the Poet, there were stronger objections. Trade it is presumed never can be considered any evil in a trading country ; nor is the oppression or depopulation of villages by force or violence of the owners of the soil a probable occurrence in one that boasts to be free. Volunteer patriots and philanthropists who require no spur to exertion but rather an occasional check to their zeal, are too endemic to our soil, and too much on the alert for objects to patronise, to overlook or not to resent such a tyrannical act should it take place. However popular therefore the tale of a grievance commonly is, the writer found few to agree with him ; he nevertheless sturdily maintained his opinion, and it may be conceded that if he found but one village razed or depopulated from whatever cause, this was perhaps sufficient for his purpose.

To swear to the truth of a song is proverbially a work of supererogation ; nor is such a voucher perhaps necessary for the political doctrines contained in a poem. It is scarcely necessary therefore to contest the point whether the main argument of the Deserted Village, the evils of luxury, be or be



not, a fallacy. Poets in all ages, have conspired to make wealth and its usual concomitants a theme for censure ; while statesmen who have been fortunate enough to introduce it among the people they govern, consider themselves the greatest public benefactors. Luxury, viewed in the abstract, may be an evil, or at least lead to the introduction of certain moral evils, but it has in fact no abstract existence ; it is merely a symptom of general prosperity, an attendant upon a high degree of knowledge, riches, and civilisation ; so that the presence of the former, is an indication of the existence of the latter. It is only when luxury is in excess, when the gifts of Providence are abused and made the means of vicious or inordinate appetites and indulgences, that it becomes justly amenable to the censure of the moralist. Restrained within due limits, the stimulus which it gives to human ingenuity must be advantageous to all communities aiming at more than mere animal existence. Nations have been always found to become luxurious as they become rich and intelligent ; and it seems therefore idle to regret what is the strongest proof of their advance in the scale of social existence. Of this truth, whatever cause he may have had to change his opinion, none had been more convinced than Goldsmith a few years before.

“ Is it not a truth,” he inquires in the eleventh letter in the *Citizen of the World*, “ that refined countries have more vices, but those not so terrible ; barbarous nations few, and they of the most

hideous complexion? Perfidy and fraud are the vices of civilized nations; credulity and violence those of the inhabitants of the desert. Does the luxury of the one produce half the evils of the inhumanity of the other? Certainly those philosophers who declaim against luxury have but little understood its benefits; they seem insensible that to luxury we owe not only the greatest part of our knowledge, but even of our virtues.

\* \* \* \* \*

“ Examine the history of any country remarkable for opulence or wisdom, you will find they would never have been wise had they not been first luxurious; you will find poets, philosophers, and even patriots, marching in Luxury’s train. \* \* \* In whatsoever light therefore we consider luxury; whether as employing a number of hands naturally too feeble for more laborious employment; as finding a variety of occupation for others who might be totally idle, or as furnishing out new inlets to happiness without encroaching on mutual property; in whatever light we regard it, we shall have reason to stand up in its defence, and the sentiment of Confucius still remains unshaken; *that we should enjoy as many of the luxuries of life as are consistent with our own safety, and the prosperity of others; and that he who finds out a new pleasure is one of the most useful members of society.*”

The beauties of the poem offered something for the gratification of every taste; favourite passages

found general circulation ; but perhaps the most quoted is the celebrated one so much in harmony with the spirit and tendency of the argument —

“ Princes and lords may flourish or may fade.”

The similes of the hare returning to her haunts, the bird teaching her young to fly, “ the tall cliff that lifts its awful form,” the description of the village schoolmaster, the apostrophe to poetry, all found advocates. But more especially the picture of the village preacher fixed attention for its excellence, as being at once minute and comprehensive in the characteristics, skilful in their selection, true to nature in general effect, and as forming not only the most finished specimen of a Christian pastor, but one of the most admirable pieces of poetical painting in the whole range of ancient and modern poetry. More than one of his relatives have been put forward as claimants for this character ; his father by Mrs. Hodson, his brother by others, and his uncle Contarine by the Rev. Dr. O'Connor. The fact perhaps is that he fixed upon no one individual, but borrowing like all good poets and painters a little from each, drew the character by their combination.

His obligations to predecessors were, as in the instance of the Traveller, few, or rather it would be difficult to say that he has borrowed from any. In the character of the Village Preacher there are the lines —

“ Truth from his lips prevail'd with double sway,  
And fools who came to scoff remain'd to pray :”

which bear some resemblance in expression though not in thought, to a passage in the *Britannia Rediviva* of Dryden —

“Our vows are heard betimes, and Heaven takes care,  
To grant before we can conclude the prayer ;  
Preventing angels met it half the way,  
*And sent us back to praise who came to pray.*”

The admired simile which concludes the description of the same character, is supposed by high classical authority, to be taken from a Roman poet. “But as Claudian has come in my way,” says the Rev. Gilbert Wakefield in his *Memoirs*, “and the subject turns on the obligations of the moderns to the ancients, I will step out of the road to discover the origin of perhaps the sublimest simile that English poetry can boast. —

‘As *some tall cliff* that lifts its awful form,  
Swells from the vale and *midway leaves the storm*,  
Though round its breast the rolling clouds are spread,  
*Eternal sunshine settles on its head.*’

————— ‘*Ut altus Olympi*  
*Vertex, qui spatio ventos hiemesque relinquit,*  
*Perpetuum nullâ temeratus nube serenum,*  
*Celsior exsurgit pluviis, auditque ruentes*  
*Sub pedibus nimbos, et rauca tonitrua calcat ;*  
*Sic patiens animus per tanta negotia liber*  
*Emergit, similisque sui : justique tenorem*  
*Flêctere non odium cogit, non gratia suadet.*

CLAUD. *de Mall. Theod. Cons.* 206.’”

He adds another quotation from Statius tending as he also thinks to resemblance —

“*Stat sublimis apex, ventosque imbresque serenus*  
*Despicit.*” *Theb.* ii. 35.

Scholars like Mr. Wakefield, strongly imbued with classical partialities, too frequently seem willing to take from the merit due to modern writers in order to add to the already abundant store of the ancients. To such, a preference for the companions of their youth and the favourites of their riper years, is perhaps unavoidable; much of their happiness is made up by dwelling on their superiority, and the haze of antiquity serves to magnify deserts which no reader of taste will deny, though some may believe they have more than a due share of admiration. With the more ardent lovers of classical authors we are perhaps more than with others, disposed to contest a point of criticism, from the knowledge that the course of their studies has a tendency to bias the judgment. Admitting some general resemblance in the simile, it may be observed that no English poet of equal education has so few obligations to the ancients as Goldsmith; he treats of no subject in common with them, has no reference to their gods, heroes, opinions, or manners, rarely descends to a translation or one at least such as he thought worth preserving, and in all his poems scarcely a mythological allusion so much hackneyed by other writers, occurs. His topics, descriptions, and incidents are modern, domestic, and almost wholly applicable to English life, manners, and character. Had he borrowed in this instance, he would probably have taken more by extending the imitation, as it offers a fine field for poetical description. Indeed

in the two passages there are distinctive differences which taking a liberal view of such things seem to point to a different origin, or that the respective writers wrote each from original impressions. The lines of Goldsmith are few and general, those of Claudian detailed and specific; in the former we find no reference to the winds of winter, to falling rains, to treading under foot, black, threatening clouds and the hoarse thunder; while the more picturesque points of the English poet, the "awful form," "the swelling from the vale," and "the eternal sunshine settling on its head," are wanting in the Roman writer.

But if a source other than the imagination of the poet be sought, we may find it in another quarter; he was then employed in writing the first volume of *Animated Nature*, in which Ulloa, the traveller in South America who has furnished him with many other facts, is expressly quoted as affording the substance of the following striking description, which however forms only part of further details on the same subject. "On those places next the highest summits, vegetation is scarcely carried on; here and there a few plants of the most hardy kind appear. The air is intolerably cold; either continually refrigerated with frosts, or disturbed with tempests. All the ground here wears an eternal covering of ice and snows that seems constantly accumulating. Upon emerging from this war of the elements, he ascends into a purer and serener region, where vegetation entirely ceases; where the precipices,

composed entirely of rocks, arise perpendicularly above him; while he views beneath him all the combat of the elements; clouds at his feet; and thunders darting upward from their bosoms below. A thousand meteors, which are never seen on the plain, present themselves. Circular rainbows; mock suns; the shadow of the mountain projected upon the body of the air; and the traveller's own image, reflected as in a looking-glass, upon the opposite cloud. Such are, in general, the wonders that present themselves to a traveller in his journey either over the Alps or the Andes."\*

A phrase used in the passage —

“In all my wanderings round this world of care,  
*In all my griefs, and God has given my share,*”

is the same as one of Collins in his second Eclogue —

“Ye mute companions of my toils, that bear  
*In all my griefs, a more than equal share.*”

A strange origin has been found by an anonymous writer for the thought in the celebrated passage, “Princes and lords may flourish or may fade,” &c., in an old French poet, De Caux, who in one of his poems on an hour glass comparing the world to it, says —

“C'est un verre qui luit,  
Qu'un souffle peut détruire, et qu'un souffle a produit.”

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\* Animated Nature, vol. i. p. 145.

But if we are disposed to hunt for imitations in passages which after all have obviously sprung from the subject and not, as minute criticism would have us believe, forced into it, an origin might have been discovered nearer home. In an indifferent poem published in 1769, called the Middlesex Freeholder, we receive the novel information that

“Kings may make *lords*, but cannot make a *man*.”

And several months after the publication of the Deserted Village, a naval promotion having taken place which gave little satisfaction to such officers as were not included, it was said by a writer in one of the daily journals, who by the same rule might be said to have borrowed the hint from Goldsmith, that

“The king might make admirals, but could not make seamen.”

Yet were this kind of criticism permitted to pass current in literature, scarcely any writer could hope to have credit for originality.

As it is ever a source of interest to trace the origin of poetical paintings, — of those objects or hints often trifling in themselves, which having at some time fallen under the eye of Genius, are treasured up for future use, and become by her creative power objects of general attention, the question has been often asked in England, and the



inquiry shows the impression made by the poet, whether Auburn is merely a poetical creation, or really existed and experienced the fate he describes. The name appears to have been chosen merely as pretty and poetical, derived perhaps from a village so named in Wiltshire; two others take their names from the poem; one Auburn is in America, and the other forms the residence of Mr. Hogan, nearly opposite Lissoy, the abode of Goldsmith's father, and is of comparatively recent erection. That village is no doubt the spot which furnished the chief scenery of the poem, an opinion which was early formed as already stated in a former page of this work. His sisters Mrs. Hodson and Mrs. Johnston traced many of their brother's stories, sketches and characters, to his own adventures, or to places and persons, in the neighbourhood. Auburn was at once pronounced by these ladies to be Lissoy, and their father the village preacher; and in this belief all the residents in the vicinity have concurred.

“This place” (Lissoy), says Dr. Streaan who having been curate of Kilkenny West enjoyed the same amount of salary as Henry Goldsmith forty pounds a year “is certainly the Auburn of the Poet. The inhabitants there at that time, their characters, and the situation of the country, then and now, prove this;” and he enters into details which the writer has verified by personal observation.

“With respect to Auburn,” writes the Rev.

Mr. Handcock\* in letters now before the writer dated Athlone, October 30th and December 1st, 1790, addressed to the late Joseph Cooper Walker, Esq., of Dublin, “there is a place within six miles of this town where Oliver Goldsmith’s father lived many years ‘The Village Preacher,’ where Oliver himself was born, and passed his youth—and where I am assured he took the history, and I know he took the scenery, of his Deserted Village. All this a nephew of Goldsmith and two of his sisters now living here, assure me he has acknowledged to them.” Again he says (December 1st of the same year),

“I wished to give you the fullest information, and this could not be done at the fire-side. I did not indeed complete my own information of Goldsmith’s history until this day, when in a conversation of three hours with his sister, I was confirmed in what before I could not fully persuade myself of, namely, that Lissoy was the scene of his Deserted Village.

“In order to be accurate in the description you required of the place, I rode there immediately on receipt of your letter; it is a snug farm house in view of the high road, to which a straight avenue

\* This gentleman was a native of Athlone, and after these letters were written, for some years managed the property of Lissoy for Mr. Henry Goldsmith, son of the clergyman, an officer in the army, and nephew of the Poet. For the perusal of the letters the writer is obliged to Joseph Cooper Walker, Esq., of Dublin.

leads with double rows of ash trees\*, six miles N.E. of this town. The farm is still held under the Naper family by a nephew of Goldsmith at present in America. In the front view of the house is the 'decent church' of Kilkenny West, that literally 'tops the neighbouring hill;' and in a circuit of not more than half a mile diameter around the house, are 'the never failing brook,' 'the busy mill,' 'the hawthorn bush with seats beneath the shade,' 'the brook with mantling cresses spread,' 'the straggling fence that skirts the way, with blossomed furze unprofitably gay,' 'the thorn that lifts its head on high, where once the sign post caught the passing eye,' 'the house where nut brown draughts inspired,' in short every striking object in the picture. There are besides many ruined houses in the neighbourhood, bespeaking a better state of population than at present.

"The history of the place is, that at the return of the late General Naper from Germany, the leases of his estate which had been parcelled into small farms being then expired, he dislodged in general, the old tenantry in order to furnish an extensive demesne to his house which is not far distant.

"In the house at Lissoy, lived Goldsmith's father, at first curate to an uncle named Green and

\* These, as stated in a previous page, no longer exist, having been cut down by the purchaser of the property from the Goldsmith family.

‘passing rich on forty pounds a year.’ After the death of the incumbent he obtained the living. This gentleman and his wife were the genuine Dr. and Mrs. Primrose. Though a man of learning, there are many laughable instances of his simplicity and ignorance of mankind recorded in the neighbourhood to this day. Here Goldsmith was instructed in the first stage of his learning.”

So far the identity of Auburn and Lissoy is considered certain by such as are best acquainted with the neighbourhood. The incident alluded to by Mr. Handcock and said to form the groundwork of the poem has been adverted to in a preceding chapter, but is thus more specifically told.

Lieut. Gen. Robert Naper, so spelt in the law documents of the time though now written Napier, who is represented to have returned from Vigo in Spain with a large fortune, purchased as has been stated, the adjoining lands. In erecting a residence and forming a demesne around it, the habitations of some as is alleged, respectable tenants, and several of the peasantry stood in the way, and being unwilling to remove for his convenience, were at length after much resistance, all excepting the Goldsmith family, ejected for non-payment of rent. Their houses were pulled down and the park enlarged to a circumference of nine miles; but so great was the indignation of the people at the proceeding, that on the general’s death which occurred soon afterward, they assembled in a tumultuous manner, assailed the house, destroyed much of the property

in and around it, and among other things the plantations, to the value of 5000*l.*

Such is the story ; but stories of this description in Ireland after the lapse of a few years must be taken with certain allowances for heat and misrepresentation ; and after some trouble taken in the inquiry, we may be induced to believe that if not wholly untrue it is highly exaggerated. The original estate on reference to papers connected with its purchase, was six hundred acres ; to this on the death of the general who seems to have died before the contract was finished, was added nearly six hundred more, and had the whole been converted into demesne which from other documents we know was not the case, it could not have embraced any thing like a circumference of nine miles. The house moreover is of very moderate size, not at all of dimensions requiring such an extent of park ; the high road likewise from Athlone to Ballymahon, a few smaller cross roads, the house of Goldsmith's father which could not be disturbed, the mill to which he alludes in the poem, and a variety of other objects if not natural obstacles, stand much less than a mile from the house so said to be built or begun by General Naper, and would necessarily interfere with his design. Neither, had he been tyrannically disposed, was the Goldsmith family at his mercy ; their tenure by the terms of the lease as already stated, was "for ever" on the fulfilment of the moderate

conditions therein stated; and the original possessor was Mr. Newstead, not General Naper.

The truth probably was that the general in entering upon his new purchase in a rude and disturbed country, found the occupiers of the soil disposed, as is too commonly the case in Ireland, to consider themselves its freeholders, and scarcely liable on any plea or even provocation, to be disturbed. That he could procure no rent the story admits; being necessarily driven to process of law to compel payment, the act was revenged by those barbarous outrages which are as common on such occasions at the present day as at remote periods. When once removed, their habitations, which are commonly of the rudest description, may have been razed to prevent a repetition of such scenes.

So far it is possible the offence of the proprietor extended; but the wanton destruction of a thriving or pretty village in a country where such are carefully encouraged by all proprietors of lands, is wholly improbable. Popular opinion however always inclines to the weaker side; and the circumstances if true only in the smallest degree, were calculated to make a strong impression upon a mind like that of Goldsmith, generous in its impulses, but not always discriminating in its judgments. These being retained and revolved with all the tenacity of early impressions, would readily acquire that tone of exaggeration, capable of transforming for the purposes of poetry, a group of mud cabins into a beautiful village; and perhaps

their turbulent and vindictive occupants, into injured, and innocent, and expatriated peasants. Any similar story heard by him in England would recall the razed village of his native land; and without allusion to Ireland, which he might think likely to diminish its interest in the eye of an English reader, his sketch would partake, as we really find it, of the characteristics of both countries.

The details of the poem sufficiently shew that he had each occasionally in view; the picture is neither wholly from imagination, nor wholly from reality; from any one place, or from any one division of the kingdom; but from the remembrance or observation of many circumstances belonging to either island, which with the skill of a poet are worked up into a perfect whole. Thus the flourishing state of trade, the influx of wealth and luxury, the song of the nightingale, and many other incidental details, hold good only of England. On the other hand, the stream of emigration which has for a century largely and steadily flowed toward America, and much of the local scenery and objects, belong to Ireland.

The allusions bearing upon Lissoy are numerous; the following are supposed to apply to the Sundays or numerous holidays, usually kept in Roman Catholic countries.

“How often have I blessed the coming day  
When toil remitting lent its turn to play.”

To the succeeding are traced the origin of the poem —

————— “The man of wealth and pride,  
Takes up the space that many poor supplied,  
Space for his lake, his park’s extended bounds,  
Space for his horses, equipage and hounds.”

The general character of the adjoining country, particularly in the rear of the house, being a plain, Auburn is appropriately characterized “loveliest village of the plain.” As the scene of enjoyment in early life, and of boyish delights, he with equal truth and affection calls them —

“Dear lovely bowers of innocence and ease,  
Seats of my youth when every sport could please,  
How often have I loiter’d o’er thy green !”

And again —

“How often have I paused on every charm !”

Personal allusions such as these may be admissible in poetry not strictly meant to be accurately descriptive, yet taken with the context, their application to the feelings and circumstances of the writer is perfectly compatible with the fact.

“The never-failing brook, the busy mill,”

are found in a hollow, the road to which lies at the end of the village in a turning to the left as we proceed from his paternal residence; the stream which moves it is small, and the mill of rude construction, and of the overshot kind, but he may have had also in view that of Ballymahon, which existed at that period above the bridge of that



town, and where afterwards he was known to spend many hours.

“The decent church that tops the neighbouring hill,”

was that in which his father officiated, crowning a height of gentle elevation in front of their residence, and though distant about a mile, from its conspicuous situation constantly in their eye.

Such an object was not likely to escape his recollection. The term *decent* is that perhaps which describes it most exactly; being clean and very homely without pretension to any other quality. Between it and the house, lies a valley occupied by a sheet of water, alluded to probably in the line—

“The noisy geese that gabbled o’er the pool.”

Another natural object—

“The hawthorn bush with seats beneath the shade,  
For talking age, and whispering lovers made,”

was larger than ordinary trees of that description, with surrounding seats as here represented; it rose with a double trunk, shaded a considerable portion of ground opposite the ale-house, and from being at the confluence of two roads, presented sufficient space for the evening assemblages of the villagers, described as having

“Led up their sports beneath the spreading tree.”

The selection of a “hawthorn bush,” so rarely of sufficient dimensions to perform the office here

assigned when so many nobler tenants of the forest affording ampler shade and more majesty of description for his verse were at poetical command to use on the occasion, is considered another proof of the identity of the spot from which the picture was drawn. The celebrity of this tree has been fatal to it. The material objects immortalized by poets are too frequently sacrificed to the admiration they excite, as if spoliation were the truest test of devotion in the eyes of admirers; and poetry thus seems like the unnatural mother of mythology, content to prey upon her own offspring. Every traveller hither for a period of forty years, carried away a portion of the tree as a relic either of the poem or of his pilgrimage; when the branches had been destroyed, the trunks were attacked; and when these disappeared, even the roots were partially dug up, so that in 1820, scarcely a vestige remained either above or below ground, notwithstanding a resident gentleman by building round it endeavoured to prevent its utter extermination. At the period of the writer's visit (1830) a very tender shoot had again forced its way to the surface, which he in imitation of so many other inconsiderate idlers felt disposed to seize upon as a memorial of his visit; but if permitted to remain, though this is unlikely, may renew the honours paid to its predecessor.

Opposite the remains of the hawthorn stands the ale-house—

——— “where nut brown draughts inspired,  
Where grey-beard mirth and smiling toil retired,”

still appropriated to its original use, chiefly by the care of Mr. Hogan, who repaired or rebuilt it after being long in a state of decay. By the same hand it was supplied with the sign of the “Three Jolly Pigeons,” with new copies of the “twelve good rules,” and the “royal game of goose,” not omitting even the—

——— “broken tea-cups wisely kept for shew  
Ranged o’er the chimney glistened in a row,”—

which for better security in the frail tenure of an Irish publican, or the doubtful decorum of his guests, were embedded in the mortar. Most of these have again disappeared, sacrifices to the love of relics, and sold no doubt to admiring visitors as the originals referred to in the poem; even the sign is no longer to be seen, removed either by cupidity or the ravages of time.

The allusions to America, as the destined home of voluntary exiles, who

——— “took a long farewell and wished in vain,  
For seats like these beyond the western main,”

are in perfect keeping with truth, the late celebrated John Wesley having remarked the large efflux of persons thither from Ireland as far back as the year 1770, though it prevailed at a much earlier period. Indeed whenever by the alleged cupidity of landlords, the rivalry of other

tenants, or their own imprudence, the lower class of Irish become unsettled, they seldom refix permanently in another part of their own country, or even in England or Scotland, but commonly seek a distant, and as they are led to believe, a more advantageous settlement in the New World.

The pathetic lines —

————— “Yon widow'd solitary thing  
That feebly bends beside the plashy spring;  
She, wretched matron, forced in age, for bread,  
To strip the brook with mantling cresses spread,”

are supposed to apply to a female named Catherine Geraghty whom the Poet had known in earlier and better days, and who was well remembered by some of the inhabitants when Dr. Streaun served the curacy of the parish. The brook and ditches near the spot where her cabin stood, still furnish cresses, and several of her descendants reside in the neighbourhood.

To his own instructor, Thomas Byrne, is supposed to belong the description of a personage so important to youth.

“There in his noisy mansion, skill'd to rule,  
The village master taught his little school.”

But the portrait though good as a general sketch, wants that individuality which from the actual peculiarities of the person in question, might have been given it; one probable characteristic however is retained —

“ While words of learned length, and thundering sound,  
Amaz'd the gazing rustics ranged around.”

The school-house is still shown; here there may be some straining of fact as to identity, for no place built expressly for such purpose having existed at that time, the common cottages which are constructed loosely of mud and stone would have crumbled long ere this, few of them without great care attaining the age of a century.

No lines in the poem point more strongly to the abode of his youth, than,

“ Along thy glades a solitary guest,  
The hollow-sounding bittern guards its nest.”

In the immediate vicinity of the village and in more than one direction, is found a considerable portion of water; a river likewise, with several small lakes, pools, and marsh lands, lye around Ballymahon, to which is now added the course of the Grand Canal from Dublin; to several of these, water-fowl continue to resort and among others the bird which he has thought proper to notice in the foregoing lines. In the opening of the sixth volume of *Animated Nature*, it is thus poetically adverted to, with the effects of its call upon the minds of the villagers.

“ Those who have walked in an evening by the sedgy sides of unfrequented rivers, must remember a variety of notes from different water-fowl: the loud scream of the wild goose, the croaking of the mallard, the whining of the lapwing, and the tre-

mulous neighing of the jacksnipe. But of all these sounds, there is none so dismally hollow as the booming of the bittern. It is impossible for words to give those who have not heard this evening call an adequate idea of its solemnity. It is like an interrupted bellowing of a bull, but hollower and louder, and is heard at a mile's distance as if issuing from some formidable being that resided at the bottom of the waters.

\*            \*            \*            \*            \*

*I remember in the place where I was a boy with what terror this bird's note affected the whole village; they considered it as the presage of some sad event; and generally found or made one to succeed it. I do not speak ludicrously; but if any person in the neighbourhood died, they supposed it could not be otherwise, for the night-raven had foretold it; but if nobody happened to die, the death of a cow or a sheep gave completion to the prophecy.\**

The primitive state of manners implied by the description of the village clergyman's fire-side, where the "long remembered beggar," "the ruin'd spendthrift," and "the broken soldier" figure as guests, is exclusively Irish. Beggars are a privileged class in that country particularly in rural districts, where the want of poor laws to provide for the destitute, the aged, and the infirm, imparts a prescriptive claim, amounting nearly to a right, to the compassion of the poorer and middling classes

\* Vol. vi. pp. 1, 24.

of people, upon whom the burden of maintaining them almost exclusively falls. The epithet "long remembered" is thus strictly correct; for the same persons are seen for a series of years to traverse the same tract of country at certain intervals, intrude into every house which is not defended by the usual outworks of wealth, a gate and a porter's lodge, exact their portion of the food of the family, and even find an occasional resting-place for the night, or from severe weather, in the chimney-corner of respectable farmers.

French versions of this poem have appeared both in prose and verse. Among the latter was a paraphrase by the Chevalier Rudlidge in two cantos, octavo, 1772, called *Le Retour du Philosophe, ou Le Village Abandonné*, for which Goldsmith returned the writer his thanks; an imitation called *Le Village Détruit* by M. Léonard, whose name has been already mentioned as an imitator of the Hermit; another by M. Monvels; a complete translation though of indifferent execution, by a writer with the initials M. P. A. L. in 1805; but of these the affecting muse of M. Léonard as the French critics say, for the writer has not met with it, gives the truest idea of the English poem. The collection of Madame de la Borde called *Divers Poèmes imités de l'Anglais*, 1785, contains translations in prose of the Deserted Village and the Traveller. The character of the Village Schoolmaster has been closely imitated by De Lille in *L'Homme des Champs*.

Several journals of the day, it has been observed, were made the vehicles of praise or dispraise of the poem. In one of these \* which was then made a frequent medium for the communication of opinions upon polite literature, there are no less than seventeen letters within a few months connected with this seemingly fertile subject; of which a specimen of the complimentary description, may be given.

*“ To Dr. Goldsmith.*

ON READING HIS POEM OF THE DESERTED VILLAGE.

“ Goldsmith, the laurel does to thee belong,  
 All ears delighted listen to thy song ;  
 So strongly dost thou paint the flowery plain,  
 The leafy grove, the golden-tinctured grain ;  
 The pleasing sports that round the village stray,  
 The harmony that breaks from every spray ;  
 The comprehensive thought, the tuneful line,  
 The perdurable plan, the just design ;  
 These high enroll thee in poetic fame,  
 And crown with plaudits due thy peerless name ;  
 Go on, sweet bard, thy lays continue still,  
 While the groves echo to thy magic quill ;  
 O mayst thou still in melting notes prolong,  
 The matchless pleasures of melodious song.

Another said to be written by a Mr. Fowler a barrister, and frequent contributor to the newspapers, may suffice to give the reader an idea rather of the warmth of his admiration than the excellence of his lines.

\* St. James's Chronicle ; with which many popular writers of the day were connected, either as proprietors or contributors.



“Ascend again the Pegasean hill,  
 Th’ abstracted ear with rapturous music fill;  
 So Vice shall feel the terrors of thy hand,  
 And Virtue grace once more this abject land.\*

“P. F.”

One of the topics particularly adverted to by readers and critics, was the intimation dropped by the Poet, of forsaking the pursuit of an art which is plainly stated to have proved of an unprofitable kind. A general interest was expressed on this occasion by all the admirers of his poetical talents; the reviews joined the newspapers in their regrets; and a variety of petitions were thrown out to prevail upon him not to carry his threat into execution. “We hope,” was the general strain of supplication, “for the honour of the art and the pleasure of the public, Dr. Goldsmith will retract his farewell to poetry, and give us other opportunities of doing justice to his merit.”†

Two letters on this subject, one partly in verse, the other in prose, indicate that some interest was really felt in his threatened desertion; the first, originally supposed from the initials affixed and perhaps from the verses being on a par with such as he usually wrote, to be written by Boswell though dated from Oxford; the second, though signed with an apparently real name, was said by his constant assailant Kenrick to be written by Goldsmith himself in order to praise his own production; but

\* St. James’s Chronicle, July 31.—Aug. 2. 1770.

† Monthly Review, June 1770.

neither statement appears to be true. Little or nothing in his praise can be traced to the pen of Boswell; and Goldsmith had quitted England on an excursion to France before the publication of the second letter. From the tone of the latter however, and the minuteness of reply to the chief strictures passed on the poem, particularly in the *Critical Review*, it may have come from some zealous friend who knew and spoke the sentiments of the author, but most certainly it is not his own. The remonstrance in verse is subjoined\* ; that in

\* *To the Printer of the St. James's Chronicle.*

“Dr. Goldsmith in his *Deserted Village* has these excellent but alarming lines toward the end of it, addressed to Poetry —

‘ Dear charming nymph, neglected and decry’d,  
My shame in crowds, my solitary pride,  
Thou source of all my bliss and all my woe,  
That found’st me poor at first and keep’st me so,  
Thou guide, by which the nobler arts excel,  
Thou nurse of every virtue, fare thee well !’—

“Apollo and the Muses forbid ! What ! shall the author of the *Traveller* and the *Deserted Village*, poems which not only do honour to the nation, but are the only living proofs that true poetry is not dead among us ; shall he, I say, this author, living in the richest nation in Europe and the subject of a young and generous King who loves, cherishes, and understands the fine arts, be obliged to drudge for booksellers, and write, because he must write, lives of poets much inferior to himself, Roman History, Natural History, or any history, and be forced to curb his imagination lest it should run him into distresses ?

‘ Quatenus heu nefas.’

“I could not stop the overflowing of my mind on this occasion in the following lines —

prose as a specimen of the opinions and criticism of the day being too long for insertion here, will be found in a future volume annexed to the poem.

Among other evidences of the popularity of the poem were imitations of the title and subject. Thus, "The Village Oppressed; a Poem—Dedicated to Dr. Goldsmith," and "The Frequented Village; a Poem—Dedicated to Dr. Goldsmith" soon appeared, both authors proud of his acquaintance, and proud likewise to tell the world of the honour they enjoyed. It may be doubted whether he was equally proud of his disciples, neither of whom were proficient in the art of poetry, as will be obvious from the complimentary and concluding part of the latter production, the better of the two, "by a Gentleman of the Middle Temple," who was so impressed by the danger of surreptitious copies of his work

UPON DR. GOLDSMITH TAKING HIS FAREWELL OF POETRY IN  
HIS DESERTED VILLAGE.

'Mason was mute, and Gray but touch'd the lyre,  
For faction chills, not fans, poetic fire;  
Where Shakspeare's genius blazed and Milton's glow'd,  
Discord has fix'd her dark and drear abode,  
Spreads gloom around, and now no tuneful bird,  
Except the lonely Nightingale, is heard;  
He sadly sweet, his woe-fraught bosom heav'd,  
And o'er deserted Auburn hung and griev'd.  
' Pathetic warbler of the pensive plain,  
Cast forth this demon with thy magic strain;  
O soothe our troubled minds, renew thy song,  
And as alone thou charm'st us, charm us long.  
From royal George the royal means shall spring,  
To give thee strength to fly and power to sing;  
So shall his reign this long wish'd truth declare,  
That kings can feel and Genius smile at care.'

"Oxford, July 12th.

J. B."

being put into circulation, that he “begs to sign the initials of his name ‘B. K.’ in each copy.”

“Accept dear Goldsmith, these ingenuous lines,  
Whose generous breast no thought but truth confines ;  
Whose page instructive, as harmonious, found,  
A bright example sheds its light around.  
To thee unfledged my tender muse would soar,  
Secur’d of thine what praises wish I more ?  
Whose pensive ruins, sadly colour’d, tell,  
That once a people happily did dwell,  
Whose desart waste and unfrequented spot,  
Proclaim a village lost, forlorn, forgot.”

The four concluding lines of the poem were supplied by Dr. Johnson, who in looking it over while preparing for the press, conceived they furnished a more appropriate termination —

“That trade’s proud empire hastes to swift decay,  
As ocean sweeps the labour’d mole away :  
While self-dependent power can time defy,  
As rocks resist the billows and the sky.”

See Boswell, vol. ii. p. 309.

## CHAPTER XX.

REQUESTED TO WRITE IN SUPPORT OF THE MINISTRY. — NEWS-PAPER WIT. — LIFE OF PARNELL. — EXCURSION TO PARIS. — ABRIDGMENT OF ROMAN HISTORY. — LIFE OF BOLINGBROKE. — OPINION OF ROWLEY'S POEMS. — HAUNCH OF VENISON. — DR. HIFFERNAN.

THE attention drawn to his farewell to Poetry appeared to answer the object for which it was probably written; that of hinting the impracticability of pursuing an art in which he gave so much pleasure, without having other pecuniary means than his literary labours furnished, of acquiring the necessary leisure for that purpose; and a public provision was thought of by his friends.

An impression of being neglected there is no doubt, had for some time taken root in his mind; he became irritable from the constant drudgery of writing; and from the same cause experienced occasional attacks of a very painful complaint, which were usually succeeded by fits of despondency, and these held up to an excited imagination the probability of being deprived by advancing infirmity of the power of contributing to his own support. A considerable share of public favour and applause added something perhaps to the opinion of his own deserts. Next to Johnson, he occupied the largest share of public attention

in popular literature; on topics of criticism and polite letters his name frequently occurs in the periodical works of the day in conjunction with the latter, and appeals were made conjointly to their judgment; his works had acquired the highest reputation; and the state of his pecuniary circumstances when known, induced the hope of sharing in the bounty that had pensioned Johnson, Sheridan, and Shebbeare, and found means if not of pensioning, at least of being liberal to Murphy, Kelly, and others.

Allusions to his poverty occur in many parts of his writings and he was equally un-reserved in conversation. To Poetry he says emphatically

“That found'st me *poor* at first and keep'st me so.”

Writing to Mr. Bennet Langton in 1771, in speaking of his labours in Natural History we have the admission — “God knows I am tired of this kind of finishing, which is but bungling work; and that not so much my fault as the fault of my scurvy circumstances.” In the preface to that history in allusion to the expense as well as the labour it cost him, we are told, “I have taxed my scanty circumstances in procuring books, which are on this subject, of all others the most expensive.” To the Earl of Lisburn, who once addressed him at a dinner at the Royal Academy with a complimentary notice of his poetical talents and an inquiry whether the world was to be favoured by a new production of his genius, he jocularly replied, “My Lord, I cannot afford to court the

draggie-tail Muses ; they will let me starve : but by pursuing plain prose, I can make shift to eat, and drink, and wear good clothes."

No other notice of the hints thus dropped was taken by the dispensers of national bounty, than an attempt made some months afterwards to engage him through the means of one of their most active agents in support of the ministry, which was then hard-pressed by the opposition in parliament, and by Junius, Wilkes, and a variety of other political writers out of it ; so that his reward or expected reward, was thus to be made dependent not on his literary, but on his political services.

This proposal he had the courage to decline. The fact of its having been made seems to be placed beyond doubt by the bearer of it, the Rev. Dr. Scott, well known as a warm political partisan of the day, and a constant writer in the newspapers under a variety of signatures particularly Anti-Sejanus, Panurge, and others\*, having communicated the fact to living witnesses. † To one of these, Mr. Basil Montagu, to whom the public is indebted for matters of much more importance, the writer is obliged for the anecdote. It exhibits the very different tone of feeling between the Poet

\* In the Public Advertiser, April 6th, 1770, there is a coarse and abusive squib, addressed "To the Rev. Anti-Sejanus, alias the Rev. Mr. Slyboots, alias the Rev. Mr. \* \* \* Chaplain to the pious Jemmy Twitcher" (Lord Sandwich, who was known by this name). This was Dr. Scott.

† Since this was written Sir George Tuthill has died.

though poor, and the reverend and prosperous politician, the studious scholar and the veteran man of the world; and the former perhaps deserves the more credit for his independence when we consider that in complying with the request, he would have been advancing not only his worldly interests, but supporting his avowed political principles, which were nearly similar to those of Dr. Johnson.

“A few months,” writes Mr. Montagu, “before the death of Dr. Scott, author of *Anti-Sejanus* and other political tracts in support of Lord North’s administration, I happened to dine with him in company with my friend Sir George Tut-hill, who was the Doctor’s physician. After dinner Dr. Scott mentioned, as matter of astonishment and a proof of the folly of men who are according to common opinion ignorant of the world, that *he* was once sent with a *carte blanche* from the ministry to Oliver Goldsmith to induce him to write in favour of the administration. “I found him,” said the Doctor, “in a miserable set of chambers in the Temple; I told him my authority; I told him that I was empowered to pay most liberally for his exertions, and, would you believe it! he was so absurd as to say—‘*I can earn as much as will supply my wants without writing for any party; the assistance therefore you offer is unnecessary to me,*’ and so I left him,” added Dr. Scott, “in his garret.”

The purport of this interview soon came to the



knowledge of his friends by whom it was probably mentioned in conversation to others; for threats were occasionally held forth to him in the newspapers if he should become a retainer of the ministry. Among the more authoritative exhortations thus published, and which is said to have been sent him privately, is the following; it seems to proceed from one, to whom his hope of receiving a portion of that royal bounty extended to so many others, his inferiors in literary merit, was evidently not unknown. But the persuasive it contained to despise extraneous assistance, and to depend solely on his own resources for support, as if literature was either an easy or a lucrative profession, or one such as required no other encouragement than praise, for little more than praise could be earned by poetry to which this writer points, is one of those gratuitous pieces of advice, which those who commonly give, would deem it exceedingly inconsiderate or a proof of great self-denial in themselves to follow.

“A friend to Dr. Goldsmith’s great merit as a writer, and worth as a man, hopes he will avail himself of the candid and generous treatment he meets with from the public; their favour he will at all times find to be the best of pensions; and if the Doctor thinks rightly, he will pay a strict regard to his reputation, by avoiding the stigma which literary men too often fix upon themselves, that of betraying the interests of their country for base and scandalous pay.

“There is no need to point out by name the spaniels to power ; they are sufficiently known and despised ; but the tool of a minister, the drudge of a bookseller, or the compiler of temporising histories are characters beneath Dr. Goldsmith’s genius and principles to stoop to. He has luckily too no share in a patent to make him mean or avaricious, nor would he as it is believed, desert the cause of science to become the sparrow and bashaw of a declining theatre. There is a nobler field before the Doctor ; let him till it ; and may that public who are to reap the fruits of that culture, continue to reward him !”

Akin to the disinterestedness which induced him to refuse the proposal from the ministry, the following story is told. Having received for the Deserted Village a note for one hundred guineas, he was told by a friend whom he met when returning from the bookseller, that it was a large sum for a short performance ; and seeming to be of the same opinion by the remark “that it was more perhaps than the honest man could afford,” he returned and delivered it up.

Whether true or not, the anecdote sufficiently conveys the general opinion formed of his probity and generosity ; but its authenticity is at least doubtful. A bookseller scarcely requires to be instructed by a stranger about the amount to be given for a poem written by a popular writer, the merit of which was obvious to any critical eye ; and

Goldsmith was commonly too much in want of money to relinquish, without further and convincing reasons what must have been voluntarily given as the reward of his labours. Had the sale been such as to prove a loss to the purchaser, he would no doubt have reimbursed him in another way, but of the value of the time and labour expended upon the work, the severe and repeated revisions it had undergone, producing so near an approach to perfection as to occasion little or no alteration in successive editions, he could not be ignorant. Poems are not to be judged as the supposed remark of this friend would imply, by their length, but by their excellence; the former is indeed sometimes a vulgar criterion of merit, and it might perhaps escape from one of the persons whom his good-nature not their own merits or intelligence, admitted to occasional intimacy. The whole sum received for this poem is supposed not to have been more than one hundred guineas.\*

The names of Johnson and Goldsmith were so

\* The precise sum received for it appears not to have been known among what is called the *trade*; for Cadell who was connected with Goldsmith in some literary transactions did not know the amount. In Hannah More's correspondence it appears that he offered her the same sum for *Sir Eldred of the Bower* as was received for the *Deserted Village*, if she could find it out; — a striking proof of the very different value of poetry in the literary market and in Parnassus; for no one of critical discrimination, least of all the ingenious authoress, would have ventured to compare them in the scale of merit.

commonly united, that when one became the sport of newspaper wit, the other rarely escaped.\* The former was callous to any thing of this description ; but the Irish poet being known to be sensitive, many of the inferior writers, from envy or love of mischief, took delight in teasing him by their jests and ridicule.

On one of these occasions Johnson and he were represented as the Pedant and his flatterer in *Love's Labour Lost*. Goldsmith, whose dignity was offended by the imputation, came to his friend complaining of their insolence and vowing vengeance against the printer, till Johnson, impatient of the subject, cried out at last, "Why, what wouldest thou have, dear Doctor? Who the plague is hurt with all this nonsense? and how is a man the worse I wonder in his health, purse, or character for being called *Holofernes*?" "I do not know," replied the Poet with some readiness,

\* Johnson was frequently the subject of a squib, in allusion either to his personal peculiarities, his politics, or his pension. In one he is announced (ironically of course) to appear in the character of *Sir Charles Easy*, and Goldsmith in that of *Common Sense*. In another he is represented, in allusion to the pension, as Hercules slaying the Hesperian Dragon, and receiving his *reward*. Again in a squib against the ministry where each is recommended to fill a place at variance with their supposed characters, he finds a place as *Governor of Falkland Islands*. In a mock will of Wilkes, among other satirical bequests there is, — "To my dear wife, my love ; — to Mrs. Catherine M'Auley, my breeches ;" "to Dr. Samuel Johnson, *my politeness*." These are only a few out of a great number.

“how you may relish being called Holofernes, but I do not like at least to play *Goodman Dull*.”

Mrs. Piozzi, who relates the anecdote, gives no reference to the article that produced it, which however the writer has discovered.\* The wit is neither very new nor sparkling. The author of it through the convenient medium of a dream, attends a fancied auction, where a bookseller acting as auctioneer, is supposed to put up the literati of the day to sale, and the literary friends are thus described, beginning with Johnson.

*Auctioneer.* “This is the Leviathan of Literature — the Colossus Doctor — and his friend, the head of the press; a technical pair, fit to fill up any lady’s library. The first was secretary to Rasselas, Prince of Abyssinia, but turning out both an *Idler* and a *Rambler* and giving many *False Alarms* to the city, by which he frightened into fits the Queen Irene, he was immediately ordered to be sold by public auction.

“His companion was thought a *Good Natured Man* till he injured a *Vicar of Wakefield* by deluding the poor priest with a false *Prospect of Society*; since which he has crawled among the ruins of a *Deserted Village*, and employed his time in castrating the *Roman History*. These are the literary Castor and Pollux; the benevolent, celebrated, convivial associates; the incomprehensible Holofernes and the impenetrable *Goodman Dull*.

\* St. James’s Chronicle, June 14th, 1770.

Gentlemen say something for this concatenated couple. — Six shillings — Zounds — that the originals should not fetch the price of one of their smallest works! Going for six shillings—The immaculate contemporaries for six shillings! Sixpence more;—for six and sixpence, going. These voluminous folios of pomposity for six and sixpence — going — going — gone!

“ Nothing astonished me so much as the price of these invaluable geniuses. I did at least imagine they would have fetched ten times as much as the Gentle Naso\*, but I find sound sense and heavy judgment is not the present taste of the present age.”

About the middle of June he brought out the *Life of Parnell*†, prefixed to an edition of his works. The facts contained in the memoir are few, which induced Johnson to say, “ Goldsmith’s *Life of Parnell* is poor; not that it is poorly written but that he had poor materials.” Whether he used much diligence in adding to the existing stock, may be doubted, though obligations are confessed to the nephew of the poet, Sir John Parnell; but no reference appears from what we find in it to have been made to his daughter who was then living. We are consequently uninformed of the private

\* Who was meant by the Gentle Naso, does not appear; Cumberland, Macpherson, Major Topham, and others figure in this supposed catalogue of sale.

† Published for T. Davies, price 1s. separately; or with the *Works of the Poet*, 3s. 6d. *St. James’s Chronicle* — *Public Advertiser*, July 13th, 1770.

life, the domestic habits and manners, the origin, accidental or otherwise, of his productions, the space of time they occupied in the composition, when they were published, or his mode of study, in short of all those circumstances that go to make up a life not merely domestic but literary, and which a daughter might be supposed capable and desirous of furnishing. When biography fails to interest us it commonly fails from this cause. All our knowledge of Parnell's residence in Ireland, where notwithstanding his love of England much time must necessarily have been passed, is confined to the fact of disliking his neighbourhood. But biography at the time he lived and in all previous periods was too much neglected by contemporaries in both countries, surprisingly so considering its importance, and the omission is now difficult, more especially in Ireland, to repair. It was perhaps with a feeling of personal application, that Goldsmith from what he himself experienced, was induced to make the following remarks on the public character of his subject. "A poet, while living, is seldom an object sufficiently great to attract much attention; his real merits are known but to a few, and these are generally sparing in their praises. When his fame is increased by time, it is then too late to investigate the peculiarities of his disposition; the dews of the morning are past, and we vainly try to continue the chase by the meridian splendour."

The edition he produced contained chiefly the

poems published by Pope, who selecting from the papers of his friend such only as were thought the best, suppressed others of less value. Several of these afterwards published, were questioned as to their authenticity and merit, and have been usually disregarded. Goldsmith did the same; but he or his publisher, for it is doubtful whether Davies did not introduce them on his own authority, added two pieces, *Piety, or the Vision*, and *Bacchus\**; with the Life of Zoilus, and his supposed remarks on Homer's battle of the Frogs and Mice, intended as satires on the critics, Dennis and Theobald.

On the principal pieces, he gives a few critical observations, which Dr. Johnson in the Lives of the Poets remarks it would not be safe to contradict. All his opinions however were not equally well received. For an indirect preference of the *Night-piece on Death* to Gray's Elegy in a Country Churchyard, which is thus expressed, "it deserves every praise, and I should suppose with very little amendment, might be made to surpass all those night pieces and churchyard scenes that have since appeared," he received a very sharp rebuke from one of the professional critics† as being "blind to all excellence but his own;" while Johnson likewise adds in preference of the English bard, that "Gray has the advantage of dignity, variety, and originality of sentiment."

\* First published, as we are told, by Mr. James Arbuckle in No. 62. of the Letters of Hibernicus.

† Critical Review.



The fame of Parnell rests on the Hermit, one of the most beautiful poems in our language; the Rise of Woman, the Fairy Tale, and the Allegory on Man, are perhaps next in merit. His characteristics are ease, sweetness, and simplicity, which belong likewise with some higher qualities to Goldsmith himself, who seems in these respects to have superseded him in public estimation, for the Hermit though not forgotten, is less read than formerly. The remarks of David Hume on the subject of simplicity as applicable to this poet exhibit just taste and correct criticism with regard to his art, and deserve to be quoted as explaining to inferior critics the origin of much of the popularity belonging to Goldsmith.

“Those compositions which we read the oftenest and which every man of taste has got by heart, have the recommendation of simplicity, and have nothing surprising in the thought when divested of that elegance of expression and harmony of numbers with which it is clothed. If the merit of the composition lies in a point of wit, it may strike at first; but the mind anticipates the thought in the second perusal, and is no longer affected by it. When I read an epigram of Martial, the first line recalls the whole; and I have no pleasure in repeating to myself what I know already. But each line, each word in Catullus has its merit; and I am never tired with the perusal of him. It is sufficient to run over Cowley once; but Parnell after the fiftieth reading is as fresh as at the first.”

Towards the end of July he joined Mrs. and the Misses Horneck in an excursion to Paris. To this journey there is an allusion in a letter of Miss Moser afterwards Mrs. Lloyd, daughter of the keeper of the Royal Academy, addressed to Fuseli then at Rome.

“Some of the literati of the Royal Academy were much disappointed as they could not obtain diplomas, but the secretary who is above trifles, has since made a very flattering compliment to the Academy in the preface to his *Travels*: The Professor of History is comforted by the success of his ‘*Deserted Village*,’ which is a very pretty poem, and has lately put himself under the conduct of Mrs. Horneck and her fair daughters, and is gone to France; and Dr. Johnson sips his tea, and cares not for the vanity of the world.” Immediately after disembarking at Calais he wrote the following lively sketch of the first few incidents that occurred on reaching the French shore, which has caused some regret that his letters were not more diligently continued.

