



CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

London: FETTER LANE, E.C.

C. F. CLAY, MANAGER



Edinburgh: 100, PRINCES STREET

Berlin: A. ASHER AND CO.

Leipzig: F. A. BROCKHAUS

New York: G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS

Bombay and Calcutta: MACMILLAN AND CO., LTD.

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NINETEENTH CENTURY  
ESSAYS

Edited with Introduction and Notes

by

GEORGE SAMPSON  
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Cambridge :  
at the University Press

1912

PR1362  
S25

Cambridge

PRINTED BY JOHN CLAY, M.A.

AT THE UNIVERSITY PRESS



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## INTRODUCTION

THE choice of pieces and the extent of annotation in this volume may seem to need some exculpatory remarks. First, as to the text. To call a book "Nineteenth Century Essays" and include no specimen of Lamb whose "Elia" volumes appeared respectively in 1823 and 1833, or of Hazlitt whose record as an essayist stretches from 1817 to 1826, or of Leigh Hunt whose published work falls wholly within the century, is, apparently, to take very arbitrary liberties with chronology. But literary chronology, like synchronised time, is often wrong. Thus, though Carlyle was born in the eighteenth century, he belongs in spirit almost to our own days; and though Leigh Hunt died in the same year as Macaulay, he belongs as plainly to the Georgian age of Revolution as Macaulay to the Victorian period of Free Trade. As a matter of fact the volume covers exactly a century; for Carlyle, the first of our essayists, was born in 1795, and Stevenson, the last, died in 1894. If any weakness is discernible in the latter part of the book, not the editor, but the inexorable interdict of copyright must be blamed. This matter is altogether too large for discussion here; but room should be found for a bitter, if brief, complaint that the harsh

exercise of copyright veto is a dreadful difficulty in the way of the English teacher, and produces in the mind of the pupil a fixed impression that literature ended abruptly somewhere about the time of Wordsworth. A book of Nineteenth Century Essays should certainly have included examples from some writers here unrepresented, but my attempts to secure one or two which I specially wished to include were met by flat, not to say fierce, refusals. It is with the greater pleasure that I record my thanks to Messrs Longmans for permission to use the amended form of Bagehot's "Shakespeare the Man" from Vol. I. of the *Literary Studies*, and to Messrs Chatto and Windus for the readiness with which they allowed me to reprint Stevenson's "A Penny Plain and Twopence Coloured" from *Memories and Portraits*.

Next, as to the notes. I fear that some young lions among English teachers will roar furiously at so old-fashioned a production as a school book with elaborate annotation. Now it is quite undeniable that one of the most valuable acquirements a student can gain during the English course at school is the ability to use a plain text; but a place still remains for the annotated volume as a means to that most valuable disciplinary exercise in literary work, the intensive study of a piece or group of pieces. The present agitation against notes is a reaction, not really against notes, but against unsuitable notes. That is a fact frequently overlooked. Because past students in their teens were injudiciously offered two pages of philological and antiquarian information about the use of some particular word or phrase, some teachers have vigorously proclaimed that present students in their teens must be offered

nothing at all about anything. This is a great mistake. The mind of youth is inquisitive, and its curiosity must be neither defrauded nor wilfully handicapped. To urge that a boy should read Macaulay without notes and consult an encyclopædia for solution of his difficulties is magnificent but not practical. Every teacher knows the precise amount of uncompelled reference he can expect from the average labour-saving schoolboy. In the present instance, the notes are many, not for quantity's sake, but because allusion is the salt of an essay, and allusions need elucidation. A student who reads intelligently the Macaulay essay here given should be stimulated by its multitudinous allusions to a proper literary curiosity. Baffle that curiosity by denying information, and the student will miss one of Macaulay's chief merits. At the same time it cannot be too strongly urged that the text is truly, though not in corporal fact, the beginning and the end of this volume. The student may entirely ignore the notes, and, with only partial understanding of the text, learn much about the essayists of the nineteenth century; on the other hand, he may diligently acquire every fact recorded in the notes, and know nothing at all about the matter. The text is the thing: the notes are an appended encyclopædia to which recourse may be had (fruitfully I hope) when curiosity prompts. As far as I know, none of the essays here printed has been annotated before, and I am therefore relieved from making the usual acknowledgments to predecessors. I have, of course, pillaged the usual works of reference, and I am indebted, also, to some kindly correspondents.

In preparing the volume I have had in view the upper forms of secondary schools, and, especially,

the needs of those students who are preparing for the Board of Education's Preliminary Examination for the Teachers' Certificate, the requirements of which, in the matter of general reading, are excellent in intention though disconcertingly vague in statement. My own experience among candidates for this examination has shewn me that even the simplest classical allusions are not understood by some, and such allusions are therefore explained here. These and similar notes can be simply ignored by those who do not need them.

The choice of essays is deliberate: I have tried to select different types,—the abstract, the historical, the æsthetic, the critical, the biographical, and the actual. That some passages will be beyond the comprehension of the young student is very possible; but each essay as a general rule should be not only intelligible but attractive. The pieces are arranged in order of composition without reference to the authors' birth-dates. In the little biographical notes I have aimed at two things: first, to add something to the impulse each essay should give towards further reading, and next, to suggest the books in which that further reading may be most profitably sought.