“*To Sir Joshua Reynolds.*”

“MY DEAR FRIEND,

“We had a very quick passage from Dover to Calais, which we performed in three hours and twenty minutes, all of us extremely sea-sick, which must necessarily have happened as my machine to prevent sea-sickness was not completed. We were

glad to leave Dover, because we hated to be imposed upon; so were in high spirits at coming to Calais, where we were told that a little money would go a great way.

“ Upon landing two little trunks, which was all we carried with us, we were surprised to see fourteen or fifteen fellows all running down to the ship to lay their hands upon them; four got under each trunk, the rest surrounded and held the hasps; and in this manner our little baggage was conducted with a kind of funeral solemnity, till it was safely lodged at the custom-house. We were well enough pleased with the people’s civility till they came to be paid; every creature that had the happiness of but touching our trunks with their finger, expected sixpence; and they had so pretty and civil a manner of demanding it, that there was no refusing them.

“ When we had done with the porters, we had next to speak with the custom-house officers who had their pretty civil way too. We were directed to the Hôtel d’Angleterre, where a valet de place came to offer his service, and spoke to me ten minutes before I once found out that he was speaking English. We had no occasion for his services, so we gave him a little money because he spoke English, and because he wanted it. I cannot help mentioning another circumstance; I bought a new ribbon for my wig at Canterbury, and the barber at Calais broke it in order to gain sixpence by buying me a new one.”

It was on this journey that the story printed by Boswell, of his exhibiting extreme jealousy of the admiration shown towards his young and beautiful companions, as if this were injustice to the distinction he thought due only to himself, first originated. Northcote in the *Life of Reynolds* has repeated the tale, with additional circumstances tending to confirm its truth, such as that "the town was Antwerp," "that the populace surrounded the door of the hotel and testified a desire to see those beautiful young women."

The absurdity of a man not absolutely an idiot, being jealous from motives of personal vanity of the admiration excited by his female friends, seems so incredible as scarcely to require contradiction. But having been believed and often quoted in the case of Goldsmith, the writer after examining the matter closely and being satisfied of the incorrectness of the story, had written a page or two in disproof of its reality, when further trouble was saved him by an interview with Northcote, who voluntarily alluding to the anecdote expressed his regret that a statement so injurious to the poet, and which more correct information from the best authority had satisfied him was untrue, should have received further circulation by his means. From the same unquestionable source that he received the contradiction, namely from that of one of the ladies who was the principal party concerned, and who still to the delight of her friends survives to tell the story, the writer a few days afterward received the following account : —

Having visited part of Flanders, they were proceeding to Paris by the way of Lisle, when in the vicinity of the hotel at which they put up, a part of the garrison going through some military manœuvres, drew them to the windows, when the gallantry of the officers broke forth into a variety of compliments intended for the ears of the English ladies. Goldsmith seemed amused ; but at length assuming something of severity of countenance, which was a peculiarity of his humour often displayed when most disposed to be jocular, turned off, uttering something to the effect of what is commonly stated, that elsewhere he would also have his admirers. “ This,” added my informant, “ was said in mere playfulness, and I was shocked many years afterwards to see it adduced in print as a proof of his envious disposition.”

Of Paris, the same lady states he soon became tired, the celebrity of his name and the recent success of his poem, not ensuring that attention from its literary circles which the applause received at home induced him to expect. A letter of his written from Paris to Sir Joshua Reynolds at this time is still in existence, and records his distaste to France and almost every thing French ; hints at the different impressions made on the mind by travelling at twenty (though he was twenty-seven when formerly in France) and at forty ; wishes that the period of their sojourn had expired ; and even projects the plot of a comedy to expose the folly of an English family

going to France with the hope of living cheaply. With the same grave kind of humour as exhibited in the anecdote of the ladies at Lisle, and which on other occasions was mistaken by such as did not know him for serious discontent, he tells of one of his *bon mots* not being appreciated by his companions. For this letter which also adverts to the too familiar topic with him of pecuniary difficulty, the reader is indebted to the politeness of Mr. Singer.

“ *To Sir Joshua Reynolds.*

“ Paris, July 29th (1770).

“ MY DEAR FRIEND,

“ I began a long letter to you from Lisle giving a description of all that we had done and seen, but finding it very dull and knowing that you would show it again I threw it aside and it was lost. You see by the top of this letter that we are at Paris, and (as I have often heard you say) we have brought our own amusement with us, for the ladies do not seem to be very fond of what we have yet seen.

“ With regard to myself I find that travelling at twenty and at forty are very different things. I set out with all my confirmed habits about me and can find nothing on the Continent so good as when I formerly left it. One of our chief amusements here is scolding at every thing we meet with and praising every thing and every person we left at home. You may judge therefore whether your

name is not frequently bandied at table among us. To tell you the truth I never thought I could regret your absence so much as our various mortifications on the road have often taught me to do. I could tell you of disasters and adventures without number, of our lying in barns, and of my being half poisoned with a dish of green peas, of our quarrelling with postillions and being cheated by our landladies, but I reserve all this for an happy hour which I expect to share with you upon my return.

“ I have little to tell you more but that we are at present all well, and expect returning when we have staid out one month, which I did not care if it were over this very day. I long to hear from you all, how you yourself do, how Johnson, Burke, Dyer, Chamier, Colman, and every one of the club do. I wish I could send you some amusement in this letter, but I protest I am so stupified by the air of this country (for I am sure it can never be natural) that I have not a word to say. I have been thinking of the plot of a comedy which shall be entitled A Journey to Paris, in which a family shall be introduced with a full intention of going to France to save money. You know there is not a place in the world more promising for that purpose. As for the meat of this country I can scarce eat it, and though we pay two good shillings an head for our dinner I find it all so tough that I have spent less time with my knife than my picktooth. I said this as a good

thing at table, but it was not understood. I believe it to be a good thing.

“As for our intended journey to Devonshire I find it out of my power to perform it, for, as soon as I arrive at Dover I intend to let the ladies go on, and I will take a country lodging somewhere near that place in order to do some business. I have so outrun the constable that I must mortify a little to bring it up again. For God’s sake the night you receive this take your pen in your hand and tell me something about yourself, and myself, if you know of any thing that has happened. About Miss Reynolds, about Mr. Bickerstaff, my nephew, or any body that you regard. I beg you will send to Griffin the bookseller to know if there be any letters left for me, and be so good as to send them to me at Paris. They may perhaps be left for me at the Porter’s Lodge opposite the pump in Temple Lane. The same messenger will do. I expect one from Lord Clare from Ireland. As for others I am not much uneasy about.

“Is there any thing I can do for you at Paris? I wish you would tell me. The whole of my own purchases here is one silk coat which I have put on, and which makes me look like a fool. But no more of that. I find that Colman has gained his lawsuit. I am glad of it. I suppose you often meet. I will soon be among you, better pleased with my situation at home than I ever was before. And yet I must say that if any thing could make France pleasant the very good women with whom



I am at present would certainly do it. I could say more about that but I intend showing them this letter before I send it away. What signifies teasing you longer with moral observations when the business of my writing is over. I have one thing only more to say, and of that I think every hour in the day, namely, that I am your most

“ Sincere and most affectionate friend,

“ OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

“ Direct to me at the Hôtel de Danemarck,  
Rue Jacob Fauxbourg St. Germaines.”

Some portion of this impatience to be gone, arose from a gentleman joining the party to whom he afterwards gave an Epitaph in Retaliation.

“ Here Hickey reclines, a most blunt, pleasant creature,  
And slander itself must allow him good nature ;  
He cherish'd his friend, and he relish'd a bumper,  
Yet one fault he had, and that one was a thumper.  
Perhaps you may ask if the man was a miser,  
I answer no, no, for he always was wiser ;  
Too courteous perhaps, or obligingly flat,  
His very worst foe can't accuse him of that ;  
Perhaps he confided in men as they go,  
And so was too foolishly honest ? Ah no !  
Then what was his failing ? Come tell it and burn ye, —  
He was, could he help it ? a special attorney.”

These lines, with the delicate dexterity shown in sketching nearly all the characters in that production hint more than they express ; at least when at Paris they were not so well acquainted as after-

wards, and neither the mind nor manners of Mr. Hickey were deemed the most polished — neither was he a favourite otherwise with the party ; but being well acquainted with the French capital, served the purpose of a useful acquaintance. Goldsmith, whose foibles he could see without being then able to appreciate his genius, had at this time from several slight disagreements, taken a dislike to him, and wished to accelerate the departure either of himself or the visitor.

The sense of his own imperfections in a religious point of view, was shown in a way to which allusion has been already made. During the stay of his friends in the French capital few opportunities having offered of attending the service of the church of England, Mrs. Horneck more than once requested Goldsmith to read the morning service. His reply invariably was, “ I should be happy to oblige you, my dear madam, but in truth I do not think myself good enough.”

His emulative spirit, or desire to excel in feats of activity which had gained him some reputation in Ireland, was here productive of rather a ludicrous result, communicated from another quarter. Being with a party at Versailles viewing the water-works, a question arose among the gentlemen present whether the distance from whence they stood to one of the little islands was within the compass of a leap. Goldsmith maintained the affirmative, but being bantered on the subject and remembering his former prowess as a youth, attempted

the leap, but falling short, descended into the water to the great amusement of the company. \*

At the end of six weeks, he returned with his friends to England. Soon afterwards when dining with Mr. (or Counsellor) Ridge whom in Retaliation he characterises as "Anchovy" in St. James's Street, he was asked by that gentleman in allusion to a projected excursion of mutual friends, whether travelling on the Continent made up to an Englishman by its novelty and interest for the sacrifices which it required of his accustomed habits and conveniences; whether on the whole he advised it as a source of instructive recreation. — "I recommend it by all means," was the reply, with perhaps the remembrance of some circumstances which had annoyed him on the journey, "to the rich if they are without the sense of *smelling*, and to the poor if they are without the sense of *feeling*; and to both if they can discharge from their minds all idea of what in England we term comfort."

The design intimated in the letter to Sir Joshua

\* "In going through the towns of France sometime since, I could not help observing how much plainer their parrots spoke than ours, and how very distinctly I understood their parrots speak French, when I could not understand our own, though they spoke my native language. I at first ascribed it to the different qualities of the two languages, and was for entering into an elaborate discussion on the vowels and consonants; but a friend that was with me solved the difficulty at once, by assuring me that the French women scarce did any thing else the whole day than sit and instruct their feathered pupils; and that the birds were thus distinct in their lessons in consequence of continual schooling." — *Animated Nature*, vol. v. p. 276.

of remaining some time in the neighbourhood of Dover for the purpose of literary application did not take effect, for immediately upon reaching England he received the news of the death of his mother who had been blind for some years ; an affliction he endeavoured to soothe by taking care that it should not be accompanied by want. His inconsiderate conduct earlier in life had no doubt excited a degree of displeasure not unusual in an anxious parent ; neither perhaps was she pleased that his subsequent life in London offered so little of worldly advantage ; but there is no reason to believe that this occasioned any thing like alienation of feeling on the part of either, especially in a man of warm affections like her son. No particulars of presumed disagreement were necessarily known to his London friends ; but an incident which were it true could be considered but as a whim of the moment, and not as indicative of disregard, on his part, excited notice in his familiar circle. It is told by Northcote in the Life of Reynolds.

“ About the year 1770 Dr. Goldsmith lost his mother, who died in Ireland. On this occasion he immediately dressed himself in a suit of clothes of grey cloth trimmed with black such as is commonly worn for second mourning. When he appeared the first time after this at Sir Joshua Reynolds’s house Miss Reynolds asked him whom he had lost as she saw he wore mourning, when he answered a distant relation only ; being shy as I conjecture to own that he wore such slight mourning for so near

a relation. This appears in him an unaccountable blunder in wearing such a dress; as all those who did not know his mother or her death would not expect or require him to wear *mourning* at all, and to those who knew of his mother's death it would not appear the proper dress of mourning for so near a relation; so that he satisfied nobody and displeased some; for Miss Reynolds who afterwards heard of his mother's death thought it unfeeling of him to call her a distant relation."

Circumstantially as this story is told, we may suspect something of the mistake or exaggeration common in so many other stories concerning its subject. Northcote was not then in London, and consequently knew not the circumstances himself; what he afterwards heard may have been incorrectly told, as there seems to have been some indisposition on the part of Miss Reynolds towards Goldsmith, or after the lapse of forty years it may have been imperfectly remembered by the relater. A surer guide to his dress at this moment is the authority already quoted, his tailor's account, where it is entered September 8th, in the same terms as the dress worn after the loss of his brother in 1768, and again for the Princess Dowager of Wales in 1772, simply as a "suit of mourning." Had it been half-mourning on one or other occasion the difference would no doubt have been expressed. The whim, had it been really indulged was harmless, not necessarily implying want of reverence or affection; and the story is only noticed

in proof of the caution with which anecdotes of him even from seemingly authentic quarters should be received.

The relaxation enjoyed in France was as usual, to be made up by corresponding diligence at home; and he had been little more than a week in London when the following agreement for another compilation was signed with one of his publishers.

“ Sept. 15. 1770.

“ It is agreed between Oliver Goldsmith, M.B. and Thomas Davies of Covent Garden bookseller, that Oliver Goldsmith shall abridge for Thomas Davies, the book entitled Goldsmith’s Roman History in two volumes 8vo. into one volume in 12mo., so as to fit it for the use of such as will not be at the expense of that in 8vo. For the abridging of the said history and for putting his name thereto, the said Thomas Davies shall pay Oliver Goldsmith fifty guineas, to be paid him on the abridgement and delivery of the copy; as witness our hands.

“ OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

“ THOMAS DAVIES.”

From this design he was diverted for a time by another, which Davies, with a view to the politics of the moment, pressed upon him for immediate performance.

The excitement existing in the nation at this period from the supposed influence of Lord Bute, the unpopularity for a time of George III., and

the imprudences of successive ministries in their contests with Mr. Wilkes, added to other unpopular measures, exceeded any thing short of open violence, which had ever been previously witnessed in the annals of the country. This feeling was increased by the low private as well as political character of several members of the government; it was fostered by a strong and able opposition in parliament; and out of it by the contention, from various motives, of such writers as Burke, Johnson, and Junius; of Wilkes, Home, Shebbeare, Murphy, Kelly, and a thousand nameless writers of various ability, whose labours on either side kept the country for two or three years in a state of extraordinary ferment. In these contests it was natural to revert to the political warfare of the preceding age; the days of Walpole, Pulteney, and Bolingbroke were retraced for examples; and several pamphlets of the latter writer, as being the ablest and in some measure most applicable to the circumstances of the time, were selected by more than one bookseller for republication. These were chiefly the Patriot King, and the Dissertation on Parties; to the latter as a further source of interest, Davies wished a life to be prefixed, and on this subject Goldsmith was now employed.

It came out in the middle of December\*; his name was withheld for the moment, contrary to

\* Erroneously considered by Bishop Percy, to have been first printed in 1771.

the practice adopted in the biography of Parnell, from an apprehension perhaps of being charged with becoming a political partisan, though after his death it was affixed to an edition of Bolingbroke's works published in 1774. No great degree of secrecy indeed was sought by the publisher, for Davies in order to promote the success of his speculation took care to let the author be known. "The Life of Lord Bolingbroke," says the writer in the *Critical Review*, "is evidently written by the author of the Life of Dr. Parnell, who has no reason to be ashamed of the performance." The *Monthly Review*, after many sharp strictures on the work without mentioning the author in the body of the article, attaches his name to it in the index.

The immediate object for which this was undertaken offered little inducement to search for original materials, neither were these perhaps, judging from the little that has since transpired, easily to be found. Yet connected as was the subject of it, during a long and active life, with political intrigue and party, with statesmen, men of rank and of letters, an indefatigable writer himself, an eloquent speaker, secretary of state to Queen Anne and to the Pretender, leader of the House of Commons when in it, and when no longer permitted to enter parliament the leader of the opposition out of it, and as such corresponding largely not only with the press but with persons of various descriptions on state or other affairs, it is difficult not to be-



lieve there is much and not uninteresting matter withheld. The business of Goldsmith was to select from such as was known ; to arrange in a clear and pleasing narrative what appears in a confused form in the *Biographia Britannica* and other available sources, introducing such observations as the incidents of a life so various suggested.

The character of Bolingbroke seems now pretty well fixed in general opinion ; all perhaps that can be said in favour of it he lived to say for himself, and any new discoveries that may be made, however instructive to the historian, as they will elucidate little more than political intrigue, are not likely to redound to his advantage. He was a man of eminent talents but of no fixed principles, or these hung so loosely about him as to be shaken off whenever it suited his interests or convenience. His ambition was in advance even of his abilities ; and to gratify it he seems often to have deviated from the course of a wise or straight-forward man. Wherever we trace him in fact there is something to be seen irregular or inconsistent in conduct ; tortuous, rugged, slippery, and occasionally dangerous, in his paths ; but they were of his own choosing, and he chose them in preference to such as were more easy and perhaps quite as direct ; and this may form one of the causes why of all the leading statesmen of that age, there are few however inferior their capacity who do not command more of our respect. Much of his conduct may be traced to the turbulence of his passions

which commonly held the mastery over his actions; moderation in their indulgence was a quality little known to his nature, or one which he never attempted to practise. The ruling passion of the moment occupied him wholly. Thus, up to the age of twenty-eight a course of unbridled licentiousness gained him unenviable notoriety; when he entered the House of Commons he seems to have devoted himself zealously to its business; during two years afterwards when out of office, he was, if we are to believe himself, not less assiduously devoted to study. With a determination and efforts of labour almost without parallel, he negotiated as Secretary of State the treaty of Utrecht in defiance of a powerful party in parliament, — of the allies in the war, — of the great general then commanding our army, — and with little or no assistance from his colleagues in the cabinet; and with equal energy and art pursued persevering intrigues to unseat his colleague Harley, as first minister, in order to fill his place. We find the same morbid activity in the hatred with which for a long series of years he pursued Walpole, their joint opponent and successor, when he found him resolutely opposed to his re-introduction to parliament; and in the war against him of frequent and able pamphlets, — then of more weight than at any previous period of our history, — from the press; while with the same view, he continued unwearied efforts to organise and influence a powerful opposition in the senate, which his position admitted of

no hope of being enabled to lead. But his labours did not terminate there. Having failed to disturb the system of national policy consequent upon the Revolution, he turned round with a feeling resembling desperate determination to perpetrate mischief of some kind, to assault the foundations of the Christian faith.

A striking evidence of his powers was the sway which he held over minds of no secondary order, over statesmen and men of letters, classes which in general sharply scrutinize a proposed idol before they make him an object of worship. Lord Chesterfield, the witty and the worldly and who thought himself above his fellows in penetration, thought extravagantly of his talents while he cared nothing for his principles; Prior gave him his love; Swift, a caustic observer of men and manners, his esteem and regard; Arbuthnot his applause; and Pope almost his adoration, for he made him, as he tells us, "his guide, philosopher, and friend." The admiration of such men has imparted more of celebrity and consideration than past or present ages would otherwise have given him, though in fact he had, and has, no weight with either. His name indeed, not his merits, is secure of a passport to immortality by the address to him in the *Essay on Man*. But this has nothing to do with our esteem. Talents when misapplied, or perverted to mischievous and unjustifiable purposes, whether for the gratification of private selfishness or doubtful national ends, lose all their value in our opinion.

In England we expect and ought to have some character with public men; it is due to our general and even individual interests as well as to the proud moral station held by our country; without exacting an impossible purity from such as hold official station, they should be at least free from glaring impropriety; and in the instance of this well known statesman so thought the nation at large. Little confidence could be given to one whose principles were doubtful and whose morals had drawn down censure; who was known to be an unscrupulous intriguer; and who by accepting office under the Pretender and organizing the invasion of Scotland in 1715, could not be considered otherwise than a traitor to his country. With all his abilities therefore the political life of Bolingbroke was, and deserved to be, a failure; nor are there many who would accept the reputation of such abilities as he possessed, to be the subject of the same ungovernable passions, the same ungratified craving for political power, the same vicissitudes, mortifications and bitter disappointments in his chief pursuit, and leave behind him a name more than questionable in morals and religion.

Such a subject was neither easy nor agreeable to handle; yet the memoir is judiciously drawn up. He praises where praise can be given; but of one so objectionable in religion, morals and politics, — whom he characterises truly as one of those “characters that seemed formed by nature to take delight in struggling with opposition, and whose most

agreeable hours are passed in storms of their own creating" — "whose life was spent in a continual conflict of politics, and as if that was too short for the combat has left his memory as a subject for lasting contention," it must have been a matter of difficulty to preserve the natural partiality of the biographer amid the truth required from the historian. The probable remuneration received for this piece was forty pounds, for it appears by a memorandum that in February 1771 he paid away a note of hand of Davies in his favour for that amount.

The attention drawn to the Poems of Rowley during the two preceding years, and the recent death of their assumed discoverer, the unhappy Chatterton, created at this time a strong interest among literary men. The question was variously considered by critics of poetical taste or antiquarian knowledge; some were wholly incredulous; and others continued to doubt; while a third party looking at the merit of the poetry, the quantity produced within a short period, the acquaintance displayed with the language and events of their supposed date, and the improbability that an imposition so extensive and difficult could be accomplished by a youth of sixteen, of narrow education, and confined to the duties of an attorney's office, were led to the belief of their being genuine.

Among the latter was Goldsmith. Ten years before he saw at once the imposture attempted to be practised on public credulity in the instance

of Ossian, but on consideration of the circumstances just mentioned, believed there could be none in this case; and sometimes stated his reasons in expressions sufficiently strong though not necessary to repeat here, in the societies which he frequented. One of these occasions was at the dinner of the Royal Academy, when his remarks drew forth Horace Walpole to speak of his previous knowledge of the poems and their discoverer, of which he gives a fuller account in the letter he thought proper to write explanatory of his intercourse with Chatterton, printed at Strawberry Hill in 1779.

“ I supposed ” said he “ the pieces were of the age of Richard I. ; that impression was so strong on my mind that two years after when Dr. Goldsmith told me they were allotted to the age of Henry 4th or 5th, I said with surprise, ‘ They have shifted the date extremely. ’ ”

After stating the return of the poems when angrily demanded by Chatterton, and also of his letters, he adds —

“ I thought no more of him or them till about a year and a half after when dining at the Royal Academy, Dr. Goldsmith drew the attention of the company with the account of the marvellous treasure of ancient poems lately discovered at Bristol, and expressed enthusiastic belief in them, for which he was laughed at by Dr. Johnson who was present. I soon found this was the trouvaille of my friend Chatterton; and I told Dr. Goldsmith that this novelty was known to me, who

might if I had pleased, have had the honour of ushering the great discovery to the learned world. You may imagine, sir, we did not at all agree in the measure of our faith; but though his credulity diverted me, my mirth was soon dashed, for on asking about Chatterton, he told me he had been in London and had destroyed himself."

On a future occasion, conviction of the truth of his opinion of their genuineness, and an equally vehement assertion of disbelief on the part of Dr. Percy who could not always control his temper, led to a degree of heat that produced a breach between them, soon afterwards however repaired, although a contrary inference may be drawn from one account of the quarrel. "How frail, alas!" exclaims a writer who knew both parties, "are all human friendships! I was witness to an entire separation between Percy and Goldsmith, about Rowley's Poems."\*

Afterwards when he saw a MS. copy of these poems in the possession of a friend of Chatterton, Mr. George Catcott of Bristol, and expressed a wish to become the purchaser, he proved to be, what was a common occurrence it is to be feared, without money. A note of hand was proposed; the reply to which is said to have been characteristic: "Alas, sir, I fear a poet's note of hand will not pass current on our exchange at Bristol."

Part of the spring and summer of the year 1771 he passed at Gosfield and at Bath, with Lord

\* Cradock's Memoirs, vol. i. p. 206.

Clare, who having recently lost his only son Colonel Nugent, found some consolation in the society of the Poet. To this visit Dr. Johnson alludes in a letter written to Mr. Langton in March that year — “Goldsmith is at Bath with Lord Clare.” Mr. John Gray, author, in conjunction with Guthrie, of the History of the World already mentioned, and of a translation of the Odes and Epistles of Horace, also notices this intimacy in a letter written some months afterwards to Dr. Smollett, then in Italy.

“In poetry we may be said to have nothing new; but we have the mezzotinto portrait of the poet, Dr. Goldsmith, in the print-shop windows; it is in profile from a painting of Reynolds, and resembles him greatly.” “To-day, July 9th,” he adds in another part of the same letter, “I observe a new History of England soon to be published by Dr. Goldsmith, all for a guinea. I am told he now generally lives with his countryman, Lord Clare, who has lost his only son, Colonel Nugent.”

On his return from this visit he drew up that amusing piece, “The Haunch of Venison,” addressed to his Lordship, some hints for which are, as suggested by Mr. Croker\*, derived from Boileau. No correct date has been assigned it in any edition of his works, the years 1765, 1769, 1770, being stated by various editors, whereas it was not published till after his death. The period of its

\* Croker's Boswell, vol. ii. p. 123. *Note.*



being written is pretty evident to such as are acquainted with the history of the time by internal evidence alone, chiefly from the allusions made to temporary topics of conversation. Thus the phrase quoted in the following passage is from the love letters of the Duke of Cumberland, whose orthography and style furnished abundant matter for amusement to the newspapers\* of the day —

“ Left alone to reflect, having emptied my shelf,  
And ‘ *Nobody with me at sea but myself.*’ ”

The writers who are alluded to in the lines ;—

“ They’re both of them merry and Authors like you ;  
The one writes the *Snarler*, the other the *Scourge* ;  
Some think he writes *Cinna* — he owns to *Panurge* ”—

occupied the columns of the Public Advertiser almost daily during the end of the year 1770 and the spring of 1771.† As supposed organs of the ministry, they became topics of conversation, and as such are mentioned by Goldsmith writing at the moment ; for their compositions possessed no principle of prolonged vitality, and were not likely to have been resuscitated by him when the occasion that produced them had passed away.

Several variations appear between the first and subsequent impressions, besides an addition of ten new lines, there being in the former one hundred

\* Vide Public Advertiser, passim, 1770, 1771.

† See the months of September, October, November, December, 1770.

and fourteen and in the latter one hundred and twenty-four. And as death had removed the author before the period of publication (1776) the MS. copy first furnished to the press, must have been one of his early transcripts, and therefore less correct than further research supplied.

The additional lines are —

“ Though my stomach was sharp I could scarce help regretting  
To spoil such a delicate picture by eating.”

\* \* \* \* \*

“ There’s my countryman Higgins — Oh let him alone,  
For making a blunder or picking a bone.”

\* \* \* \* \*

“ Some lords, my acquaintance, that settle the nation,  
Are pleased to be kind — but I hate ostentation.”

\* \* \* \* \*

“ So there I sat stuck like a horse in a pound,  
While the bacon and liver went merrily round.”

\* \* \* \* \*

And two lines in the original —

“ There ’s a pasty ” — “ A pasty ” returned the Scot ;  
“ I don’t care if I keep a corner for *that*,”

he has converted into four in the amended copy —

“ There ’s a pasty ” — “ A pasty ” repeated the Jew,  
“ I don’t care, if I keep a corner for ’t too.”  
“ What the de’il mon, a pasty ! ” re-echoed the Scot,  
“ Tho’ splitting, I ’ll still keep a corner for that.”

In considering how he shall dispose of the neck and the breast of venison, he recalls as proper objects of the gift the names of the authors who found a frequent resource in his generosity. To the general reader these are now become unintelligible by the first and last letters only of each

being printed ; a degree of reserve scarcely necessary at any time, and continued perhaps only from the persons being forgotten. No such delicacy was evinced in the first edition, where we find them given at length :—

“ There 's Coley, and Williams, and Howard and Hiff,  
I think they love venison ;— I know they love beef ;  
But hang it !— to poets who seldom can eat,  
Your very good mutton 's a very good treat ;  
Such dainties to them ! — it would seem like a flirt, —  
Like sending them ruffles when wanting a shirt.”

Wanting genius or industry, these writers have left nothing by which to be remembered, fulfilling the remark of Roger Ascham, applied by Dr. Johnson to many of what he termed his Grub Street acquaintance — “ Who lived unknown men knew not how, and died obscure men marked not when.”

Of one only of the four named in the poem is any remembrance preserved, who proved an annoyance for some years to managers and dramatists, and a terror to the inferior actors in whose art he professed to be deeply versed.

This was Paul (or Dr. Paul) Hiffernan or Hef-fernan, one of those eccentric and irregular characters who with some learning and conversational talents, assume literature as a profession but do it no honour. He was born in the county of Dublin, educated for a Roman Catholic Priest in France, but disliking the clerical office, took the degree of Bachelor of Medicine, and commenced the prac-

tice of physic in Dublin. Here the theatre, politics, and convivial societies, proved more attractive to one of his habits than the duller routine of a profession ; he therefore made no progress in medical practice ; a few pieces written on popular topics, familiarity with continental scenes and manners which he rendered very amusing in description, and stories told with some vivacity and effect, made him acceptable to such as wanted merely a companion ; a kind of ambition in which few who indulge are ever likely to ascend to any thing great or useful. Some account of him at this time appears in a letter of Mr. (afterwards the Rev.) William Dennis, who has already been introduced to the reader as the college friend and companion of Edmund Burke ; the notices of Hiffenan, though new, are of inferior moment to the particulars we incidentally glean of the juvenile pursuits and studies of Burke, who when little more than seventeen years old, was with a few companions, more zealous than informed or discreet, endeavouring to correct or control the management of the Dublin stage under the elder Sheridan. No apology will be necessary for the introduction of this curious memorial.

It should be observed that among other frequenters of the theatre, several students of Trinity College took upon themselves to be dissatisfied with the taste or conduct of the manager ; and in trying to amend what they considered wrong young Burke, and Hiffenan who was much his

senior, although personally unknown to each other, agreed; the former as it would seem with the design of forcing the play of one of his young friends forward for representation. The result of their juvenile plots was a riot well known in theatrical history, which had the effect of driving Sheridan from Dublin. The letter, like that in a preceding page, and communicated by the same friend, is addressed to Shackleton, the son of their schoolmaster at Ballitore, with whom they were in constant correspondence.

“ Dublin, Jan. 14th, 1747. — 8 o'clock.

“ *Arma virumque cano—bella horrida bella.*  
 Nothing else to do, we the triumvirate\* talk of nothing but the subversion of the present theatrical tyranny; lend us your pen; you have often drawn it for your own and friends' entertainment; now do it for their assistance and the establishing taste in spite of Sheridan's arrogance or his tasteless adherents. Don't think this gasconade, for we love liberty and consequently hate French customs. No, we tread on firm ground with Irish resolution and perseverance, resolving to pull down Baal from the high places, and that by (what is esteemed uncommon) the force of Irish genius, and establish Irish productions in the place of the English trash comedies and French frippery of dances and harlequins, which have been the public entertainments this winter.

\* Burke, Brennan, and the writer of the letter, Dennis.

“Doubtless you wonder what gave rise to this resolution, and suspect Brennan’s comedy rejected ; but ’t is not so ; they promise to play it next March, but for fear it should be then neglected, or that the lateness of the season should prevent its taking, we resolve to bring it on immediately, *vi et armis*, against Sheridan’s will ; which is to be thus effected.

“There is one Dr. Hiffernan, a poet, philosopher, and play-wright in this town, who stirred up by hatred to Sheridan as manager, and as we suspect by the rejection of a play he offered to the stage, is purposed to oppose and pull down that tyrant’s pride. By his acquaintance with Victor\* this Hiffernan got the reading of the Lawsuit†, and was told Burke was the author, which is implicitly believed by Sally Cotter‡ to whom he told it, and by whose means we came to know him.

“Ned (Edmund) Burke some time since wrote a paper called Punch’s Petition to Mr. Sheridan for admission into the theatre, which coming into Cotter’s hands he showed it to Hiffernan who persuaded him to publish it, telling him he thought it a humorous, sharp piece. The notion of its going to the press alarmed us for fear it might hurt Brennan if there were any suspicion of

\* Afterwards author of the History of the Theatres of London and Dublin ; and then, it is believed, prompter of the Dublin Theatre.

† The play no doubt of Brennan’s, previously alluded to.

‡ See page 81. vol. i.

Burke's being the author. This sent us to Cotter's to delay its publication, where I met Hiffenan. After some chat Sally Cotter attacks me about the 'Lawsuit,' which I deny any knowledge of. Then Hiffenan began his opinion of it, which was most extravagant. He said it was one of the best pieces he ever read, and had the true *vis comica*, with other particulars too tedious to recite, and that with such warmth, as made me confess in the gladness of my heart, that I had read it. Then we talked about bringing it on the stage (without mention of the author) and he fancied it was practicable, and warrants the effecting it first by making a party of friends which he has secured already, which he calls an association in defence of Irish wit; then charging the town with a heap of papers on Sheridan, proving him an arrogant ass, and displaying his faults in the management of the theatre till having weakened his party so as not to fear opposition. Those friends in the mean time may spread a favourable report of the play to prepare the town for its reception when they call for it in the play-house, which desire of the audience to see it we hope to make general, so that Sheridan can't refuse bringing it on.

"Will not this scheme do? 'T is partly our contrivance and partly Hiffenan's and mine, for (he) knows not either Burke or Brennan. Burke's paper has paved the way; three hundred were sold yesterday. On Monday Hiffenan in an expostulation from Punch displays Mr. Sheridan in

a ridiculous but true light, which will take three papers. Next comes Brennan with a grave inquiry into the behaviour of the manager, which will be backed by Ned and I ; and thus will we persecute him daily from different printers till the plot is ripe, and we have established liberty on the stage, and taste among the people.

“ You must throw some hints together likewise immediately for the press and send them up. Talk how trivial it is to keep a stage well swept and painted, and the candles well snuffed, when teaching the actors and choosing good plays should be his employment, and hint at his indifferent performance.

And prove with us that you sincerely hate  
The mighty Tom \*, and all his mimic state.”

“ Feb. 4th, 1747.

“ I send you enclosed the second number of the Reformer †, with this comfort that the generality of the town likes it I believe, by the sale which was about 500 to-day. The first number the town bought near 1000 of ; we have set out *bonis omnibus*, and I hope shall continue the same. Hiffernan who was heretofore a friend of Victor’s, has lost his acquaintance on the suspicion of being the author. Sheridan is much piqued, and his friends

\* Thomas Sheridan — the Manager.

† A periodical paper, carried on chiefly by Burke, in order to correct what he and his young friends considered irregular or improper in the management of the Dublin Theatre.



among whom is Sappho who admires him as a player, vigorously oppose it, and damn it as earnestly as they do taste every night at the play-house in the applause they bestow upon dulness.

“Ned (Edmund Burke) is writing for his degree!”

In the celebrated contest of Dr. Lucas the Irish patriot as he was called, with the authorities of Dublin, and afterwards even with the Irish House of Commons, by which he was compelled to seek a retreat in England, Hiffernan took part in a periodical paper called the *Tickler*, which being in support of authority, found admirers among the opponents of the popular idol. He required however the means to live, which being found difficult in Dublin, he removed to London where a wider sphere offered for the indulgence of his dramatic tastes. All classes of society then evinced a degree of interest in stage affairs which few in the present day think it necessary to display, or indeed feel; men of all professions and pursuits conceived themselves to be critics, and many frequenters of the theatre appeared to think they had a right to become its directors; authors of all descriptions, unoccupied physicians, lawyers, and even merchants, prescribed rules to dramatists, actors, and managers; and those who could, and many who could not, write on other subjects, felt fully qualified to decide upon all that was necessary for the stage. Among these was Hiffernan. He began a paper connected with this topic called the “*Tuner*,” in

1754, assumed in time the character of arbiter in histrionic excellence, became acquainted with actors who were laid under contribution either to secure his praise or silence his censure in the newspapers, and was constantly found in the lower taverns near the theatres delivering his decisions on such matters with an air of authority. Here likewise he was seen exacting fees from such candidates for the stage as believed he had the skill to instruct, or influence to recommend them for an engagement. His attachment to the drama made him known to Garrick, who ever careful of guarding against attacks upon his professional reputation, thought it prudent to conciliate many whom he despised; also to Foote, Murphy, Bickerstaffe, and others, from whom and a few physicians, booksellers, and casual acquaintance he drew occasional assistance in the shape of subscriptions for books, some of which were never written, and some that were written probably never read. These consisted of translations from the Latin and French; "Miscellanies in Prose and Verse;" "The Ladies' Choice," a dramatic petite piece; "The Wishes of a free People;" "The New Hippocrates," a farce; "The Earl of Warwick," a tragedy taken from the French; "Dramatic Genius;" "Philosophic Whim;" "Heroine of the Cave," finished from the "Cave of Idra," a tragedy left by Henry Jones, author of the Earl of Essex, and probably others that are unknown. None it appears had sufficient merit to survive the occa-

sion. He was not without learning had it been properly applied, though with few or no pretensions to genius. He lived in wretchedness, and seems never to have aimed at escaping from it by the exertion of active industry; yet he had pride enough to conceal his lodgings so effectually from all his acquaintance, that no ingenuity could discover them, although one gentleman is said to have walked with him with this view as far as White-chapel, when he gave up the pursuit, as Hiffernan intended he should, in despair. It appeared afterward that he occupied wretched apartments in St. Martin's Lane. To Goldsmith he presented no point of rivalry, and was frequently an object of his bounty; and besides the allusion in the poem, we may readily believe that from him and such as him, the pictures of distressed authors found in his Essays were drawn.

## CHAPTER XXI.

HISTORY OF ENGLAND. — LODGINGS AT HYDE. — PROLOGUE TO ZOBEBIDE. — THRENODIA AUGUSTALIS. — DR. M'VEAGH MAC-DONNELL. — MASQUERADES. — LETTER FROM JUDGE DAY.

EARLY in August 1771 the History of England, agreed for two years before, and the contract for which notwithstanding complaints of his dilatoriness seems to have been pretty punctually fulfilled, appeared in four volumes.\* Like the Roman History it was meant as a succinct and elegant abstract of our known annals; a medium for the statement of facts, rather than an opportunity sought of reasoning upon them. He claims the merit of having read much upon the subject, but does not desire to be considered “a reader of forgotten books” and is indisposed to display erudition upon minute or controverted points, or even to repeat new anecdotes, when all his space was required for matters which were material.

As Hume formed his chief guide, the facts differ little from what we find in that writer. Without wholly discarding reflection, or those pointed observations which give history much of its value, he

\* Public Advertiser, Aug. 6. 1771.

has contrived to fulfil Dr. Johnson's idea of history, by "putting into his book as much as his book would contain;" and the ease and perspicuity with which this is done, add much to the interest of the narrative. Numerous passages it has been observed, are transcribed verbatim from the "Letters of a Nobleman to his Son," many of which were marked for transcription by the writer, but their number precludes insertion here; while others are varied merely by the introduction of a few words. This saved him labour, and passed at the moment without observation. The critic failed to discover what he doubtless would have thought redounded to the credit of his research, and proved a fruitful theme for censure had he been so disposed; while the author probably willing enough to profit by this oversight of *the enemy*, was not reduced to the necessity of making public the avowal that such materials though seemingly borrowed were really his own.

Carelessness in slight circumstances, arising evidently from trusting to memory, is obvious in some of the details. Thus in treating of the civil war between Charles and his Parliament, Naseby in Northamptonshire, the scene of the battle, is mentioned as being in Yorkshire, confounding it no doubt with *Knaresborough*.

Another instance occurs in which, speaking of the siege of Londonderry in Ireland, so nobly defended by the inhabitants and a few soldiers against a large army of James II. in 1689, he mentions

one of the chief heroes on that occasion as “one Walker, a dissenting minister,” whereas he was a clergyman and afterwards a dignitary of the established church. A private letter from a correspondent in Ireland\* apprised him of the error which was corrected in the second edition. The person alluded to, occupies too prominent a station in the history of Ireland at that period to be so cursorily noticed. He was an extraordinary man drawn forth by the pressure of unusual circumstances, who having passed the usual term of human life as a minister of peace, became in old age a leader in war, and who displayed in that situation energies unexpected from his age and habits, and of the possession of which he was not perhaps previously conscious. To him the safety of the north of Ireland, and of the Protestant party, from the army of James, is said to be owing, and as a tribute of

\* *To Dr. Goldsmith.*

“SIR,

“I beg leave to acquaint you, there is a mistake in your Abridgement of the History of England, respecting Dr. Walker, viz. — one Walker, a dissenting minister.

“I venture to assure you, Mr. Walker was a clergyman of the Established Church of Ireland, that was appointed Bishop of Dromore by King William for his services at Derry; but was unfortunately killed at the battle of the Boyne. Which I hope you will be pleased to insert in future editions of your late book.

“The Duke of Schomberg was certainly killed in passing the river Boyne. I am Sir with great respect

“Your most obedient humble servant,

“THOMAS WOOLSEY

“Dundalk, April 10th, 1772.”

historical justice some account of him from private sources of information is subjoined. \*

\* The Rev. George Walker had been 26 years Rector of the parishes of Donoughmore and Erigle in Tyrone, when at the age of 70 or more, the disturbed state of Ireland, produced by the Revolution in England, involved him and all of his faith in imminent personal danger. The intrigues of James II., and the measures of his Viceroy, Tyrconnel, added to intimidation and outrage in various forms, seconded by the array of physical force, threatened at this moment extinction to the lives and properties of all Protestants. Ulster was the first province to make head against this tyranny, the contending parties there being more equally balanced than in the others. Great efforts having been made after James had fled from England to France, to secure Ireland in his interest, one of the means adopted was to dispatch from Dublin several Popish regiments to the North to secure its strongholds, such as Dungannon, Enniskillen and Londonderry. This, the Protestants in aid of the main object of the Revolution, were desirous to prevent, and Mr. Walker was first noticed in raising men for the defence of Dungannon ; but the preponderance of the enemy in the field soon drove them into the fortified places. Londonderry offering the best means of defence, his energy, courage, and skill became so conspicuous as to win the confidence of the inhabitants, who finding more than one of the chief officers in command guilty of treachery, at length elected Mr. Walker, joint Governor, first with Major Baker, and upon his death during the siege, afterwards with Colonel Michelburn.

The inhabitants of this small place, and particularly the "Apprentice boys" who thence derive peculiar honours and consideration from the event, left almost wholly to their own resources, exhibited extraordinary devotion and courage in defence of their city. The place was very ill fortified, scarcely a gun being well mounted, the military force within it small ; and arms and munitions of war even of the ordinary stamp, very scanty in supply. Famine soon added its miseries to those with which they were already contending, so that horses, dogs, and all living animals, with tallow, greaves, hides, and

While receiving praise from some for the spirit and perspicuity of his narration, and others, among

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every thing that could be devoted to edible purposes, were appropriated to appease hunger. To add to their other distresses, the enemy failing in their object by force, persuasion, and treachery at length had recourse to the barbarous expedient of driving the unoffending Protestant inhabitants of the surrounding country under the walls, to perish by hunger and the shot of the contending parties, or by acting on the feelings of their relatives and friends within the town, to influence their surrender.

James with the view of hastening its reduction, sent thither some of his best officers, several of whom were killed while in command; the force before the town is said to have been at one time 20,000 men; and at length he came himself, but remained only a short time. All these means however failed to subdue the resolution of a handful of determined men. The blockade continued for three months, followed by a close siege of more than four; the gates being shut on the 7th December, 1688, and opened on the retreat of the enemy in consequence of some vessels breaking the boom thrown across Lough Foyle and reaching the town with supplies of provision for the beleaguered, on the 12th August, 1689.

The conduct of Mr. Walker during this trying period, commanded general applause, as the safety of Londonderry was thought to embrace that of the whole of Ireland. He proceeded to London, published his diary of the siege in the autumn of 1689, received £5000 as a gratuity from King William, was promoted to the see of Londonderry which he had so valiantly defended (not of Dromore as is commonly said), received the thanks of the House of Commons and the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity from Oxford, and by the King's command it is said sat to Sir Godfrey Kneller for his picture. Soon afterwards he followed William to Ireland, and being led by his ardour into an exposed situation, was killed at the battle of the Boyne. When word of this event was brought to the monarch on the field, he is said to have rejoined with some truth perhaps, but with little feeling — "What business had he there?"



whom more than one of the professional critics pronounced that English history had never before been "so usefully, so elegantly, and agreeably epitomized," his supposed opinions on government became a theme of reproach in the newspapers. He was accused of being unfriendly to liberty, of wishing to elevate monarchy beyond its proper sphere in a free constitution, of not giving due credit to some of the leaders of the Revolution, and of censuring the conduct of Lord Chief Justice Holt on occasion of the trial of Sir John Friend and Sir William Perkins, where the historian makes the Judge to have acted "rather as counsel against the prisoners than as a solicitor in their favour, by influencing the jury to find them guilty."

These charges frequently repeated being at length thought to interfere with the sale of the work, a long answer drawn up probably by the publisher, not the Author, was inserted in the Public Advertiser. In this, in allusion to the conduct of the Chief Justice, the narrow minds and supposed professional prejudices of lawyers, with the little dependence to be placed upon their principles on great national questions if at variance with their interests, are treated with as little cere-

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A handsome column, surmounted by his statue looking towards Lough Foyle whence the besieged first derived aid, has been recently erected on the walls of Londonderry. Of the siege of this city, the Rev. John Graham has written an interesting account.

mony as Burke afterwards used on several occasions in speaking of the same class in their political relations. The letter is long, and with scarcely sufficient interest, as not being written by himself, to find a place here.

In private letters also as well as in conversation, he thought it necessary to defend himself from this reputed bias; and the following letter alludes to the imputation thus thrown out. Here we find his political opinions stated without reserve. We have also an account of his literary occupations at the moment which will be read with interest as exhibiting the too frequent unlucky fortune of our Author, who while endeavouring as he says to make others laugh, was himself far enough removed from a merry vein.

*To Bennet Langton, Esq. at Langton, near  
Spilsby, in Lincolnshire.*

“MY DEAR SIR,

“Since I had the pleasure of seeing you last, I have been almost wholly in the country at a farmer’s house, quite alone, trying to write a comedy. It is now finished, but when or how it will be acted, or whether it will be acted at all, are questions I cannot resolve. I am therefore so much employed upon that, that I am under the necessity of putting off my intended visit to Lincolnshire for this season. Reynolds is just returned from Paris, and finds himself now in the case of a

truant that must make up for his idle time by diligence. We have therefore agreed to postpone our journey till next summer, when we hope to have the honour of waiting upon Lady Rothes, and you, and staying double the time of our late intended visit. We often meet, and never without remembering you. I see Mr. Beauclerc very often both in town and country. He is now going directly forward to become a second Boyle: deep in chemistry and physics.

“Johnson has been down on a visit to a country parson, Doctor Taylor; and is returned to his old haunts at Mrs. Thrale’s. Burke is a farmer, *en attendant*, a better place; but visiting about too. Every soul is a visiting about and merry but myself. And that is hard too, as I have been trying these three months to do something to make people laugh. There have I been strolling about the hedges, studying jests with a most tragical countenance. The Natural History is about half finished, and I will shortly finish the rest. God knows I am tired of this kind of finishing, which is but bungling work; and that not so much my fault as the fault of my scurvy circumstances. They begin to talk in town of the Opposition’s gaining ground; the cry of liberty is still as loud as ever. I have published, or Davies has published for me, an Abridgement of the History of England, for which I have been a good deal abused in the newspapers, for betraying the liberties of the people. God knows I had no thought for or against liberty in

my head ; my whole aim being to make up a book of a decent size, that, as 'Squire Richard says, would do no harm to nobody. However they set me down as an arrant Tory, and consequently an honest man. When you come to look at any part of it, you'll say that I am a sore Whig. God bless you, and with my most respectful compliments to her Ladyship, I remain dear Sir, your most affectionate humble servant,

“ OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

“ Temple ; Brick Court.  
Sept. 7th, 1771.”

By this we find he had again turned his attention to the stage, the reception of the Good Natured Man not being so unfavourable as to alienate him wholly from the exertion of his genius in that department or time having altered his first determination. Like many other authors when withing under disappointment of their hopes, he had threatened not to write for it again. Such resolutions adopted in the agony of the moment, are rarely permanent ; the very acuteness of the feeling, is against its endurance. The society into which he was thrown, many of them as managers or performers connected with the theatre, the tone of conversation arising from such connexions, the seducing popularity derived from a successful piece, and probably the representation of his former comedy which took place for a few nights in the spring of the year, set him to work on “ She Stoops

to Conquer." It was commenced about the time of his return from his visit to Lord Clare at Bath late in the spring of 1771 or even before that time, and finished as he says in this letter early in September. This perhaps applies rather to the first rough draught than to the play as completed in its present state, for afterwards it underwent several alterations.

A farm house six miles from London formed the scene of his retirement. Besides this play, much of his *Animated Nature*, *History of Greece*, and other compilations were written here, and to this residence Boswell alludes when he visited it in the following year.