The volume raises the interesting question. What is an essay? What is there in common between the elaborate review-article and the purely personal note; between Macaulay's wide historical survey and Stevenson's charming trifle; between the hundred-and-forty pages of Carlyle's *Scott* and the forty lines of Bacon's *Adversity*? One might, perhaps rather frivolously, suggest that the modern essay is generally a discourse (occupying some fifty-five minutes in delivery) decorously

disguised for use in printed form. Certainly, more than one of the present pieces began life as a lecture; and one of them retains, I think unfortunately, the actual vocatives of an address. That, however, does not tell us what an essay is, nor shall any attempt be here made to give a formal answer to the question. Let us be content to say (evading definition), that an essay is more than a paragraph and less than a treatise, and, at its best, includes some of the most delightful reading that prose has to give.

GEORGE SAMPSON.

BARNES, S.W.

*December, 1911.*





# THOMAS CARLYLE

## *ON HISTORY*

1830

Clio was figured by the ancients as the eldest daughter of Memory, and chief of the Muses; which dignity, whether we regard the essential qualities of her art, or its practice and acceptance among men, we shall still find to have been fitly bestowed. History, as it lies at the root of all science, is also the first distinct product of man's spiritual nature; his earliest expression of what can be called Thought. It is a looking both before and after; as, indeed, the coming Time already waits, unseen, yet definitely shaped, pre-determined and inevitable, in the Time come; and only by the combination of both is the meaning of either completed. The Sibylline Books, though old, are not the oldest. Some nations have prophecy, some have not: but of all mankind, there is no tribe so rude that it has not attempted History, though several have not arithmetic enough to count Five. History has been written with quipo-threads, with feather-pictures, with wampum-belts; still oftener with earth-mounds and monumental stone-heaps, whether as pyramid or cairn; for the Celt and the Copt, the Red man as well as the White, lives between two eternities, and warring against Oblivion, he would fain unite himself in clear conscious relation, as in dim unconscious relation he is already united, with the whole Future and the whole Past.

A talent for History may be said to be born with us, as our chief inheritance. In a certain sense all men are historians. Is not every memory written quite full with Annals, wherein joy and mourning, conquest and loss manifoldly alternate; and, with or without philosophy, the whole fortunes of one little inward Kingdom, and all its politics, foreign and domestic, stand ineffaceably recorded? Our very speech is curiously historical. Most men, you may observe, speak only to narrate; not in imparting what they have thought, which indeed were often a very small matter, but in exhibiting what they have undergone or seen, which is a quite unlimited one, do talkers dilate. Cut us off from Narrative, how would the stream of conversation, even among the wisest, languish into detached handfuls, and among the foolish utterly evaporate! Thus, as we do nothing but enact History, we say little but recite it: nay rather, in that widest sense, our whole spiritual life is built thereon. For, strictly considered, what is all Knowledge too but recorded Experience, and a product of History; of which, therefore, Reasoning and Belief, no less than Action and Passion, are essential materials?

Under a limited, and the only practicable shape, History proper, that part of History which treats of remarkable action, has, in all modern as well as ancient times, ranked among the highest arts, and perhaps never stood higher than in these times of ours. For whereas, of old, the charm of History lay chiefly in gratifying our common appetite for the wonderful, for the unknown; and her office was but as that of a Minstrel and Storyteller, she has now farther become a Schoolmistress, and professes to instruct in gratifying. Whether, with the stateliness of that venerable character, she may not have taken up something of its austerity and frigidity; whether in the logical terseness of a Hume or Robertson, the graceful ease and gay pictorial heartiness of a Herodotus or Froissart may not be wanting, is not the question for us here. Enough that all learners,

all inquiring minds of every order, are gathered round her footstool, and reverently pondering her lessons, as the true basis of Wisdom. Poetry, Divinity, Politics, Physics, have each their adherents and adversaries; each little guild supporting a defensive and offensive war for its own special domain; while the domain of History is as a Free Emporium, where all these belligerents peaceably meet and furnish themselves; and Sentimentalist and Utilitarian, Sceptic and Theologian, with one voice advise us: Examine History, for it is 'Philosophy teaching by Experience.'

Far be it from us to disparage such teaching, the very attempt at which must be precious. Neither shall we too rigidly inquire: How much it has hitherto profited? Whether most of what little practical wisdom men have, has come from study of professed History, or from other less boasted sources, whereby, as matters now stand, a Marlborough may become great in the world's business, with no History save what he derives from Shakespeare's Plays? Nay, whether in that same teaching by Experience, historical Philosophy has yet properly deciphered the first element of all science in this kind: What the aim and significance of that wondrous changeful Life it investigates and paints may be? Whence the course of man's destinies in this Earth originated, and whither they are tending? Or, indeed, if they have any course and tendency, are really guided forward by an unseen mysterious Wisdom, or only circle in blind mazes without recognisable guidance? Which questions, altogether fundamental, one might think, in any Philosophy of History, have, since the era when Monkish Annalists were wont to answer them by the long-ago extinguished light of their Missal and Breviary, been by most philosophical Historians only glanced at dubiously and from afar; by many, not so much as glanced at.