"Goldsmith told us that he was now busy in writing a *Natural History*; and that he might have full leisure for it he had taken lodgings at a farmer's house near to the six-mile stone on the Edgware Road, and had carried down his books in two returned post chaises. He said he believed the farmer's family thought him an odd character, similar to that in which the *Spectator* appeared to his landlady and her children; he was *The Gentleman*. Mr. Mickle the translator of the *Lusiad*, and I went to visit him at this place a few days afterwards. He was not at home; but having a curiosity to see his apartment we went in, and found curious scraps of descriptions of animals, scrawled upon the wall with a black-lead pencil."\*

\* Croker's Boswell, vol. ii. p. 177.

The apartment, for it was only one, which he occupied here till the period of his death though still preserving his chambers in the Temple, was recently visited by the writer. The house is of the superior order of farm houses, and stands upon a gentle eminence in what is called Hyde Lane, leading to Kenton, about three hundred yards from the village of Hyde on the Edgware Road, and commands a view of an undulating country directly opposite, diversified with wood, in the direction of Hendon. The spot bears evidence to his taste, for few places near a great metropolis are prettier. The owner of the house and adjoining land does not occupy it himself, but resides in the vicinity, a very honest farmer, Mr. Robert Selby, who holds the property from All Souls' College, Oxford; and with whose father Goldsmith resided. Being then about sixteen years old he remembers the Poet perfectly, and with some degree of pride pointed to the room where "She Stoops to Conquer" was written, a convenient and airy apartment up one pair of stairs to the right of the landing as we ascended. His recollections of their inmate, as may be supposed of a youth whose time was chiefly occupied in agricultural labours, are not numerous, but they are sufficiently distinct and may be worth recording.

It appears that though boarding with the family, the Poet had the usual repasts commonly sent to his own apartment, where his time was chiefly spent in writing. Occasionally he wandered into the kitchen,

took his stand with his back towards the fire apparently absorbed in thought, till something seeming to occur to mind he would hurry off to commit it, as they supposed to paper. Sometimes he strolled about the fields, or was seen loitering and musing under the hedges or perusing a book. More frequently he visited town, and remained absent many weeks at a time, or paid visits to private friends in other parts of the country.

In the house, he usually wore his shirt collar open in the manner represented in the portrait by Sir Joshua. Occasionally he read much at night when in bed; at other times when not disposed to read, and yet unable to sleep which was not an unusual occurrence, the candle was kept burning, his mode of extinguishing which when out of immediate reach was characteristic of his fits of indolence or carelessness; he flung his slipper at it, which in the morning was in consequence usually found near the overturned candlestick, daubed with grease. No application of a charitable description was made to him in vain; itinerant mendicants he always viewed with compassion and never failed to give them relief; while his actions generally evinced much goodness of heart and great commiseration for the poorest classes of society.\*

\* The exaggerated view which excess of benevolence, and possibly the remembrance of unrelieved distresses of his own, induced Goldsmith to take of the conduct of the rich towards the poor, will be seen in the following passage. Yet surely there is something fallacious in the inference he seems to draw:

Sir Joshua Reynolds, Sir William Chambers, and other eminent men whose names are now indistinctly remembered, occasionally visited him here; once or twice it is believed Dr. Johnson was in company with the former. Among others who frequently spent an evening with him was Hugh Boyd, one of the supposed writers of the Letters of Junius, who resided for some time at the neighbouring village of Kenton above two miles distant. The road thither being excessively bad, Goldsmith having once paid him a visit on foot, returned at night without his shoes which had stuck fast in a slough, and anathematising the parish authorities for their negligence, declared he could not again undertake such a journey.

When visitors stopped to take tea, which was

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or rather a querulous repining against the order of nature, and those circumstances that belong in common to the condition of man in all countries — against in fact the decree of Providence which has made him as unequal in worldly advantages as in mental capacity —

“There are many of our peasantry that have no other possession but a cow; and even of the advantages resulting from this most useful creature, the poor are but the nominal possessors. Its flesh they cannot pretend to taste, since then their whole riches are at once destroyed; its calf they are obliged to fatten for sale, since veal is a delicacy they could not make any pretensions to; its very milk is wrought into butter and cheese for the tables of their masters; whilst they have no share even in their own possession, but the choice of their market. I cannot bear to hear the rich crying out for liberty, while they thus starve their fellow-creatures, and feed them up with an imaginary good, while they monopolize the real benefits of nature.”—Animated Nature, vol. iii. p. 8. Ed. 1774:



not unfrequently the case, the hour for that repast being then early, he had the use of the parlour immediately beneath the room he constantly occupied. Here likewise he had, though rarely, a dinner party, and one is particularly remembered from the circumstance of a violent thunder storm coming on about the hour his friends meant to retire, who although with several carriages in attendance, were unwilling to depart during its continuance; a dance was therefore got up on the instant by Goldsmith for the younger members of the party, and continued till a late hour.

On one occasion he took the young people of the house, among whom was Mr. Selby the relater of these anecdotes, to Hendon in a carriage, to see a company of strolling players; and proved not only very jocular on the road, but in his comments on the performance, which afforded all the party, and more particularly himself by the laughter in which he indulged, infinite amusement.

A view of the house as it then was, is in possession of the owner, but since that period it has been repaired and improved. Around the fireplace and on various parts of the walls, as Mr. Selby states in corroboration of what Boswell told us long since, were written over, some of the passages in Latin, and although the room was thus disfigured, he felt much reluctance in erasing during the repairs rendered necessary some years afterward, these memorials of an eminent man whose conduct had won the regard of the family.

About three weeks or a fortnight before his death, feeling indisposed he went to London with the hope of deriving relief rather from the change of occupation and scene than from medicine, intimating to the landlady that his absence would be short. — “I shall soon be back, Mrs. Selby, and mean to remain as long as you will permit me; the retirement of your place is agreeable to me.”

After his death, Griffin the publisher, who had occasionally visited him at Hyde, came down, and after paying the small sum due for rent, carried off several of his papers and books which he claimed as being his property, having previously paid for the one, or lent the other for the purpose of his compilations; the claim which was no doubt just seems to have been admitted by his friends, for it appears by existing receipts that he had received considerable sums for works then only in progress.

Toward the end of the year he became acquainted with the late Mr. Joseph Cradock, a gentleman of fortune residing at Gumley in Leicestershire, at whose house he found an occasional retreat. They appear first to have met at the house of Mr. Yates, the actor; and the tastes of Mr. Cradock inclining not only to the performance, for he was fond of private theatricals, but to the writing of the drama, he had altered Voltaire's tragedy of Zobeide, which was represented at Covent Garden on the 10th December 1771, and well received. Goldsmith being applied to for a prologue through the medium of the Yates's, the husband being to

speak it (though Quick was afterwards deputed to this duty) and the wife to perform in the play, sent that which now appears in his poetical works to the author, then in the country, accompanied by the following note: —

“ Mr. Goldsmith presents his best respects to Mr. Cradock; has sent him the Prologue such as it is. He cannot take time to make it better. He begs he will give Mr. Yates the proper instructions; and so, even so, he commits him to fortune and the publick.

“ For the Right Hon. Lord Clare,  
(Mr. Cradock) Gosfield, Essex.”

A memorandum at this time in the books of the successor of his deceased friend Newbery, exhibits him in the unusual character of paying rather than of receiving money; this had reference no doubt to the discharge of a debt contracted to the latter which has been noticed in a preceding page. —

“ 1771. Dec. 10. — Cash by Dr. Goldsmith in part. See C. B. 24. — £20...0...0.”

The death of the Princess Dowager of Wales in February 1772, led him at the suggestion of some friends, and in repayment of some obligations of his own which have not been clearly ascertained, to honour the deceased by a poetical lament. He gave it the name of *Threnodia Augustalis*, a term used by Dryden in a poem to the memory of Charles II., and objected to by Dr. Johnson as un-

warranted by Latin writers although deemed by others of sufficient classical authority.\* It was adapted to music and recited and sung on the 20th February in the rooms of Mrs. Cornelys, so long celebrated as a place of fashionable evening resort, in Soho Square. By the nature of the event no reasonable period could be allowed him for the composition; and it was therefore strung together in haste. He who writes against time, will commonly be beaten by an opponent whom in poetry particularly, it is more prudent to wait upon than to contend with. Hints were in consequence to be drawn from other poets to supply the exigencies of the occasion, among whom is Collins; an obligation which was thought sufficiently acknowledged thus in the preliminary advertisement:—

“The following may more properly be termed a compilation than a poem. It was prepared for the composer in little more than two days; and may therefore be considered rather as an industrious effort of gratitude than of genius.” The music likewise it appears was adapted and prepared in an equally short period.†

\* “The word *Augustalis* is used by Columella, Suetonius, Tacitus and other ancient writers. It is sufficiently familiar to the ears of a civilian, for it repeatedly occurs in the Theodosian code, and in the code and pandects of Justinian. ‘*De Officio Augustalis*’ is one of the rubrics in each of the two last collections.” Irving’s *Life of Buchanan*, p. 286.

† The composer was Signor Vento; the speakers Mr. Lee and Mrs. Bellamy; the singers Mr. Champnes, Mr. Dine, and Miss Jameson.

No honours being likely to result from a production so prepared, his name as author was withheld; but to secure a certain degree of favour from the public during its performance, a hint of at least respectable literary origin appeared in the following terms, in some of the journals. "The Threnodia Augustalis which the evening papers of last night announce to be performed to-morrow evening at Mrs. Cornelys's in Soho Square in honour of the late Princess Dowager of Wales, we are informed has been written for the purpose by a *gentleman of acknowledged literary merit.*"

His connexion with this piece seems to have been known at first to such only as were concerned in getting it up. Boswell, though in London the following month, makes no allusion to what if familiar to the circle in which they both moved, would no doubt have been adverted to in the various conversations he records. Mr. Cradock indeed afterwards had a copy presented him by the author; and Mr. Steevens, as we have seen in a foregoing page, was subsequently aware of the writer being Goldsmith. An impression likewise prevails that it first appeared in print in Chalmers's Edition of the Poets in 1810, while in fact it was published by W. Woodfall and sold at the door of the room on the evening of representation.\* It is

\* "This day at noon will be published, price one shilling, Threnodia Augustalis, sacred to the memory of Her late Royal Highness the Princess Dowager of Wales, as it will be spoken and sung this evening before the nobility and gentry subscribers

likewise noticed in the Critical Review for February 1772; but in 1779 had become so scarce that Evans, the bookseller, in the small edition of the Poet's works, collected in two volumes and brought out the following year, could procure no copy for republication.

Excepting the *Threnodia*, and a small compilation for schools towards the end of the year, he produced little for the press in 1772. It is not to be supposed he was idle. The operations of an author militant like those of excavators in a mine, may not be the less active and industrious, although unexposed to public gaze. Part of his leisure appears to have been occupied by the revision of his comedy still in hand, and in negotiations for its introduction to the stage.

The Natural History however as of more immediate pecuniary value, claimed the greatest share of his attention during much of the year, for it appears that he received at Midsummer the whole amount of copy money agreed for with the publisher, amounting to eight hundred and forty pounds. The legal assignment of the work dated the 27th June is extant\*; it merely reiterates in

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to the house in Soho Square. Printed for W. Woodfall in White Friars.— A Porter will be employed to sell the books at the door of the house this evening." *Public Advertiser*, Feb. 20. 1772.

\* In the possession of W. Upcott, Esq., whose collection of such things, original letters, and autographs, is by far the most extensive in the kingdom, and exhibits extraordinary diligence in being enabled to bring together so many and such various memorials of the eminent of past ages.

the forms of law, the agreement given in a previous page. Annexed to it is the following acknowledgment : —

“ Received the day and year already written (27th June 1772), of the above-named William Griffin, the sum of eight hundred and forty pounds, being the consideration above mentioned to be paid to me. Witness my hand,

OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

£840.

Witness,  
George Corral.”

A gratifying compliment was paid him about this time by Sir Joshua Reynolds. A line in the *Deserted Village*—

“ While *Resignation* gently slopes the way,”

produced a picture personifying that virtue from the pencil of the President, who in return for the honour of the dedication of the poem to him, dedicated the print from it to Goldsmith, with this inscription—

“ Sinks to the grave with unperceiv'd decay,  
While *Resignation* gently slopes the way ;  
And all his prospects brightening to the last,  
His heaven commences ere the world be past.”

“ This attempt to express a character in the *Deserted Village*, is dedicated to Dr. Goldsmith by his sincere friend and admirer,

“ JOSHUA REYNOLDS.”

An allusion to this picture, admired by many for its expression, occurs in a short poem addressed to Reynolds by Dr. Willis, complimentary to poet and painter.

“Tis thine, oh Reynolds ! to possess the art,  
By speaking canvass to affect the heart ;  
See Resignation settled in that eye,  
Nature can only with thy pencil vie,”

concluding with —

“ And genuine taste may pleasure still acquire,  
Whilst thou canst paint and Goldsmith tune the lyre.”

An instance of his habitual commiseration for the poor and destitute occurred about this period, which derives additional interest from being related to the writer by the gentleman who was the object of it shortly before his death ; this was the late Dr. M'Veagh M'Donnell, a physician known to many in London.

This gentleman, who possessed considerable classical attainments, and whose detailed history would form an interesting page in a romance, was descended from a poor but respectable Roman Catholic family in the north of Ireland. Having a brother educating for a priest in one of the Jesuit seminaries in France, he proceeded thither with the same view at the age of eleven. After a residence there of several years, he and his brother, whose health was rapidly declining, made an effort to regain their native land, but the latter died on reaching London, leaving the survivor destitute of friends or money. Accident threw him in the way of Goldsmith. By him he was protected for a time and afterwards recommended to a school, as a means of turning his attainments to advantage.



Subsequently he studied physic, passed some time in England and on the Continent, aiming to establish himself in practice, but without success. At length according to the account given to his relatives, a brother physician and intimate friend named M'Donnell, a native of Scotland, being taken with a fatal illness, recommended him on his death-bed to assume his name and country as a means of improving his worldly prospects, and adopt if he could a Scottish accent. "As an Irishman you have failed my dear friend, but as a countryman of mine you may succeed."

The injunction was easily fulfilled, where there were none to inquire or to care for any appellation he thought proper to assume; and to the patronymic M'Veagh was added the legacy, not wholly unprofitable as it turned out, of that of M'Donnell. His residence on the Continent brought him to the knowledge of some English families of rank, by whom it is said he was employed in situations of confidence. During the early part of the revolution in France he is represented to have been placed in some trying and dangerous situations, but quitting that country before its more atrocious excesses commenced, established himself ultimately in London. He was a man of strong and original powers of mind, eccentric in address and conversation, though of considerable learning. His manner though labouring under illness in the interviews with the writer, was extremely vivid and energetic, his memory unimpaired, and his remem-

brance of the classics, fresh as if just risen from their perusal, bursting into momentary quotation. He communicated or confirmed several anecdotes mentioned in this work. His recollections of the Poet, for whose memory he entertained enthusiastic attachment, were noted down in his presence and as far as relates to him are given as nearly as possible in his own words. —The detail of his first knowledge of Goldsmith had been previously communicated to the writer in Dublin, derived from the information of his relatives.

“It was in the year 1772, that the death of my elder brother in London on our way to Ireland, left me in a most forlorn situation; I was then about eighteen; I possessed neither friends nor money, nor the means of getting to Ireland, of which or of England, I knew scarcely any thing from having so long resided in France. In this situation I had strolled about for two or three days considering what to do, but unable to come to any determination, when Providence directed me to the Temple Gardens. I threw myself on a seat, and willing to forget my miseries for a moment drew out a book; that book was a volume of Boileau. I had not been there long when a gentleman strolling about passed near me, and observing perhaps something Irish or foreign in my garb or countenance addressed me, ‘Sir, you seem studious; I hope you find this a favourable place to pursue it.’ ‘Not very studious, Sir, I fear; it is the want of society that brings me hither; I am

solitary and unknown in this metropolis ;' and a passage from Cicero, — *Oratio pro Archia*, — occurring to me, I quoted it. — *Hæc studia pernoctant nobiscum, perigrinantur, rusticantur.* \* 'You are a scholar too, Sir, I perceive.' 'A piece of one, Sir ; but I ought still to have been in the college where I had the good fortune to pick up the little I know.' A good deal of conversation ensued ; I told him part of my history, and he in return gave his address in the Temple, desiring me to call soon, from which to my infinite surprise and gratification, I found that the person who thus seemed to take an interest in my fate was my countryman, and a distinguished ornament of letters.

"I did not fail to keep the appointment, and was received in the kindest manner. He told me smilingly, that he was not rich ; that he could do little for me in direct pecuniary aid, but would endeavour to put me in the way of doing something for myself ; observing that he could at least furnish me with advice not wholly useless to a young man placed in the heart of a great metropolis. 'In London,' he continued, 'nothing is to be got for nothing ; you must work ; and no man who chooses to be industrious need be under obligations to another, for here labour of every

\* The reader will remember that the whole sentence runs thus :—"*Hæc studia adolescentiam alunt, senectutem oblectant, secundas res ornant, adversis perfugium ac solatium prebent, delectant domi, non impediunt foris, pernoctant nobiscum, perigrinantur, rusticantur.*" *Cic. pro A. Licinio Archia.*

kind commands its reward. If you think proper to assist me occasionally as amanuensis I shall be obliged and you will be placed under no obligation, until something more permanent can be secured for you.' This employment which I pursued for some time was to translate passages from Buffon, which was abridged or altered according to circumstances, for his Natural History.

"I think it was generally believed by his acquaintance" continued Dr. M'Donnell "that he had graduated at Louvain; that is my impression. Perhaps it may have been Padua, for that university had Irish professors; so had Louvain; also Manheim; and likewise the College of Maria Theresa at Brussels.

"It has been said he was irritable. Such may have been the case at times; nay I believe it was so; for what with the continual pursuit of authors, printers, and booksellers, and occasional pecuniary embarrassments, few could have avoided exhibiting similar marks of impatience. But it was never so towards me. I saw him only in his bland and kind moods, with a flow, perhaps an overflow, of the milk of human kindness for all who were in any manner dependent upon him. I looked upon him with awe and veneration, and he upon me as a kind parent upon a child.

"His manner and address exhibited much frankness and cordiality, particularly to those with whom he possessed any degree of intimacy. His good nature was equally apparent. You could not dis-

like the man, although several of his follies and foibles you might be tempted to condemn. He was generous and inconsiderate; money with him had little value.

“ I was abroad at the time of his death, and wept bitterly when the intelligence first reached me. A blank came over my heart as if I had lost one of my nearest relatives, and was followed for some days by a feeling of despondency. — Poor Goldsmith was himself subject to frequent fits of depression as I heard from those around him.

“ After settling in England, I had frequent opportunities of hearing much of my old patron from several of his surviving acquaintance whom I met at the house of Dr. Prendergast, an Irish physician, then resident at Richmond, who had made a fortune in Jamaica. Among others with whom we recalled his character and memory with fondness were Richard Burke; Captain Higgins, who had been an officer of marines and is mentioned in the *Haunch of Venison*, and who I believe was Goldsmith's companion when he beat Evans the bookseller; Mr. Hickey who has a place in *Retaliation*, a shrewd, quick, careless, but seemingly warm-hearted man; the Rev. Mr. East, once Editor of the *World*; and my old friend Tom English, a man of talents, but also, so often the attendant of talents, improvident, and for which he paid the usual tax of neglect and poverty in the decline of life. He had been, if I mistake not, a college friend of Edmund Burke; at any rate he was pa-

tronised by him, and upon the accession of the latter to parliament, English conducted the Annual Register under his direction, or at least those parts which merely required compilation.\* I do not believe he wrote the historical articles in that work. He never expressly laid claim to them in my hearing, though willing enough, like other persons, to have his friends think well of his abilities; but he has told me that when pressed by occasional pecuniary difficulties, Burke wrote political articles and presented them to him to dispose of for his own advantage. The connexion between them was certainly at one time intimate. English would retire to the 'Spaniard,' a favourite house of country resort at that time at Hampstead, or some other tavern in the neighbourhood of London, and remain for some time without intimating his place of retreat, during which to my knowledge, messengers from the Burkes used to be in search of him. The last time I saw him was at a house in Orange Street, Leicester Square, about the year 1799, or perhaps a year or two earlier; and there I believe he soon afterwards died.

“ I recollect meeting Mr. Cradock, another friend of Goldsmith, at Paris many years ago in something of the character of what appeared to me then a distressed gentleman. He seemed a friendly

\* This fact, though it escaped the present writer at an earlier period, became known to him before his interviews with Dr. M'Donnell, along with much other valuable and original matter relative to Edmund Burke.

and unassuming man. I had several conversations with him respecting the Poet, for whose memory he professed a warm affection. I remember he told me that once when in conversation with him the latter complained much of the attempts made by inferior writers, and by others who could scarcely come under that denomination, not only to abuse and depreciate his writings, but to render him ridiculous as a man; perverting every harmless sentiment and action into charges of absurdity, malice, or folly, concluding with 'Sir, I am as a lion baited with curs.' These remarks were probably levelled at Dr. Johnson and others of *his friends*, of whose sarcastic remarks on his conversation and manners he could not be ignorant; and it was perhaps one of the strongest proofs of good nature and forbearance, that he submitted not only to the savage reproofs of one who indeed was his superior in some respects, but to the insolence or impertinence of many others far his inferiors either as good men, or as able writers."

Goldsmith's patronage of the friendless, proved on a subsequent occasion, to be less gratefully repaid than in the instance of the gentleman who thus told his story. A native of Ireland, named Griffin, who had likewise been educated in a Roman Catholic seminary in France, and had found his way equally destitute to England, hearing probably of the liberal conduct of the Poet to his distressed countrymen applied for his patron-

age, and by way of making sure of countenance from some quarter, addressed similar solicitations to Garrick. His manner of attacking each exhibited some knowledge of character. To the heart of the manager he hoped to make his way by the channel through which he understood it to be most accessible, that of flattery, and therefore addressed him in a poetical eulogy couched in an extravagant strain, which had its effect. Trusting to the character for benevolence of the Poet, he simply told him a tale of urgent distress; requesting as an act of kindness to a distressed countryman, to be introduced to the good offices of the celebrated actor. By their joint recommendation he was placed at his own request as teacher in a respectable school, which he soon after robbed, and escaped to the Continent.

A favourite amusement of the Poet being a masquerade, his name appeared more than once in the newspapers in the list of such as were present, when Kenrick who seems never to have lost an opportunity of warring against his more gifted brethren, seized the occasion for pouring out his usual ribaldry. Some apology may be necessary for retaining this even in a note; it may serve indeed as a general specimen of the man and of his manner, as well as of the abuse, indiscriminate indeed and impartial towards all who had any pretension to celebrity, and of the trifling pretexts seized for assailing particularly the character of



one who had from the first experienced his malignity.\*

The writer of the lines being very well known, he and the subject of them met shortly afterwards at the Chapter Coffee-house, when the former was in conversation with another literary man. Goldsmith very sharply took him to task for presuming to take liberties with his name and by implication with his morals, in connexion with a place of general resort and amusement, conveying an intelligible intimation that as he had more than once indulged

\* “ *To Dr. Goldsmith ;*

ON SEEING HIS NAME IN THE LIST OF MUMMERS AT THE LATE MASQUERADE.

“ Say should the philosophic mind disdain  
That good which makes each humbler bosom vain ?  
Let school-taught pride dissemble all it can,  
These little things are great to little man.”—GOLDSMITH.

“ How widely different, Goldsmith, are the ways  
Of Doctors now, and those of ancient days !  
Theirs taught the truth in academic shades,  
Ours in lewd hops and midnight masquerades.  
So chang'd the times ! say, philosophic sage,  
Whose genius suits so well this tasteful age,  
Is the Pantheon, late a sink obscene,  
Become the fountain of chaste Hippocrene ?  
Or do thy moral numbers quaintly flow,  
Inspired by th' *Aganippe* of Soho ?  
Do wisdom's sons gorge cates and vermicelli,  
Like beastly Bickerstaffe or bothering Kelly ?  
Or art thou tired of th' undeserv'd applause,  
Bestowed on bards affecting Virtue's cause ?  
Would'st thou like Sterne, resolv'd at length to thrive,  
Turn pimp, and die cockbawd at sixty-five ?  
Is this the good that makes the humble vain,  
The good philosophy should not disdain ?  
If so, let pride dissemble all it can,  
A modern sage is still much less than man.”

in similar attacks, a repetition of such conduct would be productive of *personal* consequences of an unpleasant description. Kenrick shuffled out of the difficulty lamely, protesting nothing derogatory to his private character was meant; but afterwards loudly complained of being publicly and *wantonly* attacked in the coffee-house by one who (in his modest estimate) was his inferior, and whose writings, conversation, and person he designated as being fit subjects for ridicule. He likewise took the opportunity of laughing at the mathematical knowledge of the Poet in consequence of a controversy (whether real or fictitious is doubtful) represented as arising on another occasion in the same house, when the latter maintained that the sun was not eight days or thereabout, more in the northern than southern signs, and being referred to the authority of Maupertuis for a contrary opinion, spurned it, saying with an affectation of authority — “Maupertuis! I know more of the matter than Maupertuis.”\*

It is remembered likewise that masquerades were sometimes chosen by wags of his acquaintance to single him out under cover of their disguise, seemingly without design, and either by praising other poets and decrying him, by misquoting his

\* The censures of Kenrick did not pass for much with his contemporaries. Langhorne the poet writing to Hannah More in 1776 says — “I hear you have had the honour to be abused by Kenrick; I think nothing would hurt me so much as such a fellow’s praise; — I should feel as if I had a blister upon me.” — *H. More’s Correspondence*, vol. i. p. 23.

verses, and then abusing them, or by burlesque parodies, occasioned him annoyance. One of these, a Mr. Purefoy, whom he did not discover, by continued persecution for an evening, at length drove him fairly out of the house. On another occasion, according to the late Mr. John Taylor, the Poet himself having teased a young lady who happened to know him, and giving way to laughter at his own wit, was instantly silenced by her quotation of his line—

“ And the loud laugh that speaks the vacant mind.”

Connected with this subject, an anecdote of his whim mentioned by Sir Joshua Reynolds, has been communicated by the lady to whom the reader is indebted for several contributions of a similar kind. Entering his chambers on one occasion the President found him in something of a reverie, yet deliberately walking round the room and kicking a bundle before him in the manner of a foot-ball of which the nature could not be immediately distinguished. On enquiry the article proved to be an expensive masquerade dress which he had been persuaded to purchase, and the occasion having been served and repenting perhaps of his imprudence in expending on such an article money for which there were so many more pressing demands, he was determined in his own phrase “ to have the value out of it in exercise.”

A sharp attack of illness of a peculiarly painful nature, not long afterward gave considerable inter-

ruption to his literary pursuits ; the disease was accompanied by febrile symptoms, for which James's Powders under the direction of Doctor James himself, were administered with good effect ; and this success impressed him ever after with great confidence in the efficacy of the remedy.

He retired soon afterwards to the country to re-establish his health, spent part of the summer with Lord Clare, Mr. Cradock, and it is believed Mr. Langton, and visited the Leasowes of Shensstone of which he gave some account a few months afterward in a magazine. A rumour gained credence at the time, that his illness had been occasioned by the vexation of losing nearly one hundred pounds at play, though there is no good reason to believe that he ever at any time lost such a sum, or that he had it often to lose. More than one such illness beyond doubt was occasioned by severe application to his desk.

Much however has been said on this attachment to gaming, as one of the sources of those embarrassments under which he appears to have frequently suffered. The result of diligent enquiry on this head as far as enquiry can now be carried, gives little confirmation to the belief that serious losses were ever sustained from that cause ; an impression to the contrary has indeed been so generally received, that to question it may seem like violation of historical truth, especially after what we are told by one of his acquaintance, if he be correct in his

statement.\* “The greatest real fault of Dr. Goldsmith was, that if he had thirty pounds in his pocket he would go into certain companies in the country, and in hopes of doubling the sum would generally return to town without any part of it.”

It is not meant here to shield him from an accusation induced in some degree by his own inconsiderate, or possibly ostentatious acknowledgments; for the vice being fashionable, he was vain enough to believe that confessions of losses by such means, enhanced his importance by implying there was something to lose. That he was fond of cards as a source of amusement, and exceedingly inexpert in their use, we may believe; that he played at whist and at loo, sometimes perhaps expensively, but more commonly for trifling sums as is stated by one who frequently enjoyed this amusement in his company, is likewise true; but thousands daily do this without incurring the name of gamester, or sustaining losses of moment.

It should be remarked likewise, that of all such as venture to speak of his habits, a few only of whom knew him intimately, none state any fact in proof of the existence of such an unhappy propensity, or of specific sums thus expended; and it is improbable that such a practice could have been carried on for years under the eyes of his friends without particular instances coming to their know-

\* Mr. Cradock.

ledge. Such, if they existed, could scarcely have escaped the prying curiosity of Boswell, who while he states the general rumour, adduces no fact in its support. Neither has Johnson in his remarks on the foibles of his friend alluded to this which he might fairly reprehend as one of the greatest, and which had it been frequent or obvious must have fallen under his caustic rebuke. Sir Joshua Reynolds in his conversation afforded no clue to the persons with whom, or to the places and times at which, this passion was said to be indulged. And a surviving friend, when the question was asked whether the common opinion of his being addicted to this practice was well founded, gave the writer this reply, "I do not believe Goldsmith to have deserved the name of gamester; he liked cards very well as other people do, and lost and won occasionally; but as far as I saw or heard, and I had many opportunities of hearing, never any considerable sums. If he gamed with any one, it was probably with Beauclerk, but I do not know that such was the case. His habits otherwise were known to be expensive, and may account for his difficulties without believing them owing in any material degree to gaming."

In his writings he speaks of this vice in the usual tone of reprobation of a moralist, and in the *Life of Nash*, uses the very strongest dissuasives from its practice. In this respect therefore, if the charge be true, he resembled Denham, his countryman and brother poet, who having written a

treatise expressly against this pernicious habit, was nevertheless unable to resist the temptation of indulging in it. Principle and practice we know are often at variance in the strongest minds; and his may not have been exempted from the too frequent infirmity of our nature, that of knowing what is right, but being unable to follow it.

A few further anecdotes of him from another quarter, belong chiefly to this period. They come from the venerable Judge Day, now retired from the Irish Bench, whose hospitalities at Loughtinstown House in the vicinity of Dublin, being enlivened by several anecdotes of the Poet, he at the request of the writer committed them to paper; and with a few circumstances added afterwards will appear best in his own words.

“ Loughtinstown House, 20th Feb. 1831. ”

“ DEAR SIR,

“ I first became acquainted with Goldsmith in 1769, the year I entered the Middle Temple, where he had chambers; it was through the introduction of my friend and namesake, Mr., afterwards Sir John, Day, who subsequently became Judge-Advocate General in Bengal.

“ The Poet frequented much the Grecian Coffee-house, then the favourite resort of the Irish and Lancashire Templars; and delighted in collecting around him his friends, whom he entertained with a cordial and unostentatious hospitality. Occasionally he amused them with his flute or with

whist, neither of which he played well, particularly the latter, but in losing his money, he never lost his temper. In a run of bad luck and worse play, he would fling his cards upon the floor and exclaim ‘*Bye-fare* George I ought for ever to renounce thee, fickle, faithless, Fortune!’

“ In person he was short, about five feet five or six inches ; strong, but not heavy in make ; rather fair in complexion, with brown hair, such at least as could be distinguished from his wig. His features were plain, but not repulsive, — certainly not so when lighted up by conversation. His manners were simple, natural, and perhaps on the whole we may say not polished, at least without that refinement and good breeding which the exquisite polish of his compositions would lead us to expect. He was always cheerful and animated, often indeed boisterous in his mirth ; entered with spirit into convivial society ; contributed largely to its enjoyments by solidity of information and the naïveté and originality of his character ; talked often without premeditation and laughed loudly without restraint.

“ Being then a young man I felt myself much flattered by the notice of so celebrated a person. He took great delight in the conversation and society of Grattan whose brilliancy in the morning of life furnished full earnest of the unrivalled splendour which awaited his meridian ; and finding us dwelling together in Essex Court near himself where he frequently visited my immortal friend,



his warm heart became naturally prepossessed towards the associate of one whom he so much admired.

“Just arrived as I then was from College, full freighted with Academic gleanings, our Author did not disdain to receive from me some opinions and hints towards his Greek and Roman\* histories, light and superficial works, not composed for fame, but compiled for the more urgent purpose of recruiting his exhausted finances. So in truth was his ‘Animated Nature.’ His purse replenished by labours of this kind, the season of relaxation and pleasure took its turn in attending the Theatres, Ranelagh, Vauxhall and other scenes of gaiety and amusement, which he continued to frequent as long as his supply held out. He was fond of exhibiting his muscular little person in the gayest apparel of the day, to which was added a bag wig and sword.

“This favourite costume, involved him one morning in a short but comical dialogue in the Strand with two coxcombs, one of whom pointing to Goldsmith called to his companion in allusion to the Poet’s sword ‘to look at that fly with a long pin stuck through it.’ Goldsmith instantly cautioned the passengers aloud against ‘that brace of disguised pickpockets,’ and having determined to teach those gentlemen that he wore a sword as well for defence from insolence as for ornament,

\* Here probably there is an error. The Roman History must have been in the press previous to the commencement of the acquaintance.

he retired from the footpath into the coachway which admitted of more space and freedom of action, and half-drawing his sword beckoned to the witty gentleman armed in like manner, to follow him; but he and his companion thinking prudence the better part of valour, declined the invitation and sneaked away amid the hootings of the spectators.

“Whenever his funds were dissipated, and they fled more rapidly from being the dupe of many artful persons, male and female, who practised upon his benevolence, he returned to his literary labours, and shut himself up from society to provide fresh matter for his bookseller and fresh supplies for himself.

“I was in London when the *Deserted Village* came out. Much had been expected from the Author of the *Traveller*, and public expectation and impatience were not disappointed. In fact it was received with universal admiration, as one of the most fascinating and beautiful effusions of British genius.

“His beautiful little ‘*Hermit*’ which by some persons had been fathered upon Johnson, and reputed to have been given by him to his protégé to help the Vicar of Wakefield into popularity, was by this time restored to the owner by the public, who had discovered ere now that he excelled in the art of poetry even his eminent patron.

“His broad comedy ‘*She Stoops to Conquer*,’ was received with scarcely less applause, though

his friends Garrick and Colman had many misgivings of its success. His friends, of whom I was one, assembled in great force in the pit to protect it; but we had no difficulty to encounter; for it was received throughout with the greatest acclamations, and had afterwards a great run.

“I was also among those who attended his funeral, along with my friend John Day, Hugh Kelly, and a few others who were summoned together rather hastily for the purpose. It had been intended that this ceremony should be of an imposing kind, and attended by several of the great men of the time, Burke, Reynolds, Garrick, and others. This determination was altered, I imagine, from the pecuniary embarrassments of the deceased Poet; the last offices were therefore performed in a private manner, without the attendance of his great friends. He was interred in the Temple burial ground. Hugh Kelly, with whom he had not been on terms of intercourse for some years, shed tears over his grave, which were no doubt sincere; he did not then know that he had been slightly mentioned in ‘Retaliation;’ nor would he have been so noticed there, could the deceased have anticipated this proof of good feeling. Slight circumstances often separate even the most deserving persons; nor are they perhaps conscious of the worth of each other until accidental circumstances produce the discovery.—I have the honour (in great haste) to be, dear Sir,

“Your faithful and obedient servant,

“ROB. DAY.

“I have been in town almost ever since I had the pleasure of receiving your memorandum ; and beg pardon for sending you so slovenly and hurried an answer to it. Some things have no doubt escaped my notice at present which may hereafter occur to recollection.”

## CHAPTER XXII.

TABLE TALK AND LITERARY OPINIONS. — ABRIDGEMENT OF ROMAN HISTORY. — LETTER FROM THOMAS PAINE. — ANECDOTES AT BARTON. — WESTMINSTER MAGAZINE. — COMEDY OF SHE STOOPS TO CONQUER.

LITTLE of his conversation at this period is preserved, and that little meagre and unsatisfactory. The business of Boswell, as he expressly tells us, was with that of Johnson alone, and therefore so much only is given of the remarks of others as serve to make those of his principal not only intelligible, but forcible and triumphant. Thus, few associates of the moralist appear to advantage in his society, even such as were distinguished by talents, extent of knowledge, and conversational readiness; not because they did not exhibit brilliant powers on the immediate topics of discussion, but because so extensive a record was not within the plan, and frequently not within the power of the biographer however well disposed his inclination, or accurate his memory, to accomplish.

Neither had he, as we find from the accurate investigation of Mr. Croker, so many opportunities

of hearing these conversations as might be imagined from a cursory perusal of his volumes : of such moments indeed he made the best use ; and it is our business not to lament that he did not do more, but to be grateful for his having done so much. Goldsmith therefore, notwithstanding the latent disinclination towards him already noticed, fares little worse than Burke, and so many other celebrated men, in being shorn of some of their interlocutory honours ; and we may be permitted to regret that no other person among the circle of their acquaintance, excepting in a slight degree Mrs. Piozzi, found time or inclination to add much to Boswell's labours.

One of the opinions hazarded by Goldsmith in conversation, though nowhere noticed by either of those writers, was a lower estimate of our older dramatists than most persons of poetical taste and judgment now entertain. Ben Jonson, Beaumont, Massinger, and others, he more than once said were little more than second-rate poets ; even Shakspeare appeared in his eyes infinitely lowered by his defects, and once or twice he hinted he was probably estimated beyond his merits ; an opinion in which however at variance with the usual decisions of criticism, Lord Byron, who was not aware of the coincidence, seems to join. This conclusion may have been owing less to the deliberate judgment, than to the wayward humour and occasionally hasty opinions of both ; for both often said in conversation what the former more

particularly would have hesitated to advance in public as his settled conviction. Thus we find no traces of such opinions in his writings; Shakspeare whenever mentioned, is mentioned with honour; and if the paper formerly noticed, "A Scale of Poets," written in 1758, be really his, he receives all the praise which a judicious admirer can desire. Neither can this degree of praise be considered less equivocal by the lines in Retaliation, written when his taste had been long settled, in allusion to Garrick where he tell us —

‘ Those poets, who owe their best fame to his skill,  
 Shall still be his flatterers, go where he will,  
 Old Shakspeare receive him with praise and with love,  
 And Beaumont and Bens be his Kellys above.’

That he honoured his genius though fully alive to his defects appears from a criticism written in 1759, where he says, in allusion to the bad taste exhibited in many of the dramas of the age of Elizabeth, —

“ Nothing less than a genius like Shakspeare’s could make plays wrote to the taste of those times, pleasing now; a man whose beauties seem rather the result of chance than design; who while he laboured to satisfy his audience with monsters and mummery seemed to throw in his inimitable beauties as trifles into the bargain. Massinger however was not such a man; he seldom rises to any pitch of sublimity, and yet it must be owned is never so incorrigibly absurd as we often find his

predecessor. His performances are all crowded with incident but want character, the genuine mark of genius in a dramatic poet."

The comedies of Farquhar and Vanbrugh, particularly the former, rejecting their indelicacies, he considered the best on the English stage.

Of Lord Kames's *Elements of Criticism* he said, "It is easier to write that book than to read it." Johnson admitted there was nothing new in the matter, but old things were told in a new way.

Pope found in him, as in all the poets of the past age, and in Lord Byron and in many of the distinguished names of the present, that warm admiration which his genius, vigour, variety and harmony must ever command from every reader of taste. The critical opinions of Warton, had failed to render his fallacies although recent, a fashion, or to convince the judgment of the age he addressed, that the class of poetry to which that of Pope belongs, was necessarily of an inferior order, or that popularity formed, after the lapse of a reasonable time, no criterion of merit. Goldsmith estimated his genius scarcely inferior to that of Dryden; his judgment and versification some degrees higher. His character of Addison he quoted on several occasions as displaying a profound knowledge of the human heart.

Toward the poetry of Gray he was as has been already stated, less favourably disposed, though from no unworthy motive; and without mentioning



names, it is indirectly expressed in the *Vicar of Wakefield*, where we find marked condemnation of redundancy of epithet, one of the admitted faults of that eminent poet. Goldsmith considered this blemish as bordering upon mere expletive; a symptom of want of variety of expression, or vigour of thought; and seems to have written the *Hermit* in proof of how successfully one man of genius could avoid what he considered so objectionable in others. That ballad is introduced in the novel with the remark, that whatever be its other defects, it is free at least from the one he censures:—

“It is remarkable that both the poets you mention (*Ovid* and *Gay*) have equally contributed to introduce a false taste into their respective countries by loading all their lines with epithet. Men of little genius found them most easily imitated in their defects, and English poetry like that in the latter empire of *Rome*, is nothing at present but a combination of luxuriant images without plot or connexion; a string of epithets that improve the sound without carrying on the sense.”

His opinion of portions of *Gray's* poetry seems corroborated by that of another contemporary poet, *Langhorne*, who thus figuratively expresses himself:—“How enchantingly beautiful was *Gray's* Muse when she wandered through the churchyard in her morning dress! But when she was arrayed in gorgeous attire, in a monstrous hoop and a brocade petticoat, I could gaze upon her

indeed ; she made an impression on my eye, but not on my heart.”\*

It is said indeed, if we are to believe Mr. Cradock, who however wrote at a late period of life and whose reports of mere conversations must be received with some caution, that Goldsmith proposed even, we may believe in a jocular moment, to improve the Elegy — “ You are so attached ” he is made to say “ to Hurd, Gray, and Mason, that you think nothing good can proceed but out of that formal school. Now I’ll mend Gray’s Elegy by leaving out an idle word in every line —

The Curfew tolls the knell of day,  
The lowing herd winds o’er the lea,  
The ploughman homeward plods his way  
And” —————

to which the narrator makes himself very promptly and reasonably object.

He was fond of the amusement of a garden, and when on a visit in the country commonly passed several hours in it daily. At Lord Clare’s he had been permitted to build an ice-house and hot-house on plans of his own ; he volunteered to construct one of the former for Cradock, saying that as he had already built two, it should be perfect, and a pattern for the whole county. To this taste Beauclerk probably alludes when writing to Lord

\* Correspondence of Hannah More, vol. i. p. 23.

Charlemont, whom he jocularly urges to return to London for the following reasons—

“ If you do not come here, I will bring all the club over to Ireland to live with you, and that will drive you here in your own defence. Johnson shall spoil your books, Goldsmith pull your flowers, and Boswell talk to you.”

“ When Boswell,” adds Mr. Cradock, “ was at Lichfield with Dr. Johnson he wrote a prologue to be spoken by some players who were performing there, and this caused a proposal that the comedy of the *Beaux Stratagem* should be got up in good style by amateurs. ‘ Then,’ exclaimed Goldsmith, ‘ I shall certainly offer to play *Scrub!*’

“ Goldsmith used to rally me ” continues the same writer “ on my Cambridge pedantry, and I in turn hinted at illegitimate education. He truly said that I was nibbling about elegant phrases while he was obliged to write half a volume.” This hint if ever really given respecting imperfect education seems scarcely to have been called for, when it is considered, what Cradock did not probably know or remember, that the Poet like himself had been member of a university.

A question was started, how far people who disagree in a capital point can live in friendship together. Johnson said they might. Goldsmith said they could not, as they had not the *idem velle atque idem nolle*—the same likings and the same aversions. Johnson. “ Why, Sir, you must shun the subject as to which you disagree. For in-

stance, I can live very well with Burke: I love his knowledge, his genius, his diffusion, and affluence of conversation; but I would not talk to him of the Rockingham party." Goldsmith. "But, Sir, when people live together who have something as to which they disagree, and which they want to shun, they will be in the situation mentioned in the story of Bluebeard. 'You may look into all the chambers but one.' But we should have the greatest inclination to look into that chamber, to talk of that subject." Johnson (with a loud voice). "Sir, I am not saying that *you* could live in friendship with a man from whom you differ as to some point; I am only saying that I could do it. You put me in mind of Sappho in Ovid."

When conversing at the table of Sir Joshua on the merits of Otway's *Venice Preserved* which Goldsmith highly extolled as one of the tragedies nearest in excellence to those of Shakspeare, Johnson peremptorily contradicted him, asserting there were not forty good lines in the play, and adding, "Pooh! what stuff are these lines—

'What feminine tales hast thou been listening to,  
Of unair'd sheets, catarrh, and toothach, got  
By thin-soled shoes?'

"True!" replied Goldsmith, "to be sure that is very like Shakspeare."

Few readers or spectators of the tragedy but will agree rather with Goldsmith than with Johnson. Whatever the professed critic may tell us of how, or by what, we are to be affected, there is another and higher tribunal to which the tragic

writer may appeal, namely that power over the heart and feelings with which no arguments can hope to contend. It is vain for him to urge that our sympathies ought not to be excited, or our tears to flow, by defective poetry; for these bid defiance to all critical rules. The characters, the plot, or the poetical merit of the play in question, may be occasionally not the highest, but the pathos is unquestionable; and it will be difficult to prove that this quality alone can exist and act powerfully upon audiences for a century and half, and during various revolutions of taste, if unsupported by forty good lines of poetry. There must be fitness and appropriateness in one to the other, or the piece will not preserve its hold on public favour. If this tragedy be not wholly domestic, its most affecting scenes are certainly of that description, and keeping this in remembrance, even the lines censured by the critic, addressed by Pierre to Jaffier in raillery of his delay and the influence over him of Belvidera, are natural and not beneath the dignity of tragedy. Such touches of familiar life and manners occur continually in Shakspeare, and no doubt, from their verisimilitude, give him strong hold upon the imagination. Goldsmith therefore seems to have been right; but had he taken an opposite view of the matter, there is perhaps little doubt that from the argumentative propensities of his opponent he would have been no less vigorously opposed.

In a conversation at General Oglethorpe's, Boswell started the question, whether duelling was consistent with moral duty. Goldsmith turning to him said, "I ask you first Sir, what you would do if you were affronted?" The reply was that he would deem it necessary to fight. "Why then," observed the Poet, "that solves the question." Johnson denied that this reasoning was conclusive, but admitted that as the refinements of society require a man who receives an affront to resent it, so duelling under such circumstances becomes a species of self-defence.

Whether this conclusion which differs little from that of Goldsmith, forms a sufficient apology for a practice that most men even when they have recourse to it, condemn, may be doubted. Affronts or injuries are no doubt difficult to bear patiently; neither the religion nor the philosophy of him who submits to them quietly, receives much credit for forbearance; and yet we can have no stronger evidence of the unjustifiable nature of the deed than that persons who have been engaged in one fatal duel will often sooner submit to an affront than be tempted to embark in a second. Their feelings and convictions condemn it even without higher motives. But while offences are thus compelled to be resented, the evils of duelling may be in practice materially mitigated nay extinguished, by a little discretion in those who are called upon to act in the character of friends or seconds; for these have the power, if possessed of sufficient

good feeling and good sense to use it, to prevent such encounters.

Few duels are fought in consequence of serious injuries ; nor among those who resort to this method of vindicating a punctilio, are there many influenced by so malignant a spirit as really to wish to slay the person with whom they contend. An apology can expiate the great majority of offences for which duels are fought ; but as heat, ill temper, or mistaken pride, may prevent an aggressor from doing this voluntarily, the only real use of a second is, in the character of his friend, to point out the propriety and the necessity of concession. It is the business of a person so called upon, to judge the quarrel dispassionately as an umpire, not as a partisan ; to do that for his principal, which the latter from irritation is unable or unwilling to do for himself ; and to make him who is in the wrong, which is seldom difficult to discover, render the necessary reparation. If this be declined by an angry or pertinacious man, it is the obvious duty of the second immediately to surrender his office ; for there can be no obligation of friendship to compel him to abet and uphold another in an unjust or vindictive proceeding. Were this done invariably by the friends of both parties, there would be few duels. Men will rarely fight alone. Fatal results therefore may be almost always traced to the improper conduct of one or both of the seconds, who should be held by the law and by society, sternly responsible for

their conduct. For the principals on such an occasion, acting frequently under the influence of passion, there may be some commiseration; but for the seconds who have no such apology to plead and who come to the consideration of the matter in cool blood, there ought to be no excuse, and seldom forgiveness.

The Abridgement of the Roman History, contracted for two years before for fifty guineas, appeared early in December. The volume was small, intended merely for schools, and therefore executed only as a matter of trade, not of inclination.

A letter addressed to him about the same period will be read with some degree of attention on account of the notoriety of the name of the writer, the well-known Thomas Paine. This period seems to have been nearly the dawning of that spirit of mischief by which he was afterwards influenced, for though now serving in the humble capacity of officer of excise, he sought an opportunity to take the lead in producing among his brethren, whether with sufficient cause or not, the same feeling of discontent with their situation which he afterwards fostered upon a larger scale against the institutions of his country. His claim to be considered "singularly modest," a quality which appears to have been of short continuance, will amuse the reader. The reputation of Goldsmith induced a variety of similar applications for advice upon, or the revision of, literary works; but in this instance as the pamphlet



had been circulated and produced all its intended effect, the cause of intrusion seems to have been more an excuse to make his acquaintance than a reference to his opinion.

*From Thomas Paine.*

“ HONOURED SIR,

“ Herewith I present you with the case of the officers of excise. A compliment of this kind from an entire stranger may appear somewhat singular; but the following reasons and information will I presume sufficiently apologise.