The truth is, two difficulties, never wholly surmountable, lie in the way. Before Philosophy can teach by Experience, the Philosophy has to be in

readiness, the Experience must be gathered and intelligibly recorded. Now, overlooking the former consideration, and with regard only to the latter, let any one who has examined the current of human affairs, and how intricate, perplexed, unfathomable, even when seen into with our own eyes, are their thousandfold blending movements, say whether the true representing of it is easy or impossible. Social Life is the aggregate of all the individual men's Lives who constitute society; History is the essence of innumerable Biographies. But if one Biography, nay our own Biography, study and recapitulate it as we may, remains in so many points unintelligible to us; how much more must these million, the very facts of which, to say nothing of the purport of them, we know not, and cannot know!

Neither will it adequately avail us to assert that the general inward condition of Life is the same in all ages; and that only the remarkable deviations from the common endowment and common lot, and the more important variations which the outward figure of Life has from time to time undergone, deserve memory and record. The inward condition of Life, it may rather be affirmed, the conscious or half-conscious aim of mankind, so far as men are not mere digesting-machines, is the same in no two ages; neither are the more important outward variations easy to fix on, or always well capable of representation. Which was the greatest innovator, which was the more important personage in man's history, he who first led armies over the Alps, and gained the victories of Cannæ and Trasimene; or the nameless boor who first hammered out for himself an iron spade? When the oak-tree is felled, the whole forest echoes with it; but a hundred acorns are planted silently by some unnoticed breeze. Battles and wartumults, which for the time din every ear, and with joy or terror intoxicate every heart, pass away like tavern-brawls; and, except some few Marathons and Morgartens, are remembered by accident, not by

desert. Laws themselves, political Constitutions, are not our Life, but only the house wherein our Life is led: nay they are but the bare walls of the house; all whose essential furniture, the inventions and traditions, and daily habits that regulate and support our existence, are the work not of Dracos and Hampdens, but of Phœnician mariners, of Italian masons and Saxon metallurgists, of philosophers, alchemists, prophets, and all the long-forgotten train of artists and artisans; who from the first have been jointly teaching us how to think and how to act, how to rule over spiritual and over physical Nature. Well may we say that of our History the more important part is lost without recovery; and,—as thanksgivings were once wont to be offered ‘for unrecognised mercies,’—look with reverence into the dark untenanted places of the Past, where, in formless oblivion, our chief benefactors, with all their sedulous endeavours, but not with the fruit of these, lie entombed.

So imperfect is that same Experience, by which Philosophy is to teach. Nay, even with regard to those occurrences which do stand recorded, which, at their origin have seemed worthy of record, and the summary of which constitutes what we now call History, is not our understanding of them altogether incomplete; is it even possible to represent them as they were? The old story of Sir Walter Raleigh’s looking from his prison-window, on some street tumult, which afterwards three witnesses reported in three different ways, himself differing from them all, is still a true lesson for us. Consider how it is that historical documents and records originate; even honest records, where the reporters were unbiassed by personal regard; a case which, were nothing more wanted, must ever be among the rarest. The real leading features of a historical Transaction, those movements that essentially characterise it, and alone deserve to be recorded, are nowise the foremost to be noted. At first, among the various witnesses, who are also parties interested, there is only vague wonder, and fear or hope, and the

noise of Rumour's thousand tongues; till, after a season, the conflict of testimonies has subsided into some general issue; and then it is settled, by majority of votes, that such and such a 'Crossing of the Rubicon,' an 'Impeachment of Strafford,' a 'Convocation of the Notables,' are epochs in the world's history, cardinal points on which grand world-revolutions have hinged. Suppose, however, that the majority of votes was all wrong; that the real cardinal points lay far deeper; and had been passed over unnoticed, because no Seer, but only mere Onlookers, chanced to be there! Our clock strikes when there is a change from hour to hour; but no hammer in the Horologe of Time peals through the universe when there is a change from Era to Era. Men understand not what is among their hands: as calmness is the characteristic of strength, so the weightiest causes may be most silent. It is, in no case, the real historical Transaction, but only some more or less plausible scheme and theory of the Transaction, or the harmonised result of many such schemes, each varying from the other and all varying from truth, that we can ever hope to behold.

Nay, were our faculty of insight into passing things never so complete, there is still a fatal discrepancy between our manner of observing these, and their manner of occurring. The most gifted man can observe, still more can record, only the *series* of his own impressions: his observation, therefore, to say nothing of its other imperfections, must be *successive*, while the things done were often *simultaneous*; the things done were not a series, but a group. It is not in acted, as it is in written History: actual events are nowise so simply related to each other as parent and offspring are; every single event is the offspring not of one, but of all other events, prior or contemporaneous, and will in its turn combine with all others to give birth to new: it is an ever-living, ever-working Chaos of Being, wherein shape after shape bodies itself forth from innumerable elements. And this

Chaos, boundless as the habitation and duration of man, unfathomable as the soul and destiny of man, is what the historian will depict, and scientifically gauge, we may say, by threading it with single lines of a few ells in length! For as all Action is, by its nature, to be figured as extended in breadth and in depth, as well as in length; that is to say, is based on Passion and Mystery, if we investigate its origin; and spreads abroad on all hands, modifying and modified; as well as advances towards completion,—so all Narrative is, by its nature, of only one dimension; only travels forward towards one, or towards successive points: Narrative is *linear*, Action is *solid*. Alas for our 'chains,' or chainlets, of 'causes and effects,' which we so assiduously track through certain handbreadths of years and square miles, when the whole is a broad, deep Immensity, and each atom is 'chained' and complected with all! Truly, if History is Philosophy teaching by Experience, the writer fitted to compose History is hitherto an unknown man. The Experience itself would require All-knowledge to record it,—were the All-wisdom needful for such Philosophy as would interpret it, to be had for asking. Better were it that mere earthly Historians should lower such pretensions, more suitable for Omniscience than for human science; and aiming only at some picture of the things acted, which picture itself will at best be a poor approximation, leave the inscrutable purport of them an acknowledged secret; or at most, in reverent Faith, far different from that teaching of Philosophy, pause over the mysterious vestiges of Him, whose path is in the great deep of Time, whom History indeed reveals, but only all History, and in Eternity will clearly reveal.

Such considerations truly were of small profit, did they, instead of teaching us vigilance and reverent humility in our inquiries into History, abate our esteem for them, or discourage us from unweariedly prosecuting them. Let us search more and more into the Past; let all men explore it, as the true fountain of

knowledge; by whose light alone, consciously or unconsciously employed, can the Present and the Future be interpreted or guessed at. For though the whole meaning lies far beyond our ken; yet in that complex Manuscript, covered over with formless inextricably-entangled unknown characters,—nay which is a *Palimpsest*, and had once prophetic writing, still dimly legible there,—some letters, some words, may be deciphered; and if no complete Philosophy, here and there an intelligible precept, available in practice, be gathered: well understanding, in the meanwhile, that it is only a little portion we have deciphered; that much still remains to be interpreted; that History is a real Prophetic Manuscript, and can be fully interpreted by no man.

But the Artist in History may be distinguished from the Artisan in History; for here, as in all other provinces, there are Artists and Artisans; men who labour mechanically in a department, without eye for the Whole, not feeling that there is a Whole; and men who inform and ennoble the humblest department with an Idea of the Whole, and habitually know that only in the Whole is the Partial to be truly discerned. The proceedings and the duties of these two, in regard to History, must be altogether different. Not, indeed, that each has not a real worth, in his several degree. The simple husbandman can till his field, and by knowledge he has gained of its soil, sow it with the fit grain, though the deep rocks and central fires are unknown to him: his little crop hangs under and over the firmament of stars, and sails through whole untracked celestial spaces, between Aries and Libra; nevertheless it ripens for him in due season, and he gathers it safe into his barn. As a husbandman he is blameless in disregarding those higher wonders; but as a thinker, and faithful inquirer into Nature, he were wrong. So likewise is it with the Historian, who examines some special aspect of History; and from this or that combination of circumstances, political, moral, economical, and the issues



it has led to, infers that such and such properties belong to human society, and that the like circumstances will produce the like issue; which inference, if other trials confirm it, must be held true and practically valuable. He is wrong only, and an artisan, when he fancies that these properties, discovered or discoverable, exhaust the matter; and sees not, at every step, that it is inexhaustible.

However, that class of cause-and-effect speculators, with whom no wonder would remain wonderful, but all things in Heaven and Earth must be computed and 'accounted for'; and even the Unknown, the Infinite in man's Life, had under the words *enthusiasm*, *superstition*, *spirit of the age* and so forth, obtained, as it were, an algebraical symbol and given value,—have now wellnigh played their part in European culture; and may be considered, as in most countries, even in England itself where they linger the latest, verging towards extinction. He who reads the inscrutable Book of Nature as if it were a Merchant's Ledger, is justly suspected of having never seen that Book, but only some school Synopsis thereof; from which, if taken for the real Book, more error than insight is to be derived.

Doubtless also, it is with a growing feeling of the infinite nature of History, that in these times, the old principle, division of labour, has been so widely applied to it. The Political Historian, once almost the sole cultivator of History, has now found various associates, who strive to elucidate other phases of human Life; of which, as hinted above, the political conditions it is passed under are but one, and though the primary, perhaps not the most important, of the many outward arrangements. Of this Historian himself, moreover, in his own special department, new and higher things are beginning to be expected. From of old, it was too often to be reproachfully observed of him, that he dwelt with disproportionate fondness in Senate-houses, in Battle-fields, nay even in Kings' Ante-chambers; forgetting, that far away from such scenes,

the mighty tide of Thought and Action was still rolling on its wondrous course, in gloom and brightness; and in its thousand remote valleys, a whole world of Existence, with or without an earthly sun of Happiness to warm it, with or without an heavenly sun of Holiness to purify and sanctify it, was blossoming and fading, whether the 'famous victory' were won or lost. The time seems coming when much of this must be amended; and he who sees no world but that of courts and camps; and writes only how soldiers were drilled and shot, and how this ministerial conjuror out-conjured that other, and then guided, or at least held, something which he called the rudder of Government, but which was rather the spigot of Taxation, wherewith, in place of steering, he could tap, and the more cunningly the nearer the lees,—will pass for a more or less instructive Gazetteer, but will no longer be called a Historian.