“ I act myself in the humble station of an officer of excise, though somewhat differently circumstanced to what many of them are, and have been the principal promoter of a plan for applying to parliament this session for an increase of salary. A petition for this purpose has been circulated through every part of the kingdom and signed by all the officers therein. A subscription of three shillings per officer is raised, amounting to upwards of five hundred pounds, for supporting the expenses.

“ The excise officers in all cities and corporate towns have obtained letters of recommendation from the electors to the members in their behalf, many or most of whom have promised their support. The enclosed case we have presented to most of the members, and shall to all, before the petition appear in the House.

“ The memorial before you met with so much

approbation while in manuscript, that I was advised to print four thousand copies: three thousand of which were subscribed for by the officers in general, and the remaining one thousand reserved for presents.

“ Since the delivering them, I have received so many letters of thanks and approbation for the performance, that were I not rather singularly modest, I should insensibly become a little vain.

“ The literary fame of Dr. Goldsmith has induced me to present one to him such as it is. ’T is my first and only attempt, and even now I should not have undertaken it, had I not been particularly applied to by some of my superiors in office.

“ I have some few questions to trouble Dr. Goldsmith with, and should esteem his company for an hour or two, to partake of a bottle of wine or any thing else, and apologise for this trouble, as a singular favour conferred on his unknown humble servant and admirer,

“ THOMAS PAINE.

“ Excise Coffee House, Broad Street,

“ December 21. 1772.

“ P.S. Shall take the liberty of waiting on you in a day or two.”

A correspondent of a very different description drew from him in reply a letter in prose and verse, which has all his characteristic humour. His acquaintance, Miss Catherine Horneck became in August 1771 the wife of Henry William Bunbury Esq. celebrated for the powers of his pencil, and

having addressed an invitation to him in a rhyming and jocular strain to spend some time at their seat at Barton in Suffolk, he answered it in a similar manner. The first part in prose has that air of assumed severity, to which allusion has been made as being liable to be mistaken in conversation for ill humour, particularly in literary matters, where a spirit of rivalry might be supposed to exist. After some mock solemnity of criticism on Mrs. Bunbury's verses, and her advice in playing the game of loo, he feels inspired, he says, at once with verse and resentment :

“ First let me suppose what may shortly be true,  
 The company set and the word to be Loo ;  
 All smirking and pleasant and big with adventure,  
 And ogling the stake which is fixed in the centre.”

The progress of the game, the supposed loss of his money from the advice of the ladies, and his imaginary revenge in bringing them to the bar of the Old Bailey —

“ For giving advice that is not worth a straw,  
 May well be called picking of pockets in law,”

render this one of his pleasantest trifles. It is now printed for the first time in the new edition of his works.

While at Barton, where his society was often sought as the writer learns from one of the party, who entertains great regard for his memory, his

manners were always playful and amusing, taking the lead in promoting any scheme of innocent mirth, and usually prefacing the invitation by "Come now and let us play the fool a little." At cards, which was commonly a round game and the stake small, he was always the most noisy, affected great eagerness to win, and teased his opponents of the gentler sex with continual jest and banter on their want of spirit in not risking the hazards of the game. But one of his most favourite enjoyments was to romp with children, when he threw off all reserve and seemed one of the most joyous of the group.

"His simplicity of manners" continued my informant "made him occasionally the object of tricks of the jocular kind to other visitors of the house. Being at all times gay in dress, he made his appearance at the breakfast table in a smart black silk coat with an expensive pair of ruffles; the coat some one contrived to soil, and it was sent to be cleansed; but either by accident or probably design the day after it came home the sleeves became daubed with paint, which was not discovered until the ruffles also, to his great mortification, were irretrievably disfigured.

"He always wore a wig, a peculiarity which those who judge of his appearance only from the fine poetical head by Reynolds, would not suspect; and on one occasion some person contrived seriously to injure this important adjunct to dress. It was the only one he had in the country, and

the misfortune seemed irreparable until the services of Mr. Bunbury's valet were called in, who however performed his functions so indifferently that poor Goldsmith's appearance became the signal for a general smile.

“ On another occasion some difference of opinion having arisen with Lord Harrington respecting the depth of a pond, the Poet remarked that it was not so deep but that if any thing valuable was to be found at the bottom he would not hesitate to pick it up. His lordship after some banter, threw in a guinea; Goldsmith not to be outdone in this kind of bravado, in attempting to fulfil his promise without getting wet, accidentally fell in, to the amusement of all present, but persevered, brought out the money and kept it, remarking that he had abundant objects on whom to bestow any further proofs of his Lordship's whim or bounty.

“ His benevolence was unquestionable, and his countenance bore every trace of it. He was a very plain man, but had he been much more so, it was impossible not to love and respect his goodness of heart, which broke out upon every occasion; nobody that knew him intimately could avoid admiring and loving his good qualities. They accused him of envy but it certainly was not envy in the usual sense of that word; he was jealous perhaps of giving praise where he thought praise was not due; but I am sure that on many occasions, from the peculiar manner of his humour and assumed frown of countenance, that what

was often uttered in jest, was mistaken by those who did not know him for earnest.

“The expression of his countenance is most happily caught in one of the sketches of Mr. Bunbury which gives the head with admirable fidelity as he actually lived among us; nothing can exceed its truth.

“There are others by the same gentleman executed in a sportive vein, and therefore caricatured. The head by Reynolds is a fine portrait and likewise conveys a good idea of his face; it was painted as a fine poetical head for the admiration of posterity, but as it is divested of his wig and with the shirt collar open, it was not the man as seen in daily life. This however detracts nothing from the merit of the painting of that great artist and amiable man, whom from an early period till his death, I had the honour to number among my most particular friends.

“One of the means by which he amused us was his songs, chiefly of the comic kind, which were sung with some taste and humour; several I believe were of his own composition, and I regret that I neither have copies which might have been readily procured from him at the time, nor do I remember their names.”

To this talent for singing Boswell alludes in his journal in 1773—“We drank tea with the ladies (the dinner was at General Oglethorpe’s); and Goldsmith sung Tony Lumpkin’s song in his comedy ‘She Stoops to Conquer,’ and a very

pretty one to an Irish tune which he had designed for Miss Hardcastle ; but as Mrs. Bulkeley who played the part could not sing, it was left out. He afterwards wrote it down for me by which means it was preserved and now appears amongst his poems."

On another occasion when at the house of Sir Joshua and a large party of ladies were present, a ballad singer under the window chanced to sing one of his favourite airs "Sally Salisbury," and on remarking its miserable execution, was questioned in a lively manner by one of the party whether he could do it better. The reply was in the affirmative, and on being requested to indulge the company with the song, he immediately complied, and acquitted himself so well as to receive the approbation of all present.

Toward the end of the year 1772, a new Magazine, The Westminster, commenced, among the contributors to which were Capt. Edward Thompson of the navy, author of some dramatic pieces, songs, and The Sailor's Letters, and afterwards Isaac Reed and the Rev. Mr. Badcock. Goldsmith also it is pretty certain wrote a few of the earlier articles. These are in the first number, "The History of a Poet's Garden," meaning the Leasowes of Shenstone, and "A Comparison between Laughing and Sentimental Comedy," intended as a preparative perhaps to the appearance of *She Stoops to Conquer* ; in the February number, "A Register of Scotch Marriages," and a notice of the

Sleep Walker, Cyrillo Padrovana. These appear in his Essays published by Reed in 1797, though the three former only are given by Bishop Percy in the edition of his works. Little doubt can be entertained of their authenticity, being retained on the authority of Malone and Steevens, as well as of Reed; and the probable reason of the cessation of his communications to that work was the success of his comedy the following month, the moderate praise of it in the magazine, and the introduction at the same time of a few anecdotes exhibiting the jokes practised upon his simplicity.

From the commencement of the theatrical season 1772-73, he had been anxiously endeavouring to procure the representation of his play, written as we have seen more than a year before, at one of the theatres. To those unacquainted with such matters, the affair may seem to have been of easy accomplishment to a writer of celebrity who enjoyed personal intimacy with both managers; but Goldsmith found it otherwise. Friendship by no means implies favour on such occasions; tastes and judgments on dramatic productions may reasonably differ; but the politics of the theatre have the reputation of being subject to as many under, and counter, influences, as those that affect more extended and important interests, and are little less difficult successfully to manage.

The play was first placed in the hands of Mr. Colman of Covent Garden, who soon intimated verbally a variety of objections to its probable suc-



cess ; and after a considerable interval, returned the manuscript with his remarks written on the blank sides of the leaves, in contravention as it seems to have been considered, of the laws of politeness. These the Poet did not hesitate to show to some of his friends, by whom they were pronounced unfair, or in the sharp language employed in the journals, "envious, insipid, and contemptible." It was then submitted to Garrick who displayed his usual aversion to give a plain and direct answer ; for though he did not condemn it, the hesitation to approve was understood as a sufficient indication of an opinion similar to that of his brother manager. In this state of suspense the friends of the author, among whom was Dr. Johnson, applied to Colman again, who after urgent solicitations yielded reluctant assent to its being brought forward at his theatre.

The boon thus unwillingly conceded, Goldsmith found it necessary to accept ; the season was late ; Lent and the benefits were at hand ; and these, however successful might be the play, must interfere with its run and productiveness to the managers as well as to the author. All the circumstances of its rejection and subsequent acceptance soon acquired general publicity and excited unusual interest ; several anonymous advocates of the Poet insisted that he had been ungenerously treated ; that the delay in first returning the manuscript, the period of its subsequent acceptance, and the dissemination of the unfavourable opinion of the

manager, were the acts of a jealous, rival dramatist, desirous of its condemnation; and that had he meant it should be fairly dealt by, there was abundant time by the prompt withdrawal of an opera by Kenrick which was not really meant to be brought forward, to represent it at an advantageous part of the season. Delay for another year was however inconsistent with the necessities of the Author; neither perhaps was he disposed to put faith in the promises of Colman to bring it on early next season, for he was known to have a comedy of his own in forwardness — (the Man of Business) — and possessing the power, was not likely to let the production of another interfere with the success of that in which he was so much more interested.

Some blame in this affair certainly appears imputable to the manager; not perhaps for his opinion of the play if that were a sincere opinion, but for the publicity, injudiciously if not unfairly, given to it. All the friends of both parties, the performers of the theatre, and a few of the newspapers, repeated without reserve his predictions of its failure; but the author felt and expressed extreme and not unreasonable indignation, that this anticipation should have been repeated by the box-keepers to the servant of the Duke of Gloucester while he was engaging the stage box for his Royal Highness. To the manager's and his own opinion of the play, Dr. Johnson alludes in a letter to Boswell, dated February 22d, 1773.

“ Dr. Goldsmith has a new comedy which is

expected in the spring. No name is yet given it. The chief diversion arises from a stratagem by which a lover is made to mistake his future father-in-law's house for an inn. This you see borders upon farce. The dialogue is quick and gay, and the incidents are so prepared as not to seem improbable." To the Rev. Mr. White, afterwards Bishop of the Episcopal Church in Pennsylvania, he writes on the 4th March; "Dr. Goldsmith has a new comedy in rehearsal at Covent Garden, to which the manager predicts ill success. I hope he will be mistaken. I think it deserves a very kind reception." Speaking on the same subject some years after the death of the Poet (1778) he said, "Both Goldsmith's comedies were once refused; his first by Garrick, his second by Colman, who was prevailed on at last by much solicitation, nay, a kind of force, to bring it on."

Adverting to the same general topic, the probable failure of the play, *Northcote*, then a young man and living with Sir Joshua, thus writes to his brother, March 24th 1773.\*

"Last Monday I went to see Goldsmith's new play, and quite the reverse to every body's expectation, it was received with the utmost applause; and Garrick has writ a very excellent prologue to it in ridicule of the late sentimental comedies. Goldsmith was so kind as to offer me half a dozen tickets for the play on his night, and I intend to

\* From a letter obligingly furnished by Wm. Brockedon Esq.  
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accept of two or three. He is going to dedicate his play to old Johnson.”

While negotiations for its representation were going on, the following letters were written. The first explains the pecuniary difficulties of the unfortunate author by the tone of solicitation for its acceptance which dire necessity alone could have induced him to use; and if it causes regret for the situation of a man of genius, furnishes the true reason probably why, after the neglect and obstruction experienced on the occasion, he permitted the representation at all. The second withdraws the play from Garrick. The originals of both are without dates; but the former was probably written about the middle of January, the latter certainly early in February 1773.

“ *To George Colman, Esq.*

“ DEAR SIR,

“ I entreat you’ll relieve me from that state of suspense in which I have been kept for a long time. Whatever objections you have made or shall make to my play, I will endeavour to remove and not argue about them. To bring in any new judges either of its merits or faults I can never submit to. Upon a former occasion when my other play was before Mr. Garrick he offered to bring me before Mr. Whitehead’s tribunal, but I refused the proposal with indignation: I hope I shall not experience as hard treatment from you as from him. I have as you know, a large sum of

money to make up shortly ; by accepting my play I can readily satisfy my creditor that way ; at any rate I must look about to some certainty to be prepared. For God's sake take the play and let us make the best of it, and let me have the same measure at least which you have given as bad plays as mine.

“ I am your friend and servant,

“ OLIVER GOLDSMITH.”

“ *To David Garrick, Esq.*

“ DEAR SIR,

“ I ask many pardons for the trouble I gave you yesterday. Upon more mature deliberation, and the advice of a sensible friend, I began to think it indelicate in me to throw upon you the odium of confirming Mr. Colman's sentence. I therefore request you will send my play back by my servant ; for having been assured of having it acted at the other house, though I confess yours in every respect more to my wish, yet it would be folly in me to forego an advantage which lies in my power of appealing from Mr. Colman's opinion to the judgment of the town. I entreat if not too late, you will keep this affair a secret for some time.

“ I am dear Sir your very humble servant,

“ OLIVER GOLDSMITH.”

When it had gained the length of a rehearsal, new difficulties awaited the author. Several alterations had been made by him at the suggestion of

friends, but others of more moment now suggested by the manager were rejected as interfering with the main business of the piece; and additional offence was thus supposed to have been given him. Two of the comedians likewise (Smith and Woodward) for whom the characters of Marlow and Tony Lumpkin were intended, declined their respective parts, though their friends after the unequivocal reception of the play, found it expedient to send forth an apology for the refusal. One of them (Smith) alleged that far from disliking the part of young Marlow, none in comedy had pleased him more for several years, but the play of *Elfrida* in which he was perfect, being refused for his benefit, just then at hand, he had to study a part in *Lady Jane Grey*, and was thus unable from the shortness of the notice to undertake that which was assigned him in *She Stoops to Conquer*. The other intimated that he had been influenced by the opinion of the manager, who considered it would not reach a second representation; one of his criticisms on the play as alleged, being afterwards quoted, that "it dwindled and dwindled, and at last went out like the snuff of a candle." So essential was the aid of these two performers deemed to a favourable result, that a few friends of the Poet recommended on this account if on no other, the postponement of the performance till the ensuing season. His reply evinced the pride of an author, or no small confidence in the merit of his comic scenes — "I should sooner that my play were

damned by bad players, than merely saved by good acting."

Two others of the Covent Garden\* Company were therefore substituted for those who withheld their services; but this embarrassment removed, another immediately occurred respecting the Epilogue. The first, supplied as it appears by Murphy, theatrical custom prevented from being sung as intended by Mrs. Catley; a second was then provided; and eventually no less than four were written before manager and performers could be satisfied. When we thus learn the caprice and petulance to which men of genius are subject in their intercourse with the theatre, our wonder becomes increased that any should be found to exert their talents in a sphere where they are subjected to so many and vexatious impertinences.

The measure of the mortifications of the author was not yet full. During one of the rehearsals when several ladies of his acquaintance, and among others Miss Reynolds, were present, a sally of Tony Lumpkin appeared of questionable propriety, and he proposed to omit it. — "Pshaw, my dear Doctor," cried Colman, "of what consequence is a squib, when we have been sitting for two hours over a barrel of gunpowder." Such a remark at such a moment was at least ungenerous, appearing to insult by sarcasm what he had endeavoured to obstruct by the possession of theatrical power; and

\* Mr. Lee Lewes, who thence by his performance was first brought into notice, and Mr. Quick.

the Poet is said not to have forgiven so offensive and ill-natured a sally of wit. By the terms however in which he is mentioned in the dedication to the published play, this would not appear to have been the case.

No name, as we have seen, had been given the comedy on the 22d February, and from the frequent remark of Johnson "We are all in labour for a name to Goldy's play" it seems to have occasioned some perplexity. The first adopted but soon dismissed, was "The Old House a New Inn;" Reynolds proposed the "Belle's Stratagem," afterwards chosen by Mrs. Cowley for one of her comedies, which may have been deemed inappropriate from the stratagem of Miss Hardcastle not being premeditated, but the effect of the mistake of Marlow and Hastings. The present name, a suggestion of the author himself, was fixed upon only three days before the representation, and in some of the newspapers it was announced simply as "The Mistakes of a Night."

While the rehearsals were going on, he addressed the following note to Mr. Cradock, then in town—

"Mr. Goldsmith's best respects to Mr. Cradock—when he asked him to-day, he quite forgot an engagement of a week's standing, which has been made purposely for him; he feels himself quite uneasy at not being permitted to have his instructions upon those parts where he must necessarily be defective. He will have a rehearsal on Monday, when if Mr. Cradock would come, and after-



wards take a bit of mutton chop, it would add to his other obligations.

“Sunday morning.

“To J. Cradock, Esq. at the Hotel in Pall Mall.”

To the same friend who had in the mean time returned to the country, he wrote immediately after the representation of the piece and gives an account of the trouble occasioned by the epilogues, and an intelligible intimation of discontent at the treatment he had received. Both letters are without dates.

“MY DEAR SIR,

“The play has met with a success much beyond your expectations or mine. I thank you sincerely for your epilogue, which however could not be used, but with your permission shall be printed.\* The story in short is this; Murphy sent me rather the outline of an epilogue than an epilogue, which was to be sung by Mrs. Catley, and which she approved.

“Mrs. Bulkley hearing this insisted on throwing up her part, unless according to the custom of the theatre, she were permitted to speak the epilogue. In this embarrassment I thought of making a quar-

\* Mr. Cradock has the following memorandum respecting these lines:—“The Epilogue as Dr. G. terms it, was a mere *jeu d'esprit* returned to him with the copy of his comedy, as a ludicrous address to the town by Tony Lumpkin, but not intended to be spoken; parts alluded to in it, had been even struck out by myself as too free, in the Doctor's original manuscript.”

relling epilogue between Catley and her, debating who should speak the epilogue, but then Mrs. Catley refused after I had taken the trouble of drawing it out. I was then at a loss indeed; an epilogue was to be made and for none but Mrs. Bulkley. I made one and Colman thought it too bad to be spoken; I was obliged therefore to try a fourth time, and I made a very mawkish thing as you'll shortly see. Such is the history of my stage adventures, and which I have at last done with. I cannot help saying that I am very sick of the stage; and though I believe I shall get three tolerable benefits, yet I shall on the whole be a loser, even in a pecuniary light; my ease and comfort I certainly lost while it was in agitation.

“ I am my dear Cradock

“ Your obliged and obedient servant,

“ OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

“ P. S. Present my most humble respects to Mrs. Cradock.”

Under all the disadvantages enumerated, in addition according to the general remark, of bad actors, bad dresses, and bad scenery, the triumph of the comedy in public favour was complete, as if the town had determined to approve in the strongest manner what the manager seemed disposed prematurely to condemn. Its reception as we find he confesses exceeded even the expectations of the author. The first representation took place on the 15th March, between which and the

conclusion of the season, in consequence of holidays and benefits, no more than twelve nights including three for the author, remained to the managers; these however were occupied by the new comedy, and the house closed with it on the 31st May. The author's nights, duly announced according to the custom of the time as being "For the Author," were the 18th March, and 12th and 29th of April, by which according to a calculation of the usual expenses and receipts of the house, he received between four and five hundred pounds.\*

The Duke of Gloucester, for whom in conse-

\* Friends were not wanting to forward his views by various inducements to attend the theatre for his advantage; the following appeared the third night; it has been remarked that some advertisements announced the comedy on the first performance simply as "The Mistakes of a Night."

"The Mistakes of a Night,  
Will set matters right,  
As 't is by all parties agreed;  
From this lucky hit,  
For once a poor wit,  
May turn out a Goldsmith indeed!"

"THEATRICAL INTELLIGENCE."

"It is with great pleasure we can inform the public, that the ingenious and engaging *Miss Comedy*, is in a fair way of recovery. This much admired young lady has lately been in a very declining way, and was thought to be dying of a *sentimental consumption*. She is now under the care of *Dr. Goldsmith*, who has already prescribed twice for her. The medicines sat extremely easy upon her stomach, and she appears to be in fine spirits. The Doctor is to pay her a *third* visit this evening, and it is expected he will receive a very handsome *fee* from the lady's friends and admirers."

quence of the Royal Marriage Act some public sympathy existed, was present the first night of representation, whether from previous intimation of a passage in the play, does not appear. But when Hastings uttered the speech to Miss Neville "We'll go to France, for there even among slaves, the laws of marriage are respected," it was instantly applied to his Royal Highness by the audience, and several rounds of applause testified their feeling for his situation.

Such an incident was not likely to pass unnoticed, and might be construed into an attack by the author on what were known to be the sentiments of the King. He was too independent however to strike out the passage, although desirous, as he more than once expressed in society, that his Majesty might command his play; adding however to the wish, "not that it would do me any good;" and yet perhaps with the hope if viewed with an eye of favour, of receiving some token of royal consideration. His desire was gratified on the 5th May, the tenth night of performance, when it was commanded by the King and Queen; and again in the ensuing season (November 10th) but the honour formed all the advantages accruing from these visits. During the summer Foote acted the comedy at the Haymarket, and it was repeated at Covent Garden frequently before the following Christmas.

Few will hesitate to admit that the success of the play, although the humour may be occasion-

ally broad and some of the situations bordering upon farce, was well deserved. The leading incident of the plot, the mistaking a gentleman's house for an inn by a trick played off upon the credulity of travellers, is a novel contrivance, yet scarcely more improbable than the various blunders and involvements which comedy frequently exhibits; and if the fact ever occurred, of which it is said there are more instances on record than the mistake made by Goldsmith himself in travelling to school at Edgeworthstown, it is sufficient for the purposes of the dramatist. Several of the characters seem new, or nearly new to the stage. Tony Lumpkin is certainly original, and allowing for some coarseness and the usual degree of comic embellishment, not far removed from nature; young Marlow has likewise claims to novelty; and Mr. and Mrs. Hardcastle differ in several shades from the customary old country gentleman and indulgent mother, familiar to the eye of an audience. The business of the scene is active and diverting, the interest sustained throughout, and the dialogue lively from the equivoque produced by the mistake of some of the characters with regard to their position with others. The incident of the robbery is supposed to be borrowed from Albumazar.

Cumberland in his memoirs gives a minute detail of the preliminary measures of the friends of the author to support the piece. He states that they dined together at the Shakspeare Tavern, with Johnson in remarkably high spirits in the

chair ; near him was Goldsmith, the Burkes, Reynolds, Fitzherbert, Caleb Whitefoord, and as he tells us "a phalanx of North-British pre-determined applauders under the banners of Major Mills ;" that they thence proceeded to the theatre, separated into knots with pre-concerted signals when to applaud ; and that he was placed as flapper or remembrancer, to Mr. Adam Drummond who he adds, was "gifted by nature with the most sonorous, and at the same time the most contagious laugh that ever echoed from the human lungs," to give him his cue, *he having himself declared he did not know when to give his fire ;* and that in this manner, with Johnson in the front row of a side box also laughing, they carried the play, and "triumphed" he goes on to say, "not only over Colman's judgment, but our own."

The greater part of this story, like that of the alleged matrimonial design of the landlady of the Poet upon him, told by the same writer, is believed to be apocryphal.\* He is known to be inaccurate in his narrations, he admits even mis-statements, and writing from memory at the distance of thirty

\* In conversation lately with an eminent writer distinguished for research and accuracy, he remarked, in allusion to memoir writers and without being aware of the opinion of the present writer, that many parts of Cumberland's Autobiography were little better than romance. It is painful to think this of any respectable member of the republic of letters, but it is to be feared there is too much reason for it in the present instance. Further reasons for believing the fact in reference to Goldsmith will hereafter appear.

years after the transaction, with few dates in his volumes, cannot be supposed to remember correctly, trifling incidents connected with his occasional associates. He avows that he knew little or nothing of Goldsmith, which is obvious from a close examination of his book, he tells no original anecdote of him, and strangely misrepresents what he had heard from others; as in the story above alluded to, the sale of the *Vicar of Wakefield*, the sum received for it, and even what every one of common knowledge on literary matters knew, the name of the bookseller to whom sold.

Wherever the dinner took place, whether at the house of Sir Joshua Reynolds as Northcote told the present writer, and he is rarely incorrect, or at the Shakspeare, it consisted of but a few persons. Nor can it be conceived why a large party of *North Britons* more particularly, should assemble to support the play of one whose friends, personal or literary, were not of that nation, and whose national prejudices he had offended by frequent jokes, and by his known opinions upon *Ossian*. Mr. Fitzherbert, who is stated to have been one of the dinner party, had died the preceding year. The more immediate friends of the Poet really present in the theatre and noticed by the audience, were Johnson, Burke, Reynolds, Dr. Thomas Francklin connected with the *Critical Review*, and a few more of less note. Cumberland, Kelly, Macpherson and others were likewise visible in the boxes, the two former, accord-

ing to general opinion, as rivals or enemies rather than friends, and as such were assailed in the innumerable squibs and witticisms thrown out on the occasion. Cumberland had acquired unusual notoriety for his jealousy of brother authors of whatever description; it is therefore difficult to believe he attended as the active friend of his most formidable rival, considered in the triple character of poet, novelist, and dramatist; and the success of whose play was loudly proclaimed in the daily journals as a triumph over the "Kellys, Cumberlands, Kenricks, Lenoxes, Griffithses, and other sentimentalists."\*

\* "On Monday, between the hours of six and nine in the evening, Miss Sententia Horn-Book, a young lady particularly known at the theatres, was suddenly taken ill and her life is despaired of. Her friends, who during the course of her short existence, have been perpetually crying about her, will probably say on this occasion, like Laertes,

'Too much of water hast thou had Ophelia  
And therefore I forbid my tears.'

"This sudden calamity is said to have been brought on by the prescription of one Dr. Goldsmith, a name which we do not recollect to have met with in the list of those who destroy either with or without a license. Mr. C——d, (Cumberland), Mr. K——y, Mrs. G——hs, Mrs. L——x, Mr. O——n, (O'Brien), are sending every hour to inquire after her; because when she dies, as the proverb says, they may *quake for fear*."

On the third night of the comedy the following appeared—

"At Dr. Goldsmith's merry play,  
All the spectators laugh, they say;  
The assertion, Sir, I must deny,  
For Cumberland and Kelly cry.

*Ride, si sapis."*



The inference that Cumberland means to be drawn from the account he gives is, that success was the result of the exertions of the Author's friends, not of the merits of the piece itself. The sneer with which it concludes, written at so distant a period when the popularity of the play had long found universal favour, has something of the appearance of ill-nature; and this can scarcely be matter of surprise when we remember that its career was considered fatal to his own less comic productions\*; and may be a further reason for be-

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“There is *no truth* in the report that the author of *The Fashionable Lover* (Cumberland) is preparing a criticism on Dr. Goldsmith's play; for he is well known to be at this time employed in writing the Epithalamium of Lady B———t L——, and Mr. Deputy F——.”

\* Hannah More in her correspondence points strongly at the jealous temper of Cumberland. To Wm. Gray Esq. of York she writes Aug. 14. 1809.

“I have never written, and by the grace of God, I never *will* write a line in my own vindication, though Mr. Cumberland in his last Review talks of my ‘suckling babes of grace,’ and ‘making *hell-broth* ;’ advises the Bishop against a book which is intended to overturn the Church; that the deepest mischiefs lurk in every page of ‘*Cœlebs* ;’ and as the book is in every body's hands, he feels it his duty to say, ‘*Caveat Emptor.*’ My dear Sir, shall I not pity the poor man on the borders of fourscore, who could write such a criticism after having written a poem called ‘*Calvary?*’ Alas! for poor human nature, that he has not forgiven, at the end of thirty years, that in my gay and youthful days a tragedy of mine was preferred to one of his which perhaps better deserved success.” To Sir William Pepys in December of the same year she says —“My early foe —— (Cumberland) has kept alive all that rancour which he exerted against me thirty years ago, because ‘*Percy*,’ with perhaps less merit, had more success than the ‘*Battle of Hastings.*’”

lieving that though present at the representation, it was not as the zealous supporter he describes. Goldsmith's friends no doubt attended as is usual on the first night of a new piece, willing to promote his success, or counteract unfair opposition. But such advocates can never overpower the public voice, or give currency to productions destitute of merit; a negative or silent rejection is as effectual as that which is positive; none therefore will pay to hear what they dislike, or do not approve. Should even a first night succeed by such means, the second or third will show the failure; whereas every succeeding representation of the new comedy served to raise its popularity.\* To the comments of an unfriendly critic, the comic

\* Several similar accounts to the following appeared in all the daily journals:—

“The applause given to a new piece on the first evening of its representation is sometimes supposed to be the tribute of partial friendship. The approbation shown on the second exhibition of Dr. Goldsmith's new Comedy, exceeded that with which its first appearance was attended. Uninterrupted laughter or clamorous plaudits accompanied his muse to the last line of his play; and when it was given out for the Author's benefit the Theatre was filled with the loudest acclamations that ever rang within its walls.”

“The vein of natural and easy humour which runs throughout Dr. Goldsmith's new Comedy is so happily calculated to entertain all degrees of people, that a gentleman well known at the West end of the town is said to have laid a considerable wager, that in four months' time it will have been performed at all the different Theatres in Ireland and Scotland, as well as in every great town in England, to which any company of comedians belongs, and with the same degree of applause it has received at the Theatre Royal in Covent Garden.”

dramatist may at all times oppose the mirth of his audience; for time has confirmed the opinion which Dr. Johnson gave at the moment — “ I know of no comedy for many years that has so much exhilarated an audience; that has answered so much the great end of comedy — making an audience merry.”

A similar idea of the true design of comedy generally, seems to have been entertained by the Author himself. Inquiring of Northcote, then a pupil of Sir Joshua, to whom as we have seen he had good-naturedly given tickets for the performance on his benefit night, his opinion of its merits, the latter said he could not presume to decide upon the matter. “ Did it make you laugh?” “ Exceedingly ” was the reply; “ Then ” continued the Poet “ that is all that I require.”

The greater indifference now shown to theatrical pieces, renders it difficult to give an adequate idea of the general exultation at the overthrow, as it was considered, of the class of sentimental comedies which had for a few years occupied the place of mirth and humour. Though fashion had upheld them for a time, sufficient good taste existed among the people to disapprove when the opportunity offered, of what were termed, “ Comedies taken from the Whole Duty of Man, and Sentiments from the Book of Proverbs.” Goldsmith was loudly hailed as the champion of this reform in taste; he became the theme of conversation, the daily journals rang with his praises or

ridicule of his rivals, and complimentary paragraphs and verses were showered down upon the vivacity and humour of his muse. A few of these, as proofs of the general feeling of the moment, may be quoted; one absurdly assumes the name of Johnson, though without a particle of his energy, correctness, or power, and in the concluding lines, pays rather an equivocal compliment; the fourth and best is said to have been written by Mr. Wilkes, although intimate with the manager whom he so wittily assails.\*

\* *Verses from Dr. Johnson to Dr. Goldsmith,*

OCCASIONED BY HIS NEW COMEDY, ENTITLED "THE MISTAKES  
OF A NIGHT."

"No wonder the *Vis Cômica* is scarce,  
Bad taste had banished Comedy and Farce,  
Fettered the Drama's sons, their genius damp't,  
Their native, manly, sterling humour cramp't;  
No flights permitted as in days of yore,  
'T was dangerous alike to sink or soar.  
With some pert fools who call'd themselves the Town,  
Wit was a pedant, Humour was a clown;  
Nor one nor t' other durst a play-wright show,  
Wit was too high and Humour was too low.  
The play-house bard who wanted cloaths and fuel,  
Must bring a piece harmless as water-gruel:  
In order to secure his houses full,  
Be chastely moral and genteely dull;  
And if he hoped to live his nine nights out,  
Must give no Bill-of-Rights-man cause to pout;  
To sentimental dialogue must keep,  
Whilst the tame audience yawn, admire, and weep. —  
Too many tears the Comic Muse hath shed,  
Too much of Sentiment in Humour's stead;  
Old saws too long have charm'd the slumb'ring Pit,  
And musty Proverbs in default of Wit.  
"But now with joy I tell the Drama's friends,  
Now a new progeny from heaven descends;  
Thalia long, too long from Britain stray'd,  
Appears again in all her charms array'd :

In proportion to the praises of the successful author, were the ridicule and odium cast upon his

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Say not that Wit and Humour now are scarce,  
 Say not we've no new Comedy or Farce;  
 The arduous task a modern bard has done,  
 Restoring Farce and Comedy in one."

ON THE SUCCESS OF DR. GOLDSMITH'S NEW COMEDY OF "THE MISTAKES  
 OF A NIGHT."

"Long have our comic writers tried to move,  
 With tales of pity and chaste scenes of love;  
 On stilts sublime the laughing muse they raise,  
 For nothing low our taste refined can please.  
 Nor wit nor humour such grave preachers knew,  
 The Maudlin-house resembles Whitfield's crew.  
 No bursts of laughter shook the merry Pit,  
 In solemn silence all attentive sit;  
 Till some sad story big with tragic woe,  
 From the touch'd Boxes cause the tear to flow.  
 So deep the comedy, it makes you stare,  
 To find no poisoned bowl or dagger there.  
 Gay mirth and honest joke are in disgrace,  
 Melpomene usurps her Sister's place:  
 Let sentiment but stiffen every line,  
 The raptur'd audience loudly cry, how fine!  
 Goldsmith at length warm in Thalia's cause,  
 Broke the dull charm, and rescued Nature's laws."

*To Dr. Goldsmith,*

ON THE SUCCESS OF HIS NEW COMEDY, CALLED "SHE STOOPS  
 TO CONQUER."

"Long has the Comic Muse, seduc'd to town,  
 Shone with false charms, in fin'ry not her own;  
 And strove by affectation's flimsy arts,  
 And sickly sentiments to conquer hearts:  
 But now reclaim'd, she seeks her native plains,  
 Where pass'd her youth, where mirth, where pleasure reigns;  
 She throws each tinsel ornament aside,  
 And takes once more plain Nature for her guide;  
 With sweet simplicity she smiles again,  
 And *Stoops to Conquer* with her Goldsmith's pen."

supposed enemies, both in prose and verse.\*  
Among these, besides the persons already men-

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*To Dr. Goldsmith.*

“ Has then (the question pray excuse,  
For Doctor you 're a droll man),  
The dose that saved the Comic Muse,  
Almost destroyed poor Colman ?

“ How drugs, alike in strength and name,  
In operation vary !  
When what exalts the Doctor's fame  
Undoes th' Apothecary ! ”

\* “ *On Mr. Hugh Kelly's Censure of the New Comedy.*

ADDRESSED TO DR. GOLDSMITH.

“ If Kelly finds fault with the *shape* of your muse,  
And thinks that too loosely it plays,  
He surely, dear Doctor, will never refuse  
To make it a new *Pair of Stays* !

“ His *lining* is small talk pick'd up at a dance,  
His *laces* are tragedy groans,  
His *Tabby*'s a Novel, his *Twist* a Romance,  
And sentiments serve for the *Bones* ! ”

\* \* \* \* \*

“ *To the Printer of the St. James's Chronicle.*

“ SIR,

“ Though Dr. Goldsmith's brow has been already covered with such laurels as this grateful nation could bestow, perhaps after all he may regard a sprig of Northern bays as the greater curiosity.

“ It is well known that Mr. Macpherson attended the first night's representation of the *New Comedy* ; but the public has not yet been informed, that soon after the conclusion of the piece, he was heard to utter the following sentiments, and in that peculiar style with which he has dignified his late Translation of Homer :

“ — ‘ Through the sable boxes darkened the bombazeens of women : — But along the mournful veil of artificial grief —

tioned, were numbered Macpherson though no dramatist, which may of itself disprove the story of Cumberland of the play being supported by many North Britons. But Colman, as manager, was selected more especially for the object of censure. Goldsmith's cause was indeed extremely

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quick shot the gay radiance of joy: — and kindled in every bright eye.'

“ ‘ Dumb the sullen critic sat : — on his cankered heart feeding : — Fiercely frowning, deeply glooming. — Till at last, from lungs of poison — burst faintly a timorous hiss — Turn him out, turn him out, toss him over — was the voice of the crowd in a rage.’

“ ‘ The *Manager* grumbled within: — The people sat laughing amain : — Through galleries, boxes, and pit — loud rattled the tumult of joy.’

“ I am Sir, with the sincerest pleasure in being able to communicate this literary curiosity to your paper, your most obedient servant,

“ PHILLO-FUSTIAN.”

To George Colman, Esq.,

ON THE SUCCESS OF DOCTOR GOLDSMITH'S NEW COMEDY.

“ Come, Coley, doff those mourning weeds,  
Nor thus with jokes be flamm'd ;  
Tho' Goldsmith's present play succeeds,  
His next may still be damn'd.

As this has 'scap'd without a fall,  
To sink his next prepare ;  
New actors hire from Wapping Wall,  
And dresses from Rag Fair.

For scenes let tatter'd blankets fly,  
The prologue Kelly write,  
Then swear again the piece must die  
Before the author's night.

Should these tricks fail, the lucky elf  
To bring to lasting shame,  
E'en write *the best you can yourself*,  
And print it in *his name*.”

popular, but in taking it up, several of his partisans were probably revenging their own ; some willing to punish the ruler of the theatre for past refusals of their pieces ; others meaning to intimidate him from such offences in future. The fire of squibs, witticisms, and paragraphs against him became incessant ; his opinion of the play was attributed to extreme jealousy, and if it were not jealousy it was triumphantly asked, how could any dramatic writer in future, with satisfaction to himself, offer a piece to a person so defective in judgment as Mr. Colman had shown himself, or the town receive it with pleasure at his hands ? Either horn of the dilemma was thought fatal to his continuance in theatrical power. His marginal criticisms which seemed to be well known, were treated with derision ; to be despised, it was said, they need only be published ; and the author as the best punishment of his enemy was recommended to print them with the play, in order that the public might see on whom they depended for the selection of their chief amusement.

So perseveringly was this warfare carried on in every variety of form, that the manager became at length seriously annoyed ; he wrote what was considered a penitential letter to Goldsmith, requesting he would “ *take him off the rack of the newspapers,*” and in order to escape the annoyance in London, took flight in the beginning of the second week to Bath. A victory was thus achieved to the great satisfaction of the wits of the day, but



the author on the publication of the play, gave no intimation either of triumph or discontent in the only allusion he permitted himself to make. — “The undertaking a comedy” he says “not merely sentimental was very dangerous; and Mr. Colman who saw this piece in its various stages always thought it so. However I ventured to trust it to the public; and though it was necessarily delayed till late in the season, I have every reason to be grateful.” This moderation which indicates none of the permanent resentment attributed to him, was not without its effect. When death had removed all rivalry, the manager, weaned from his sentimental attachments, thus paid tribute to the genius and memory of his old friend, in the prologue to the Chapter of Accidents, 1780.

“Long has the passive stage howe'er absurd,  
 Been rul'd by names and govern'd by a word.  
 Some poor cant term, like magic spells, can awe,  
 And bend our realms like a dramatic law.  
 When Fielding, Humour's favourite child, appear'd,  
*Low* was the word, a word each author fear'd!  
 Till cheer'd at length by Pleasantry's bright ray,  
 Nature and Mirth resum'd their legal sway,  
 And Goldsmith's genius bask'd in open day.”

Some imitations of the play have appeared on the French stage; among others *La Fausse Auberge* a prose comedy in two acts which came out at the Italian theatre at Paris in 1789, and experienced tolerable success.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

FRACAS WITH EVANS THE BOOKSELLER. — AN UNFINISHED NOVEL. — CLAIMS UPON HIS CHARITY. — THE GRUMBLER. — DICTIONARY OF ARTS AND SCIENCES.—HISTORY OF GREECE.

THE applause bestowed upon his comic labours was too great not to draw from less successful candidates for public favour, a portion of that abuse frequently incurred by superior merit. A letter of this description appeared in the London Packet newspaper, of the 24th March\*, which he would

\* “ *To Dr. Goldsmith.*

“ *Vous vous moyez par vanité.*

“ SIR,

“ The happy knack which you have learnt of puffing your own compositions provokes me to come forth. You have not been the editor of newspapers and magazines, not to discover the trick of literary *humbug*. But the gauze is so thin, that the very foolish part of the world see through it, and discover the Doctor’s monkey face and cloven foot. Your poetic vanity, is as unpardonable as your personal; would man believe it, and will woman bear it, to be told, that for hours, the *great* Goldsmith will stand surveying his grotesque orang-outang figure in a pier glass. Was but the lovely H——k as much enamoured, you would not sigh, my gentle swain, in vain. But your vanity is preposterous. How will this same bard of Bedlam ring the changes in praise of Goldy! But what has he to be either proud or vain of? The Traveller is a flimsy poem, built upon false principles; principles diametrically opposite to liberty.

no doubt have treated with the neglect such things deserve and which he had hitherto always

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What is the Good Natured Man, but a poor, water-gruel, dramatic dose? What is the Deserted Village, but a pretty poem, of easy numbers, without fancy, dignity, genius or fire? And pray what may be the last *speaking pantomime* so praised by the Doctor himself, but an incoherent piece of stuff, the figure of a woman, with a fish's tail, without plot, incident, or intrigue. We are made to laugh at stale, dull jokes, wherein we mistake pleasantry for wit, and grimace for humour; wherein every scene is unnatural, and inconsistent with the rules, the laws of nature, and of the drama; viz. Two gentlemen come to a man of fortune's house, eat, drink, sleep, &c. and take it for an inn. The one is intended as a lover to the daughter; he talks with her for some hours, and when he sees her again in a different dress, he treats her as a bar-girl, and swears she squinted. He abuses the master of the house, and threatens to kick him out of his own doors. The Squire whom we are told is to be a fool, proves the most sensible being of the piece; and he makes out a whole act, by bidding his mother lie close behind a bush, persuading her that his father, her own husband, is a highwayman, and that he is come to cut their throats; and to give his cousin an opportunity to go off, he drives his mother over hedges, ditches, and through ponds. There is not, sweet sucking Johnson, a natural stroke in the whole play, but the young fellow's giving the stolen jewels to the mother supposing her to be the landlady. That Mr. Colman did no justice to this piece, I honestly allow; that he told all his friends it would be damned, I positively aver; and from such ungenerous insinuations, without a dramatic merit, it rose to public notice, and it is now the *ton* to go to see it; though I never saw a person that either liked it or approved it, any more than the absurd plot of *the Homes'* tragedy of *Alonzo*. Mr. Goldsmith, correct your arrogance! Reduce your vanity; and endeavour to believe, as a man, you are of the plainest sort; and as an author, but a mortal piece of mediocrity.

Brise le miroir infidèle,  
Qui vous cache la vérité.

“TOM TICKLE.”

shown, but for the injudicious interference of a military acquaintance, one of his countrymen, Captain Higgins, who with something of the national pugnacity, thought it necessary to involve his friend in a personal encounter in answer to this very silly and very harmless abuse.

An unfinished fragment intended for a detail of the affair, and no doubt meant for publication in lieu of that which afterwards appeared, was found among his papers in the handwriting of an amanuensis.

“As I find the public have been informed by the newspapers of a slight fray which happened between me and the editor of an evening paper; to prevent their being imposed upon, the account is shortly this.

“A friend of mine came on Friday to inform me that a paragraph was inserted against me in the London Packet which I was in honour bound to resent. I read the paper, and considered it in the same light as he did. I went to the editor and struck him with my cane on the back. A scuffle ensued \* \* \* \*.”

A few new particulars of the assault upon the publisher are thus communicated by a surviving witness, whose recollection of the occurrence is but little impaired by time.\*

\* Mr. Harris, late of St. Paul's Churchyard, whose publications for youth are so well known, and who succeeded to the business of Francis Newbery, the nephew, not the son, of John Newbery.

“ The circumstances attending the personal contest between Dr. Goldsmith and Evans the bookseller with whom I lived at the time, are to the best of my recollection as follow.

“ A letter signed Tom Tickle appeared in the London Packet of which Evans was the publisher, reflecting on the person and literary character of Goldsmith and introducing the name of one of his female acquaintance. Instigated as it was believed by injudicious friends, he came to Paternoster Row accompanied by Captain Horneck of the Guards\*, and inquiring of me whether Evans was at home, I called the latter from an adjoining room and heard Goldsmith say to him — ‘ I have called in consequence of a scurrilous attack in your paper upon me (my name is Goldsmith) and an unwarrantable liberty taken with the name of a young lady. As for myself I care little, but her name must not be sported with.’ Evans declaring his ignorance of the matter, said he would speak to the editor, and stooping down for the file of the paper to look for the offensive article, the Poet struck him smartly with his cane across the back. Evans who was sturdy, returned the blow with interest, when in the scuffle a lamp suspended over head was broken and the oil fell upon the combatants ; one of the shopmen was sent for a constable, but in the mean time Dr. Kenrick who had been all the time in the adjoining room, and who it was pretty certain was really author of the news-

\* Other accounts state it to have been Captain Higgins.

paper article, came forward, separated the parties, and sent Goldsmith home in a coach.

“ Captain Horneck expressed his surprise at the assault, declaring he had no previous intimation of such a design on the part of the Poet, who had merely requested that he should accompany him to Paternoster Row. Evans took steps to indict him for an assault; but subsequently a compromise took place by his assailant agreeing to pay fifty pounds to the Welsh charity.”

The affair gave ample employment to the newspapers for several days. A sense of common danger, on all such occasions, unites a body which almost claims to be irresponsible not only against the law but against individuals who attempt to resent their untruths or provocations; and Goldsmith was assailed for the gross outrage, as it was called, of beating a man in his own house.\* Among other things urged against him was that of having been formerly editor of a Magazine, in which he had no doubt taken as many liberties with others as had been in the present instance taken with him. To the latter part of this accusation, from which as far as can be discovered he was quite

\* Of the innumerable squibs issued on this occasion, the following is a specimen: —

“ THE COMBAT.

“ While the printer was busy — to give him a blow,  
 Unsuspecting, unguarded — how could you do so?  
 Such a victory gain'd will by all be agreed,  
 My dear Doctor, is *Stooping to Conquer* indeed!”

free, he however thought proper to reply in the following address, printed in the Daily Advertiser of the 31st March, 1773.

*“ To the Public.*

“ Lest it should be supposed that I have been willing to correct in others an abuse of which I have been guilty myself, I beg leave to declare, that in all my life I never wrote or dictated a single paragraph, letter, or essay in a newspaper, except a few moral essays under the character of a Chinese, about ten years ago, in the Ledger, and a letter to which I signed my name, in the St. James’s Chronicle. If the liberty of the press, therefore, has been abused, I have had no hand in it.

“ I have always considered the press as the protector of our freedom, as a watchful guardian, capable of uniting the weak against the encroachments of power. What concerns the public, most properly admits of a public discussion. But of late the press has turned from defending public interest, to making inroads upon private life ; from combating the strong, to overwhelming the feeble. No condition is now too obscure for its abuse, and the protector has become the tyrant of the people. In this manner the freedom of the press is beginning to sow the seeds of its own dissolution ; the great must oppose it from principle, and the weak from fear ; till at last every rank of mankind shall

be found to give up its benefits, content with security from insults.

“How to put a stop to this licentiousness by which all are indiscriminately abused, and by which vice consequently escapes in the general censure, I am unable to tell; all I could wish is that, as the law gives us no protection against the injury, so it should give calumniators no shelter after having provoked correction. The insults which we receive before the public, by being more open are the more distressing; by treating them with silent contempt, we do not pay a sufficient deference to the opinion of the world. By recurring to legal redress we too often expose the weakness of the law, which only serves to increase our mortification by failing to relieve us. In short, every man should singly consider himself as a guardian of the liberty of the press, and as far as his influence can extend, should endeavour to prevent its licentiousness becoming at last the grave of its freedom.

“OLIVER GOLDSMITH.”

One of the jests played off upon him on this occasion was a story, that having proceeded after the engagement with injured eyes and bandaged face to his friend Dr. Johnson, complaining of the insolence and slanders of anonymous writers in the newspapers, the latter is made to reply, though with a very humble imitation of his sarcastic wit, that if he (Dr. Johnson) had attempted to resent



all the slanders vented against him through such channels, he would have had by that time neither eyes to see, nor jaws to eat with. This alleged conversation some of his friends deemed it necessary to meet by a formal contradiction. What Johnson really thought and said on this occasion is told by Boswell.

“On Saturday April 3d, the day after my arrival in London this year, I went to his (Dr. Johnson’s) house late in the evening and sat with Mrs. Williams till he came home. I found in the London Chronicle Dr. Goldsmith’s apology to the public for beating Evans the bookseller, on account of a paragraph in a newspaper published by him, which Goldsmith thought impertinent to him and to a lady of his acquaintance.

“The apology was written so much in Dr. Johnson’s manner that both Mrs. Williams and I supposed it to be his; but when he came home he soon undeceived us. When he said to Mrs. Williams, ‘Well, Dr. Goldsmith’s *manifesto* has got into your paper;’ I asked him if Dr. Goldsmith had written it, with an air that made him see I suspected it was his, though subscribed by Dr. Goldsmith.

“JOHNSON. ‘Sir, Dr. Goldsmith would no more have asked me to have wrote such a thing as that for him, than he would have asked me to feed him with a spoon, or do any thing else that denoted his imbecility. I as much believe that he wrote it as if I had seen him do it. Sir, had he shown it to any

one friend he would not have been allowed to publish it. He has indeed done it very well, but it is a foolish thing well done. I suppose he has been so much elated with the success of his new comedy, that he has thought every thing that concerned him must be of importance to the public.’”

In the press, the play was as successful as on the stage, not less it is said, than six thousand copies having been sold during this and the ensuing season. It was dedicated to Dr. Johnson, as much from sincere esteem as in return for the good opinion first formed by him of the piece, and his zealous endeavours to carry it forward to representation: “I have particularly reason,” he says, “to thank you for your partiality to this performance.” The terms otherwise used on this occasion form a compliment of the most flattering kind. “By inscribing this slight performance to you I do not mean so much to compliment you as myself. It may do me some honour to inform the public that I have lived many years in intimacy with you. It may serve the interests of mankind also to inform them that the greatest wit may be found in a character, without impairing the most unaffected piety.”

The copy-right passed into the hands of Mr. Francis Newbery, who had published the *Vicar of Wakefield*. An anecdote connected with its transfer is thus in substance stated by the same gentleman, whose account of the quarrel has just

been given, and who had abundant opportunities of knowing the fact.

Being pressed by pecuniary difficulties in 1771 — 1772, Goldsmith had at various periods obtained the advance of two or three hundred pounds from Newbery under the engagement of writing a novel, which after the success of the *Vicar of Wakefield* promised to be one of the most popular speculations. Considerable delay took place in the execution of this undertaking, and when at length submitted to the perusal of the bookseller, it proved to be in great measure the plot of the comedy of *The Good-natured Man*, turned into a tale. Objections being taken to this, the manuscript was returned. Goldsmith declared himself unable or unwilling to write another, but in liquidation of the debt now pressingly demanded, said he should require time to look round for means of raising the money, unless Mr. Newbery chose to take the chance of a play coming forward at Covent Garden. “And yet to tell you the truth, Frank,” added the candid poet in making the proposal, “there are great doubts of its success.” Newbery accepted the offer, doubtful of being otherwise repaid, and the popularity of “*She Stoops to Conquer*,” gained, according to the recollection of the narrator, above three hundred pounds more than the sum advanced to the author.

This novel thus mentioned as rejected he afterwards read in the family of Mr. Bunbury, and by one of the ladies then present, is very well remem-

bered as being taken from the comedy, though the impression remains that it was unfinished. What became of the manuscript, or the name given to it, is unknown. This uncertainty warrants perhaps a conjecture in the absence of more positive information. In the "Omniana" of Mr. Southey we find the following notice:— "A fraud has been practised in France upon Goldsmith's reputation. At the end of a volume which bears date 1774, is the following title in a list of new books, *Histoire de François Wills, ou le Triomphe de la Bienfaisance, par l'auteur du Ministre de Wakefield. Traduction de l'Anglais.*"

It is just possible that this may be the novel of which we are told; and that the author considering it too indifferent to acknowledge, or more probably leaving it incomplete, the conclusion may have been added by another hand, and the facts by some means communicated after his death to the French translator. The original if it was ever really published in England, will no doubt furnish traces of his pen; and the similarity of title is at least remarkable.

Among the claims upon his charity, those from poor and obscure authors were perhaps least to be resisted, as much from sympathy with all the sons of misfortune, as from painful remembrance of his former struggles for existence. Of these applications, often dexterously timed, when by the success of a new play or publication his purse was believed to be replenished, and when the more to ensure



nerosity bordering on imprudence to which he was witness.

Having waited upon the Poet with a small sum of money raised for the purpose of rescuing him from momentary embarrassment, one of his countrymen was admitted during their conversation, and related a tale of woe calculated to work on the feelings of Goldsmith. His sensibility, tremblingly alive to such appeals, knew no restraint from prudence, and snatching up no inconsiderable part of what had been brought for the relief of his own necessities, put it into the hands of the applicant and dismissed him.

Such solicitations appear never to have been made in vain however great the inconvenience to himself, so that his sensitiveness to distress became at times almost morbid. He has been known to quit his bed at night and even when labouring under indisposition, in order to relieve the miserable; and when money was scarce, or to be procured with difficulty by borrowing, he has nevertheless shared it with such as presented any claim to charity. The effect of such calls upon one of his nervous temperament, may be judged by another anecdote, which to those not aware of his peculiarities would have looked like affectation.

While playing whist at the house of Sir William Chambers in Berners Street, the party at the table consisting besides Sir William, of Lady Chambers, Baretti, and Goldsmith, the latter hastily threw down his cards at a critical point of the game, flew

out of the room, and as appeared by the opening of the door, into the street, returning speedily and resuming his seat. Sir William conceiving that something unusual had occurred, ventured after the lapse of a few minutes, to inquire the cause of his sudden retreat, trusting it had not been occasioned by the heat of the room. "Not at all" was the reply, "but in truth I could not bear to hear that unfortunate woman in the street half singing, half sobbing, for such tones could only arise from the extremity of distress; her voice grated painfully on my ear and jarred my frame, so that I could not rest until I had sent her away." On farther explanation it appeared that others had likewise noticed a female voice of peculiar character aiming to sing, but without remarking that mingled tone of misery conveyed to the mind of the Poet, and which he had quitted the room to relieve.

He was content likewise to be made the channel of conveyance for the bounty of others, as we find by the following letter of General Oglethorpe, a distinguished and amiable man, at whose table he met much good society and spent many agreeable hours, and who now at an advanced period of life displayed the same love for the good of mankind in a private way, that he had previously exerted on a more extended scale. After being educated at Oxford, he had served under Prince Eugene against the Turks, and was afterwards employed to found the colony of Georgia; in this duty he

had gained a species of immortality from the praise of Pope—

“Or, driven by strong benevolence of soul,  
Shall fly like Oglethorpe from Pole to Pole.”

In the rebellion of 1745 he held a command under the Duke of Cumberland, but for some alleged neglect, though acquitted by a court martial, continued afterwards unemployed. He sat in parliament for many years, preserved a taste for literature, and the society of literary and distinguished men, had been a patron of Johnson's poem of “London” when the writer was unknown to him, was hospitable, generous, and friendly. He survived Goldsmith about ten years, dying at the age of eighty-seven. An active interest by the Poet in the institution of a charitable society, seems to have produced this communication.

“*From General Oglethorpe.*”

“How just, Sir, were your observations, that the poorest objects were by extreme poverty deprived of the benefit of hospitals erected for the relief of the poorest.

“Extreme poverty which should be the strongest recommendation to charity, is here the insurmountable objection, which leaves the distressed to perish.

“The qualifying such objects to receive the benefit of hospitals answers the intentions of the intended society. The design is the immediate relief from perishing; thereby giving time and



protection to get proper destinations. And this being admitted into an hospital is a proper destination.

“ You were so good as to offer to distribute such sums as should be sent to you.

“ At the same time that I am to return you thanks for your charitable offer, I am to send you five pounds to distribute for that purpose in the time and manner you think proper. Which I accordingly herewith send.

“ You have seen I suppose, in the St. James’s Evening Post, from September 22d to 25th, the Zoilus that attacked you treated with proper contempt.

“ If a farm and a mere country scene will be a little refreshment from the smoke of London, we shall be glad of the happiness of seeing you at Cranham Hall. It is sixteen miles from the Three Nuns at Whitechapel, where Prior our stage coach (man) inns. He sets out at two in the afternoon.

“ I am, Sir,

“ Your obedient humble servant,

“ J. OGLETHORPE.

“ Cranham Hall,  
(By Gray’s bag) Essex.”  
[No Date.]

His opinion of manuscript works being often requested by literary friends, an approval and letter

of recommendation from him was esteemed an advantageous introduction to a bookseller. The following is one of these. The work mentioned was "The History of the Revolutions of Denmark, with an account of the Present State of that Kingdom and People. By John Andrews. LL.D."

It consisted of two volumes, a creditable and now scarce, though perhaps never a popular performance, got up to satisfy public curiosity when general attention was drawn to that country by the unhappy circumstances in which Queen Matilda had been involved. It is deficient in the interest and the elegance which Goldsmith imparted to his narratives; neither is it broken into chapters, which contributes so materially to relieve the fatigue of casual or careless readers, and fix attention more thoroughly on epochs, persons, and circumstances. The letter was addressed to Mr. Nourse, the bookseller, and as appears with effect, as he became the publisher in the spring of the following year. It is without date but endorsed April 26th 1773.

" SIR,

" The bearer is Doctor Andrews who has just finished a work relative to Denmark, which I have seen and read with great pleasure. He is of opinion that a short letter of this kind expressing my approbation, will be a proper introduction to you. I therefore once more recommend it in the warmest manner, and unless I am mistaken it will

be a great credit to him as well as benefit to the purchaser of the copy.

“ I am, Sir,

“ Your most obedient servant,

“ OLIVER GOLDSMITH.”

Gratitude for the exertions of the actor \* who personated Tony Lumpkin in his last comedy, induced him to consent to alter an old play into a farce for his benefit, having on a former occasion made a pecuniary present to the representative of Croaker † in the Good Natured Man. The piece so chosen was “ The Grumbler ;” a translation by Sir Charles Sedley of “ Le Grondeur,” a comedy in three acts by Brueys. Little variation from the original appears in the English version, the characters being all preserved, but Goldsmith gives them English names as follow, and compresses the three acts into one.

*The Dramatis Personæ are,*

SOURBY, the Grumbler	- - -	(Mr. Quick.)
OCTAVIO, his son	- - -	(Mr. Davis.)
WENTWORTH, brother-in-law to	} (Mr. Owenson.)	
Sourby		- - -
DANCING MASTER, called Sig-	} (Mr. King.)	
nior Capriole in the Bills		- - -
SCAMPER, servant	- - -	(Mr. Saunders.)
CLARISSA, in love with Octavio		(Miss Helme.)
JENNY, her maid	- - -	(Miss Pearce.)

\* Mr. Quick.

† Mr. Shuter.

The plot is sufficiently simple. Sourby, an ill-tempered, discontented man as his name implies, is the torment of his family, neighbours, and servants, with none of whom can he live on tolerable terms. In the opening of the piece his son is on the point of being married to Clarissa, the consent of Sourby being chiefly obtained by the lady who believes he has a design upon her himself, relinquishing her naturally mild character for that of a termagant towards the domestics. The character thus assumed agrees however so well with his own, that in defiance of previous arrangements and promises he determines to marry her himself, a design favoured by her fortune being in his power.

No other remedy occurs to the lovers to avoid his tyranny than further deception; she therefore assumes a new character, that of an extravagant, giddy woman of fashion, who in addition to various modes of expense and pleasure, is determined to have as she tells him, “habits, feasts, fiddles, haut-boys, masquerades, concerts, and especially a ball for fifteen days after their nuptials.” Above all, her intended husband must learn to dance; she will admit of no excuse on the plea of years and becoming gravity. In a change of scene the dancing master arrives; Sourby as soon as he knows his errand, orders him off and threatens chastisement, but the former having his cue, declares he has positive orders from Clarissa to make him dance, and drawing his sword compels him to do so by force. In the midst of this scene Went-

worth arrives, and Sourby in a fit of rage with his intended bride for placing him in a situation so unfitted to his years and disposition, renounces her for ever, to the great satisfaction of the lovers, who are consequently rendered happy.

The marks of haste in adaptation are obvious; the plot wants sufficient interest, the dialogue point, and excepting Sourby we find little attempt at character; even he is rather overcharged and unnatural, but there is an effective scene or two for the comic powers of the actor.

It was represented on the 8th of May 1773 \*, and though announced the previous day and afterwards, as being adapted to the English stage by the successful author of "She Stoops to Conquer," was not repeated. As it has never been printed nor is likely to be, a scene from the MS. copy now in the possession of Thomas Amyot, Esq., will be given in another place for the satisfaction of the reader.

Among the literary projects that had taken strong hold upon his mind, was one of a popular "Dictionary of Arts and Sciences." This he hoped to write into notice, if not by the extent of his information at least by the graces of his

\* In the Journal of Boswell of this year, he has made a mistake in the day of the month. — "On Sunday, 8th May, I dined with Johnson," &c. ; whereas the 8th May was Saturday, on which night the Grumbler came out at Covent Garden. Neither does he allude to Goldsmith's connexion with the piece, although it was so announced in the newspapers.

style. Yet the means of acquiring the best information from popular writers were not to be neglected. With this view he had engaged several distinguished friends to write articles on the subjects with which they were believed to be best acquainted; other assistance was to be procured from persons of acknowledged merit; and the influence of his own name as editor, would he believed give popularity to the undertaking, forgetting that in a work necessarily embracing much of science, he had made no secret of avowing that he possessed "a taste rather classical than scientific."

In aid of this design, Dr. Johnson assented to contribute the article on ethics, and would no doubt have added others. Burke had also made liberal promises, among which it was said according to Malone, were to be an abstract of his Essay on the Sublime and Beautiful, a paper on the Philosophy of Bishop Berkeley, and no doubt others on political science. Sir Joshua chose his own profession; and a paper from him on painting, however much he had already told in his lectures, must have commanded attention. Garrick had nearly untrodden ground to go over in teaching, or telling, as much of his own art as can be communicated by writing, and which from admitted skill, experience, and literary talents, he could have rendered amusing, if not instructive, to the general reader. Dr. Burney's contribution was likewise to be professional and the article "Musician" was

actually drawn up for the work ; he appears to have been personally unknown to Goldsmith, but being applied to by Garrick, agreed to give the benefit of his knowledge to one with whose fame and friends he was well acquainted. The article is supposed to have been sent to the editor\*, for though some reference to it exists in Dr. Burney's papers, the piece itself is not to be found. In reply to an intimation from Garrick of the promised aid from this quarter, Goldsmith wrote the following letter : —

“ *To David Garrick, Esq.*

“ Temple, June 10th, 1773.

“ DEAR SIR,

“ To be thought of by you obliges me ; to be served by you is still more. It makes me very happy to find that Dr. Burney thinks my scheme of a dictionary useful ; still more that he will be so kind as to adorn it with any thing of his own. I beg you will also accept my gratitude for procuring me so valuable an acquisition.

“ I am, dear Sir,

“ Your most affectionate servant,

“ OLIVER GOLDSMITH.”

To introduce this project in the best manner to public notice, he drew up a *Prospectus*, with that

\* So the writer was informed by Madame D'Arblay, in a very agreeable interview she did him the honour to grant in August 1831.

perspicuity and elegance by which such papers from his pen were always distinguished, though unfortunately it has not been preserved. Bishop Percy praised it as being of uncommon merit, and took some pains through Malone and others, as appears in his MS. correspondence, to recover it by inquiries of Mr. Bott who was supposed to hold his chief papers, though in vain. Boswell also in a letter to that prelate in 1790\*, seems to doubt whether it was saved from oblivion. Neither has the present writer been more fortunate, notwithstanding long and diligent inquiry wherever it was likely to be found, though it may not be irrecoverably lost. But the address and eloquence of its author proved unavailing. The booksellers hesitating to second his views, and their aid being essential to the design, no material progress was made in it. The time necessarily required for its completion, the capital to be expended, the system and arrangement to be adopted, all probably appeared to them to require an editor of more regular habits of business than he was considered to possess. Genius in such a work they probably thought less a merit than an incumbrance; while industry and knowledge, method and punctuality, were indispensable to success.

The coldness shown towards a scheme on which

\* April 9. — "Pray who is it that has the charge of Goldsmith's Works here? I should like to talk with him. I know not where the plan of his Encyclopædia is, or if it be preserved." — *Mr. Mason's MS. Collection.*



he had expended much thought, and some labour, and which promised to prove a source of permanent income, at least for a few years to come, occasioned him considerable vexation, and tended no doubt to that depression of spirits frequently affecting the latter part of his life. Had he lived, probably something of the kind would have been attempted; by its failure we have at least lost some papers which from the talents to be employed upon them could not have been without value.

Encouraged by the success attending the Roman and English histories, he had in the preceding year commenced that of Greece on the same abbreviated plan. When one subject wearied him another was always at hand to be taken up, and the readiness with which he turned his mind to each, gives us an idea of his facility. One volume of the work was now completed, but on the plea of that urgent necessity so often pleaded, and from whatever causes so often felt, Griffin as the agent of other booksellers paid him the copy money in June for both volumes.

Doubts however have been started whether he really had any hand in it, although the whole was printed off at the period of his death, and published about two months afterwards; for these suspicions there was no just cause. Bishop Percy not aware of his labours in this field, and probably not having read the work, felt disposed to hesitate in believing it his, but several other friends

knew how he was employed and saw portions of the manuscript. The following receipt in his own handwriting for the consideration agreed upon, is still extant. But without this testimony, the internal evidence affords to any one familiar with his manner, sufficient proof of its origin. The same merits and defects, the same occasional peculiarity of phrase \*, identity of sentiment, elegance of style, and clearness of narration, mark this as forcibly as any of his writings, while its ease will cheat us into the belief until the trial be made, that we could tell the same story equally well.

“ June 22. 1773. †

“ Received two hundred and fifty pounds for writing and compiling the History of Greece from Mr. William Griffin for which I promise further assignment on demand.

“ OLIVER GOLDSMITH.”

\* Several of these, were it necessary to descend to detail, might be pointed out. Thus the word *strike* is used two or three times in an unusual sense. In the Deserted Village we find —

“ Unfit in these degenerate times of shame  
To catch the heart and *strike* for honest fame.”

In Grecian History, vol. i. p. 166.—

“ Some skirmishing between the Persian cavalry and the wing of the Grecian army, in which the latter were successful, seemed to give a presage of future victory, which however for ten days neither side seemed willing to *strike* for.”

In the Vicar of Wakefield George Primrose's literary acquaintance means to “ *strike* for a subscription.”

† From the Collection of William Upcott, Esq. The work was published June 15. 1774.

The introductory remarks, not less just than admirably stated, discover the writer, for they reiterate thoughts previously advanced in one of his Essays, and transplanted into the Citizen of the World, when published in volumes. The concluding figure had been used in the Life of Parnell. "The fabulous age therefore of Greece must have no place in history; it is now too late to separate those parts which may have a real foundation in nature, from those which we owe to folly and the imagination. There are no traces left to guide us in that intricate pursuit; *the dews of the morning are past, and it is vain to attempt continuing the chase in meridian splendour.*"

This work is rather more elementary than that of Rome, and considerably more so than that of England, about six hundred and eighty very moderate sized octavo pages being devoted to it up to the death of Alexander. For an elementary work this is perhaps enough. Exclusive of the mass of admitted fable in which its earlier history is involved, the improbability of many of the details of more recent date which juvenile credulity is accustomed to believe, and courtesy has permitted to assume the name of history, are utterly beyond the pale of rational belief. Nay, many of the supposed deeds of heroism, the asserted self-denials, the reputed wisdom, the impossible virtue, the institution of and submission to revolting and impracticable laws, the battles where a few hundreds are made to contend with

and overcome on all occasions thousands and tens of thousands of enemies, the merits of every description assumed by the Greeks, but never yet seen in any community of men where we had the testimony of strangers to corroborate their own pretensions, exhibit that strong tinge of oriental exaggeration with which local position made them familiar. Much of what we are thus told, is contrary to the history of man, and therefore contrary to truth ; much is owing to their being almost solely their own historians ; much to national characteristics as a vain, versatile, boastful people, desirous of claiming kindred qualities with the divinities they worshipped. " Man, plain historical man," in the language of Goldsmith, " seems to have no share in the picture." From this cause perhaps and the limits within which he was necessarily confined, he has entered less at large into their civil than military annals.\*

An anecdote connected with this history, communicated by a gentleman of much literary research † who believes his authority to be good, is at least amusing. It may detract something from its authenticity to remember, that the historian whose name is used on the occasion, did not appear as such publicly until after the death of Goldsmith, though the peculiar nature of the pursuits in which he was engaged may have been known among his literary acquaintance.

\* A French translation of the History of Greece, by M. P. F. Aubin, appeared in 1802.

† Dawson Turner, Esq.

While engaged at his desk in composing the concluding portion of the work, Gibbon called upon him in the Temple, when after the usual preliminary salutations the Poet observed — “ You are the very person of all others I wish to see. I am writing a History of Greece, and have been taxing my recollection in vain for the name of that Indian King who gave Alexander so much trouble.” Gibbon amused at his perplexity and inclined to jest with it, or to punish his indolence in not referring to authorities, replied with an inward chuckle, “ Oh, I can settle that point in a moment ; it was Montezuma.” “ You are right, no doubt,” said the absent Poet after a moment’s hesitation, as if he nevertheless entertained some doubt, and wrote it down. Gibbon however believing that the jest might actually go forth in sober earnest, would not permit it to stand, but seemingly recollecting himself, exclaimed after a short pause, “ Oh no, I mistake ; I meant to say Porus, not Montezuma.”

The carelessness implied by the story receives countenance from what occurred on another occasion, regarding a book and a writer now equally forgotten ; yet the labours of the Poet considered, we may find some apology for his negligence in the almost unceasing nature of his drudgery.

Among the necessitous authors who resorted to his chambers for advice or pecuniary assistance, was one who had proved rather a frequent and troublesome visitor. Tired at length of solicitations, or having nothing with which to silence them, he

recommended personal exertion as the surest method of obtaining relief, and set his petitioner down to draw up a description of China, with details of the manners of the people, for which a bookseller had proposed to him a sum too inadequate to be induced to take much trouble with it himself. When completed and sent to the printer without his having looked over the manuscript, he was astonished on its coming from the press, to find the Emperor of China made a Mahometan, and India supposed to stand between China and Japan. A few sheets were obliged to be cancelled at his expense, but the event afforded an opportunity of dismissing his new ally in disgrace.

An instance of what at first view seems more reprehensible than mere carelessness in treating such books as he possessed, is related by Sir John Hawkins.

“While I was writing the *History of Music*,” says that gentleman, “he, at the club, communicated to me some curious matter; I desired he would reduce it to writing; he promised me he would, and desired to see me at his chambers: I called on him there; he stepped into a closet and tore out of a printed book six leaves that contained what he had mentioned to me.”

The fact here stated is probably true, at least the locality is correctly given, as the closet to which allusion is made formed a central apartment between his principal rooms; but the colouring intended to be given to it partakes of the seve-

rity of judgment in which that writer was too prone to indulge.\* The book thus spoliated is not named, which Sir John could have done, as readily as inform us of the specific number of leaves taken out, had it suited his design so to do ; and we are therefore unable to judge of the real extent of the supposed crime of the offender. For it must be remembered that as a professed compiler on many subjects, he purchased books often of little value in order to pull to pieces for immediate objects, or to save the trouble of transcription, and these when the purpose was served, were no longer of use. We may therefore as justly believe that the book was of little or no value, an old magazine for instance, as the reverse.

Truth however requires that all his alleged offences originating in indolence or negligence should be stated without reserve ; the following instance comes from another acquaintance, and having also been mentioned by Bishop Percy in conversation, is, if it can really form a charge against him, true.

“ I particularly recollect that when Goldsmith was near completing his *Natural History*, he sent to Doctor Percy and me to state, that he wished

\* Sir John Hawkins seems to have been, from whatever cause, probably an unhappy temper, extremely unpopular. In the *St. James's Chronicle* for 1773, and in other years, are several open attacks upon his “ dire malevolence,” “ hatred of all mankind,” spirit of “ dark revenge,” and “ harsh discord of mind.”

not to return to town from Windsor for I think a fortnight, if we would only complete a proof that lay on his table in the Temple. It was concerning birds, and many books lay open that he had occasionally consulted for his own materials. We met by appointment, and Doctor Percy smilingly said, 'Do you know any thing about birds?' 'Not an atom' was my reply, 'do you?' 'Not I,' said he; 'I scarcely know a goose from a swan; however let us try what we can do.' We set to work and our task was not very difficult. Some time after the work appeared we compared notes, but could not either of us recognise his own share."\*

This excursion to Windsor was undertaken in company with some ladies, one of whom had written some pieces under the signature of Melissa, and likewise Mr. Purefoy, whose name has appeared in a preceding page, and who afterwards communicated some of the particulars to the late Mr. Pennick of the British Museum. It was literally by the account given by that gentleman, a party of pleasure, where enjoyment was pursued with no ordinary zest.

A second edition of the History of England being likely to be called for soon, he was now occupied in the revision of the first; the error of making Naseby situated in Yorkshire was still overlooked. The following notes written about this

\* Mr. Cradock, in his Memoirs. — Yet even by this anecdote it appears that Goldsmith afterwards altered or threw out what his friends supplied.



time relate to his employment; it may be necessary to notice in explanation of their being addressed to Mr. Cadell, that Davies having sold part of his interest in the work, the former had become the purchaser.

“ Doctor Goldsmith’s compliments to Mr. Cadell, and desires a set of the History of England for correction, if interleaved the better.”

“ Mr. Goldsmith’s compliments to Mr. Cadell, begs for an hour or two, the use of Millot’s History by Mrs. Brooke.

“ Mr. Cadell, Strand.”

At what period the following letter was written does not appear, being without date, but probably about this time when exulting at the success of his last play. Another similar production as we see, in which it is doubtful whether he had made any progress, is held up to Garrick in prospect, who would appear by the proposed draught upon him to have been made occasionally available in pecuniary advances. The reference to Newbery appears to relate also to money transactions which had been productive of disagreement.

“ *To David Garrick, Esq.*

“ MY DEAR FRIEND,

“ I THANK YOU! I wish I could do something to serve you. I shall have a comedy for you in a season or two at farthest that I believe will be

worth your acceptance, for I fancy I will make it a fine thing. You shall have the refusal. I wish you would not take up Newbery's note but let Waller teize him, without however coming to extremities; let him haggle after him and he will get it. I will draw upon you one month after date for sixty pound and your acceptance will be ready money, part of which I want to go down to Barton with. May God preserve my honest little man, for he has my heart.

“ Ever

“ OLIVER GOLDSMITH.”\*

To one of his visits to a favourite resort with Sir Joshua Reynolds, the following allusion occurs in a letter of Mr. Thomas Fitzmaurice, a relative of a noble Irish family, addressed to Garrick, dated August 4. 1773. †

“ I shall dine at Twickenham to-morrow, and if I should not hear from you to the contrary, I shall set out from thence towards Hampton in my phaeton on Friday morning at nine o'clock; and if I should meet you or her Majesty ‡ on the Common shall be happy to take up one or both in my vehicle, or shall be glad to descend and accompany you on foot to Hampton. *I am just going with Sir Joshua and Doctor Goldsmith to Vauxhall,* which will be my first exit from home this day.

\* In the collection of William Upcott, Esq.

† Ibid.

‡ Mrs. Garrick.

I don't find myself the better for my confinement of late. My best compliments, &c. &c. attend the best of Queens and her companion, my favourite Mrs. Flasby.

“ Yours most sincerely and affectionately, &c.

“ THOMAS FITZMAURICE.”

## CHAPTER XXIV.

EMBARRASSMENTS. — TABLE TALK. — HIS CONVERSATION. — WIT.

**IMPRUDENCE** in the management of his pecuniary concerns, produced at this time its frequent result, serious uneasiness of mind. To disappointment in the project of the Dictionary, was added failure by a few of his friends in efforts made to secure some provision for him from Government; he found difficulty in raising further supplies, and as a necessary consequence, of repaying sums already borrowed; while the calls of publishers compelled him to labour upon works for which the remuneration had been received and spent. His spirits became depressed, his health impaired, and short starts of irritability to which he had been occasionally subject, increased; a jest would disconcert him, and he was seen to take offence in mixed societies from trifling causes.

As none of his acquaintance were informed of the extent of these embarrassments, they understood not certain inconsistencies, or as they were termed, absurdities, in his behaviour, assumed no doubt often to throw off unpleasant recollections. From seeming absence or gravity, he would fly to

the extremes of mirth and jollity ; and from silence, would commence talking incessantly and inconsiderately on all subjects ; just as he was formerly seen, when by his own account nearly suffocating with vexation at the reception of his play, singing a song of “ an old woman tossed in a blanket seventeen times as high as the moon.” Unwilling to be suspected of wishing to tax the generosity of his friends, or too proud to seem as poor as he really was, a few only suspected his situation ; to these he exhibited the assumed gaiety of despair.

About this period one of those friends with whom there existed much mutual esteem \* saw him in London, and in his Recollections has given some particulars which from corroborating circumstances are no doubt substantially true. He had come to town out of the usual season for country visitors, in order to place his lady under the care of a popular dentist, and took lodgings in the vicinity of the Temple. With him the Poet seems to have used no disguise, and the relation is not without interest.

“Goldsmith” writes this gentleman “ I found much altered and at times very low ; and I devoted almost all my mornings to his immediate service. He wished me to look over and revise some of his works ; but with a select friend or two, I was most pressing that he should publish by subscription his two celebrated poems of the ‘ Traveller ’ and the ‘ Deserted Village ’ with notes ; for he was well aware that I was no stranger

\* The late Joseph Cradock, Esq.

to Johnson's having made some little addition to the one, and possibly had suggested some corrections at least for the other ; but the real meaning was to give some great persons an opportunity of conveying pecuniary relief of which the Doctor at that time was particularly in need. Goldsmith readily gave up to me his private copies and said, ' Pray do what you please with them.' But whilst he sat near me he rather submitted to, than encouraged my zealous proceedings.

" I one morning called upon him however and found him infinitely better than I expected, and in a kind of exulting style he exclaimed, ' Here are some of the best of my prose writings ; I have been hard at work since midnight and I desire you to examine them.' ' These' said I ' are excellent indeed.' ' They are' he replied, ' intended as an introduction to a body of arts and sciences.'

\* \* \* \*

" The day before I was to set out for Leicestershire I insisted upon his dining with us. He replied ' I will, but on one condition that you will not ask me to eat any thing.' ' Nay,' said I, ' this answer is absolutely unkind, for I had hoped as we are supplied from the Crown and Anchor that you would have named something you might have relished.' ' Well' was the reply, ' if you will but explain it to Mrs. Cradock I will certainly wait upon you.'

" The Doctor found as usual at my apartments

newspapers and pamphlets, and with a pen and ink he amused himself as well as he could. I had ordered from the tavern some fish, a roasted joint of lamb, and a tart; and the Doctor either sat down or walked about just as he pleased. After dinner he took some wine with biscuits, but I was obliged soon to leave him for a while, as I had matters to settle for my next day's journey. On my return coffee was ready, and the Doctor appeared more cheerful (for Mrs. Cradock was always rather a favourite with him) and in the course of the evening he endeavoured to talk and remark as usual, but all was force. He stayed till midnight, and I insisted on seeing him safe home, and we most cordially shook hands at the Temple gate. He did not live long after our return into Leicestershire; and I have often since regretted that I did not remain longer in town at every inconvenience."

Besides the literary societies of London, he was occasionally known to mingle in circles of higher rank and pretension, though like Johnson, this was a sphere he neither much sought nor enjoyed. He probably found it, as most men of observation find it, without heart or cordiality. Fashionable society, although sought after by such as know it not, is very far from being the best society in London; it is too frequently parade without pleasure, the forms of intercourse without its substance; where little sincerity is found, and few friendships are formed; and where slight differences in rank become a bar to that intercourse which best exercises the under-

standing. At Lansdowne House \* as the writer has been informed, at the house of Lord Clare, of Lord Charlemont when he was in London, of Beauclerk, Burke, Langton, General Oglethorpe, Garrick, and others, as well as previously at that of Mrs. Montagu, he had an opportunity of forming an extensive acquaintance, but found that his acknowledged talents and celebrity did not always ensure notice from men of distinguished rank, though he was unreserved enough to avow his sense of being overlooked.

“Goldsmith in his diverting simplicity” writes Boswell “complained one day in a mixed company of Lord Camden. “I met him” said he “at Lord Clare’s house in the country, and he took no more notice of me than if I had been an ordinary man.” The company having laughed heartily, John-

\* A dedication to Lord Shelburne of “The Beauties of Goldsmith,” published in 1782 by an Editor who signs the initials W. H. thus alludes to the supposed regard of his Lordship for the Poet.

“MY LORD,

“Your friendship for Dr. Goldsmith is a sufficient inducement for one to inscribe his Beauties to you. In all ages the illustrious and the learned have been courted in the highest strain of panegyric to take the offspring of Genius under their patronage. This I am prevented doing here, for the writings from which this cento of excellence is taken have long since found innumerable admirers in every polished society. My sole motive for addressing your Lordship, arises from your esteem for the author whose moral and sentimental writings have given birth to a volume every way meriting your Lordship’s countenance.”



son stood forth in defence of his friend. "Nay gentlemen, Dr. Goldsmith is in the right. A nobleman ought to have made up to such a man as Goldsmith; and I think it is much against Lord Camden that he neglected him."

The feelings of Goldsmith and of Johnson on this assumed — for it can scarcely have been otherwise than assumed — distance, or indifference of one who had been himself but recently raised to the peerage, are not unreasonable. It is right that rank should notice and encourage talent, and that talent in return be taught to respect rank; this mutual feeling cannot arise unless there be that degree of intercourse necessary to create it, and rank therefore having the power so to do, should make those advances without which intimacy cannot begin. If from the want of this intercourse, a feeling of hostility, as we have sometimes seen, be engendered between such powerful interests, the results as experience has taught us in other countries, are commonly unfavourable to rank, which can rarely contend successfully with the fierce and sometimes unscrupulous energy of abilities when excited by a sense of neglect or discouragement. Aristocracy whenever bitterly assailed by its enemies, has no surer means of subduing them than by condescension and kindness; and no more effectual whetstone to animosity than the appearance of contempt or indifference. But exclusive of the impolicy of men in elevated station wantonly offending a body that so much influences the reading and thinking

part of mankind, there is in it something likewise of bad taste by the slur thus indirectly cast upon their own origin ; for we are willing to believe, and it may not be safe to destroy the illusion, that rank owes its existence in nations to the display of some description of talents.

A few notices of his conversation, nearly all that remain to us of this period, it would be improper to omit.

At a dinner at General Paoli's where Martinelli who had written a History of England in Italian was present, a debate took place whether he should continue it down to that day.

Goldsmith. "To be sure he should." Johnson. "No, Sir ; he would give great offence. He would have to tell of almost all the living great what they do not wish told." Goldsmith. "It may, perhaps, be necessary for a native to be more cautious ; but a foreigner who comes among us without prejudice may be considered as holding the place of a judge, and may speak his mind freely." Johnson. "Sir, a foreigner, when he sends a work from the press, ought to be on his guard against catching the error and mistaken enthusiasm of the people among whom he happens to be." Goldsmith. "Sir, he wants only to sell his history, and to tell truth ; one an honest, the other a laudable motive." Johnson. "Sir, they are both laudable motives. It is laudable in a man to wish to live by his labours ; but he should write so as he may *live* by them, not so as he may be knocked on the head.

I would advise him to be at Calais before he publishes his history of the present age. A foreigner who attaches himself to a political party in this country, is in the worst state that can be imagined; he is looked upon as a mere intermeddler. A native may do it from interest." Boswell. "Or principle."

Goldsmith. — "There are people who tell a hundred political lies every day, and are not hurt by it. Surely then, one may tell truth with perfect safety." Johnson. "Why, Sir, in the first place, he who tells a hundred lies has disarmed the force of his lies. But besides; a man had rather have a hundred lies told of him, than one truth which he does not wish to be told." Goldsmith. "For my part, I'd tell truth, and shame the devil." Johnson. "Yes, Sir, but the devil will be angry. I wish to shame the devil as much as you do, but I should choose to be out of the reach of his claws." Goldsmith. "His claws can do you no harm where you have the shield of truth."

It having been observed that there was little hospitality in London; Johnson. "Nay, Sir, any man who has a name or who has the power of pleasing, will be very generally invited in London. The man, Sterne I have been told, has had engagements for three months." Goldsmith. "And a very dull fellow." Johnson. "Why no Sir."

The party talked of the King's coming to see Goldsmith's new play. "I wish he would" said Goldsmith; adding however with an affected in-

difference, "Not that it would do me the least good." Johnson. "Well, then, Sir, let us say it would do *him* good (laughing). No, Sir, this affectation will not pass,—it is mighty idle. In such a state as ours, who would not wish to please the chief magistrate?" Goldsmith. "I do wish to please him. I remember a line in Dryden,

"And every poet is the monarch's friend."

It ought to be reversed." Johnson. "Nay, Sir, there are finer lines in Dryden on this subject.

"For colleges on bounteous kings depend,  
And never rebel was to arts a friend."

General Paoli observed, that successful rebels might. Martinelli. "Happy rebellions." Goldsmith. "We have no such phrase." General Paoli. "But have you not the *thing*?" Goldsmith. "Yes, all are *happy* revolutions. They have hurt our constitution, and will hurt it, till we mend it by another happy revolution." I never before discovered that my friend Goldsmith had so much of the old prejudice in him.

General Paoli, talking of Goldsmith's new play, said, "*Il a fait un compliment très-gracieux à une certaine grande dame ;*" meaning a duchess of the first rank.\* I expressed a doubt, says Boswell, whether Goldsmith intended it, in order that I

\* This speech has been noticed in a previous page as applying to the Duchess of Gloucester.

might hear the truth from himself. It, perhaps, was not quite fair to endeavour to bring him to a confession, as he might not wish to avow positively his taking part against the court.

He smiled and hesitated. The General at once relieved him by this beautiful image, "*Monsieur Goldsmith est comme la mer, qui jette des perles et beaucoup d'autres belles choses, sans s'en apercevoir.*" Goldsmith. "*Très-bien dit, et très-élégamment.*"

Speaking of suicide Johnson said, "I have often thought, that after a man has taken the resolution to kill himself, it is not courage in him to do any thing, however desperate, because he has nothing to fear." Goldsmith. "I don't see that." Johnson. "Nay, but my dear Sir, why should you not see what every one else sees?" Goldsmith. "It is in fear of something that he has resolved to kill himself; and will not that timid disposition restrain him?" Johnson. "It does not signify that the fear of something made him resolve; it is upon the state of his mind after the resolution is taken that I argue."

An opinion of his, hazarded more than once in conversation was, that vanity constituted one of the chief springs of human action. This was controverted by Johnson and others, yet he may not have been far wrong; for when minutely examined, the love of distinction, let this passion be called ambition or vanity or any other name we please, is unquestionably one of the strongest passions in

the human breast. He appears not to have been singular in the opinion, though he had not then the means of knowing the concurrence in it of a brother poet. Pope said, "It is vanity which makes the rake at twenty, the worldly man at forty, and the retired man at sixty." \*

The custom of eating dogs at Otaheite being mentioned, at General Oglethorpe's table, Goldsmith observed that this was also a custom in China; that a dog-butcher is as common there as any other butcher; and that when he walked abroad all the dogs fall on him.† Johnson. "That is not owing to his killing dogs; Sir, I remember a butcher at Lichfield, whom a dog that was in the house where I lived always attacked. It is the smell of carnage which provokes this, let the animals he has killed be what they may." Goldsmith. "Yes, there is a general abhorrence in animals at the signs of massacre. If you put a tub full of blood into a stable, the horses are like to go mad." Johnson. "I doubt that." Goldsmith. "Nay, Sir, it is a fact well authenticated." Thrale. "You had better prove it before you put it into your book on natural history. You may do it in my stable if you will." Johnson. "Nay, Sir, I would not have him prove it. If he is content to take his information from others, he may get through his book with little trouble, and without

\* Spence's Anecdotes, p. 203. 8vo. 1820.

† This account appears likewise in *Animated Nature* in speaking of the dog.

much endangering his reputation. But if he makes experiments for so comprehensive a book as his, there would be no end to them; his erroneous assertions would fall then upon himself; and he might be blamed for not having made experiments as to every particular."

The character of Mallet having been introduced and spoken of slightly by Goldsmith; Johnson. "Why, Sir, Mallet had talents enough to keep his literary reputation alive as long as he himself lived; and that let me tell you is a good deal." Goldsmith. "But I cannot agree that it was so. His literary reputation was dead long before his natural death. I consider an author's literary reputation to be alive only while his name will ensure a good price for his copy from the booksellers. I will get you (to Johnson) a hundred guineas for any thing whatever that you shall write, if you put your name to it."

In allusion to the received opinion of the migration of birds which an essay of Mr. Daines Barrington attempted to controvert, Johnson observed that the evidence in favour of woodcocks doing so was nearly conclusive. When it was said that some were found in Essex in summer, he remarked that the exception proved the rule; some being found, proved that if all remained many would be found. Goldsmith said, "There is a partial migration of the swallows; the stronger ones migrate, the others do not;" an opinion which after some fluctuations for and against it

seems now to be pretty generally received among naturalists.

In reply to a remark of Johnson that birds build by instinct; they never improve; the Poet observed, "Yet we see if you take away a bird's nest with the eggs in it, she will make a slighter nest and lay again." When it was said that this arose from having less time in which to make a second nest, Goldsmith continued, "The nidification of birds is what is least known in natural history, though one of the most curious things in it."

During a dinner given by Dilly the bookseller who was a dissenter, to several literary men, the subject of toleration being started, Johnson excited no small admiration by the vigour and ingenuity of his arguments; but an error and perhaps a little conversational rivalry, of Goldsmith who took part in the discussion, gave rise to one of those sallies of irritability from the moralist which all his friends were occasionally obliged to endure.

Johnson. "Sir, the only method by which religious truth can be established is by martyrdom. The magistrate has a right to enforce what he thinks; and he who is conscious of the truth has a right to suffer. I am afraid there is no other way of ascertaining the truth, but by persecution on the one hand, and enduring it on the other."

Goldsmith. "But how is a man to act, Sir? Though firmly convinced of the truth of his doctrine, may he not think it wrong to expose him-



self to persecution? Is it not as it were committing voluntary suicide?" Johnson. "Sir, as to voluntary suicide, as you call it, there are twenty thousand men in an army who will go without scruple to be shot at, and mount a breach for five-pence a day?" Goldsmith. "But have they a moral right to do this?" Johnson. "Nay, Sir, if you will not take the universal opinion of mankind, I have nothing to say. If mankind cannot defend their own way of thinking I cannot defend it. Sir, if a man is in doubt whether it would be better to expose himself to martyrdom or not, he should not do it. He must be convinced that he has a delegation from heaven."

Goldsmith. "I would consider whether there is a greater chance of good or evil upon the whole. If I see a man who has fallen into a well, I would wish to help him out; but if there is a greater probability that he shall pull me in, than that I shall pull him out, I would not attempt it. So were I to go to Turkey, I might wish to convert the Grand Signior to the Christian faith; but when I considered that I should probably be put to death without effecting my purpose in any degree, I should keep myself quiet."

Johnson. "Sir, you must consider that we have perfect and imperfect obligations. Perfect obligations, which are generally not to do something, are clear and positive; as, 'Thou shalt not kill.' But charity for instance is not definable by limits. It is a duty to give to the poor; but

no man can say how much another should give to the poor, or when a man has given too little to save his soul. In the same manner it is a duty to instruct the ignorant, and of consequence to convert infidels to Christianity; but no man in the common course of things is obliged to carry this to such a degree as to incur the danger of martyrdom, as no man is obliged to strip himself to the shirt, in order to give charity. I have said that a man must be persuaded that he has a particular delegation from heaven."

Goldsmith. "How is this to be known? our first reformers, who were burnt for not believing bread and wine to be Christ —" Johnson (interrupting him). "Sir, they were not burnt for not believing bread and wine to be Christ, but for insulting those who did believe it."\*

During some further discussion, Goldsmith is stated by Boswell, in that gratuitous spirit of censure which assumed to judge even of his thoughts, to have "sat in restless agitation from a wish to get in and *shine*."

"Finding himself excluded" (from the discussion)

\* On this opinion of Johnson Mr. Croker has the following note; and Goldsmith's statement certainly agrees better with historical accounts:—

"This seems to be altogether contrary to the fact. The first reformers whether of Germany or England, were certainly not burned for insulting individuals; they were burned for heresy; and abominable as that was, it was less indefensible than what Johnson supposes, that they were burned for *insulting* individuals."

says that biographer, "he had taken his hat to go away, but remained for some time with it in his hand, like a gamester who at the close of a long night, lingers for a little while to see if he can have a favourable opportunity to finish with success. Once when he was beginning to speak he found himself overpowered by the loud voice of Johnson who was at the opposite end of the table and did not perceive Goldsmith's attempt. Thus disappointed of his wish to obtain the attention of the company, Goldsmith in a passion threw down his hat looking angrily at Johnson, and exclaimed in a bitter tone, '*Take it.*'

"When Toplady was going to speak, Johnson uttered some sound which led Goldsmith to think that he was beginning again and taking the words from Toplady. Upon which he seized this opportunity, continues Boswell, of venting his own envy and spleen under the pretext of supporting another person. 'Sir (said he to Johnson), the gentleman has heard you patiently for an hour; pray allow us now to hear him.' Johnson (sternly). 'Sir I was not interrupting the gentleman; I was only giving him a signal of my attention. Sir, you are impertinent.' Goldsmith made no reply, but continued in the company for some time."\*

When they met on the same evening at the club, the apology offered by the one, and the placable spirit in which, as was anticipated by the

\* Croker's edition of Boswell, vol. ii. pp. 238, 239.

offender, it would be received by the other, did equal credit to both. The Poet appeared to sit silently brooding over Johnson's reprimand to him after dinner. Johnson perceived this, and said aside, "I'll make Goldsmith forgive me," and then called to him with a loud voice, "Dr. Goldsmith, something passed to-day where you and I dined; I ask your pardon." Goldsmith answered placidly, "It must be much from you, Sir, that I take ill." And so at once the difference was over, and they were on as easy terms as ever, and Goldsmith rattled away as usual.\*

The whole of this scene though so amicably concluded, conveys a vivid impression of the power, not to say tyranny, which Johnson occasionally exercised over his coterie of personal friends. If they sometimes became impatient of being roughly or unfairly overborne by it, we must not be surprised; for however great his powers of conversation or argument, few are disposed to submit to a monopoly in that which is considered the joint stock of private society. Goldsmith therefore only did what others probably were as willing to do, had they possessed more courage or less prudence; neither can his remark in this instance be deemed personally offensive when in two previous efforts to speak he had been overpowered, and Johnson as we learn had been already heard for an hour. The recurrence of similar im-

\* Croker's Boswell, vol. ii. p. 241.

petuosities of temper on the part of the latter, which it was equally painful to submit to or resent, had often irritated him ; and it was in these moments when giving vent to an excusable dissatisfaction, that Boswell thought proper instead of the true cause, to attribute it to motives of "envy and spleen."

From others likewise it appears he was subjected to mortifications by occasional impertinence or ill-breeding ; some of these were ludicrous enough, some sufficiently provoking, as in the following instance. When talking in company with fluent vivacity, and as he believed to the satisfaction of those immediately within hearing, a foreigner who sat near and perceived Johnson rolling himself as if about to speak, suddenly stopped him, unconscious perhaps of the rudeness of which he was guilty, saying, "Stay, stay, Doctor Shonson is going to say something." An interruption so little complimentary to the speaker, could not be otherwise than mortifying to any one, much more to a man of genius and reputation whose claims to be heard in general conversation were at least equal to most of his auditors.

Upon this person, Mr. George Michael Moser, a Swiss and keeper of the Royal Academy, not having forgotten the slight and having had time to sharpen his wit, he afterwards took a satisfactory revenge. While at dinner at that institution, a speech something similar in tendency addressed to another person in conversation with the poet at

the moment Johnson seemed preparing to speak, was again made by the same offender, when Goldsmith sharply replied, "Are you sure that *you* can comprehend what he says?"

On another occasion, Graham one of the masters of Eton and author of the *Masque of Telemachus*, sat with Johnson and Goldsmith until he became under the influence of wine. To the former he chiefly addressed himself, and at length said, "You are a clever fellow to be sure, but you cannot write an essay like Addison, or verses like the *Rape of the Lock*." At length he said, "Doctor, I should be glad to see you at Eton." "I shall be glad to wait on you," answered Goldsmith. "No," replied Graham, "'t is not you I mean Dr. *Minor*, 't is Dr. *Major* there." Goldsmith was hurt by the slight estimation implied by the answer. — "Graham," said he afterwards, "is a fellow to make one commit suicide."