However, the Political Historian, were his work performed with all conceivable perfection, can accomplish but a part, and still leaves room for numerous fellow-labourers. Foremost among these comes the Ecclesiastical Historian; endeavouring, with catholic or sectarian view, to trace the progress of the Church; of that portion of the social establishments, which respects our religious condition; as the other portion does our civil, or rather, in the long-run, our economical condition. Rightly conducted, this department were undoubtedly the more important of the two; inasmuch as it concerns us more to understand how man's moral well-being had been and might be promoted, than to understand in the like sort his physical well-being; which latter is ultimately the aim of all Political arrangements. For the physically happiest is simply the safest, the strongest; and, in all conditions of Government, Power (whether of wealth as in these days, or of arms and adherents as in old days) is the only outward emblem and purchase-money of Good. True Good, however, unless we reckon Pleasure synonymous with it, is said to be rarely, or rather

never, offered for sale in the market where that coin passes current. So that, for man's true advantage, not the outward condition of his life, but the inward and spiritual, is of prime influence; not the form of Government he lives under, and the power he can accumulate there, but the Church he is a member of, and the degree of moral elevation he can acquire by means of its instruction. Church History, then, did it speak wisely, would have momentous secrets to teach us: nay, in its highest degree, it were a sort of continued Holy Writ; our Sacred Books being, indeed, only a History of the primeval Church, as it first arose in man's soul, and symbolically embodied itself in his external life. How far our actual Church Historians fall below such unattainable standards, nay below quite attainable approximations thereto, we need not point out. Of the Ecclesiastical Historian we have to complain, as we did of his Political fellow-craftsman, that his inquiries turn rather on the outward mechanism, the mere hulls and superficial accidents of the object, than on the object itself: as if the Church lay in Bishops' Chapter-houses, and Ecumenic Council-halls, and Cardinals' Conclaves, and not far more in the hearts of Believing Men; in whose walk and conversation, as influenced thereby, its chief manifestations were to be looked for, and its progress or decline ascertained. The History of the Church is a History of the Invisible as well as of the Visible Church; which latter, if disjoined from the former, is but a vacant edifice; gilded, it may be, and overhung with old votive gifts, yet useless, nay pestilentially unclean; to write whose history is less important than to forward its downfall.

Of a less ambitious character are the Histories that relate to special separate provinces of human Action; to Sciences, Practical Arts, Institutions and the like; matters which do not imply an epitome of man's whole interest and form of life; but wherein, though each is still connected with all, the spirit of

each, at least its material results, may be in some degree evolved without so strict a reference to that of the others. Highest in dignity and difficulty, under this head, would be our histories of Philosophy, of man's opinions and theories respecting the nature of his Being, and relations to the Universe Visible and Invisible: which History, indeed, were it fitly treated, or fit for right treatment, would be a province of Church History; the logical or dogmatical province thereof; for Philosophy, in its true sense, is or should be the soul, of which Religion, Worship is the body; in the healthy state of things the Philosopher and Priest were one and the same. But Philosophy itself is far enough from wearing this character; neither have its Historians been men, generally speaking, that could in the smallest degree approximate it thereto. Scarcely since the rude era of the Magi and Druids has that same healthy identification of Priest and Philosopher had place in any country: but rather the worship of divine things, and the scientific investigation of divine things, have been in quite different hands, their relations not friendly but hostile. Neither have the Bruckers and Buhles, to say nothing of the many unhappy Enfields who have treated of that latter department, been more than barren reporters, often unintelligent and unintelligible reporters, of the doctrine uttered; without force to discover how the doctrine originated, or what reference it bore to its time and country, to the spiritual position of mankind there and then. Nay, such a task did not perhaps lie before them, as a thing to be attempted.

Art also and Literature are intimately blended with Religion; as it were, outworks and abutments, by which that highest pinnacle in our inward world gradually connects itself with the general level, and becomes accessible therefrom. He who should write a proper History of Poetry, would depict for us the successive Revelations which man had obtained of

the Spirit of Nature; under what aspects he had caught and endeavoured to body forth some glimpse of that unspeakable Beauty, which in its highest clearness is Religion, is the inspiration of a Prophet, yet in one or the other degree must inspire every true Singer, were his theme never so humble. We should see by what steps men had ascended to the Temple; how near they had approached; by what ill hap they had, for long periods, turned away from it, and grovelled on the plain with no music in the air, or blindly struggled towards other heights. That among all our Eichhorns and Wartons there is no such Historian, must be too clear to every one. Nevertheless let us not despair of far nearer approaches to that excellence. Above all, let us keep the Ideal of it ever in our eye; for thereby alone have we even a chance to reach it.

Our histories of Laws and Constitutions, wherein many a Montesquieu and Hallam has laboured with acceptance, are of a much simpler nature; yet deep enough if thoroughly investigated; and useful, when authentic, even with little depth. Then we have Histories of Medicine, of Mathematics, of Astronomy, Commerce, Chivalry, Monkery; and Goguets and Beckmanns have come forward with what might be the most bountiful contribution of all, a History of Inventions. Of all which sorts, and many more not here enumerated, not yet devised and put in practice, the merit and the proper scheme may, in our present limits, require no exposition.

In this manner, though, as above remarked, all Action is extended three ways, and the general sum of human Action is a whole Universe, with all limits of it unknown, does History strive by running path after path, through the Impassable, in manifold directions and intersections, to secure for us some oversight of the Whole; in which endeavour, if each Historian look well around him from his path, tracking it out with the eye, not, as is more common, with

the *nose*, she may at last prove not altogether unsuccessful. Praying only that increased division of labour do not here, as elsewhere, aggravate our already strong Mechanical tendencies, so that in the manual dexterity for parts we lose all command over the whole, and the hope of any Philosophy of History be farther off than ever,—let us all wish her great and greater success.