When his literary reputation had risen deservedly high, he found fault one evening in a circle of wits with Boswell, for assigning to Johnson the honours of unquestionable superiority in literature. "Sir," said he, "you are for making a monarchy of what should be a republic."

At the time Johnson agreed to travel to Scotland, Goldsmith observed says Boswell, that "he would be a dead weight for me to carry, and that I should never be able to get him along through the Highlands and Hebrides. Nor would he patiently allow me to enlarge upon Johnson's won-

derful abilities ; but exclaimed, ‘ Is he like Burke, who winds into a subject like a serpent?’ ”

These remarks, which arose in unreserved conversation and which like that on making literature a monarchy, was not in itself unjust, the biographer of Johnson attributes to envy ; yet scarcely satisfied with himself for advancing such a charge, almost in the same sentence inconsistently confesses, “ In my opinion, however, Goldsmith had not more of it (envy) than other people, but only talked of it freely.” He omits to inform us that the great subject of his work made a similar confession, though we have it from another quarter.

“ I never knew any man but one,” says a writer who enjoyed much intimacy with, and felt unbounded admiration for, him to whom he alludes, “ who had the honesty to confess that he had a tincture of envy in him.” And this person we are informed, and the fact was thus stated during his life, by Davies the biographer of Garrick, was Dr. Johnson. \*

The same writer who admits the good qualities of Goldsmith, omits to tell us that he likewise had equal courage to avow a similar weakness. It may be doubted whether either of these distinguished men really believed they were influenced by a passion which others take such pains to conceal, or expected that their candour should be turned with something of bitterness to their dis-

\* Vol. ii. p. 285. Lond. 1780.

advantage. But admissions of this kind are dangerous experiments upon the generosity of mankind; we are all impatient of superiority, too ready and too willing to believe the frailties and imperfections of such as are above us either in rank or in talents. A close inquirer into human nature may perhaps trace in this very feeling something of that envy, or proneness to depreciate others, which we take such pains to condemn.

Literary envy is one of those unhappy infirmities even of genius, which is at once odious and unprofitable; yet some of the greatest names in our world of letters, such as Dryden, Addison, Pope, and many others have felt its influence. If it were the envy of a lover towards a favoured rival, of a minister displaced from power — of a general from the command of an army to make room for a successor, or a courtier supplanted by superior intrigue in royal favour, we might understand the passion, because the gain of one may be the loss of another. But it is rarely or never so with candidates for public favour in literature. Of fame, the great object of pursuit of men so engaged, there is abundance and to spare for all who can prove their claim to deserve it, for the merits of each are seldom so similar as to interfere one with another. Praise cannot be monopolized by any one person; no just ground for jealousy therefore exists where each will receive his due; where in fact the possession is so general, that we might almost with as much propriety envy him the bread he eats as the fame he



enjoys. If a writer be dull, he will sink of himself and therefore save his opponents much trouble in trying to do it for him; if he possess desert, the general voice will award him reputation whatever may be the hostility or malevolence of individuals; the stream of favour may be obstructed for a time, but come it will if really deserved; and possibly come as in several instances with additional force by being momentarily diverted from its proper channel.

The envy, which like the love of play, Goldsmith somewhat ostentatiously thought proper to acknowledge, and of which some unfair advantage has been taken, proved a source of amusement rather than of anger or anxiety, to those against whom it was directed; it produced no overt acts of malevolence, and never went farther when he found a weak or objectionable passage in contemporary writers than the hasty sally, "What vile nonsense is this!" Men who really feel this passion, take care not to own it, and whenever felt, it is rarely confined as with him, to a splenetic remark in private society, but finds vent in anonymous writing, while the great literary antagonists of former days more manfully displayed their hostility in avowed criticism, or stinging and eloquent satire.

From all of these he was free; neither harsh invective nor unfair criticism, can be alleged against him even when writing under the concealment of contributor to a Review. His forbearance, where

the temptation was great and the chance of discovery small, was not less than the want of it in men of far inferior minds.

If a name be given to his prevailing passion for superiority, it would be rather rivalry, or emulation, than envy. It is no doubt true, that whether in his writings, his conversation, his pecuniary liberalities, his desire of being agreeable in society, his dress, his chambers, and in minor points, some beneath his notice and others impracticable of accomplishment without an universality of acquirements such as is denied to the faculties of man, he was impatient of being excelled. He was willing to believe he could himself do whatever he saw done by another. If this belief occasionally led him into the commission of absurdities, as we are led to believe by contemporary testimony, it was also perhaps the source of much of his greatness. On his first entering into literary life, he found the attention of the reading part of the people fixed upon the essays of Johnson, and thence he became an essayist; the novels of Smollett were universally read, and he aimed to be a novelist; Gray, Mason, Akenside, Armstrong, and others claimed the honours of poetry, and he aspired to be a poet; Hume, Smollett and Robertson having acquired high reputation in history, he desired to be a historian; and dramatic writers were so numerous and many so fortunate, that believing his own powers not inferior to theirs, he became a success-

ful dramatist. To call honest ambition of this kind envy, is obviously misapplication of language.

The excess alone of this emulative spirit exposed him to ridicule. A writer in one of the journals of the day (1773) in allusion to this says — “ Now, there is Dr. G—th ; not content with his fame in great things, he must have equal credit in small ; if you were to meet him and boast of your shoes being well blacked, the Doctor would look down at his own and reply ‘ I think mine are still better done.’ ”

We may smile likewise at the attempt he is said to have made in the same spirit to play the orator. When Burke’s name was mentioned with all the praise due to his extraordinary powers in parliament, he maintained, not altogether without foundation, that oratory was but a knack, and that almost any one who would take the trouble might in time become an orator. Being asked to exemplify his theory, he tried it on the spur of the moment, but as may be supposed from such an unpremeditated effort failed, somewhat to the amusement of his audience.

Another whim of his, that poets are, or should be, the best readers of poetry, although the examples of Dryden, Thomson, Congreve and others were adduced to the contrary, is mentioned by Malone.

“ Of Goldsmith’s deficiency in this respect I can speak from my own knowledge ; for several years ago I was in company with him and Dr.

Johnson ; and after dinner the conversation happening to turn on this subject, Goldsmith maintained that a poet was more likely to pronounce verse with accuracy and spirit than other men. He was immediately called upon to support his argument by an example ; a request with which he readily complied ; and he repeated the first stanza of the ballad beginning with the words “ At Upton on the Hill ” with such false emphasis by marking the word *on* very strongly, that all the company agreed he had by no means established his position.”

One of the things to the knowledge of which he did *not* pretend, was painting ; this he avows in the dedication of the *Deserted Village*, and made the same acknowledgment in conversation with his countrymen, Barrett the landscape painter, and Barry. The former who is said to have painted a picture for him the history of which cannot be traced, spoke of the pleasure he had on more than one occasion experienced in his society ; and very warmly praised his benevolence and lamented his premature death.

With Barry he was less cordial, arising from his intimacy with Sir Joshua, which it was one of the infirmities of temper so strongly characterizing the former eminent and irritable artist, not to forgive in his acquaintance. For a year or two indeed they met not unfrequently, and on one occasion at the house of Burke in London, when a discussion taking place on the arts, Goldsmith said he could

not account for poetry, painting, and music, being called sister arts, because he saw little connexion between them; he had heard of few who had excelled in one, who knew or cared more than persons in general, for any of the others; no man was eminent in any two of them. Poetry as an effort of mind, he considered so far beyond her companions as to be in some degree lowered by the association; painting for instance was in many respects a mechanical art, though undoubtedly in its highest range requiring great genius for its execution. A painting however was but a scene; a poem was composed of a series of scenes, and could enchain the attention or touch the affections infinitely more than any representation on canvass. Then a painter might execute during his life, fifty, or a hundred, or more, good paintings; while no genius could furnish such a number of good poems; this alone evinced the greater difficulty and superiority of the art.

Barry at length alarmed for the credit of his profession, grew vehement in its defence, and something dropped from him to the effect that he was astonished at the hardihood of persons venturing to argue upon subjects of which they knew nothing. The discussion dropped, and they had little intercourse afterwards. Barry however spoke of him kindly long after his death, praised his good qualities, yet commented freely on his foibles.\*

\* A lady of consideration and much good sense, now resident in Pembrokeshire, who in early life mingled in the society

Acquitting Goldsmith of the passion of envy in its odious acceptance, it may be nevertheless

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of eminent men at her father's house in London, gives the following sketch of Barry in a letter to the writer of these pages.

"I knew Mr. Barry in early life; for having taken a fancy to learn something of the art of engraving for my amusement, my father whose house was frequented by several men of letters and of the arts, indulged the whim. Barry was my instructor and took some pains with me; but the state of my eyes at length compelled me to desist; I had much respect for him as a well-intentioned, though, in many points, singular man.

"In appearance there was little to distinguish him; for though of noble mind and elevated thoughts, little trace of these could be found in his countenance; his complexion was light, his figure clumsy, and his dress and person negligent to a degree that approached want of personal cleanliness. In manner he was plain, but energetic when excited by conversation, and then his language soared with the loftiness of his ideas, so that on many occasions he might be termed eloquent. The moral qualities and powers of men, the arts, and topics bearing upon such matters, were his favourite themes. He never seemed to be in unison with mirth and pleasantry, and had a laudable antipathy to ridicule, more especially when personal; to me he seemed to have one object chiefly in view in his discussions, that of raising, strengthening, and improving the mind, and this may account for his usual gravity of demeanour. He was no doubt ill-tempered, yet his detestation of personal ridicule belonged at least to goodness of disposition, if I may be permitted to consider the following as an instance.

"During one of the evening visits of Mrs. Barbauld at our house, she was accompanied by Miss S——, a young lady under her care, the daughter of a wealthy citizen, who by her manner and conversation obviously attaching more importance to the wealth of her father, than respect for mental excellence however great in her friend, did not long continue the charge of Mrs. Barbauld. On quitting the room, her behaviour and name afforded room for much censure and jest to the party. When they had nearly all departed, the indignation of Barry, who was

true that having earned literary fame laboriously himself, he was unwilling to share it with such

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present, and which had been smothered for a time, at length burst forth, declaring in vehement terms his contempt for persons who with no superiority of mind themselves, presumed to ridicule the errors of so young and inexperienced a creature. The defence which was very zealous, raised the painter much in our estimation, but not the young lady.

“He was accused of being parsimonious, but this I believe arose from the narrowness of his means, which admitted, as I was told, of few comforts and no luxuries; he was indeed marked by many eccentricities, and therefore appeared from his habits poorer than he really was, though at the time I knew him these peculiarities were less known or less offensive than afterwards. The people in the street in which he lived annoyed him; and one day at a future time an acquaintance of ours passing through it, reported that he had seen him with his head out of the window in violent altercation with coal-heavers, whom he accused of fraudulent practices with his coals.

“I remember he told us he had occasionally visited Dr. Johnson; and more than once during his last illness, when the mind of that eminent man was clouded by the prospect of death, of which he spoke with more apprehension than became so good a Christian and so great a philosopher. All the statements of Mr. Barry on this point, corroborated those which are to be found elsewhere, of the great sense of his imperfections entertained by the moralist. Latterly however these fears gave way, or rather his confidence in the merciful forgiveness of God became strong; and on one occasion he expressed himself so finely and eloquently on this head, that Barry said he always regretted not having written down the particulars on retiring from the interview.

“Until I read the Life of Burke, whom I heard in Westminster Hall in the prosecution of Hastings, I was not aware of the great obligations of Barry to him; I never heard the latter mention him; and this now surprises me much, because most public names were brought in review before us in conversation

whose claims were either doubtful, or over-estimated by the zeal of private friendship. This has been one ground for the charge of envy. He never on such occasions concealed his opinions; and none that are recorded have proved wrong; but in return for his candour or imprudence, sometimes lost a friend or made an enemy.

Thus when Sir Joshua painted a fine allegorical picture of Beattie in his Doctor's dress, with his volume on the Immutability of Truth under his arm, the angel of Truth going before him and beating down the vices Envy, Falsehood, &c. the principal head in the group was made an exact likeness of Voltaire.\* When Goldsmith saw this, he remonstrated with the President for placing an inferior writer however laudable his object, in competition with so great a genius, and pronounced that posterity would call him a flatterer. This came to the ears of Beattie, who in a letter to Mrs. Montagu, made against him the usual charge of envy.

“I am sorry,” he says among other remarks, “for poor Goldsmith. There were some things in his temper which I did not like; but I liked many things in his genius; and I was sorry to find last

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on the passing matters of the day, and I had thought the painter's mind too noble to be ashamed to confess obligations to such a man as Burke. I am disposed to believe that a sense of his own demerits kept him silent.”

\* This picture was exhibited in the spring of 1774, and in the catalogue is called “Dr. Beattie triumphing over Infidelity.”



summer that he looked upon me as a person who seemed to stand between him and his interest. However when *next* we meet, all this will be forgotten, and the jealousy of authors which Dr. Gregory used to say was next to that of physicians, will be no more."

The phrase "stand between him and his interest" alludes to an affair of personal rather than of literary rivalry, very little known. The reputation and general conduct of Beattie as a moral and able man, had procured him an introduction to, and gracious reception from his Majesty, and this mark of condescension was expected to be followed, as shortly afterward proved to be the case, by the royal bounty in the grant of a pension. To a similar act of favour Goldsmith had been looking as a source of relief from his difficulties, and was led to believe, probably with some foundation, that the grant to another would interfere with the expectations he had himself formed. His opinion of the *Essay on Truth*, from whatever motive given, appears to have been critically just; since however laudable the design, it has not retained its original hold on public esteem as a first-rate production.

Another supposed instance of his literary jealousy occurred at the house of Sir Joshua when perusing the poems of Miss Aikin, afterwards Mrs. Barbauld, which he pronounced of inferior merit; a decision then considered unjust. Time in this instance likewise has confirmed his opinion, for though pleasing,

they have taken no strong hold on the regard of readers of poetry. It may be remarked here as a curious fact, that though the strength of female genius is supposed to lie chiefly in imagination, a quality considered above all others essential to poetry, we have not in the long list of standard English poets, a female writer, who has been thought worthy of admission among the number; while as novelists and dramatists there are several of eminent merit. Strength of thinking, of sentiment, and of expression, are perhaps as necessary to good poetry as even what is called imagination; and a large range of observation, with an experience of mankind not always within the reach of women from their position in society, may prevent their attaining such excellence in that as in other departments of authorship. Madame de Stael indeed seems one of those who had vigour and originality of thought for a great poet, had nature furnished her with the other requisites for such a character.

The early part of the summer of 1773, appears to have been spent in London, for we find Beauclerk in his usual strain of sarcastic remark thus writing to Lord Charlemont from Muswell Hill, July 5th.

“I have been but once at the club since you left England; we were entertained as usual by Dr. Goldsmith’s absurdities.”

Disregard of times, places, and circumstances, and occasionally of persons, arising partly from

absence of mind, partly from a simplicity that led him to give utterance to such thoughts as other men conceal, were the peculiarities to which Beauclerk alludes. An instance will illustrate this better than description. When dining with a tradesman in the city, a very opulent man though exercising the not very exalted calling of a carcass-butcher, he was so impressed by the splendour of the house and table, that with an air of surprise he asked him before several strangers "How much money he made annually by his business?" One of his odd speeches, characteristic of his simplicity and quite true in its purport, was more than once repeated. "People," said he, "are greatly mistaken in me; a notion goes about that when I am silent I mean to be impudent; but I assure you, gentlemen, my silence proceeds from bashfulness."

To a man of fashion and a wit, oddities of speech, person, or manner furnish themes for ridicule that all their admiration of genius cannot suppress; and deviation from conventional forms meets from them with little forbearance. It is to this we owe Lord Chesterfield's description of Dr. Johnson; to this also Horace Walpole's impertinence towards him and to Goldsmith; and Beauclerk while professing himself superior to the prejudices of his class in fashionable life, could not wholly escape a similar feeling. The blunders therefore, the constraint, or abstractions of a scholar in his serious moods, his irregular mirth, or thoughtless

conversation when amused, an unpolished address, bluntness of speech, or smaller breaches of modes which the solitary student does not know, or regards not if known, become with such persons serious matters. They do not discriminate between him who makes the forms of the drawing-room his chief business in life, and him whose occupation it is to amuse or instruct mankind.

So much likewise is expected from the conversation of authors, that they are often denied the license granted to others of giving free utterance to unpremeditated thoughts; while some of their auditors seem to think slightingly of such as discard reserve, and who aim to be merely easy and natural, perhaps careless, in what they advance. Thus we sometimes find disappointment expressed at hearing nothing from them in occasional association very remarkable; no maxim of wisdom, pungency of wit, or flight of imagination; as if the mass of persons commonly met with in private life deserved this stretch of mind by the possession of corresponding powers, or had any just right to expect it. Society would be a serious tax upon a popular writer were he to enter it with his mind wound up like a harp-string for the gratification of many who are at best idle, though inquisitive listeners. Even if he excels in conversation, it may be prudent not to obtrude it; to be read in books in the morning, and listened to at night in the drawing-room circle, is a greater degree of atten-

tion than we are willing to concede to any whose claims are not of very commanding character.

Yet Goldsmith suffered in the estimation of contemporaries by the absence of all pretension in private intercourse, by affecting playfulness, and familiarity when perhaps more reserve might have procured the reputation of more wisdom. He was willing to sink something of the philosopher for the pleasure of being agreeable; feeling satisfied that his writings at least would shield him from any supposed loss of dignity. In general society, where his talents and superiority were admitted without dispute, this might be safely done; but it was imprudent among rivals for literary as well as colloquial fame, a few of whom as they could not equal the one, were willing enough to depreciate the other. On this point, Boswell was more indulgent or more just to him than upon others. "For my part," he says, "I like very well to hear honest Goldsmith talk away carelessly." And the Poet's opinion of the license which he claimed in talking may be gathered from a remark addressed to Dr. Douglas, Bishop of Salisbury, who is mentioned in *Retaliation*, in support of an argument of his to a similar effect. "There is a relief to the mind in disburthening itself of all its thoughts of whatever description; men in writing books are obliged to please others, but in talking they may be permitted to please themselves."

Johnson's view of conversation differed so wholly from this, that he was no more off his guard in

speaking than in writing. To the one it was generally a matter of relaxation; to the other an effort of intellectual labour, an occasion of argumentative contest and of triumph. His standard of excellence being high, he brought to it all the vigour of his mind, and as there were few to whom he gave credit for superior conversational powers, we can experience little surprise that the following remarks should be passed upon the more incautious characteristics of his friend.

“The misfortune of Goldsmith in conversation is this, he goes on without knowing how he is to get off. His genius is great but his knowledge is small. As they say of a generous man it is a pity he is not rich, we may say of Goldsmith it is a pity he is not knowing. He would not keep his knowledge to himself.”

“Of Dr. Goldsmith he said,” writes Mr. Langton, but this seems one of those phrases used not for their truth or accuracy, but for antithetic effect, “no man was more foolish when he had not a pen in his hand, or more wise when he had.”

“It is amazing how little Goldsmith knows; he seldom comes where he is not more ignorant than any one else.” “Yet there is no man,” observed Sir Joshua Reynolds, “whose company is more liked.” “To be sure, Sir,” was the reply, “when people find a man of the most distinguished abilities as a writer, their inferior while he is with them, it must be highly gratifying to them. What Goldsmith comically says of himself is very true;

he always gets the better when he argues alone ; meaning that he is master of a subject in his study and can write well upon it ; but when he comes into company, grows confused and is unable to talk."

In censuring Mr. Thrale for sitting silent on one occasion at a dinner table, Boswell observed that Goldsmith was in the other extreme, for he spoke at all ventures. " Yes, Sir, Goldsmith, rather than not speak, will talk of what he knows himself to be ignorant, which can only end in exposing him. If in company with two founders he would fall a talking on the method of making cannon, though both of them would soon see that he did not know what metal a cannon is made of."

" Goldsmith," he said on another occasion, " should not be for ever attempting to shine in conversation ; he has not temper for it, he is so much mortified when he fails. Sir, a game of jokes is composed partly of skill partly of chance ; a man may be beat at times by one who has not the tenth part of his wit. Now Goldsmith's putting himself against another is like a man laying a hundred to one, who cannot spare the hundred. It is not worth a man's while. A man should not lay a hundred to one, unless he can easily spare it, though he has a hundred chances for him ; he can get but a guinea and he may lose a hundred. Goldsmith is in this state. When he contends, if he gets the better, it is a very little addition to a man of his literary reputation ; if he does not get the better, he is miserably vexed."

These observations, scattered over a space of many years, were made we should remember in the laxity of familiar converse, when even Johnson on such occasions would prove frequently lax and inconsistent with himself, however sharp upon others for the same offence. We can therefore scarcely place implicit dependence upon them as his deliberate opinion, which is to be sought rather in what he has written than in what he has spoken. He considered Goldsmith like Garrick, as in some measure his own property, whom he had therefore a license to attack at pleasure, although he would not allow the same liberty to others; but it may be doubted whether he wished such remarks to be remembered. What we are tempted to say of those we nevertheless admire and esteem in hasty sallies of conversation, often from perhaps erroneous impressions or from slight indiscretions, it is unfair for others to dwell upon and repeat. Every one has felt that his opinions often vary respecting the same individual. Were a list shown us after the lapse of a few years, of all the remarks we had made on our best and most familiar friends, we should scarcely believe the record; while such as knew our intimacy and did not make allowance for this species of human infirmity, might consider us either very insincere companions, or our acquaintance exceptionable characters.

Of the inconsiderate tone of conversation thus laid to his charge and probably in some instances true, it is remarkable that excepting one or two



anecdotes of his emulative spirit, no examples are given to enable us to judge of the fact. We look in vain in such as are preserved, for weakness, or deficient point or vigour. On the contrary good sense, justness of observation, and a degree of wit characterize so many of his sayings, that we are induced to believe they were far from being unfrequent had there been a friendly hand always near to note them down.

Speaking of Johnson and of his dexterity in getting out of an indifferent argument with success, he said, "There is no arguing with Johnson; for when his pistol misses fire, he knocks you down with the but-end of it."

To the goodness of disposition of the same friend he has borne testimony in a pointed sentence, "Johnson to be sure has a roughness of manner, but no man alive has a better heart. *He has nothing of the bear but his skin.*"

He sometimes ventured upon the hazardous undertaking of exercising his wit or humour upon the moralist, and not without success. One of the happiest retorts imaginable considering the character of him to whom it was addressed, was heard by Sir Joshua Reynolds. Goldsmith after mentioning that he thought he could write a good fable and stating the simplicity which that kind of composition required, observed that in most fables the animals introduced seldom talk in character. "For instance," said he, "the fable of the little fishes who saw birds fly over their heads, and en-

ving them, petitioned Jupiter to be changed into birds. The skill consists in making them talk like little fishes." While he indulged this idea which it may be regretted he did not execute, he observed Johnson shaking his sides and laughing, and immediately continued, "Why Dr. Johnson this is not so easy as you seem to think; for if you were to make little fishes talk, they would talk like whales."

On another occasion when Beauclerk was present, Goldsmith talked of a project for having a third theatre in London solely for the exhibition of new plays, in order to deliver authors from the supposed tyranny of managers. Johnson treated it slightly, when Goldsmith rejoined, "Ay, ay, this may be nothing to you who can now shelter yourself behind the corner of a pension."

Johnson told the following anecdote himself. "I remember once being with Goldsmith in Westminster Abbey. While we surveyed the Poet's Corner, I said to him—

*'Forsitan et nostrum nomen miscebitur istis.'*

When we got to Temple Bar, he stopped me, pointed to the heads upon it and silyly whispered me—

*'Forsitan et nostrum nomen miscebitur ISTIS.'*"

Another instance of the freedom he occasionally took though not without suffering in return, is of undoubted authenticity.

While at supper on one occasion tête-à-tête at Jack's Coffee House Dean Street Soho\*, on rumps and kidneys, Johnson observed, "Sir, these rumps are pretty little things, but then a man must eat a great many of them before he fills his belly." "Aye, but," said Goldsmith, "how many of these would reach to the moon?" "To the moon! aye, Sir, I fear that exceeds your calculation." "Not at all, Sir," says Goldsmith, "I think I could tell." "Pray then let us hear." "Why one if it were long enough." Johnson growled at this reply for some time, but at last recollecting himself, "Well, Sir, I have deserved it; I should not have provoked so foolish an answer by so foolish a question."

In classical quotation he was frequently happy, applied to passing characters and circumstances. Thus, according to the late Sir George Beaumont, on first meeting with a military man to whom he took dislike from what seemed to be coarseness if not ferocity of manners, and on being told that this was a mistake and that the rude soldier was a man

\* This house was one of their occasional resorts, as well as of Reynolds and others of their friends. Garrick recommended it, from being kept by Mr. John Roberts one of the singers of Drury Lane theatre, from whose Christian name it is said to have derived its appellation, for when a question arose as to which tavern a party should adjourn to, the common answer was to *Jack's*. It is said to have been, even in 1770, the oldest tavern in London but three, and having continued in the family of the present occupier since that time, is now probably the oldest. At present it is known as Walker's Hotel, and the proprietor shows the room which the wits of that age frequented.

of letters and a scholar, he said, "Then I must be in error, for you know

*"Ingenuas didicisse fideliter artes  
Emollit mores, nec finit esse feros."*

Of his simplicity or absence of mind, several anecdotes were told by the lively men with whom he associated; Beauclerk, Foote, Richard Burke, Garrick, Colman, and others; and these if even problematical, it may be considered the duty of a biographer not to omit. Professed wits are not celebrated for accuracy of detail; strict matter of fact militates often against a good story; and a very small foundation of fact is sufficient on which to erect a superstructure which if not very true may be very amusing.

Mr. Beauclerk, whose humour turned almost every incident into a subject for ridicule, tells the following story to Lord Charlemont at this period (November 1773).

"Goldsmith the other day put a paragraph into the newspapers in praise of Lord Mayor Townshend.\* The same night he happened to sit next to Lord Shelburne at Drury Lane; I mentioned the circumstance of the paragraph to him and he said to Goldsmith, that he hoped he had mentioned nothing about Malagrida in it. 'Do you know,' answered Goldsmith, 'that I never could conceive

\* This has been sought for in three or four journals without success; the circumstance is unlike his usual habits as he meddled not in city matters, or even in general politics.

the reason why they call you Malagrida, *for* Malagrida was a very good sort of man.' You see plainly what he meant to say, but that happy turn of expression is peculiar to himself. Mr. Walpole says that this story is a picture of Goldsmith's whole life."

The blunder, though the meaning was obvious, arose, if it really took place, from the omission of a word or two which might readily occur in the hurry of conversation: "I never could conceive the reason why they call you Malagrida *as a term of reproach*;" but the vein of ridicule evinced in the following passage from the same letter induces a suspicion of the truth of the whole, for the story is equally gravely told. "Johnson has been confined for some weeks in the Isle of Sky; we hear that he was obliged to swim over to the main land taking hold of a cow's tail. Be that as it may, Lady Di has promised to make a drawing of it."

From the same witty source the following story found circulation.

When dining with Sir Joshua Reynolds, Goldsmith found early peas upon the table, which however from mismanagement of the cook proved to be yellow; when some one sitting next him observed that they had better be sent to Hammersmith. "And why thither?" asked the Poet. "That is the way to Turn'em green." The pun pleased him so much as to be thought worth repeating the first favourable moment as one of his own. An opportunity soon offered or was chosen for this

purpose, when Burke who was equally ambitious of the credit of a good pun chanced to sit next him ; the peas were again with an air of disapprobation of their colour, recommended the journey to Hammersmith ; the question why it should be so was again repeated, when Goldsmith forgetting his cue replied, "That is the way to *make* 'em green." Perceiving his error in the want of applause from the company, he immediately added "I mean that is the *road* to Turn 'em green." Again discovering that the witticism fell pointless, he started up disconcerted and quitted the table abruptly.

Another anecdote, told to Mr. Croker by Colonel O'Moore, is no doubt as he justly remarks, coloured or exaggerated, or indeed nothing more than another version of his alleged jealousy of the ladies in Flanders. As the Colonel and Mr. Burke were proceeding to dine with Sir Joshua, they observed Goldsmith, also on his way thither, standing near a crowd who were staring and shouting at some foreign women in the windows of a house in Leicester Square. "Observe Goldsmith," said Burke to his companion, "and mark what passes between him and me by and by at Sir Joshua's." Proceeding forward, they reached the house before him ; and when the Poet came up to Mr. Burke, the latter affected to receive him coolly, when an explanation of the cause of offence was with some urgency requested. Burke appeared reluctant to speak, but after some press-

ing said, that he almost regretted keeping up an intimacy with one who could be guilty of such indiscretions as he had just exhibited in the square. The Poet with great earnestness protested he was unconscious of what was meant. "Why," said Mr. Burke, "did you not exclaim as you were looking up at those women, what stupid beasts the people must be for staring with such admiration at those painted jezebels while a man of your talents passed by unnoticed?" Goldsmith was astonished. "Surely, surely, my dear friend I did not say so." "Nay," replied Mr. Burke, "if you had not said so how should I have known it?" "That 's true," answered Goldsmith with great humility; "I am very sorry — it was very foolish; I do recollect that something of the kind passed through my mind, but I did not think I had uttered it."

Of the waggery occasionally practised upon him, the following is an instance which occurred at the house of Mr. Burke and has been told in another place\*, though as illustrative of character, no apology will be necessary for its introduction here. The lady who personated her part so well was the sister of the lady of General Haviland who resided at Penn in Buckinghamshire, and whose son married the niece of Burke.

"Mrs. Balfour, who was a woman of lively dis-

\* Life of Burke, vol. i. p. 454. — Communicated by Thos. Haviland Burke, Esq.

position, is said to have given Garrick the first idea of the character of the *Irish Widow* in his farce of that name by a trick played off in a familiar party upon the simplicity of Goldsmith. This lady it seems for a piece of amusement personated such a character—just arrived from Ireland, full of brogue, and blunders—with wit, rant, and impudence—a little gentility nevertheless—and added to all, assuming to be an authoress soliciting subscriptions for her poems. Some of these she read with an affected enthusiasm which created the greatest amusement to those who were in the secret. Goldsmith—the great Goldsmith as she called him, her countryman and, of course, friend, she flattered extravagantly, and repeatedly appealed to him on the merit of the pieces, which he praised with all due warmth in her presence—offered his subscription—and as strongly abused the verses (as well perhaps he might) when she retired. This scene, it is said, presented a finished piece of acting. Garrick seized upon the character for representation, and brought forward his piece in 1772, the *Widow* being admirably performed by Mrs. Barry.



## CHAPTER XXV.

A SURVEY OF EXPERIMENTAL PHILOSOPHY. — ADDRESS ON THE OPENING OF THE OPERA HOUSE. — RETALIATION. — HISTORY OF THE EARTH AND ANIMATED NATURE. — SECOND EDITION OF POLITE LEARNING. — SCARRON'S ROMANCE. — HIS ILLNESS AND DEATH.

**D**URING the latter end of 1773 and the early part of the following year, his literary labours were sufficiently multifarious to become occasionally distracting to a mind otherwise ill at ease.

Besides writing and carrying through the press the Grecian History, he was engaged in a similar way upon the History of the Earth and Animated Nature, and upon a third History of England in one large volume duodecimo for the use of schools, which came out after his death in September 1774. He was likewise revising the Enquiry into Polite Learning for a new edition; writing at favourable intervals the poem of Retaliation; translating the Comic Romance of Scarron; and arranging papers gleaned in part probably for the Dictionary of Arts, into a work in two volumes commenced long before and mentioned in a preceding page, "A Survey of Experimental Philosophy, considered in its present state of Improvement."

The preliminary advertisement of the publishers (Carnan and Newbery) states, that "The first volume of this work was printed off in the life-time of the author; the second after his death; the whole of the copy being put into the hands of the publisher long before that period." Of this there is no reasonable doubt, for it was announced as being in the press three months after his death\*, although not published till 1776, the delay being probably caused by the necessity of further revision. Several mistakes remain, showing that the writer had consulted rather the books of a preceding age than the practical knowledge of his own; and this accounts for the compilation never having become popular. It has many obvious traces of his pen, and betrays even in the introductory remarks what might be expected from him, more of the tone of the moral, than of the natural philosopher.

At the opening of the Opera-house November 20th, 1773, Mrs. Yates the actress, who had quarrelled with Colman and had then no engagement in London at either of the English theatres, spoke a Poetical Exordium written for her by Goldsmith. The following notice of it the same evening, appears in a letter of Beauclerk to Lord Charlemont. "Goldsmith has written a prologue for Mrs. Yates which she spoke this evening before the opera. It is very good. You will soon see it

\* Morning Chronicle, July 1. 1774.

in all the newspapers, otherwise I would send it to you."

It is singular that a piece thus necessarily so public from the place where it was delivered, and pronounced to be "good" by a critic so fastidious as Beauclerk, should not, as he anticipated, have appeared in the newspapers of the day, or in any collection of his works since. Several copies besides that furnished to Mrs. Yates, we may believe were in circulation, by the offer made in the preceding letter of sending one to Lord Charlemont; yet in the anxiety to collect all his verses after death, these have never appeared; nor are they alluded to in any memoir of him; neither has their existence notwithstanding diligent inquiry been ascertained. The only probable explanation seems, that being either withheld for some other purpose by the author, or given by him to Bishop Percy with other papers, it was subsequently lost, as hinted to that prelate by Malone in one of his letters. It is possible likewise that if Colman felt offended by allusions to the situation of the first tragic actress of the day being unengaged in the national theatres, the Poet may have been willing to propitiate him by the suppression of the whole.

In the bills of the day it is called "A Poetical Exordium." The chief subject on which it touched was the history of the revival of the polite arts in Italy and the effect produced by their union with each other; allusions were likewise introduced to

the situation of the speaker herself in connexion with the tragic drama. The house was more crowded and brilliant than had been usually witnessed on the first night of performance, and the applause loud and universal. Yet from whatever cause, it appears not to have been repeated.

The next exercise of his poetical powers was one, which though seemingly playful, required for its successful execution no ordinary portion of address and ingenuity.

However little disposed to question his genius, few of his friends had given him credit for close observation of mankind, or that insight into individual character which men of the world think exclusively their own. Yet a very ordinary examination of his writings might have convinced them, that no one could have written as he wrote, without enjoying large acquaintance with the ways of life and with human nature. As a set-off to these indeed, they saw his peculiar habits, his occasional simplicity, his benevolence, and his consideration, not always wise or well-timed, for the undeserving. His oddities in consequence of this good-nature became what was deemed fair game for professed wits and jesters; and as he had hitherto given no proof of disposition to satire, it was thought this species of mirth might be indulged with impunity. To this mistake we owe the origin of "Retaliation;" one of those felicitous productions which struck off amid serious anxieties and various literary labours, leaves the impression of a mind unoc-

cupied and at ease. It arose not from a scene at the Literary Club in Gerrard Street as sometimes said, but from a more miscellaneous meeting, consisting of a few of its members and their friends who assembled to dine at the St. James's Coffee-house. Thus Richard and William Burke, Cumberland, Ridge, and Hickey who have a place in the poem, were never members of the original club; nor was Dr. Douglas, till after the death of the Poet.

Much mirth and convivial pleasantry appears to have resulted from their meetings. The late Sir George Beaumont mentioned that whatever was the dinner hour, whether in a private or public party, Goldsmith always came late and generally in a bustle. A peculiarity like this which is always noticed, is often disagreeable, and certainly never to be classed among the minor virtues, drew attention upon him at table, and became a source of banter to his companions; this led to further observation; his person, dialect and manners, his genius mingled with peculiarities, his negligences and blunders, often no doubt the effect of abstraction, furnished a theme for jocular notice, too tempting to be lost by men drawn together to amuse and be amused; and the remark of some one how he would be estimated by posterity first gave rise to the idea of characterising him by epitaphs.

It does not appear that many were written, or none that deserved remembrance, except that by

Garrick, of which the following is stated to be an exact copy.\*

“Here lies Poet Goldsmith, for shortness called Noll,  
Who wrote like an angel, but talk'd like poor Poll.”

Another was written upon him by Caleb Whitefoord, as stated to the writer by the relatives of that gentleman, who is also said to have exercised his pen in a similar manner upon Cumberland. The former forgave the offence with his usual pliability, but not so the latter, and they were thenceforward not friends; both these were once in the cabinet of Garrick, though neither being preserved, their merit was probably inconsiderable.

Cumberland and Cradock have each in their memoirs stated they were present on the occasion that gave birth to Retaliation. There is however no identity of circumstances in their respective relations, which from the minuteness of detail given by Cumberland must have been the case had both been present; we are reduced therefore to the necessity of believing that one only, or probably neither, were there. The explanation may be this. Writing from memory at the distance of thirty and forty years respectively, and desirous of being thought present at an interesting scene in literary history, they seem to have described what they heard shortly after the occurrence, with what they saw on another occasion at the same

\* By Dr. M'Donnell.

place, and to have confounded the circumstances in their recollection. The account of Cradock as being more general is on the whole more probable.

Cumberland is too commonly inaccurate to be safely followed; nor are his anecdotes told quite in character. When, for instance, he describes himself as retiring to a side table to write couplets on Goldsmith, and Johnson as snatching them from his hand to read to the company, we may fairly doubt whether this occurred; of all men the moralist had least sympathy with practical jokes, of which this must be considered one of the rudest; neither would he probably read aloud what was thought likely to give pain to his friend. When we find likewise that Sir Joshua is mentioned as illuminating the epitaph written by Dean Barnard with a pen and ink sketch of the Poet's bust "inimitably caricatured," we may be certain of misstatement; for this was wholly foreign to the president's habits as Northcote observes, and assuredly would not have been done to one whose feelings he was at all times solicitous not to offend. A third statement of his connected with this poem is still more unsupported by fact. "Goldsmith sickened and died, and we had one concluding meeting at my house, when it was decided to publish his Retaliation." Whatever such a meeting, if it really occurred, might decide, it had no power to accelerate or retard a production which had then found its way into other hands.

By comparing minute circumstances, it would appear that the affair of the epitaphs was not confined to one evening, and that when first produced, Goldsmith was not present. As he was known to be sensitive, though soon disposed to forget offence, it is not probable he would sit patiently to be made the subject of ridicule to a party some of whom were little known to him, or that others would so far trespass on presumed good nature as to attempt it in his presence, though what was said or written no doubt reached him soon afterward. On the other hand it is equally certain that "Retaliation" was not read to the club in its meetings. Of the existence of the poem the greater part of the members were ignorant until its appearance from the press; by whose instrumentality it has not been ascertained, though at first supposed to be from a copy in the hands of Mr. Bott. Two or three others were given to particular friends with strict injunctions to secrecy until the plan should be so far completed as to admit of being brought out with effect, and turn the laugh not of the tavern party merely, but of the kingdom against the aggressors. Mr. Burke is said to have had a sketch of a few of the characters; and Mrs. Cholmondeley another copy more complete. Its date likewise has been doubted. The period however at which it was written may be ascertained with tolerable precision by the line —

"Our Dods shall be pious, our Kenricks shall lecture."



The allusion applies to a series of lectures on Shakspeare, commenced by Kenrick in the great room of the Devil Tavern at Temple Bar on the 19th January 1774, and continued weekly for a considerable time. We may therefore assign the month of February, he being unwell in March, as the date of the chief part of the composition; and judging from its nature, we may believe it was not struck off at a heat. To plunge into the recesses of character and bring up to the surface what the owner himself is scarcely conscious of, or would willingly conceal, requires time, care, and repeated touching to be accurate. Thus, those he had known the longest, such as Burke and Garrick, are finished in the best manner; while to Dean Barnard, who was of only a few weeks' acquaintance as the poem intimates, he has been unable to assign a distinguishing character.

A production such as this presents no ordinary difficulties to the writer, as he requires for its execution great acuteness and much good nature, keen perception of the shades of character, and deep insight into the human heart. Indiscriminate satire is of no very difficult accomplishment. Neither is much skill required to sketch our friends so gently or generally as to give no offence. But to be at once searching and accurate, to individualize the man from his species, to unveil foibles without violently shocking self-love, and while probing them to inflict no pain; to be faithful yet friendly, witty and discreet; to

exhibit minute delicacy of touch, with perfect truth in the painting so that all the world shall see the likeness without the original having cause for reasonable offence in the display of his imperfections, is one of those happinesses that high genius alone can hope to accomplish, and this Goldsmith has done. We are not perhaps wholly conscious of the difficulty of such an attempt until we ourselves make it. The same felicitous qualities exhibited in a somewhat different manner, have given Horace a reputation that no time is likely to impair.

Immediate notice was drawn to the characters of Burke and Garrick as those on which he had bestowed the most pains, and directed the most pointed satire ; for to each was given that specific appropriateness considered essential to the epitaph whether serious or jocular, by which what is said of one person cannot wholly be applied to another. Burke had incurred his playful indignation by practising some tricks and relating certain stories to his annoyance ; he was likewise a Whig, of which body Goldsmith, like Johnson, entertained an indifferent opinion ; he was also a leader of the opposition ; and if we believe Northcote, had one day at Reynolds's spoken so freely of royalty as to give offence to Goldsmith. From this cause perhaps we have much of his public, and but little of his private character.

Garrick was a more serious offender. Notwithstanding some pecuniary favours, he had occasionally touched both the pride and interests of the

satirist ; he had refused his plays ; he had shown a disposition to be witty or unduly familiar with him in company, yet in private sometimes exhibited an air of reserve or superiority difficult not to resent, and of which the Poet complained to Reynolds, observing on one occasion that he would not suffer such airs of importance from one who was only a "poor player." An allusion to this conduct expressed in mild terms, occurs in the lines —

"He casts off his friends as a huntsman his pack,  
For he knows when he likes he can whistle them back."

To the list of his offences was now to be added the couplet forming the epitaph, and when we remember that it was a gratuitous and pointed attack upon one who gave no provocation, it will be admitted that "Retaliation" exhibits forbearance and good humour.

Two epigrams by Garrick are commonly supposed to have whetted the satire of Goldsmith ; but this is a mistake ; they followed, not preceded, that poem, as the first sufficiently indicates. \* The other, also written subsequently and not made public till 1776, bears traces of more deliberation

\* ON DR. GOLDSMITH'S CHARACTERISTIC COOKERY.

"Are these the choice dishes the Doctor has sent us ?  
Is this the great poet whose works so content us ?  
This Goldsmith's fine feast who has written fine books ?  
Heaven sends us good *meat* but the devil sends *cooks* !"

and labour, and aims to give the character of the Poet with all its foibles and contrarieties. So far it follows the idea of his own character in the poem, and it further imitates Goldsmith in being pungent without displaying ill nature ; it is however much overcharged for a correct portrait ; and the idea is not original, but borrowed from Swift's lines on Mrs. Biddy Floyd, where Jove and Cupid unite their skill to form a beauty.\*

Sir Joshua Reynolds is drawn with less distinctness and precision than a little more labour would have bestowed, but like the poem itself his character was left unfinished. Whether it would have possessed equal spirit with either of the preceding is doubtful, for we can rarely touch even with the gentlest hand, the foibles of such

\* " Here Hermes, says Jove, who with nectar was mellow,  
Go fetch me some clay, — I will make an odd fellow :  
Right and wrong shall be jumbled — much gold and some dross,  
Without cause be he pleased, without cause be he cross ;  
Be sure as I work to throw in contradictions,  
A great love of truth, yet a mind turned to fictions ;  
Now mix these ingredients, which warm'd in the baking,  
Turn'd to *learning* and *gaming*, *religion* and *raking*.  
With the love of a wench, let his writings be chaste ;  
Tip his tongue with strange matter, his pen with fine taste ;  
That the rake and the poet o'er all may prevail,  
Set fire to the head and set fire to the tail ;  
For the joy of each sex on the world I 'll bestow it,  
This scholar, rake, christian, dupe, gamester and poet,  
Though a mixture so odd he shall merit great fame,  
And among brother mortals be Goldsmith his name ;  
When on earth this strange meteor no more shall appear,  
You *Hermes*, shall fetch him — to make us sport here."

as we cordially and unreservedly love ; and of all whom he knew, Reynolds held the highest place in his affection and esteem, and deserved it by as warm a return of regard. Among several erasures in the manuscript sketch devoted to him, half a line containing one of the handsomest compliments to the good sense of the painter, remained unaltered—

“ By flattery unspoiled —— ”

It has been asked why a muse at once so delicate and accurate, which in painting even defects exhibited the tenderness of a friend, did not venture to portray Johnson. One reason probably is to be found in the unfinished state of the poem. He formed an admirable subject, great, varied, and peculiar, marked by strong lines, and though of rough conduct and a stinging tongue, yet with so many redeeming qualities of mind and heart, that a finished picture might serve to stamp the poetical character of any writer ; and from long and intimate knowledge of him, none we are assured could have done it with such truth and good nature as the Irish Poet. An attempt to supply the omission came from an anonymous pen a few days after the appearance of the poem ; but between the dauber and the accomplished artist, the distance is indeed vast. \*

\* “ Here rests our great Doctor, who held it high treason  
With wine, punch, or ale to encumber his reason ;  
Yet may fairly be classed with the rest of the hive  
While erect in his chair, he's thus buried alive ;

The following advertisement in the form of a letter to the publisher introduced *Retaliation* to the public:—

“ Sir,

“ In some part of Doctor Goldsmith’s works he confesses himself so unable to resist the attacks of hungry compilers, that he contents himself with the demand of the fat man who when at sea, and the crew in great want of provisions, was pitched on by the sailors as the properest subject to supply their wants; he found the necessity of acquiescence, at the same time making the most reasonable demand for the first cut off himself for himself.

“ If the Doctor in his life-time was forced by

Unwieldy with knowledge, and buckram’d in pride,  
 No mirth could unbend him, no trifler abide;  
 His sense when he deign’d some deep thought to unfold,  
 Spoke by starts or set phrase like the oracles old;  
 And his wit (as the sun when the rack rides on high,  
 With sudden effulgence beams full from the sky,  
 Then pops in his head and puts wheat-ears in terror,  
 Flashed abroad for a moment, then left us in error;  
 Unless some new sophistry happen to strike,  
 Or poor Scotland come in from some quarter oblique;  
 Then he flash’d like a fury, flea’d alive, tore to pieces,  
 With hail, wind, thunder, lightning, the storm still increases  
 All to ruin a land not worth conquest or keeping,  
 Or slay some poor insect ’twixt waking and sleeping.  
 Thus I strike at his fame with which mine will not vie,  
 As men batter a fort who can’t build a pig-stye;  
 Let his friends all attend to the worst I can say,  
 They must join in the cavil and call it fair play;  
 For none get their share from this miserly elf,  
 Of what all seem’d to value most highly — himself.”

these anthropophagi to such capitulations, what respect can we now expect from them? Will they not dine on his memory? To rescue him from this insult, I send you an authentic copy of the last poetic production of this great and good man; of which I recommend an early publication to prevent spurious editions being ushered into the world.

“ Doctor Goldsmith belonged to a club of beaux esprits where wit sparkled sometimes at the expence of good nature. It was proposed to write Epitaphs on the Doctor; his country, dialect, and person furnished subjects of witticism. The Doctor was called on for Retaliation and at their next meeting produced the following poem, which I think adds one leaf to his immortal wreath.”

The first edition, as may be supposed from affecting so many distinguished persons, sold rapidly, — the publisher said in a few hours. A second and third impression were called for; and about the middle of June a fourth, which came recommended by an additional epitaph on Mr. Caleb Whitefoord, a facetious writer for the newspapers, whose cross-readings under the signature of Papyrius Cursor made him known among the wits of the day. Its authenticity has been doubted, on account of appearing so late, and so many as twenty-eight lines being devoted to one whose merits were not so high as many others dispatched in half that space; nor was the manuscript copy furnished to the printer in the handwriting of the alleged author.