# THOMAS BABINGTON MACAULAY

## RANKE'S *HISTORY OF THE POPES*

1840

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

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

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



the world; and we feel no assurance that she is not destined to see the end of them all. She was great and respected before the Saxon had set foot on Britain, before the Frank had passed the Rhine, when Grecian eloquence still flourished at Antioch, when idols were still worshipped in the temple of Mecca. And she may still exist in undiminished vigour when some traveller from New Zealand shall, in the midst of a vast solitude, take his stand on a broken arch of London Bridge to sketch the ruins of St Paul's.

We often hear it said that the world is constantly becoming more and more enlightened, and that this enlightening must be favourable to Protestantism and unfavourable to Catholicism. We wish that we could think so. But we see great reason to doubt whether this be a well-founded expectation. We see that during the last two hundred and fifty years the human mind has been in the highest degree active, that it has made great advances in every branch of natural philosophy, that it has produced innumerable inventions tending to promote the convenience of life, that medicine, surgery, chemistry, engineering have been very greatly improved, that government, police, and law, have been improved, though not to so great an extent as the physical sciences. Yet we see that, during these two hundred and fifty years, Protestantism has made no conquests worth speaking of. Nay, we believe that, as far as there has been a change, that change has been in favour of the Church of Rome. We cannot therefore feel confident that the progress of knowledge will necessarily be fatal to a system which has, to say the least, stood its ground in spite of the immense progress which knowledge has made since the days of Queen Elizabeth.

Indeed the argument which we are considering seems to us to be founded on an entire mistake. There are branches of knowledge with respect to which the law of the human mind is progress. In mathematics, when once a proposition has been demonstrated, it is never afterwards contested. Every

fresh story is as solid a basis for a new superstructure as the original foundation was. Here therefore there is a constant addition to the stock of truth. In the inductive sciences again, the law is progress. Every day furnishes new facts, and thus brings theory nearer and nearer to perfection. There is no chance that, either in the purely demonstrative or in the purely experimental sciences, the world will ever go back or even remain stationary. Nobody ever heard of a reaction against Taylor's theorem, or of a reaction against Harvey's doctrine of the circulation of the blood.

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

Then again all the great enigmas which perplex the natural theologian are the same in all ages. The ingenuity of a people just emerging from barbarism is quite sufficient to propound those enigmas. The wisdom of Locke or Clarke is quite unable to solve them. It is a mistake to imagine that subtle speculations touching the Divine attributes, the origin of evil, the necessity of human actions, the foundation of moral obligation, imply any high degree of intellectual culture. Such speculations, on the contrary, are in a peculiar manner the delight of intelligent children and of half-civilized men. The number of boys is not small who, at fourteen, have thought enough on these questions to be fully entitled to the praise which Voltaire gives to Zadig: 'Il en savait ce qu'on en a su dans tous les âges; c'est-à-dire, fort peu de chose.' The book of Job shows that, long before letters and arts were known to Ionia, these vexing questions were debated with no common skill and eloquence under the tents of the Idumean Emirs; nor has human reason, in the course of three thousand years, discovered any satisfactory solution of the riddles which perplexed Eliphaz and Zophar.

Natural theology, then, is not a progressive science. That knowledge of our origin and of our destiny which we derive from revelation is indeed of very different clearness and of very different importance. But neither is revealed religion of the nature of a progressive science. All Divine truth is, according to the doctrine of the Protestant Churches, recorded in certain books. It is equally open to all who, in any age, can read those books; nor can all the discoveries of all the philosophers in the world add a single verse to any of those books. It is plain, therefore, that in divinity there cannot be a progress analogous to that which is constantly taking place in pharmacy, geology and navigation. A Christian of the fifth century with a Bible is on a par with a Christian of the nineteenth century with a Bible, candour and natural acuteness being of course supposed equal. It matters not at all that the compass,

printing, gunpowder, steam, gas, vaccination, and a thousand other discoveries and inventions, which were unknown in the fifth century, are familiar to the nineteenth. None of these discoveries and inventions has the smallest bearing on the question whether man is justified by faith alone, or whether the invocation of saints is an orthodox practice. It seems to us therefore that we have no security for the future against the prevalence of any theological error that ever has prevailed in time past among Christian men. We are confident that the world will never go back to the solar system of Ptolemy; nor is our confidence in the least shaken by the circumstance that even so great a man as Bacon rejected the theory of Galileo with scorn; for Bacon had not all the means of arriving at a sound conclusion which are within our reach, and which secure people who would not have been worthy to mend his pens from falling into his mistakes. But we are very differently affected when we reflect that Sir Thomas More was ready to die for the doctrine of transubstantiation. He was a man of eminent talents. He had all the information on the subject that we have, or that while the world lasts any human being will have. The text, 'This is my body,' was in his *New Testament* as it is in ours. The absurdity of the literal interpretation was as great and as obvious in the sixteenth century as it is now. No progress that science has made, or will make, can add to what seems to us the overwhelming force of the argument against the real presence. We are therefore unable to understand why what Sir Thomas More believed respecting transubstantiation may not be believed to the end of time by men equal in abilities and honesty to Sir Thomas More. But Sir Thomas More is one of the choice specimens of human wisdom and virtue; and the doctrine of transubstantiation is a kind of proof charge. A faith which stands that test will stand any test. The prophecies of Brothers and the miracles of Prince Hohenlohe sink to trifles in the comparison.

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

This reservation affects not at all the truth of our proposition, that divinity, properly so called, is not a progressive science. A very common knowledge of history, a very little observation of life, will suffice to prove that no learning, no sagacity, affords a security against the greatest errors on subjects relating to the invisible world. Bayle and Chillingworth, two of the most sceptical of mankind, turned Catholics from sincere conviction. Johnson, incredulous on all other points, was a ready believer in miracles and apparitions. He would not believe in Ossian; but he believed in the second sight. He would not believe in the earthquake of Lisbon; but he was willing to believe in the Cock Lane Ghost.

For these reasons we have ceased to wonder at any vagaries of superstition. We have seen men, not of mean intellect or neglected education, but qualified by their talents and acquirements to attain eminence

either in active or speculative pursuits, well read scholars, expert logicians, keen observers of life and manners, prophesying, interpreting, talking unknown tongues, working miraculous cures, coming down with messages from God to the House of Commons. We have seen an old woman, with no talents beyond the cunning of a fortune-teller and with the education of a scullion, exalted into a prophetess and surrounded by tens of thousands of devoted followers, many of whom were, in station and knowledge, immeasurably her superiors; and all this in the nineteenth century, and all this in London. Yet why not? For of the dealings of God with man no more has been revealed to the nineteenth century than to the first, or to London than to the wildest parish in the Hebrides. It is true that, in those things which concern this life and this world, man constantly becomes wiser and wiser. But it is no less true that, as respects a higher power and a future state, man, in the language of Goethe's scoffing fiend,

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

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

The first of these insurrections broke out in the

region where the beautiful language of Oc was spoken. That country, singularly favoured by nature, was, in the twelfth century, the most flourishing and civilized portion of Western Europe. It is in nowise a part of France. It had a distinct political existence, a distinct national character, distinct usages and a distinct speech. The soil was fruitful and well cultivated; and amidst the cornfields and vineyards arose many rich cities, each of which was a little republic, and many stately castles, each of which contained a miniature of an imperial court. It was there that the spirit of chivalry first laid aside its terrors, first took a humane and graceful form, first appeared as the inseparable associate of art and literature, of courtesy and love. The other vernacular dialects, which since the fifth century had sprung up in the ancient provinces of the Roman empire, were still rude and imperfect. The sweet Tuscan, the rich and energetic English, were abandoned to artisans and shepherds. No clerk had ever condescended to use such barbarous jargon for the teaching of science, for the recording of great events, or for the painting of life and manners. But the language of Provence was already the language of the learned and polite, and was employed by numerous writers, studious of all the arts of composition and versification. A literature rich in ballads, in war-songs, in satire, and above all in amatory poetry, amused the leisure of the knights and ladies whose fortified mansions adorned the banks of the Rhone and Garonne. With civilization had come freedom of thought. Use had taken away the horror with which misbelievers were elsewhere regarded. No Norman or Breton ever saw a Mussulman except to give and receive blows on some Syrian field of battle. But the people of the rich countries which lay under the Pyrenees lived in habits of courteous and profitable intercourse with the Moorish kingdoms of Spain, and gave an hospitable welcome to skilful leeches and mathematicians who, in the schools of Cordova and Granada, had become versed in all the learning of the

Arabians. The Greek, still preserving in the midst of political degradation the ready wit and the inquiring spirit of his fathers, still able to read the most perfect of human compositions, still speaking the most powerful and flexible of human languages, brought to the marts of Narbonne and Toulouse, together with the drugs and silks of remote climates, bold and subtle theories long unknown to the ignorant and credulous West. The Paulician theology—a theology in which, as it should seem, many of the doctrines of the modern Calvinists were mingled with some doctrines derived from the ancient Manichees—spread rapidly through Provence and Languedoc. The clergy of the Catholic Church were regarded with loathing and contempt. ‘Viler than a priest,’ ‘I would as soon be a priest,’ became proverbial expressions. The Papacy had lost all authority with all classes, from the great feudal princes down to the cultivators of the soil.

The danger to the hierarchy was indeed formidable. Only one transalpine nation had emerged from barbarism; and that nation had thrown off all respect for Rome. Only one of the vernacular languages of Europe had yet been extensively employed for literary purposes; and that language was a machine in the hand of heretics. The geographical position of the sectaries made the danger peculiarly formidable. They occupied a central region communicating directly with France, with Italy and with Spain. The provinces which were still untainted were separated from each other by this infected district. Under these circumstances it seemed probable that a single generation would suffice to spread the reformed doctrine to Lisbon, to London and to Naples. But this was not to be. Rome cried for help to the warriors of northern France. She appealed at once to their superstition and to their cupidity. To the devout believer she promised pardons as ample as those with which she had rewarded the deliverers of the Holy Sepulchre. To the rapacious and profligate she offered the plunder of fertile plains and wealthy cities. Unhappily the ingenious and



polished inhabitants of the Languedocian provinces were far better qualified to enrich and embellish their country than to defend it. Eminent in the arts of peace, unrivalled in the 'gay science,' elevated above many vulgar superstitions, they wanted that iron courage and that skill in martial exercises which distinguished the chivalry of the region beyond the Loire, and were ill fitted to face enemies who in every country from Ireland to Palestine, had been victorious against tenfold odds. A war, distinguished even among wars of religion by merciless atrocity, destroyed the Albigensian heresy, and with that heresy the prosperity, the civilisation, the literature, the national existence of what was once the most opulent and enlightened part of the great European family. Rome, in the meantime, warned by that fearful danger from which the exterminating swords of her crusaders had narrowly saved her, proceeded to revise and to strengthen her whole system of polity. At this period were instituted the Order of Francis, the Order of Dominic, the Tribunal of the Inquisition. The new spiritual police was everywhere. No alley in a great city, no hamlet on a remote mountain, was unvisited by the begging friar. The simple Catholic, who was content to be no wiser than his fathers, found wherever he turned a friendly voice to encourage him. The path of the heretic was beset by innumerable spies; and the Church, lately in danger of utter subversion, now appeared to be impregably fortified by the love, the reverence, and the terror of mankind.