Whitefoord has therefore been suspected by surviving acquaintance, though perhaps erroneously, of being himself the writer; if such be really the case the imitation at least is good, for it contains a few sentiments known to be those of the Poet, and while it gives due praise to the individual, alludes to his connexion with the daily press in a manner which he himself would probably not have done. It is indeed possible that Goldsmith, who thought favourably of his humour and facetious qualities, may have written them on another occasion, or without meaning they should find place in the poem. They were appended to the edition in question by the following introductory notice, which on the face of it contains beyond doubt an untruth in the answer put into the mouth of the reputed writer, who was then on his death-bed:—

“ After the fourth edition of this poem was printed, the publisher received an Epitaph on Mr. Whitefoord from a friend of the late Doctor Goldsmith inclosed in a letter of which the following is an abstract:—

“ ‘ I have in my possession a sheet of paper containing near forty lines in the Doctor’s own handwriting; there are many scattered broken verses on Sir Joshua Reynolds, Counsellor Ridge, Mr. Beauclerk, and Mr. Whitefoord. The Epitaph on the last-mentioned gentleman is the only one that is finished, and therefore I have copied it that you may add it to the next edition. It is a striking



proof of Doctor Goldsmith's good nature. I saw this sheet of paper in the Doctor's room five or six days before he died; and as I had got all the other epitaphs, I asked him if I might take it. *In truth you may, my boy* (replied he), *for it will be of no use to me where I am going.'\**

\* The cause of the prominent station in the poem occupied by Mr. Thomas Townshend, afterwards Lord Sydney, when Burke is said to be —

straining his throat,  
To persuade Tommy Townshend to lend him a vote,

has given rise to various conjectures without a satisfactory solution. No quarrel with the poet is known to have occurred; and in fact another name is said to have originally occupied the place now filled by that of Mr. Townshend. Sir James Mackintosh believed that the latter was substituted on account of persisting to clear the gallery of the House of Commons on one occasion when Garrick was present, in opposition to the remonstrances of Burke and Fox. This statement is erroneous. Whatever offence he may have given to Goldsmith, he gave none to Garrick, nor was it probable that one much in society like Mr. Townshend and meeting continually with the actor, should publicly exhibit towards him such a symptom of hostility. It came from another quarter, a country gentleman, the member for Shropshire, and *occurred three years after the publication of Retaliation*. It likewise appears that Mr. Townshend, as might be expected, far from opposing Garrick when this indisposition was shown to him, took his part. The Actor, writing to Miss Hannah More July 9th 1777, gives the following account of the affair shortly afterwards:—

“My theatrical curiosity diminishes daily, and my vanity as an author is quite extinct; though by the bye I have written a copy of verses to Mr. Baldwin, the member for Shropshire, upon his attack upon me in the House of Commons. He complained that a celebrated gentleman was admitted into the house when every body else was excluded, and *that I gloried in my situation*. Upon these last words my muse has taken

Early in February 1774, was first announced for publication in the following month, "The History of the Earth and animated Nature." The bookseller (Griffin) with whom the agreement for that work had been made, and who it will be remembered had sold his share so far back as June 1772, wished now to become again a proprietor, and with this object the following letter of Goldsmith was written to the purchaser. It is without date, but endorsed February 20th 1774; and from this we learn that he had thoughts of extending the plan beyond the original limits: —

" *To Mr. Nourse.*

" SIR,

As the work for which we engaged is now near coming out and for the *over* payment of which I return you my thanks, I would consider myself still more obliged to you, if you would let my friend Griffin have a part of it. He is ready to pay you for any part you will think proper to give him, and as I have thoughts of extending the work into the

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flight, and with success. I have described the different speakers, and it is said well, and strongly, and true. I read them to Lord North, Lord Gower, Lord Weymouth, Mr. Rigby &c. and they were all pleased. Burke and Mr. Townshend behaved nobly upon the occasion. The whole house groaned at poor Baldwin, who is reckoned, *par excellence*, the dullest man in it; and a question was nearly going to be put, to give me an exclusive privilege to go in whenever I pleased. In short I am a much greater man than I thought." *Correspondence*, vol. i. p. 118.

*vegetable* and *fossil* kingdoms, you shall share with him in any such engagement as may happen to ensue.

“ I am Sir,

“ Your very humble servant,

“ OLIVER GOLDSMITH.” \*

It did not appear till about the last day of June †, when death had removed him from the scene of his labours ; and notwithstanding all its mistakes and misconceptions, its errors of fact and theory, the general ignorance of the subject with which in a scientific point of view it was commenced, the anxieties and disadvantages under which during a period of five years it was carried on, must be regarded as no inconsiderable effort of genius and labour. The term genius, applied to such an undertaking in the hands of most other men, would seem, and no doubt would be, scarcely warranted ; but with Goldsmith it was otherwise ; his charm lies in his taste in selection, his vivacity in conception, and his elegance in describing. *Nihil quod tetigit non ornavit* ; he literally fulfilled

\* From the collection of John Wild, Esq. of Clapham.

† “ This day is published in eight vols. 8vo. price 2l. 8s. in boards, illustrated with 101 copper-plates engraved by Messrs. Taylor and Martin; An History of the Earth and Animated Nature. By Oliver Goldsmith. Printed for I. Nourse in the Strand; Bookseller to his Majesty.”—*Public Advertiser*, July 1st, 1774. In this as well as in the previous advertisements during his life, the preliminary “ Doctor,” or the initials of his medical degree “ M. B.” affixed to his name in other works, were omitted.

Johnson's anticipation that "he would make it as entertaining as a Persian tale."

His avowed object was a popular not learned work on the subject; a design to treat of the races, habitudes, the instincts and peculiarities of animals in their wild or social state; not a formal or scientific work for the instruction of the professed naturalist. He is therefore often inconsiderately censured for not being what he had no intention, and probably had not the requisite knowledge, to be; his book was not meant as a system, but one of general and amusing information. A better grounded objection is the existence of several errors in point of fact connected with animals which were within the reach of observation and inquiry; another is the admission of a few fabulous stories of their attributes and peculiarities taken from ancient writers. In the former, the apology of Dr. Johnson may be valid, that the subject being of an extensive kind he could not be expected to make experiments on all facts of a doubtful nature, and therefore might allowably copy such authorities as were generally received; and the same apology may serve for the latter, that without believing such stories himself, he introduced only what others had stated, trusting to the good sense and general knowledge of the reader to discriminate truth from improbability where reasonable doubts could be entertained.

The necessary information for the work was not procured without much research; greater perhaps than he received credit for, or than would have

been requisite for a professed naturalist, although as we have seen by his previous connexion with books on natural history, better prepared for the subject than many persons believed. Thus Aristotle, Diodorus Siculus, and Pliny; Aldrovandus and Reaumur, Brisson, and Buffon; Linnæus, Willughby, and Ray; and many travellers and voyagers, such as Dampier, Ulloa and many others, are freely quoted; in addition to matter gleaned from a variety of other sources, showing much and miscellaneous reading, which of itself formed no inconsiderable part of his labour. Its great charm is its style; combining that ease, freshness, and freedom which throw an irresistible attraction over his pages and render every reader of taste an admirer; while after the lapse of sixty years, notwithstanding the progress of knowledge and the consequent correction of many mistakes, no book has yet superseded it with the general reader. It has proved upon a large scale, though less exact and minute, what White's Natural History of Selborne has been upon a smaller; familiar and agreeable, communicating natural knowledge in the easiest manner, and attracting readers who would have been repelled from the study of more elaborate works.

An assertion of Cumberland relative to this work is as questionable as too many of his alleged facts regarding the Irish Poet.—“Distress,” he says, “drove Goldsmith upon undertakings neither congenial with his studies nor worthy of his talents. I remember him when in his chamber in the Tem-

ple he showed me the beginning of his *Animated Nature*, it was with a sigh such as genius draws when hard necessity diverts it from its bent to drudge for bread." The acquaintance between Goldsmith and Cumberland was slight and never reached any thing like intimacy; on the contrary notwithstanding the compliment in *Retaliation* they did not like each other. That Cumberland may have called in the Temple is possible, but by his own confession he knew nothing of him personally till the latter part of 1773, and the first volume of *Animated Nature* was written three years before and had been long consigned to the hands of the publisher. Neither, had he even shown it as alleged, would it have been done with the dramatic accompaniment of a sigh, implying dislike or contempt for his labour, when it was unquestionable that he placed a high value on the first volume, and was often not unwilling to have it believed that the whole was equally worthy of favour.

About the same time also, a new edition of the *Enquiry into Polite Learning* being proposed by the original publisher, nearly a fourth part of the first was thrown out in the revision. Among the omissions are the whole of the fourth and seventh chapters, the latter containing general remarks upon the polite learning of England and France, the translation from Macrobius now included in his poetical works, and the obvious personal allusion when stating the different aspect

which countries assume to one who is whirled through Europe in a post-chaise, and he who walks the grand tour on foot. *Haud inexpertus loquor*. No additions are introduced, excepting a few sentences to connect passages where others have been expunged. For this labour the sum received was, as will be seen, small.\*

(No date, but early in 1774.)

“ Received from Mr. James Dodsley for improving the second edition of my Polite Learning and putting my name to the same, the sum of five guineas, as witness my hand.

“ OLIVER GOLDSMITH.”

Another of his labours now, and noticed in a former page, was a translation of Scarron's comic romance, said by the publisher (Griffin) to have been completed, excepting a few sheets, at the time of his death, though not published till 1776. Some corroboration of his having been engaged upon it at this period, may be found perhaps in the first line of Retaliation : —

“ Of old, when Scarron his companions invited,  
Each guest brought his dish, and the feast was united.”

For nothing was more probable than that the name of a writer celebrated for wit and humour and whom he was then translating, should be recalled in a sportive effusion of his own ; and to

\* It was published after his death July 28. 1774.

this possibly we owe the whole introductory part of that poem. The version offers no particular evidence of his manner, nor does perhaps a close rendering permit it; but a writer in the *Monthly Review*, no doubt Dr. Griffiths himself, when noticing the work in question, thus intimates a knowledge of his previous translations, though the opinion advanced of their merit is by no means corroborated by what we know to have been done by him in "Memoirs of a Protestant:"—"We have seen translations by Goldsmith in no respect superior to the present performance. The truth is the Doctor was not excellent in this branch of authorship. The new version of Scarron is however greatly preferable to the old one by Savage and Brown."

At this moment if we are to believe Beauclerk, who however writes in a strain between jest and earnest not always to be taken literally, he had shaken off his depression of spirits, or was attempting to do so by the common means, gaiety, which he praises in some of his *Essays*, and no doubt often practised, as the best mode of dissipating care. "Our club," he writes to Lord Charlemont February 12. 1774, "has dwindled away to nothing. Nobody attends but Mr. Chambers, and he is going to the East Indies. Sir Joshua and Goldsmith have got into such a round of pleasures that they have no time."

One of the modes he adopted for returning such



civilities as were shown him by his acquaintance, was, as the writer is informed by an intimate surviving friend, by a supper given at his chambers, where a curious intermixture of characters, and frequently an expensive entertainment, were to be found. These parties, in allusion to the large and fashionable assemblages at the well-known rooms kept by Mrs. Cornelys in Soho Square, he jocularly called his "Little Cornelys."

Occasionally this was changed for a dinner, where the guests were more select. At the last, or nearly the last of these, Dr. Johnson, Sir Joshua, and several other literary men, among whom was Dr. Kippis who related the story, were present. The first course was profuse, more than sufficient for every purpose of hospitality; but a second coming on equally liberal, Johnson and Reynolds who suspected his embarrassments and wished tacitly to reprehend his extravagance, came to an understanding not to partake of it; the motive being instantly comprehended by all present, the refusal became general, and it was removed from the table untouched, much to his mortification.

His establishment otherwise was not at this time expensive. He retained the apartment at Hyde when desirous of a rural scene or of being wholly uninterrupted; he had the occasional services only of a man-servant (John Eyles) when in town; while his chambers and their contents were

wholly intrusted to the care of an elderly female named Ginger, wife of the head porter of the Middle Temple.

He had for some time seriously contemplated quitting the distractions and expences of a town life in order to fix his residence wholly in the country; and to such as were much in his confidence, took pleasure in stating his schemes on this subject, one of which was never to spend more than two months of the year in London. With this view it is said he had sold his right in the Temple chambers about three weeks previous to his death; but whether he possessed sufficient firmness to persevere in the resolution of retirement may be doubted. Of the charms of the country he had indeed a lively sense; but London or its vicinity is so peculiarly the sphere of a literary man, either for its society, its amusements, its information, or advantages of reference, and more particularly when he is destitute of the ties of family, of relatives, or of a native place to retire to (for he had no thought of going to Ireland), that a disconnection with it, or even absence for any length of time by one living exclusively by his literary labours, is nearly impossible. Few pursuits require more relaxation than literature. Solitude is necessary to an author, for in solitude must his chief labours be performed; but the task completed, few delight more in the enjoyment which release from labour brings with it; and none

were more disposed to take advantage of such moments than Goldsmith.

Whatever were his determinations, no opportunity was permitted of carrying them into effect, for life and all its anxieties were soon to come to a close.

Having retired to Hyde in the month of March, the recurrence of a painful disease to which he was subject (Dysuria) brought on by close application to his desk, added to a feeling of general indisposition, took him back to London. The local complaint subsided, but left behind the seeds of a nervous fever, aggravated no doubt by uneasiness of mind. To relieve some of the symptoms, he had recourse to an emetic on the 25th March, after the operation of which he retired to bed in the afternoon, but becoming worse, sent for Mr. (afterwards Dr.) Hawes, his apothecary, in defiance of whom he persisted in the use of James' Powders, a valuable and one of his favourite remedies, but inapplicable under the circumstances of the complaint; and the result proved as melancholy as it was generally lamented. Public notice being drawn to the event, Mr. Hawes, an intelligent and benevolent man and one of the founders of the Humane Society, in which undertaking he had engaged the active humanity of Goldsmith\*, published a pamphlet, dedicated to

\* This he states in the postscript to his pamphlet, on the illness of his patient. — “As my late respected and ingenious

Burke and Reynolds as principal friends of the deceased, stating the particulars of his attendance upon him. To this, in consequence of the remarks made in it upon the remedy being thought detrimental to its popularity, Mr. Newbery, the proprietor, replied in the newspapers, and adduced declarations of the nurse and servants, conveying the opinion of Goldsmith himself (for which however there seems no foundation) that the genuine fever-powder had not been sent him. From these and from some private sources, a full account of his illness is derived.

“On Friday the 25th March,” says Mr. Hawes, “at eleven o’clock at night the late Dr. Goldsmith sent for me to his chambers. He complained of a violent pain extending all over the fore part of his head; his tongue was moist; he had no cold shiverings or pain in any other part, and his pulse beat about ninety strokes in a minute. He then told me he had taken two ounces of ipecacuanha wine as a vomit, and that it was his intention to take Dr. James’ fever-powders. I replied that in my opinion this was a medicine very improper at

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friend Dr. Goldsmith was pleased to honour Dr. Cogan and myself with his patronage and assistance in the undertaking for the recovery of persons apparently dead by drowning and other sudden accidents now on the point of being established in this kingdom, I think I cannot show a greater proof of my esteem for the deceased than by applying the profits of this publication (if any should arise) to an institution, the design of which was favoured with his approbation.”

that time and begged he would not think of it : but I am sorry to say that every argument used, seemed only to render him more determined in his own opinion ; which gave me much concern as I could not avoid thinking that the man whom I had all the reason in the world to esteem, was about to take a step which might prove extremely injurious to him.

“ I therefore endeavoured to reason medically with him and observed that his complaint appeared to be more a nervous affection than a febrile disease. He said ‘ he thought so too.’ I replied ‘ Then Sir, as you have already taken a vomit which has operated very well I would advise you to take a gentle opiate which may be a means of quieting the stomach ; as after the operation of an emetic it generally produces for a few hours refreshing sleep ; after which in all probability the complaint of the head will gradually go off as repeated experience has confirmed.’ To this he answered ‘ I like your mode of reasoning well ;’ and for a short time he appeared to be convinced, but soon afterwards insisted upon taking the powders.”

Protesting against being considered responsible for the consequences, the friendly apothecary took his leave, and sent the medicine. He had however gained permission for a visit from Dr. For- dyce whom the patient had consulted on previous occasions, and who having returned from the club in Gerrard Street, where the Poet said he meant to

have been himself had he been well, (for it met now on Fridays) saw him in the course of the evening. The powder had been taken in the mean time, and he continued it notwithstanding the persuasions of the physician. Next day finding its effects different from those experienced on former occasions, he became impressed with the belief that a spurious medicine had been substituted for the true, and exclaimed more than once to his servants, as they stated, with hasty petulance — “ D—n that Hawes! I ordered him to send me James’s powder and he has sent me some other.” A supply was in consequence sent for from Newbery’s shop, and its administration intrusted by him to the servants in attendance.

On the morning of the 26th Mr. Hawes called, but on being told his patient was dozing, did not see him; in the evening he found him low, his pulse small and quick, and with great prostration of strength from disordered action of the stomach and bowels induced by the erroneous treatment to which he had subjected himself; he had now also it appeared lost confidence in the remedy by admitting to his adviser that “ he wished he had taken his friendly advice last night.” Dr. Fordyce also saw the critical situation of his patient, and feeling, like Hawes, considerable anxiety for the safety of one whose celebrity in public life and many good qualities in private, made him an object of interest, desired the latter to see him early the following day and persuade him if not better, to

see Dr. Turton whom he likewise knew and esteemed, in consultation.

At eight o'clock on Sunday morning he was accordingly visited again; he had passed a bad night; the vomiting and diarrhœa continued; and appearing much exhausted, Mr. Hawes proposed at once to call in Dr. Turton, a proposition immediately assented to by the patient, who now seemed conscious of his danger. From this time the physicians met twice daily in consultation. So strong however was his impression of having originally taken spurious fever-powder, although what was procured afterwards produced similar effects, that he took a dislike to his apothecary; he told his servants, as they stated to Mr. Newbery, to look for his bill which amounted to ten pounds, and pay him off; he likewise actually sent for another practitioner in the neighbourhood, who however declined at first to interfere where there was already ample attendance, or judging it only one of those hasty petulancies, increased by the disease, to which he was subject, and of which he was the first to confess the impropriety. The conduct of Mr. Hawes seems to have been unobjectionable; no time was lost in calling in Dr. Fordyce when further advice became necessary; and had his published statement varied from truth, the evidence of both physicians was at hand to point out the inaccuracy.

During the following week the symptoms fluctuated; though never free from danger, so little

apparently active disease was present, that Doctor Turton said to him, as Dr. Johnson related, "Your pulse is in greater disorder than it should be from the state of fever which you have; is your mind at ease?" Goldsmith answered 'it is not.' The functions of the mind however were very slightly, if at all, clouded by the disease, and arose less from the degree of fever than from want of sleep; he discoursed occasionally with great calmness, was sometimes cheerful, but being unable to take nourishment, his strength gave way. Recovery therefore although doubtful, was not even to the last at all improbable; nor was the fatal event in the least anticipated at the moment it occurred.

At twelve o'clock on Sunday night the 3rd of April, he was in a sound and serene sleep, perfectly sensible previous to falling off, his respiration easy, the skin moist and warm, and the symptoms altogether of a favourable description. A little before four o'clock the gentleman in attendance, Mr. Hawes not being then employed, was summoned in consequence of an unfavourable change; he found him in strong convulsions, which continuing without intermission, he expired about half past four on Monday morning the 4th April, 1774.

Thus terminated the life of an admirable writer and estimable man at the early age of forty-five, when his powers were in full vigour and much was to be expected from their exertion. The shock to his friends appears to have been great



from the unexpected loss of one whose substantial virtues, with all his foibles and singularities, they had learned to value. Burke on hearing of it burst into tears. Sir Joshua Reynolds, as Northcote informed the writer, relinquished painting for the day; an unusual forbearance, it was considered, of one who under all common circumstances rarely permitted himself to be diverted from the exercise of his art. Dr. Johnson, though little prone to exhibit strong emotions of grief, seems to have felt sincerely on this occasion, for three months afterwards he thus wrote to Boswell—

“Of poor dear Dr. Goldsmith there is little to be told more than the papers have made public. He died of a fever, I am afraid more violent from uneasiness of mind. His debts began to be heavy and all his resources were exhausted. Sir Joshua is of opinion that he owed not less than two thousand pounds. Was ever poet so trusted before?” And again; “Chambers, you find, is gone far, and poor Goldsmith is gone much further. He died of a fever exasperated as I believe by the fear of distress.”

Sir Joshua undertook to superintend his affairs until the arrival from Ireland of such of his relatives as should be authorised to arrange them. In the mean time Mr. Hawes was entrusted with the active duties of management, who soon discovered by the amount of debts, that no advantage was likely to accrue to his family from the little personal property that remained. In allusion to

his pecuniary involvements, yet in a tone of tenderness, Dr. Johnson writes at this time — “He had raised money and squandered it, by every artifice of acquisition and folly of expense. But let not his frailties be remembered; he was a very great man.”\*

As a means of showing their respect, his friends at first contemplated a public funeral, the pall to be borne by Lord Shelburne, Lord Louth, Hon. Mr. Beauclerk, Mr. Burke, Sir Joshua Reynolds, and Mr. Garrick. Further consideration altered this design to a subscription for a monument to him in Westminster Abbey; Sir Joshua, as was immediately announced, to draw the design; Mr. Wilton to execute it; and Dr. Johnson to write the epitaph.

A private interment was therefore adopted as most advisable under the circumstances. His remains were committed to the Temple burying ground in a spot which after being long forgotten has been recently ascertained by the inquiries of Mr. Bacon of the Temple, at five o'clock on Saturday evening, April 9th, attended as mourners by the Rev. Mr. Palmer, nephew to Sir Joshua Reynolds and afterwards Dean of Cashel in Ireland, Mr., afterwards Sir John, Day, the present Judge Day, Mr. Hugh Kelly, Mr. Etherington, and Mr. Hawes. After the coffin had been screwed down, it was opened in order to gratify a lady, an inti-

\* “Here Fancy’s favourite, Goldsmith sleeps,  
The Dunces smile, but Johnson weeps.”

*St. James’s Chronicle, April 7...9*

mate acquaintance and an admirer of his talents and virtues, with a lock of his hair. His papers fell into the possession of Mr. Bott, his principal creditor.

Tributes in verse and prose to his memory appeared in the journals for several weeks; several of the number in a strain of lamentation evidently from such as knew him personally, for the loss of "the good, the ingenious, the honest (and this term was often applied to him in public as expressive of the candid and unreserved nature of the man) Doctor Goldsmith." "It should be remembered," says Mr. Hawes who felt a warm attachment to his late patient, "that he was as amiable as a man, as excellent as a writer. His humanity and generosity greatly exceeded the narrow limits of his fortune; and those who were no judges of the literary merit of the author, could not but love the man for that benevolence by which he was so strongly characterised."

"When I returned to town," adds another acquaintance\*, "after his death I had an interview with his nephew, an apothecary in Newman Street†, and with the two sister milliners, the Miss Guns, who resided in a house at the corner of Temple Lane who were always most attentive

\* Mr. Cradock.

† Mr. Hodson already mentioned; he may have been there some months afterwards; but he was not in London at the time of his uncle's death. His relatives likewise say he never practised professionally in the metropolis.

to him, and who once said to me most feelingly, "O Sir, sooner persuade him to let us work for him gratis than apply to any other; we are sure he will pay us when he can."

Among the testimonies of esteem drawn forth by his death, in prose, the following just and not inelegant eulogium bearing some resemblance in manner to what was said by Burke twenty years afterwards when characterising Sir Joshua Reynolds, appeared the day after his death, and was supposed to be from his pen. On reference however to the journals of the day, it is found to be dated from Salisbury Street, April 5th; and obviously proceeded from one, whether Burke or not, whose attachment was the result of an intimate knowledge of his character.

"In an age when genius and learning are too generally sacrificed to the purposes of ambition and avarice, it is the consolation of virtue as well as of its friends that they can commemorate the name of Goldsmith as a shining example to the contrary.

"Early compelled, like some of our greatest men, into the service of the muses, he never once permitted his necessities to have the least improper influence on his conduct; but knowing and respecting the honourable line of his profession, he made no farther use of fiction than to set off the dignity of truth; and in this he succeeded so happily, that his writings stamp no less the man of genius than the universal friend of mankind.

“Such is the outline of his poetical character, which perhaps will be remembered whilst the first rate poets of the country have any monument left them. But alas! his noble and immortal part—the good man—is only consigned to the short-lived memory of those who are left to lament his death.

“Having naturally a powerful bias on his mind to the cause of virtue, he was cheerful and indefatigable in the pursuit of it; warm in his friendships, gentle in his manners, and in every act of charity and benevolence ‘the very milk of human kindness.’ Nay even his foibles and little weaknesses of temper may be said rather to show the simplicity of his nature than to degrade his understanding; for though there may be many instances to prove he was no man of the world, most of those instances would attest the unadulterated purity of his heart.

“One who esteemed the kindness and friendship of such a man as forming a principal part of the happiness of his life, pays this last, sincere, and grateful tribute to his memory.”

## CHAPTER XXVI.

MAURICE GOLDSMITH. — EPITAPH ON THE POET. — HIS CHARACTER. — RANK AS A POET AND PROSE WRITER. — MEMBERS OF THE GOLDSMITH FAMILY.

SHORTLY after the death of Oliver, his eldest surviving brother Maurice, arrived from Ireland in compliance with the summons of Sir Joshua. He was as may be imagined from his history, a plain unlettered man, too homely it seems in appearance and manners to command much consideration from his late brother's accomplished friends.

A lady alluded to more than once for her knowledge of the Poet, informs the writer, that being in a small party in the house of Sir Joshua when the latter was summoned down stairs, he returned after a considerable absence and whispered her, that he had been below with Goldsmith's brother, but thinking a little beer or spirits there, better adapted to his taste than tea in the drawing room, he had entertained him in what he considered the most appropriate manner. She, with the usual kindness of the sex, thought this behaviour scarcely becoming in the President to so near a relative of his departed friend.

No will having been left by the deceased, letters of administration were granted on the 28th of

June in the usual law form and phraseology — “of the goods, chattels, and credits of Oliver Goldsmith late of the Middle Temple bachelor, to Maurice Goldsmith natural and lawful brother and next of kin to the said deceased.” In the bond, bearing date the 6th of the same month, he is described as of “Charlestown, county of Roscommon, cabinet maker,” and the sureties are “Joseph Cruttenden of Surgeons’ Hall in the Old Bailey, London, Esquire, and William Finch of the same place, Gentleman.” No pecuniary advantage it is to be feared accrued to him from the journey in consequence of the amount of his brother’s debts. In July, arrangements were made for the sale of the furniture and library \*, described as being “a large, valuable, and well chosen collection of curious and scarce books,” and the catalogue, a copy of which has been procured and will be found in the Appendix, bears out in some measure the latter part of the description. Maurice did not wait the result of the sale, but quitted London in June; and however homely and unpolished in manners, he appears from the following letter to Mr. Hawes written about the time of his

\* “To be sold by auction; by Mr. Good; at his Great Room No. 121 Fleet Street on Monday next July 11th, 1774, at eleven o’clock, by order of the administrator of Dr. Goldsmith deceased,

“His large, valuable, and well chosen library of curious and scarce books, household furniture and other effects; which may be viewed on Monday and till the time of sale. Catalogues may be had as above.”

departure, not to have been deficient in sense or gratitude.

“*Mr. Hawes,*

“London, June 10. 1774.

“In a few hours I purpose leaving town, and now return you most sincere thanks for your kind behaviour to me since my arrival here. I also am thoroughly convinced of your care, assiduity, and diligence with respect to my brother, Dr. Goldsmith. I am also convinced that as his affairs were put into your hands by Sir Joshua Reynolds, he could have chosen no one who would have acted with more caution and disinterestedness to him than you have done, for which you have my sincere wishes for the welfare of you and yours. I am Sir, with thanks and respects to your family,

“Your much obliged humble servant,

“MAURICE GOLDSMITH.”

The spot chosen by Reynolds for the monument in Westminster Abbey was an appropriate niche fortunately found vacant in Poet's Corner between those of Gay and the Duke of Argyle, and though first intended to be given to Wilton, was executed by Nollekins, though not till after the lapse of several years. It presents a large medalion displaying a good resemblance of the face in profile, embellished with appropriate ornaments, beneath which is a tablet of white marble containing the well known inscription by Dr. Johnson.



Fault has been found with the latinity of parts of this composition \*, though seemingly without sufficient cause ; but there appears to be a determination that no modern shall be permitted to write in that language without being subjected to sharp critical animadversion.

OLIVARII GOLDSMITH,  
 Poetæ, Physiçi, Historici,  
 Qui nullum ferè scribendi genus  
     Non tetigit,  
 Nullum quod tetigit non ornavit :  
     Sive Risus essent movendi,  
     Sive Lacrymæ,  
 Affectuum potens at lenis Dominator :  
 Ingenio sublimis, vividus, versatilis ;  
 Oratione grandis, nitidus, venustus :  
 Hoc Monumento Memoriam coluit.  
     Sodalium Amor,  
     Amicorum Fides,  
     Lectorum Veneratio.  
 Natus in Hiberniâ Fornîæ Longfordiensis,  
 In loco cui nomen Pallas,  
     Nov. XXIX. MDCCXXXI. ;  
 Eblanæ Literis institutus ;  
     Obiit Londini,  
     April. IV. MDCCCLXXIV. †

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\* By a writer in the Classical Journal. No. xxvi.

† This Monument is raised

to

OLIVER GOLDSMITH,  
 Poet, Natural Philosopher, Historian,  
 Who left no species of writing untouched,  
 or  
 Unadorned by his pen,  
 Whether to move laughter  
 or draw tears.

The circumstances attending the reception of the Epitaph among the friends of Goldsmith, though familiar in literary history, must not be omitted in the biography of him to whom it relates.

At a dinner given by Sir Joshua Reynolds to several members of the club in 1776, the Epitaph written by Dr. Johnson for their late associate, became the subject of discussion; emendations were suggested for the consideration of the Doctor, but the difficulty was who should have courage to propose them. A *Round Robin*, such as sailors have had recourse to sometimes when discontented, and when the object was to conceal those who took the lead in stating the grievance by placing all the signatures to the paper in an equal position, was jocularly proposed and adopted. Dean Barnard drew up a witty address which was not adopted, as the Doctor might think it treated the subject

He was a powerful, yet gentle  
 master over the affections:  
 Of a genius sublime, lively, and versatile,  
 In expression noble, pure, and elegant.  
 His memory will last  
 While Society retains affection,  
 Friendship is not void of truth,  
 And Reading is held in esteem.  
 He was born in Ireland  
 In the parish of Forney, County of Longford,  
 At a place named Pallas,  
 29th November, 1731.  
 He was educated in Dublin  
 And died in London,  
 4th April, 1774.

with too much levity. Mr. Burke then dictated the following, which received general concurrence, Sir William Forbes, afterwards the biographer of Beattie, acting as clerk.

“ We the circumscribers, having read with great pleasure an intended epitaph for the monument of Dr. Goldsmith, which considered abstractedly, appears to be for elegant composition and masterly style in every respect worthy of the pen of its learned author ; are yet of opinion that the character of the deceased as a writer, particularly as a poet, is perhaps not delineated with all the exactness which Dr. Johnson is capable of giving it. We therefore, with deference to his superior judgment, humbly request that he would at least take the trouble of revising it ; and of making such additions and alterations as he shall think proper on a further perusal. But if we might venture to express our wishes, they would lead us to request that he would write the epitaph in English, rather than in Latin ; as we think the memory of so eminent an English writer ought to be perpetuated in the language to which his works are likely to be so lasting an ornament, which we also know to have been the opinion of the late Doctor himself.”

The names signed around this sample of literary mutiny, were Edm. Burke, E. Gibbon, Jos<sup>h</sup>. Warton, Thos. Franklin, Ant. Chamier, Geo. Colman, T. Barnard, R. B. Sheridan, P. Metcalf, W. Forbes, J. Reynolds, W. Vachell. Sir Joshua consented to deliver the paper, and escaped from so hazard-

ous an adventure pretty well, being desired by the Doctor to tell the gentlemen, that he would alter the epitaph in any manner they pleased as to the sense of it, but he would never consent to disgrace the walls of Westminster Abbey with an English inscription. Adding also, on observing Dr. Warton's name "I wonder that Joe Warton, a scholar by profession, should be such a fool;" and further remarking, "I should have thought Mund Burkè would have had more sense." Mr. Langton it appears was the only one of the company who refused to sign the paper.

A Greek tetrastich also by the same great writer, honours the memory of his friend.

Τὸν τάφον εἰσοράας τὸν Ὀλιβάρσιο· κινήν  
 Ἄφροσι μὴ σεμνήν, Ξεῖνε, πόδεσσι πάτει.  
 Οἷσι μέμηλε φύσις, μέτρων χάρις, ἔργα παλαιῶν,  
 Κλαίετε πειητῆν, ἱστορικόν, φύσικον.

Several metrical imitations \* of this have been given, but the following is nearer : —

"Thou beholdest the tomb of Oliver; press not O stranger with inconsiderate foot the venerable dust. Ye who care for nature, for the charms of song, for the deeds of ancient times weep for the Historian, the Naturalist, the Poet."

Among other verses written upon his death, all

\* One of these, the best perhaps of the number, runs —

"Whoe'er thou art with reverence tread,  
 Where Goldsmith's hallow'd dust is laid;  
 If Nature or the historic page,  
 If the sweet muse thy care engage,  
 Lament him dead whose fertile mind,  
 Their various excellence combin'd."

of which spoke the language not merely of praise of the author but of affection for the individual, Mr. W. Woty already mentioned and one of his acquaintance since 1760, thus attempted to give him an Epitaph.

“ Adieu sweet bard ! to each fine feeling true,  
 Thy virtues many, and thy foibles few ;  
 Those formed to charm e'en vicious minds, and these  
 With harmless mirth the social soul to please.  
 Another's woe thy heart could always melt,  
 None gave more free — for none more deeply felt.  
 Sweet bard Adieu ! thy own harmonious lays,  
 Have sculptur'd out thy monument of praise ;  
 Yes, these survive to Time's remotest day,  
 While drops the bust, and boastful tombs decay.  
 Reader, if number'd in the Muses' train,  
 Go, — tune thy lyre, and imitate the strain ;  
 But if no Poet then, reverse the plan,  
 Depart in peace and imitate the man.” \*

Besides the overflow of elegiac strains in the journals, several distinct poems made their appear-

\* When the monument was first determined upon, another bard contributed his lines in the following elegiac strain ; such things are not unworthy of being recalled, though even of moderate merit, as they evince the general sympathy for him whom they celebrate, and are so far useful in teaching posterity how he was estimated by contemporaries.

“ Yes, raise the monument to Goldsmith's name,  
 Ye wealthy patrons politic and just,  
 And thou bold sculptor, to secure thy fame,  
 With these fair figures ornament his bust.  
 Religion, pointing to a peaceful shore,  
 Patience, in sufferings calm, on Heav'n her sight,  
 Learning, attentive still to Virtue's lore,  
 And Candour, vested in unsullied white.

ance, all bearing testimony to his virtues as strongly as to his literary merits. Among these were "The Tears of Genius; occasioned by the death of Dr. Goldsmith. By Courtney Melmoth." "An Impartial Character of the late Dr. Goldsmith." "The Druid's Monument; a Tribute to the Memory of the late Dr. Goldsmith. By the author of the Cave of Morar." "A Monody on the death of Dr. Oliver Goldsmith. Dedicated to Mr. Burke" (by a Mr. Palmer). In July was published by Glover, though anonymously, "The Life of Dr. Oliver Goldsmith," professed to be written from personal knowledge, but the particulars communicated are few and inaccurate.

One exception only to the general voice of praise and regret appeared in a scurrilous epitaph by Kenrick, who being the first to assail his character, and pursue his literary life with abuse, was induced to continue it beyond the grave by the provocation of finding his name in Retaliation; thus venting on the dead what could have annoyed only the feelings of the living. Indignation however was so generally excited, particularly by a supposed attempt to cast upon the deceased the imputation of suicide, though the lines do not fairly bear that

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'Tis fit the man who spotless laurels wore,  
 Who mark'd proud empires' glory and their shame,  
 Who for mankind exhausted Nature's store,  
 With kings and heroes should receive his claim.  
 So some stuff birds, then praise their note and plume,  
 Tho' careless authors of the minstrel's doom."

construction,\* that the alleged defamer, though nearly shameless, became for a time silent.

The person of Goldsmith, as may be conceived from the epithet "little" applied to him on several occasions, was something under the middle size; his limbs on which he prided himself, sturdy and well shaped; his habits active; and his appearance indicative of that power of endurance the consciousness of which probably prompted his peregrination on the continent. His complexion was pale, his forehead and upper lip rather projecting, his face round, pitted with the small pox, and marked with strong lines of thinking. Phrenologists may deem it favourable to one of their supposed points of distinction to know, that their organ of *locality* was in him strongly developed; for it has been observed there are few writers with whom the association of localities and recollections in their writings, is more marked. To the impressions made by these at various periods of life, some of his original compositions were owing; and he alludes in 1759 to the alleged external mark, as phrenology chooses to consider it, of this peculiarity, in a letter given in a preceding page; "imagine to yourself a pale, melancholy visage, with two great wrinkles between the eyebrows." His eyes were of grey or hazel colour

\* "By his own art who justly died,  
A blundering, artless suicide;  
Share, earth-worms share, since now he's dead,  
His megrim, maggot-bitten head."

and possessed considerable expression; and he always, as has been already stated, wore a wig.

Although not prepossessing on first appearance, the moment he became at ease the native good humour and benevolence of his disposition broke forth in a manner that attracted and secured regard. His address indicated, as might be supposed from a life devoted to literature, more of the solitary student than of the man of the world. He was willing latterly to amend this disadvantage by the assumption of a more fashionable air; but as our friends are rarely well pleased when they have not some point in their acquaintance with which to find fault, the attempt to remedy what he was told was a defect, drew down upon him only additional censure. The imputation was too trifling to produce a moment's uneasiness; a man of genius has something of more value to recommend him to society than a polished address; and the estimation of those who because they do not find the latter, are unable to relish the former, is scarcely worthy of being sought and rarely of being valued. In manner, and in his associates, he resembled another great poet. "Dryden" as we are told by Pope in Spence's *Anecdotes* \* "was not a very genteel man; he was intimate with none but poetical men. He was said to be a very good man by all that knew him; he was as plump as Mr. Pitt (*the poet*) of a fresh colour, and a down look, and not very conversable."

\* P. 261.



In food he was commonly moderate, often abstemious, and there is no doubt fancied the latter, as Dryden likewise believed, favourable to composition, more especially when employed on any subject requiring considerable effort of mind; his milk supper after a spare and early dinner, has been mentioned; and in wine, even in convivial societies where moderate men find some excuse for going beyond their usual limit, he was as little prone to excess. In this respect his practice perfectly agreed with what we find was his theory.—“How far,” he says, “it may be enjoined in the Scriptures I will not take upon me to say; but this may be asserted, that if the utmost benefit to the individual, and the most extensive advantage to society, serve to mark any institution as of Heaven, this of abstinence may be reckoned among the foremost.”\*

He had, as the slighter peculiarities of eminent men are thought worthy of notice, some particular aversions; one was to mice, another to eels, and a third he has himself informed us of, though the object seems sufficiently harmless. “Many persons, of which number I am one, have an invincible aversion to caterpillars and worms of every species: there is something disagreeable in their slow crawling motion, for which the variety of their colouring can never compensate. But others feel no repugnance at observing, and even handling them with the most attentive application.”†

\* Animated Nature, vol. xi. p. 131.    † Ibid. vol. viii. p. 1.

The well known picture by Sir Joshua, a strong though flattering likeness, yet from being without the wig not the man exactly as he lived, is at Knowle Park, the seat of the Duke of Dorset, near Seven Oaks, in Kent. Another, painted for Mr. Thrale's mansion at Streatham along with those of Johnson, Burke and others, and sold at the general auction at that house, was purchased by Mr. George Hayter for the Duke of Bedford. A third, a copy from one of the preceding, belonged to the Poet himself, who gave it some time before his death to a friend, who left it by will to the late Archdeacon Coxe. Upon the sale of that gentleman's effects in 1828 or 1829, the auctioneer, as the writer has been informed, ignorant of the painter and of the subject of the painting, which probably from neglect presented nothing very attractive to the uninformed observer, catalogued the picture in conjunction with a common hearth broom, and they were knocked down together for two pounds. Aware however of its value, the purchaser sold it for a considerable sum to a gentleman near Salisbury in whose possession it remains. The copy procured by Mr. Hodson, nephew of the poet, now in the possession of Dr. Neligan of Athlone in Ireland, is very indifferently executed; another of similar character which hung for some years in the Wrekin public house in Broad Court, Drury Lane, which the Poet is supposed to have frequented at one period of his life, is now the property of Mr. Bacon of the

Middle Temple. One of the sketches by Bunbury, as has been observed, is an excellent though not flattering likeness, yet presenting great benevolence of expression, and conveying the best idea of his countenance; two others by the same gentleman are caricatured.

The character of Goldsmith requires little more in the way of elucidation than what the preceding pages furnish. Whatever of grace he wanted in manner, there was no deficiency in those attractive qualities of mind that go to the formation of an ingenuous, and benevolent, as well as a highly gifted man. "I have often perceived" he tells us in the *Vicar of Wakefield*, and he is an instance of the truth of his doctrine, "that where the mind is capacious, the affections are good."\* "He appeared to me" says Northcote "to be very unaffected and good natured." "It was not his nature to be unkind" writes Cumberland, "and he had no inherent malice in his heart."—"What foibles he had, he took no pains to conceal; the good qualities of his heart were too frequently obscured by the carelessness of his conduct."

In the publications of the time in which he lived, allusion is more than once made to him by name "as the honest and ingenious Goldsmith." "His disposition of mind" adds Davies in his *life of Garrick*, whose opinion is worth recording as the relations of author and publisher,—of ex-

\* "La bienfaisance," says St. Pierre, "est le bonheur de la vertu."

pectation on one side and occasional disappointment on the other sometimes embittered their intercourse — “was tender and compassionate; no unhappy person ever sued to him for relief without obtaining it if he had any thing to give; and rather than not relieve the distressed he would borrow. The poor woman with whom he had lodged during his obscurity several years in Green Arbour Court, by his death lost an excellent friend; for the Doctor often supplied her with food from his table, and visited her frequently with the sole purpose to be kind to her.”

His generosity indeed might be termed rather a passion than judicious distribution of the limited means he possessed, while in the eyes of his acquaintance, it appeared thoughtless profusion; chance likewise as much as selection seemed to present objects for its exercise. Inferences to the disadvantage of his discernment were consequently drawn by more wary or less liberal observers of mankind, and at the period of his death it was commonly said that “though well known as a child of genius, he was not regarded as a man of the world;” and that “the unbounded liberality of his heart afforded no reason for supposing that he looked searchingly into men and manners.” This however is the mistake of the severer class of judges of their fellow creatures, who confound a really benevolent love for them, with blindness to their faults or want of observation of their characters, though such is by no means the case; it is the province of a truly

great mind only, to discern their errors, yet to pity and relieve their wants; and such was that of Goldsmith. His attachments were strong where he professed attachment; and even where he avowed dislike, so peculiarly sensitive were his feelings, that the occurrence of misfortune or distress in any form, converted him on more than one occasion into an active friend. Remembering these peculiarities, and how frequently in his works of fiction he draws from his own character and recollections, the origin of the sketch given of Sir William Thornhill appears obviously to be from himself.

“ He loved all mankind; for fortune prevented him from knowing that there were rascals. Physicians tell us of a disorder in which the whole body is so exquisitely sensible that the slightest touch gives pain: what some have suffered in their persons, this gentleman felt in his mind. The slightest distress whether real or fictitious, touched him to the quick, and his soul laboured under a sickly sensibility of the miseries of others.”

Of the defects of such a character, conviction and experience had probably made him aware, for he no where holds it up as one entirely to applaud or imitate. In another of his productions, besides many scattered observations to the same effect, we find the following: —

“ In general, the benefactions of a generous man are but ill bestowed. His heart seldom gives him leave to examine the real distress of the object which sues for pity; his good-nature takes

the alarm too soon, and he bestows his fortune on only apparent wretchedness. The man naturally frugal, on the other hand, seldom relieves, but when he does, his reason and not his sensations, generally find out the object. Every instance of his bounty is therefore permanent and bears witness to his benevolence.”\*

A frankness of disposition which led to uncalled-for disclosures, made him the subject of occasional animadversion or censure. “Goldsmith” writes Davies “was so sincere a man, that he could not conceal what was uppermost in his mind ; so far from desiring to appear in the eye of the world to the best advantage, he took more pains to appear worse than he was, than others do to appear better than they are.” Whatever emotion arose seems to have found ready utterance, but the confession of weaknesses however candid or ingenuous, induced some to question his sense, or his prudence ; while the opinions, he hazarded upon literary men and their books, however honestly entertained, had the effect of making him enemies. Reserve, to such as consult their ease or their interests, seems necessary in our intercourse with mankind ; when we have no favourable opinion to give, it may be wise to continue silent unless necessity calls for the disclosure. Of him however it might be truly said that his conversation was but thinking aloud.

\* Life of Nash, see Works, vol. iii.

Among the higher qualities demanding our regard was much honest independence of mind, for like Johnson, he entertained a high idea of the dignity of literature. Thus he neglected the offer of protection made by the Earl of Northumberland, when without solicitation or subserviency, a provision might have been secured to ward off the pressure of want. He dedicated the Traveller not to a patron or man of interest, but to his brother; the Deserted Village to Sir Joshua Reynolds; and She Stoops to Conquer to Dr. Johnson. When solicited to write in support of the ministry of the day whose political principles accorded with his own, we have seen he refused it. At a later period, he may have believed that his reputation should have won some testimony of royal favour, and he probably felt the neglect; but there is no reason to believe that any personal application with that view was ever made by him to persons in power. He would not seek for patronage, but he may not have been unwilling to be sought; what he felt to be due to his merits, he was too proud to solicit as a boon.

Improvidence in pecuniary affairs was his prevailing fault; one of those which on him, as on others, entailed its own punishment. Such a vice or error, in men of high intellectual powers, however leniently viewed by posterity is rarely forgiven by such as live in their own day, who feel an equal jealousy of having their purses or good opinions taxed in favour of the obvious indiscretions

even of clever men ; nor has the prevalence of this fault among persons of that class, yet won much consideration from mankind. As contemporaries we see them too nearly ; and their portion of human infirmity becomes magnified by contiguity. But it is different when viewed through the vista of time and we know their follies cannot recur ; the severity of our judgment then relaxes, their finer qualities which had been shaded for a moment, appear in their native lustre, and by a generous re-action in the human breast, we are glad to render back with interest that forgiveness of error, or praise of desert, which had been for a time withheld. In such a spirit we now look on this failing of Goldsmith ; on which, and on occasional peculiarities of temperament supposed to mark the literary character, we find the following remarks from his pen written at an early period of his career : — “ I fancy the character of a poet is in every country the same ; fond of enjoying the present, careless of the future ; his conversation that of a man of sense, his actions those of a fool ! Of fortitude able to stand unmoved at the bursting of an earthquake, yet of sensibility to be affected by the breaking of a tea-cup ; such is his character, which considered in every light is the very opposite to that which leads to riches.”\*

In a similar spirit, we find another passage in the same work where may be traced allusions to his

\* Citizen of the World—Letter lxxxiii. See Works, vol. ii.



character and to some of his personal foibles.—“The truly great possessed of numerous small faults and shining virtues, preserve a sublime in morals as in writing. They who have attained an excellence in either, commit numberless transgressions, observable to the meanest understanding. The ignorant critic and dull remarker can readily spy blemishes in eloquence or morals, whose sentiments are not sufficiently elevated to observe a beauty. But such are judges neither of books nor of life; they can diminish no solid reputation by their censure, nor bestow a lasting character by their applause.”\*

Viewed as a man of letters, he has long taken his stand as a classical author in nearly every species of composition which he attempted; he has not only exhibited great variety and excellence, but earned the unusual distinction of being equally admired in poetry and in prose.

As a poet, if popularity be a test of merit — and after the lapse of more than half a century we shall in vain look for a better — Goldsmith takes a high rank. He took for his model the classical authorities of preceding years, regardless of the attempt of Warton to lower their standard in public opinion by preferring effusions of fancy to truth of sentiment, the play of imagination to strong sense and vigour of thought. He has thence been said to be of the school of Dryden and Pope,

\* Citizen of the World—Lett. cviii. See Works, vol. ii.

though they can scarcely be said to have founded a school, who but followed Denham, Waller and Roscommon. But if we examine the structure of his verse, it will be found so little to resemble either that he must be considered to have as few obligations to their rhyme, as Young or Thompson have to the blank verse of Milton. He does not attempt the daring license frequently assumed by Dryden, but with more taste in the selection of words, and more care in his versification, exhibits more power over the softer affections than that great writer; while if less terse than Pope, he has more pathos, nature and simplicity. There is a charm in his chief poems which we can better feel than describe, partaking something of his personal character; a philosophical tone, an air of amiability, a sympathy with the sufferings of mankind, an easy familiarity of manner not without due dignity, and an identification of his feelings and affections with the subjects, which inspires a certain interest in the writer. It is true he draws little upon invention; recollection readily supplied such materials as his purpose required; and in this as has been said, he found a follower in a late noble poet, who in a few of his poems has written as much from personal impressions and remembrances as Goldsmith. His sentiments are generally just, his ethical precepts have force and truth, his similes novelty, his descriptions vigour and variety. It is obvious he was a studious observer of nature; what he saw he retained, and possessed

such skill to turn to use, as to give many of his scenes a strong air of reality. He has no conceits, no far-fetched imagery, no startling thoughts; neither has he from the nature of his subjects, any powerful displays of passion with which to surprise or agitate us; but he paints what produces a more permanent impression, those calmer feelings and domestic scenes which come home to every individual of our species.

He has the further merit in the construction of his verse, of never attempting to produce effect by straining or inversion of language; plain words are used in the plainest manner; he is easy, flowing, and free; never obscure in sense, involved in his sentences, or harsh in expression; he uses no triplets. He has few defective rhymes, and his versification generally, in addition to its polish, possesses condensation and point, yet with an ease that conceals the labour employed on its production. In all that he attempts there is so much of the master, as to cheat us into the belief, that what seems so easily done, it is easy to do.

One of the avenues to the heart of which he makes skilful use, is strong sympathy with our fellow men, particularly of the poorer and unfriended class, in whose cause his verse and his prose were ever ready and eloquent, and which we have seen influenced his conduct as well as his writings. This is always a popular theme, and wins esteem from generous minds, more particularly when our sympathies are excited by accusations of habitual

injustice towards them by the rich; a theory which we know is often untrue; but as he adverts to their condition with all the warmth of a poet, we are willing to forgive the mistakes of the philosopher. When to his other qualities are added such as have been generally conceded to him, pathos, energy, and sublimity; and we remember that he has gratified the more learned and fastidious description of readers by the Traveller, and all classes by the Deserted Village and the Hermit, we shall cease to be surprised at the multiplied editions of his works continually issuing from the press.

Peculiar theories of poetry, or attachment to what are called other schools in the art, have produced some attempts to detract from his merit. Thus one critic dislikes his supposed school, or model, considers his popularity no test of excellence, and tells us to our amazement that he wants fancy and pathos.\* Another (Dr. Beattie) who was himself a poet, expressly tells us in contradiction to this, that he is distinguished for “pathos, energy, and even sublimity.”

\* “His poems I esteem to possess great value, because they are both original, and among the most finished of their kind; but I never can yield to that school of criticism of which Dr. Johnson was the master, that that is a very high kind. Goldsmith was like Pope, a poet rather of reason *than of fancy or pathos*; and his popularity does not appear to me by any means a test, though a favourite test with Johnson, of his transcendent claims. But it seems the style of poetry he adopted resulted not merely from the character of his genius but from the conviction of his judgment that it was the best.”—*Censura Literaria* by SIR EGERTON BRYDGES.

As an example of a third class of opinions, we may quote Cumberland, who however displays something of the temper of a writer conscious that his epic was unread, while the smaller poems of Goldsmith found their way into all hands. "That he was a poet," he tells us, "there is no doubt; but the paucity of his verses does not allow us to rank him in that high station where his genius might have carried him. There must be bulk, variety and grandeur of design to constitute a first rate poet. The *Deserted Village*, *Traveller*, and *Hermit* are all specimens, beautiful as such; but they are only birds' eggs on a string, and eggs of small birds too."

What is meant by the phrase "birds' eggs on a string" is not very clear; that he did not write very long poems we know; that he failed to do so from want of the requisite powers, no one who reads him will believe; and this the critic even appears to admit. But we have positive proofs in the remarks scattered through his writings and such as fell from him in conversation, that he thought the greater part of modern poems defective in expanding upon a large number of lines the ideas which with more skill and wiser ambition, might have been condensed into a few. Thus in the *Vicar of Wakefield* as we have seen, he censures the use of epithets as introducing a false taste into English poetry, increasing the sound without carrying on the sense. In the selections from the Poets it will also be remembered,

he characterises Eloisa to Abelard as “ drawn out to too tedious a length ;” he calls Thomson “ a verbose poet ;” and if we may believe Mr. Cradock, he considered even the lines of Gray’s Elegy capable of being curtailed with advantage ; he praises Parnell’s Hermit as being “ perspicuous and *concise* ;” and his own example proves that he considered expansion fatal to the generality of poetry. Had he believed distinction to await less the strength of his lines than their arithmetical amount, this defect might have been amply remedied, for he blotted out infinitely more than he published. By contracting his limits he hoped to add to his power ; and if equal severity of pruning had been used by contemporary and preceding writers, (always excepting Pope and Gray, who carried this species of literary scrutiny sufficiently far), to their superfluous and indifferent lines, how many would be shorn of their present dimensions ?

Bulk indeed is the criterion of the tradesman rather than of the critic ; it is of value in commerce, though not essential to wit. The claims of the poet to superiority are grounded upon other considerations ; such as the judgment shown in the selection of his subjects, and the taste and ability displayed in their execution. If in these we find Goldsmith happy, choosing as themes national characteristics which seldom change, and natural objects which never tire, and treating both with uncommon skill, he must be considered to possess the first requisites of a good poet. A great statesman and also an ex-

cellent judge of poetry (Mr. Fox), declared there was not a bad line in the Traveller. Lord Byron has been more general and more emphatic in his commendation. "You say" he replies to an observation made on Don Juan\*, "that one half is very good; you are wrong; for if it were, it would be the finest poem in existence. Where is the poetry of which one half is good? Is it the Æneid? Is it Milton's? Is it Dryden's? Is it any one's except Pope's and Goldsmith's, of which all is good. And yet these two last are the poets your pond poets would explode."

Grandeur of design, stated by Cumberland as another requisite of first rate poetry, may form no certain test of merit. We have had many epics since the death of Goldsmith, embracing what the foregoing critic considers so essential, namely, "bulk, variety, and grandeur of design" wholly unread and unthought of, not surviving even the year of their birth, and this simply because though not always ill conceived, they were badly executed. Execution would therefore seem the first requisite in a poem; the plan or "design" appears but of secondary character, if we are permitted to judge from experience, rather than from an erroneous theory. Were it true that greatness of conception chiefly, is necessary to form good poems or distinguished poets, what shall become of most of the Greek and Latin writers? What of Dryden? What of Pope, Thomson, Dyer,

\* In allusion to the 3d and 4th Cantos: Moore's Life of Lord Byron, vol. iv. p. 306.

Somerville, and even Young? What of Lord Byron in Childe Harold? for in none of these however admirable otherwise, is there what is understood by "grandeur of design." If paucity of verses again be objected to as fatal to the pretensions of poets, what is to become of Collins with his eclogues? Of Gray with his odes? Of Burns with his songs? — Of Waller, Denham, Addison, Parnell, and the long catalogue of names which make up the list of English poets whose works want the length and most of them the merit, of those of Goldsmith?

There are readers and occasional critics of another description. A few who are not without rank in letters, appear to be sufficiently conscious of the ease and simplicity of his lines, yet commit the mistake of undervaluing them; and seem to think that what is so exquisitely natural must necessarily be common-place.

They have forgotten that standard maxim in criticism, that the perfection of art is to conceal art. But we find that there are some seemingly averse to all concealment on such occasions, who find pleasure in witnessing the workman's toils, and in viewing in the finished work the various processes of labour employed by the artist. One of these seems to be Sir James Mackintosh, who gives the preference to Gray, because as he says if we rightly construe his meaning, "he was the most finished *artist*;" and whose productions he adds, "to the eye of the critic and more especially to the *artist*, afford a new kind of pleasure, not incom-



patible with a distinct perception of the *art* employed." This opinion prepares us for a bold assertion, and quite as novel as it is bold, in the following passage: — "The most celebrated poets of the same period" says Sir James in one of the journals of his reading kept in India, speaking of Goldsmith and Gray, "were writers unequal in genius but still more dissimilar in their taste. They were as distant from each other as two writers can be who are both within the sphere of classical writing. Goldsmith was the most natural of cultivated poets. Though he retained the cadence, he softened and varied the style of his master Pope. *His ideas are often common-place and his language slovenly*\*; but his simplicity and tenderness will always continue to render him one of the most delightful of our poets. Whatever excellence he possesses is genuine, neither the result of affectation nor even of effort; few writers have so much poetry with so little glare."

Were his ideas and language of the description here mentioned, common-place and slovenly, he could not have retained the rank he has so long held with credit in English verse; for these defects, as they are soon perceptible, would have immediately displaced him into a lower station. The mistake arises from his being so wholly unaffected,

\* Sir James does not seem to have wholly admired Cowper. He says the talent of writing verse with elegance and harmony "was rather bestowed on Cowper with a niggardly hand." And again he talks of "the long deserts over which the poetical passages of Cowper are scattered." — *Life*, vol. ii. pp. 230. 235.

that we are led to believe what he tells us must necessarily be familiar or common ; yet the slightest examination shews us that his subjects were not in themselves low, nor did he fall below his subjects ; he is beyond most poets, appropriate ; whatever he describes few that have ventured to follow him, of which there are several examples Crabbe being one of the number, who are not compelled to imitation in thought or in language ; and this could not be the case were the one common-place, or the other slovenly. It is in fact his simplicity, the absence of all glare and effort which are admitted, by the terms of the criticism, or in short his general skill and excellence, that have misled the critic into a decision in which scarcely any reader of taste will concur. Sir James indeed was a lawyer and a metaphysician ; and to such, let us on the other hand oppose the judgment of a poet. Sir Walter Scott, some years ago, in performing the office of reviewer to a volume of poems in a distinguished periodical work, thus writes : —

“ In a subsequent poem, Mr. Pratt is informed (for he probably never dreamt of it) that he inherits the lyre of Goldsmith. If this be true the lyre is much the worse for wear ; and for our parts we would as soon take the bequest of a Jew’s harp as the reversion of so worthless an instrument.

“ This is the third instance we remember of living poets being complimented at the expense of poor Goldsmith. A literary journal has thought proper to extol Mr. Crabbe as far above him ; and Mr.

Richards (a man of genius also we readily admit) has been said in a note to a late sermon, famous for its length, to unite 'the nervousness of Dryden with the ease of Goldsmith.' This is all very easily asserted. The native ease and grace of Goldsmith's versification have probably led to the deception; but it would be difficult to point out one among the English poets less likely to be excelled in his own style than the author of the 'Deserted Village.' Possessing much of the compactness of Pope's versification, without the monotonous structure of his lines; rising sometimes to the swell and fulness of Dryden, without his inflations; delicate and masterly in his descriptions; graceful in one of the greatest graces of poetry, its transitions; alike successful in his sportive or grave, his playful or melancholy mood; he may long bid defiance to the numerous competitors whom the friendship or flattery of the present age is so hastily arraying against him."\*

"Goldsmith's poetry," — says Mr. Thomas Campbell, among other remarks on the characteristics which particularly distinguish it, — "enjoys a calm and steady popularity, and presents a distinct and unbroken view of poetical delightfulness. His descriptions and sentiments have the pure zest of nature. He is refined without false delicacy and correct without insipidity. Perhaps there is an intellectual composure in his manner which may in some passages be said to approach to the reserved

\* Quarterly Review, vol. iv. pp. 516-17.

and prosaic ; but he unbends from this graver strain of reflection to tenderness and even to playfulness with an ease and grace almost exclusively his own ; and connects extensive views of the happiness and interests of society with pictures of life that touch the heart by their familiarity.”

The term descriptive, has likewise been applied to his poems, implying something not of the highest order of merit. Yet in the same sense that the Traveller and the Deserted Village have been called descriptive poems, what is Childe Harold, with all its originalities of sentiment and reflection, and vivid powers of description, but one of the same class ? So difficult is it to define good poetry by a name, or to judge of a poem by the supposed class to which it belongs.

To the execution and tendency of his poems, which are more material objects than their class, we have the following unquestionable testimony : —

“ I have read,” says Cowper writing to Lady Hesketh in 1785, and as this seems to have been the first perusal, the fact would surprise us but that he professed to be no reader of poetry — “ Goldsmith’s Traveller and Deserted Village, and am highly pleased with them both ; as well for the manner in which they are executed, as for their tendency, and the lessons that they inculcate.”

To fix the precise place he occupies among English poets is more difficult, as critics and readers will ever differ in opinion according to their differences of taste. But looking to all his qualities, the wit

and delicate satire of *Retaliation*, the familiar humour of the *Haunch of Venison* and shorter pieces, the unaffected simplicity of the *Hermit*, no doubt the finest ballad in our, and probably in any other, language, and the serious powers displayed in his ethical poems, he will take rank among those of the last age next to Dryden and Pope. This place is fairly due to him whether we look to his variety or excellence, his vigour and extent of thought, or power of touching the heart; for looking at Gray, Akenside, or any other who lived in his own day, we shall find them all inferior in that combination of qualities necessary to constitute an eminent, and — for in matters of general taste it is impossible to overlook this quality — popular, poet. That he did not write more in that capacity we may regret, though his reasons were sufficiently cogent. By his own account, sometimes expressed jocularly and sometimes with a tone of bitterness, he declared he could not live by it; and he declined dying a martyr even to poetry. That he had all the love for his art which clings to the true poet, there is no doubt, and we shall in vain look for a more affecting address to it than in the valedictory lines, not meant to be adhered to we are assured had his pecuniary circumstances improved, in the conclusion of the *Deserted Village* — and which though adverted to before will bear repetition —

“ And thou, sweet Poetry! thou loveliest maid,  
Still first to fly where sensual joys invade;

Unfit, in these degenerate times of shame,  
To catch the heart, or strike for honest fame :  
Dear, charming nymph, neglected and decried,  
My shame in crowds, my solitary pride.  
Thou source of all my bliss and all my woe,  
That found'st me poor at first, and keep'st me so ;  
Thou guide by which the nobler arts excel,  
Thou nurse of every virtue, fare thee well !”

It seems also to have been forgotten by all who advert to the limited quantity of Goldsmith's poetry, that he died at the age of little more than forty-five, in the very vigour of life, when his powers were matured, his imagination heightened, his power of thought strengthened, when much was expected from him, when much we may reasonably believe would have been achieved, and the anticipation of Dr. Johnson realised, that “ Every year he lived he would have deserved Westminster Abbey the more.” At such an age, Cowper, who became one of our most popular and prolific Poets, was still unknown to the world.

Three natives of Ireland, and the circumstance is not unworthy of remark, stand nearly, if not quite, at the head of our prose literature as regards their styles, though each as different in manner as he was in genius ; these are Swift in what is called the plain style, Goldsmith in the middle or more elegant style, and Burke in that of the higher order of eloquence. With the former and the latter we have at present nothing to do. But the claim of Goldsmith to take rank as one of the first, if not the very first of the elegant writers of

our country, must not be passed unnoticed. Addison indeed is not forgotten; he long and worthily occupied that station, nor should any merit be withheld from him to the undue exaltation of any other candidate, as his purity, ease, and idiomatic English, deserve all praise. With something less of purity, Goldsmith has however equal ease, greater perspicuity, more variety, and more strength; if he conjoin therefore at once vigour and ease, and impress the reader more powerfully either by the construction of his sentences or the selection of his words, he may divide at least the palm with Addison, if not seize it from him altogether; a distinction in letters which has been indeed assigned him by more than one professedly critical writer.

In running over his pages, it will be seen that he is rarely or never to be caught in a long or slovenly sentence; we see none cut short for the sake of mere point, or rounded for its sonorous effect; he is free from every appearance of labour or affectation. The words, which have no resemblance to the "learned length or sound" of those of Johnson, fall into their proper places without seeming effort, and upon the ear with musical cadence. All his earlier as well as later literary labours exhibit the same characteristics, so that his style may be considered formed as much by native good taste or a fine ear, as by study, though the latter was not neglected. If there be a shade of difference in his various productions, the *Vicar of Wakefield* and *Citizen of the World* appear to be

written in the simplest manner ; in addresses to the public in the way of advertisement for his bookseller, he is, as was probably required of him in order to attract readers, smart, epigrammatic, or antithetical ; in his histories, and particularly in the first and some other volumes of *Animated Nature*, he is eloquent, natural, and polished in a high degree. Without rejecting ornament he is sparing of it ; he admits of none that retards for a moment the onward course of his subject, and his language is intelligible to the most unlearned reader. "Taste in writing" he says in a chapter of the *Enquiry into Polite Learning* which was expunged in the second edition, "is the exhibition of the greatest quantity of beauty and of use, that may be admitted into any description without counteracting each other." By this rule it may be presumed his own style was formed.

Goldsmith as well as Addison, is distinguished more by humour than by wit though this quality is frequent in both ; and by a suavity of manner that aims to correct our follies through the medium of gentle raillery or persuasion, rather than by satire authoritative or admonition. They seem like men speaking to men as their equals ; neither assuming the lash of the satirist, nor the dictatorial superiority of the philosopher ; and this forms one of the reasons why both have secured so strong a hold upon popular favour. If either writer were the subject of strong passions, we should not be led to



suspect it by any thing discoverable in their writings; we find nothing of bitterness, of sarcastic animadversion, no invective, no exaggeration of fact, and in their fictions, no overstraining of character. All is equable, smooth and natural, with an air of good nature and moderation that win upon the reader; both teach the purest morality in the most engaging manner. Between two such writers, it may be difficult to decide which shall have the stronger claim upon our gratitude and esteem; both have laboured for the correction of our follies, for the inculcation of the best principles, and by the literary as well as moral excellence of their writings, have thrown no common brilliancy over the popular literature of their country.

“The wreath of Goldsmith” says Sir Walter Scott “is unsullied; he wrote to exalt virtue and expose vice; and he accomplished his task in a manner which raises him to the highest rank among British authors. We close his volume (the novel) with a sigh that such an author should have written so little from the stores of his own genius, and that he should have been so prematurely removed from the sphere of literature which he so highly adorned.”

“There is” says Cumberland, and no ordinary merit could have extracted such testimony from him, “something in Goldsmith’s prose that to my ear is uncommonly sweet and harmonious; it is clear, simple, easy to be understood; we never

want to read his period over except for the pleasure it bestows ; obscurity never calls us back to a repetition of it."

"As a prose writer" says Dr. Anderson in his *British Poets* "Goldsmith must be allowed to have rivalled and even exceeded Dr. Johnson and his imitator Dr. Hawkesworth, the most celebrated professional prose writer of his time. His prose may be regarded as the model of perfection, and the standard of our language ; to equal which the efforts of most will be vain, and to exceed it, every expectation, folly."

To these may be added what is sufficient for the fame of any writer, the well-known eulogium of Johnson, who in the life of Parnell characterizes Goldsmith as "a man of such variety of powers and such felicity of performance that he always seemed to do best that which he was doing ; a man who had the art of being minute without tediousness, and general without confusion ; whose language was copious without exuberance, exact without constraint, and easy without weakness."

Were not the decisions of criticism as different as the several writers of it, we should be often surprised at the variations they display. In the opinion formed of Goldsmith's prose, as well as of certain points in his poetry, Sir James Mackintosh again seems to dissent from general opinion ; but we may account for this perhaps by remembering that his own style of composition differs widely from so unaffected a model ; *his* defect in

general opinion, is too much labour; he exhibits more than is agreeable of what in characterizing Gray's poetry, he calls the "finished artist." "His prose" writes Sir James "is of a pure school, but not of sufficient elegance to atone for the substantial defects of his writings, except indeed in one charming novel in which if he had more abstained from common-place declamation, less indulged his national propensity to broad farce, and not at last hurried his personages out of their difficulties with improbable confusion, he would have reached nearly the highest rank in that species of composition."

To this estimate of the prose of Goldsmith, which from all other critics has received the praise of great elegance, let us again contrast, in concluding this account and in addition to what has been already quoted, the opinion of the late Lord Dudley and Ward, no ordinary authority on such a subject, when likewise exercising the office of reviewer in the same journal in which Sir Walter Scott records his opinion of his poetry.

"The Irish," said his Lordship, "are rich beyond most other nations in natural endowments and they are daily advancing in education and knowledge. Their great defect is bad taste. This is the rock upon which the best talents among them are wrecked; and this will continue to be the case as long as they insist upon decoration and sublimity in works which properly belong to the 'middle style.' As a first step toward improvement we

would heartily recommend them to choose some safer and less brilliant object of imitation. If they seek it among their own countrymen, the name of Swift will at once occur ; and in more recent times, they will find in the prose of Goldsmith as perfect a model as any that exists in our language of purity, facility, and grace, of clear lively narration, of the most exhilarating gaiety, of the most touching pathos, in short of almost every merit that style can possess, except in those comparatively few instances in which the subject calls for a display of higher and impassioned eloquence.”\*

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Enquiries being frequently made respecting the Poet's family, arising from notices occasionally seen in the public journals, the following particulars exhibiting some of the peculiarities and vicissitudes in life to which its members were said to be subject, may interest the reader.

The death of the Rev. Henry Goldsmith, his elder brother to whom the Traveller was dedicated, in 1768, has been mentioned, leaving a widow, son, and daughter. The former visited London in 1777 and became known to Dr. Johnson, Mr. George Steevens, and other literary friends of her brother-in-law who contributed some pecuniary aid ; and Johnson particularly desired she would on her return, procure authentic materials for the

\* Quarterly Review, vol. vi., Article on Hardy's Life of Lord Charlemont.

Poet's life. Fears having been entertained of the loss of the vessel in which she returned to Ireland, Dr. Johnson was enabled to contradict the report in the following note to Steevens, dated 25th February, 1777.

“ You will be glad to hear that from Mrs. Goldsmith whom we lamented as drowned, I have received a letter full of gratitude to us all, with promise to make the enquiries which we recommended to her.

“ I would have had the honour of conveying this intelligence to Miss Caulfield, but that her letter is not at hand, and I know not the direction. You will tell the good news.”

Being but slenderly provided for she afterwards accepted the situation of matron to the Meath Infirmary at Navan. Her daughter, Catherine, the Rev. Thomas Handcock mentions in a letter to the late Mr. Cooper Walker, Oct. 7th 1799 as “ possessing an uncommon genius for music. \* \* \* She is as like in her features to the painting of the Poet by Sir Joshua Reynolds, as possible.” She wrote a few pieces in prose and verse, which were praised by her acquaintance, taught music some years in Dublin, where she is well remembered; but laboured under the disadvantage of eccentric habits and unsettled opinions; and to the great scandal of her surviving friends who consider it one of the blots in the family, died professing the Roman Catholic faith.

Just before this event, Bishop Percy had en-

deavoured to assist her, by the publication of her uncle's works, as appears by a letter from him to Mr. Hawkins Browne, Nov. 2d 1802. \* "When I was last in England I applied to you in behalf of a poor niece, of our excellent poet Dr. Goldsmith, the daughter of his brother, to whom he addressed his fine poem 'The Traveller' thinking she was a proper object of some charity at your disposal. You then rectified my mistake in that particular, but most kindly offered to promote the sale of an edition of her uncle's works which I was then promoting for her benefit. This was published last spring by Messrs. Cadell and Davies, in 4 vols. 8vo., to which I contributed materials for an improved account of the author's life, and the publishers gave me, 200 copies to be disposed of, for the benefit of his poor relations."

Henry, the son, was distinguished for spirit, intelligence, and personal beauty; it is recorded of him that having broken his leg in some daring feat of activity, and finding after the lapse of a fortnight that it was improperly set by the surgeon, he designedly broke it again for the purpose of having this operation more correctly conducted. His subsequent history partakes so much of the changes of fortune said to characterize the family that it must not be omitted here. A commission being obtained for him in the army, he quitted Ireland for North America about the year 1782;

\* In the possession of Miss Boddington, to whom the writer is indebted for the favour of the perusal.

but this portion of his history may be told in the words of his constant friend and correspondent the Rev. Tho<sup>o</sup>. Handcock, in a letter to Jos<sup>h</sup>. Cooper Walker Esq. Oct. 7th 1799.

“The only persons of his (Oliver’s) family that I know to be now living, are Henry Goldsmith, the nephew before mentioned, late a lieutenant in the 54th regiment; a man who with an uncommon flow of spirits, possesses a large portion of his Uncle’s genius. Whilst labouring under the effects of a wound he received in America during the war there, he was much indebted to the tenderness of a young lady of Rhode Island, — daughter of a rebel family upon whom he had been quartered, and in gratitude, married her. Her family offered 6000*l.* with her, on condition of quitting the British service; but he declined it, and her fortune became confiscated in consequence of some vicissitudes in the campaign. After the peace he sold out and settled with her somewhere in Nova Scotia; where by dint of labour and industry, aided by the friendship of his regiment then quartered there, he reclaimed a large tract of ground, and erected saw-mills, whereby he had a prospect of affluence; but was once, by an accidental fire, and again by an inundation, reduced to ruin.

“In short for many years he plunged through unheard-of distresses and difficulties until very lately, when accident made our young Prince, the Duke of Kent, acquainted with his person and history; and his Royal Highness lost no time in

raising him, a wife and ten children, considerably above want, as I learn by a letter from Goldsmith within these last six weeks. I had until I left this country \*, received his rent and managed his affairs, and in his distresses he often urged me to sell his interest in the Deserted Village, (Lissoy) which I continued to avoid, to his present very great satisfaction."

Some letters of Henry to this gentleman exhibit strong attachment to the scenes of his youth, and a warm, frank, soldier-like spirit, that speaks highly for his personal character. May 28th, 1798, he writes, "I much fear it will never be my good fortune to set me down there, (Lissoy) notwithstanding my strong and ardent wish that such an event might take place; indeed if I shall at any time be able to take my family to Ireland to remain, my desires will be highly gratified. But I must own to you, that I do not think Ireland the most desirable spot of the globe to take a large family to at the present time. — I should like to be there myself that I might once more draw my sword in defence of the offended laws. \* \* \* What do these people want? Is it a total abolition of British supremacy? Or a

\* In 1798, during the horrors of the rebellion, when Mr. Handcock was, like many other honest and loyal men, compelled to fly from his residence near New Ross to escape massacre. This he accomplished with such difficulty, as to preserve no portion whatever of his property, not even wearing apparel, excepting such as his family carried on their persons. He has written a painfully interesting account of his escape, now in the hands of the Rev. Dr. Handcock of Dublin.



mitigation of penal statutes? Or is it not their final aim to be constituted a republic like France?"

He took the most anxious interest in the safety of his friend Mr. Handcock, at this moment of rebellious phrenzy and crime. "Many times have I figured to myself in silent sorrow and anguish, the very scene which you have so feelingly described to me; nay sometimes I brought myself to conceive the midnight massacre of yourself, and all your family. \* \* \* The escape of your little garrison, with your family in the crowd, is a miracle similar to that of the children of Israel, crossing the Red Sea. Would to Heaven I had commanded the 54th regiment as I once knew it, by your side at the time." \* \* \* One of his sons, he describes as a "fine, open, generous-tempered fellow, but idle, volatile, and giddy like his poor father." Of his paternal property he writes, "With respect to Lishoy, I have determined to let Bond have it in consequence of Colvill's advice, but under such restrictions as cannot I think hurt me. I have given up every idea of residing there, but I shall never part with it so long as I can possibly do without, and it shall be one of the articles of my will to remain in my family."

This resolution necessity prevented him from keeping; the result appears in the following, communication, 28th November 1802: "The business of the sale of Lishoy to Bond is at length determined; Colvill got four hundred pounds for my interest in the lease, and I am thereby enabled to

get clear of all my embarrassments." Still his heart yearned after Ireland. (Nov. 22d 1803.) "I do not like the place I am in (Halifax,) nor the climate. My heart and soul look to my native country, because there are three or four friends there with whom I commenced my voyage through life, and near whom I do most sincerely wish to end it." Dec. 25th 1803. "This day twenty-one years I think I dined with you in Athlone, and perhaps it may not be many years before I eat some of your beef and plum-pudding again. *I wish so to Harry, says Tom.*"

A letter written by him subsequently (20th March 1808) to the late Mr. Goldsmith, of Stephen's Green, Dublin, his father's pupil already mentioned, repeats the same lively and affectionate feelings.

"What a number of years, my dear John, have elapsed since I heard of you, or you probably of me! Lately by the arrival of the 101st regiment in this garrison, I have learnt from an officer of that corps, Mr. Anthony Dillon of Roscommon, that he knew you. It delighted me to hear that you are well, and that one of our name still existed, for I thought that all were extinct except myself. Pray are you married? To whom? Have you any children? How many? I could ask you almost a thousand questions in a breath.

"Since I left Ireland in 1783, (2) never hardly have you known a man, who has met with such repeated shocks of adversity, both by fire and

water, particularly by the former, which twice consumed every thing I was worth.

“ I am fixed here in the Commissariat Department, and have a family of nine children, five sons, and four daughters. The eldest Henry, follows the profession of the law ; Hugh Colvill is I hope ere this a lieutenant, in the navy ; Oliver is with a merchant at Boston ; Charles is a midshipman on this station ; and Benjamin a boy. The daughters Ann, Catherine, Eliza, and Jane, are at home with me, and promise to be all I wish them. Thus in a few words have I given you the names, and situations, of us all. Nothing in this life would please me more than to be settled in Ireland somewhere near the spot where I first drew breath, that I might as my uncle says

———— ‘ die at home at last.’

“ What is become of all the Hodsons, the Isbells, &c. &c. in fact I almost forget the names. I do not however forget the name of Ballyoughter, where in my earliest days I recollect having spent happy hours with your worthy father, Joe, your uncles Walter and John. — Yet can still say that —

‘ My heart untravell’d fondly turns to thee.’

“ I beg I may hear from you, and fail not to describe every thing to me you remember.”

This gentleman, unable to realize the wish of revisiting his native country, died at St. John’s, New Brunswick, in July 1811. His family still

survive. Two of his sons are, as he states, in the navy, officers of merit. Another, who has been since 1814 an officer highly esteemed in the Commissariat in North America, has with the name of his uncle, caught no small portion of his inspiration. In 1825 appeared "The Rising Village; a Poem. By Oliver Goldsmith;" a work of very considerable ingenuity, and peculiarly appropriate to the country in which he resides. Such scenes as it describes must have come frequently under his view, and they no doubt afford scope for the exercise of high poetical powers; but the title and even his name are rather disadvantages to the writer, by seeming to bring him into immediate competition with his eminent relative. It was introduced to the public in 1821 by a preface from the Bishop of Nova Scotia, and the following is by no means one of its best passages.

"Happy Arcadia! though around thy shore  
Is heard the stormy wind's terrific roar;  
Though round thee Winter binds his icy chains,  
And his rude tempests sweep along thy plains;  
Still Summer comes with her luxuriant band,  
Of fruits and flowers, to decorate thy land;  
Still Autumn, smiling o'er thy fertile soil,  
With richest gifts repays the lab'rer's toil;  
With bounteous hand his varied wants supplies,  
And scarce the fruit of other suns denies.  
How pleasing, and how glowing with delight,  
Are now thy budding hopes! How sweetly bright  
They rise to view! How full of joy appear  
The expectations of each future year!  
Not fifty summers yet have bless'd thy clime  
(How short a period in the page of time!)

Since savage tribes, with terror in their train,  
Rush'd o'er thy fields, and ravag'd all thy plain.  
But some few years have roll'd in haste away  
Since, through thy vales, the fearless beast of prey,  
With dismal yell and loud appalling cry,  
Proclaim'd their midnight reign of horror nigh.  
And now how chang'd the scene! The first, afar,  
Have fled to wilds beneath the northern star;  
The last have learn'd to shun the dreaded eye  
Of lordly man, and in their turn to fly.  
While the poor peasant, whose laborious care  
Scarce from the soil could wring his scanty fare;  
Now in the peaceful arts of culture skill'd,  
Sees his wide barns with ample treasures fill'd;  
Now finds his dwelling, as the year goes round,  
Beyond his hopes, with joy and plenty crown'd."

A member of the family, whose heart yearned toward the land of his fathers, though he had never seen it, thus enthusiastically writes to a relative in Ireland in 1828: "Poor Old Ireland! generous, kind, and affectionate was the parental heart that taught me to revere thee as the birth-place of my father! Would to God that his dust reposed within thy bosom! — Yes, dear Lishoy, though a native of another clime, warmly does my heart and feelings participate in thy welfare and prosperity. Hope swells my bosom; and I look forward with joy and delight to the time when I shall be enabled to tread thy soil, visit thy bowers, breathe the air of Erin's green Isle, and wander over the hallowed scenes of Sweet Auburn! Yet when that happy period shall arrive, or whether it ever will arrive, is known only to that inscrutable wisdom which governs all things."

Of his elder sister Mrs. Hodson and her descendants, and of his brother Maurice, accounts have been already given. Another sister (Mrs. Johnston) is said to have married clandestinely under the erroneous impression of her husband being the legitimate son of a gentleman of fortune ; no provision being made for him by his father, their circumstances proved by no means prosperous ; two sons are said to have been drowned in the Revenue service, and a daughter is the wife of a respectable tradesman in Dublin.

The history of Charles his younger brother, of whom some notice occurs in a preceding page, is connected with a romantic incident told in Northcote's *Life of Reynolds*, by Mr. Laird, a literary man well known a few years ago in London. \*

While travelling in a stage-coach towards Ireland in the autumn of 1791, a respectable looking man joined the passengers at Oswestry, who on some inquiry being made had occasion to say his name was Goldsmith. A remark followed from a fellow traveller, that if he meant to visit Ireland, the name there would be a passport to favour from the veneration entertained for the Poet by the people. The stranger answered with emotion that he was his brother ; and in reply to an observation that only one brother, Maurice was supposed to be alive, added that his name was Charles ; that he

\* Northcote assured the writer of these pages that Laird, not himself, procured the greater part of the materials for the *Life of Sir Joshua* and put them together ; his own part was small, and confined chiefly to criticism on arts and artists.

was the younger of the family ; and having been long absent from Europe without corresponding with his relatives, was no doubt considered dead ; but he was now on his way to Ireland to see whether any of his kindred yet survived.

In reply to further questions an early account of his visit to England, was given nearly similar to that already mentioned. He had been induced to visit Oliver in London he said, with the expectation of being provided for, but finding his mistake, had after some delay quitted it without ceremony and embarked a friendless adventurer for the West Indies. In Jamaica and in some others of the islands he had ever since resided, had amassed some property by his industry, was married and had children ; and had revisited England alone to ascertain the propriety of transferring them and his property thither ; but wished first to see how his relatives were situated in Ireland, and whether they would know or receive him, if told he had returned as poor as he set out.

This design it appears was carried into effect under circumstances somewhat dramatic, with Maurice, who received his long lost brother in the warmest manner. Charles afterwards proceeded to the West Indies, brought his family to Europe about 1795 or 1796, and resided for some time in the Polygon in Somers Town\*, and having

\* So the writer was informed by the author of Caleb Williams, who at that time lived within a door or two of him, and whose death while these sheets are passing through the press, has been announced.

proceeded to France after the peace of Amiens, narrowly escaped detention there on the resumption of hostilities in 1803. There being then no nearer relative of the Poët living, Bishop Percy wished him to profit by the remaining copies of the edition of his brother's works which continued undisposed of, and wrote to Malone to find him out, whose reply bears date Oct. 25th 1803.

“Not being able to execute your commission in person, I wrote to my friend Mr. Brindley of the Stamp Office, from whom I have received a most satisfactory answer on the subject of your inquiry. He found out Mr. Charles Goldsmith, though he does not now live at No. 1. Dorset Place, and the house has changed inhabitants twice since he left it. Goldsmith waited on Mr. Brindley, and it seems he has been out of England for a year, in consequence of which he never got your Lordship's letter. He narrowly escaped being imprisoned in France. His present abode is at No. 19. Southampton Street, Pentonville, Islington. He said he would write soon to you, and seemed much pleased at the prospect of deriving some emolument from his brother's works, whom Mr. B. says he much resembles in person, speech and manner.”\*

\* From MS. correspondence in the possession of Mr. Mason. —By a subsequent letter of the Bishop to Malone, it appears that he received a letter from Charles, and turned over to him 60 copies of the Poet's works which remained unsold, out of the 200 granted by the publishers.



The family of Charles consisted of two sons Henry and Oliver, and of two daughters; one of the latter married a native of France, and is now resident in England; the other is supposed to have died unmarried. One of the sons, the late Mr. Northcote informed the writer, applied to him for an introduction to the stage which he had thoughts of pursuing as a profession, and received a letter in furtherance of his views to Mr. Charles Kemble, but the design appears to have been relinquished. The death of one of these gentlemen is thus announced in a Jamaica newspaper Oct. 25th 1828.

“Died at Belmont in St. Ann’s on the 21st Oct. 1828 in the 32d year of his age Oliver Francis Goldsmith Esq. This young man thus taken in the prime of life from the bosom of an adoring family, was the nephew of our late Poet Dr. Goldsmith. He possessed all those talents and virtues which can render a man an ornament to society, and long will his irreparable loss be deplored by an affectionate wife and children and a large circle of relations and friends.”

The fate of the other Henry, has not been ascertained, but a person named Goldsmith, and claiming to be a nephew of the Poet died in the Cholera Hospital in Bristol in 1833; he was in a state of destitution, and may have had no just right to the honour he assumed. A few letters on this subject appeared in one of the daily journals (*Morning Herald*); and some pertinent remarks were added on the negligence of the authorities of the Temple, in not

marking by some memorial the resting-place of so celebrated a writer. \*

The late Mr. Cooper Walker of Dublin endeavoured to assist another female relative of the poet, by procuring for her the situation of house-

\* Since the above was written, a letter corroborating the principal facts, has been pointed out by a friend in a periodical work of merit and extensive circulation (*The Mirror*) from one who knew the family of Charles Goldsmith.

“As I was personally acquainted with Charles Goldsmith, the younger brother of Oliver, the poet, I am enabled to furnish a few particulars in addition to those of Philo, contained in No. 573. of the *Mirror*. Charles, on his coming to this country from the West Indies, had with him two daughters, and one son named Henry; all under 14 years of age. He purchased two houses in the Polygon, Somers Town, in one of which he resided; here the elder of his girls died; I attended her funeral; she was buried in the Churchyard of St. Pancras, near the grave of Mary Wolstonecroft Godwin. Henry was my fellow pupil; but not liking the profession of engraving, after a short trial, he returned to the West Indies. At the peace of Amiens, Charles Goldsmith sold his houses, and with his wife and daughter, and a son born in England, christened Oliver, he went to reside in France, where his daughter married. In consequence of the orders of Buonaparte for detaining British subjects, Charles again returned home by way of Holland, much reduced in circumstances, and died, about 25 years since at humble lodgings in Ossulston Street, Somers Town. After his death, his wife who was a native of the West Indies, and son Oliver, returned thither. Charles Goldsmith had in his possession a copy, from Sir Joshua Reynolds's portrait of his brother; and I can vouch his resemblance to this picture was most striking. Charles like the Poet, was a performer on the German flute, and to use his own words, found it in the hour of adversity, his best friend. He only once, I have heard him say, saw Oliver in England, which was during his prosperity.

“R. ROFFE.”

keeper to the Royal Irish Academy, but from some unknown cause failed. The following is one of her letters to him. —

“Rushport Elphin, June 19th, 1793.

“DEAR SIR,

“From your goodness on former occasions, and kind attention to me, I take the liberty of requesting the honour of a line from you, to inform me what your opinion is in regard to the Academy House, whether I may have hopes of being house-keeper to it. I blush to give this trouble to a gentleman who is almost a stranger to me in every respect except my misfortunes; but I trust I have an advocate in your humane heart. I have informed you, Sir, of the Bishop of Killaloe’s goodness in handing in my memorial, and also the kind reception it met with from the members then present. May I presume to beg that you will be so kind as to recommend me to Lord Charlemont, which would forward the business much, and infinitely serve me.

“I am, dear Sir,

“With the highest respect,

“Your much obliged humble servant,

“ESTHER GOLDSMITH.

“To Joseph Cooper Walker, Esq.,  
Eccles Street, Dublin.”

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## APPENDIX.

(See Vol. II. p. 525.)

*A CATALOGUE of the Household Furniture, with the Select Collection of scarce, curious, and valuable Books, in English, Latin, Greek, French, Italian, and other Languages, late the Library of Dr. Goldsmith, deceased, which by Order of the Administrator will be sold by Auction, by Mr. Good, at his Great Room, No. 121. Fleet Street, on Tuesday the 12th of July, 1774, at Twelve o'Clock.*

### HOUSEHOLD FURNITURE.

Lot

1. A bath stove, compass front, open border, fender, shovel, tongs and poker.
2. One blue morine festoon window-curtain complete.
3. A mahogany dining-table.
4. Six ditto hollow seat chairs, covered with blue morine, finished with a double row of brass nails, and check cases.
5. A Wilton carpet.
6. A sun-shade, line and pulleys, and a deal side-board stained.
7. A tea-chest and 2 mahogany card-racks.
8. A four-post bedstead, crimson and white check furniture.
9. A feather-bed, bolster, and 2 down pillows.
10. A check mattress.
11. Three blankets and a counterpane.
12. Three blue morine window-curtains complete.
13. Two oval glasses, gilt frames.
14. Two ditto, two light girandoles.
15. A very large dressing-glass, mahogany frame.
16. A three-plate bordered chimney-glass, gilt frame.
17. A large Wilton carpet.
18. A mahogany sofa, covered with blue morine; finished with a double row of brass nails, and a check case.
19. Eight ditto chairs and check cases.
20. Two mahogany compass front card-tables, lined.
21. A ditto Pembroke table.

## Lot

22. A stove, brass fender, shovel, tongs and poker.
23. A stained matted chair, and a wainscot table.
24. Two Telescopes.
25. A steel-hilted sword, inlaid with gold; and a black hilted ditto.
26. Eleven blue and white octagon dishes, 18 ditto plates, and an enamelled bowl.
27. A teapot, 5 coffee cups, sugar basin and cover, 4 saucers, and 6 cups.
28. Two quart decanters and stoppers, 1 plain ditto, 11 glasses and 1 wine and water glass.
29. A pair of bellows, a brush, a footman, a copper tea-kettle, and a coal-scuttle.
30. Two pair of plated candlesticks.
31. A mahogany teaboard, a fret-bordered ditto, a large round japanned ditto, and 2 waiters.
32. The Tragic Muse, in a gold frame.

## BOOKS.

## FOLIOS.

1. Harduini Opera, Amst. 1709. Plinii Hist. Naturalis. Francf. 1582.
2. Kircheri Latium, Amst. 1671. Hist. Rom. Scriptorum. Gen. 1653. Hugoni Militia Equestri. Antw. 1630.
3. Gesnerus de Quadrupedibus, cum fig. 1551. Baconi Opera, Franc. 1665. Blount Censura Auctorum. Lond. 1690.
4. Photii Epistolæ, Lond. 1651. Thuani Hist. sui temporis, 4 tom. Franc. 1625.
- \*4. Buchanani Opera, 2 tom. Edinb. 1715.
5. Rowe's Lucan. 1718. Jure Divino, 1706. Prior's Poems, 1718. Du Bartas.
6. Chaucer's Works, 1602.
7. Davenant's Works, 1673, and 2 more.
8. Camoen's Luciad, by Fanshaw, 1675. Cowley's Works, 1674. Skelton's Don Quixote.
- \*8. Wood's Athenæ Oxoniensis, 1691.
9. Heylyn's Cosmography, 1703. Knolles's Hist. of the Turks, 1638.
10. Raleigh's Hist. of the World, 1614.
11. Breval's Travels, 1738. Horrebow's Hist. of Iceland, 1758. Ludolphus's Hist. of Ethiopia.
12. Pietro della Valle's Travels, 1665. Sir J. Chardin's Travels, 1686. Herbert's Travels, 1638.

Lot

13. Ambassador's Voyages and Travels, 1662. Sandys's Travels, 1637. Life of John de Castro, 1664. Taverners's Travels, 1684.
14. Stanley's Lives of the Philosophers, 1701.
15. Rolt's Dictionary of Trade and Commerce, 1761.
16. Croker's Dictionary of Arts and Sciences, 3 vols. 1768.
17. Stephani Thesaurus, Ling. Lat. 2 tom. Par. 1543.
18. Fabri Thesaurus, Lips. 1726.
19. Calepini Dictionarium, 2 tom. Bas. Scapulæ Lexicon, Gen. 1619. Photii Bibliotheca. Rothom. 1653.
20. Aldrovandus de Quadrupedibus, de Piscibus, et Ornithologia, 3 tom. Bonon. 1619, &c.
21. Œuvres de la Mothe le Vayer, 2 tom. 1656. Œuvres du P. le Moynes, 1671.
22. Dictionnaire de Commerce, par Savary, 3 tom. Par. 1723.
23. Aristotelis Opera, 4 tom. Par. 1639.
24. Xenophontis Opera Gr. H. Stephani. Gen. 1581. Diogenes Laertius. Lond. 1664.
25. Kappii Bibliotheca, Amst. 1744.
26. Rushworth's Collections, 3 vols. Machiavel's Works, 1675.
27. Hill's Natural History of Fossils, 1748.
28. Terentii Comœdiæ, Lat. and Ital. cum fig. Rom. 1767.
29. Historia da Angeloni, Rom. 1641.
30. Histoire Romaine, Paris, 1625.

## QUARTOS.

1. Fenton's Poems. Williams's Poems. Say's Poems: The Secretes of Maistre Alexis, 1580; and 9 more. Literary Journals, &c.
2. Acta Lipsiensa, 7 tom. 1736, &c.
3. Œuvres de Voiture, Par. 1650. Histoire des Turcs, Pièces Curieuses, 1644.
- \*3. Histoire de Poissons par Gouan, 1770; and 7 more.
4. Chefs d'Œuvres de Marmontel, Par. 1773. Histoire de Cicéron, 2 tom. Par. 1745.
5. Puffendorf Droit de la Nature, 2 tom. Œuvres de Boileau.
6. Hist. de Blois. Tournefort's Voyage du Levant, Amst. 1718. Tournefort's Herbaria, Par. 3 vols. 1719; and 5 more.
7. Bonada Carmina ex Lap. Antiq. 1751. Casaubon's de Rebus Sacris, 1654. Institut. Univers. Philosoph. 2 tom. Donati Roma Vetus et Recens, 1695; and 11 more.
8. Miscellanea Græcorum aliquot Script. Carmina à Maittaire. Lond. 1722. Bohadsch de Animal. Marinis, 1761. Noodt Opera Omnia, 1713.

## Lot

9. Rosini Antiq. Rom. 1663. Wolfii Element. Matheseos, 2 tom. 1717; and 5 more.
10. Miscellanea Curiosa Medico-Physica, 19 tom. Lips. 1670, &c. Orlando Furioso di Ariosto. Ven. 1564.
11. Davila. Hist. di Francia, 1642. L'Ercoma del Sig. Biondi, 1624.
12. Philosophical Transactions, 3 vols. The same abridged, by Lowthorp and Jones, 5 vols.
13. Cibber's Apology, and Considerations on the Life of Cicero, 1740, &c.
14. Astruc de Morbis Venereis, 1754. Owen on Serpents, 1742.
15. Révolutions d'Espagne par le P. d'Orleans, 3 tom. 1734.
16. Statii Opera, 2 tom. Par. 1618. Ennii Fragmenta. Nap. 1590. Salmasii Epistolæ, L. Bat. 1656.
17. Bulwer's Artificial Changeling, 1653. Verstigan's Antiquities, 1634. Hartlib's Legacie, 1651. Sir K. Digby on the Nature of Bodies, 1645.
18. Histoire des Insectes par de Geer, 2 tom. Stock. 1771.
19. Dictionnaire Raisonné et Univers. des Animaux, 4 tom. Par. 1759.
20. Leland's Life of Philip of Macedon, 1761.
21. Wharton's History of English Poetry, 1774.
22. Killarney, a Poem, by Lessie, Dub. 1772. Chambers's Oriental Gardening, 1772.
23. La Jartière, a French Poem in MS., dedicated to the King, elegantly bound.
24. Terentius, Horatius, Virgilius, Catullus, Tibullus, et Propertius, 4 tom. Cant. 1701.
25. Lucretius. Lond. 1712.
26. Encyclopédie, ou Dictionnaire Univers. Raisonné, 25 tom. 1770.

## OCTAVOS, TWELVES, ETC.

1. Voyages to Bengal and Buenos Ayres. Three odd volumes of Plays. Epistles of Aristænetus; and 4 more.
2. Collier on Trade. Chapman on Education. Travels to Arabia. Henry and Frances, 3rd and 4th vols. Vanbrugh's Plays, and 4 more.
3. Brooke's Natural History, 5th and 6th vols. The Idler, vol. 1. Scot's Epigrams. Pac. on the Roman Poets, and 4 more.
4. Bons Mots de Santeuil. Lettres de Montesquieu, Dictionnaire Gentilhomme. Four odd vols, of Corneille's Plays, and 7 more French books.
5. French Plays by Avis. Ditto by Grange. Ditto by Champ-mélé. Théâtre de la Foire. Ditto by Favart, and 5 more.



## Lot

6. *Analecta Medii Ævi* (Specimen Literatur.) Florentinæ, 2 vols. ; and 6 more.
7. *Voyage par Winkelman. Passetemps Poétique.* Fanny Palmer, 2 parts. *Scaron Roman Comique*, 2 tom. ; and 10 more.
8. *Œuvres de Balzac. Théâtre Espagnol*, 2 tom. *Théâtre de la Chaussée*, and 3 more.
9. *La Fabricia Bibliotheca*, 3 tom. *Theophrastus, Martial*, and 15 more.
10. *Œuvres d'Ancourt*, 7 tom., the first wanting. *Œuvres de Brueys*, 1st, 3d, 4th, and 5th tom. *Théâtre de la Haye*, 1st, 2d, 4th, and 5th tom.
11. *Histoire de l'Académie Royale*, 15 tom., the 11th wanting.
12. *Théâtre Italien de Gherardi*, 5 tom., 1st wanting ; and 8 others.
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