A century and a half passed away, and then came the second great rising up of the human intellect against the spiritual domination of Rome. During the two generations which followed the Albigensian crusade, the power of the Papacy had been at the height. Frederic II, the ablest and most accomplished of the long line of German Cæsars, had in vain exhausted all the resources of military and political skill in the attempt to defend the rights of the civil power against the encroachments of the Church. The ven-

geance of the priesthood had pursued his house to the third generation. Manfred had perished on the field of battle, Conradin on the scaffold. Then a turn took place. The secular authority, long unduly depressed, regained the ascendant with startling rapidity. The change is doubtless to be ascribed chiefly to the general disgust excited by the way in which the Church had abused its power and its success. But something must be attributed to the character and situation of individuals. The man who bore the chief part in effecting this revolution was Philip IV of France, surnamed the Beautiful, a despot by position, a despot by temperament, stern, implacable and unscrupulous, equally prepared for violence and for chicanery, and surrounded by a devoted band of men of the sword and of men of law. The fiercest and most highminded of the Roman Pontiffs, while bestowing kingdoms and citing great princes to his judgment-seat, was seized in his palace by armed men, and so foully outraged that he died mad with rage and terror. 'Thus,' sang the great Florentine poet, 'was Christ, in the person of his vicar, a second time seized by ruffians, a second time mocked, a second time drenched with the vinegar and the gall.' The seat of the Papal court was carried beyond the Alps, and the Bishops of Rome became dependants of France. Then came the great schism of the West. Two Popes, each with a doubtful title, made all Europe ring with their mutual invectives and anathemas. Rome cried out against the corruptions of Avignon; and Avignon with equal justice recriminated on Rome. The plain Christian people, brought up in the belief that it was a sacred duty to be in communion with the Head of the Church, were unable to discover amidst conflicting testimonies and conflicting arguments, to which of the two worthless priests, who were cursing and reviling each other, the headship of the Church rightfully belonged. It was nearly at this juncture that the voice of John Wycliffe began to make itself heard. The public mind of England was soon stirred to its inmost depths: and the influence of

the new doctrines was soon felt, even in the distant kingdom of Bohemia. In Bohemia indeed there had long been a predisposition to heresy. Merchants from the Lower Danube were often seen in the fairs of Prague; and the Lower Danube was peculiarly the seat of the Paulician theology. The Church, torn by schism, and fiercely assailed at once in England and in the German empire, was in a situation scarcely less perilous than at the crisis which preceded the Albigensian crusade.

But this danger also passed by. The civil power gave its strenuous support to the Church; and the Church made some show of reforming itself. The Council of Constance put an end to the schism. The whole Catholic world was again united under a single chief; and rules were laid down which seemed to make it improbable that the power of that chief would be grossly abused. The most distinguished teachers of the new doctrine were put to death. The English government put down the Lollards with merciless rigour; and, in the next generation, no trace of the second great revolt against the Papacy could be found except among the rude population of the mountains of Bohemia.

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

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

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

other countries on this side of the Alps and the Pyrenees, it seemed on the point of triumphing.

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

Spain again was, with respect to the Catholic Church, in a situation very different from that of the Teutonic nations. Italy was, in fact, a part of the empire of Charles V; and the court of Rome was on many important occasions his tool. He had not, therefore, like the distant princes of the North, a strong selfish motive for attacking the Papacy. In fact the very measures which provoked the sovereign of England to renounce all connection with Rome were dictated by the sovereign of Spain. The feelings of the Spanish

people concurred with the interest of the Spanish government. The attachment of the Castilian to the faith of his ancestors was peculiarly strong and ardent. With that faith were inseparably bound up the institutions, the independence, and the glory of his country. Between the day when the last Gothic king was vanquished on the Xeres and the day when Ferdinand and Isabella entered Granada in triumph, nearly eight hundred years had elapsed; and during those years the Spanish nation had been engaged in a desperate struggle against misbelievers. The Crusades had been merely an episode in the history of other nations. The existence of Spain had been one long Crusade. After fighting Mussulmans in the Old World, she began to fight heathens in the New. It was under the authority of a Papal bull that her children steered into unknown seas. It was under the standard of the cross that they marched fearlessly into the heart of great kingdoms. It was with the cry of 'St James for Spain' that they charged armies which outnumbered them a hundred-fold. And men said that the Saint had heard the call, and had himself, in arms, on a grey war-horse, led the onset before which the worshippers of false gods had given way. After the battle every excess of rapacity or cruelty was sufficiently vindicated by the plea that the sufferers were unbaptized. Avarice stimulated zeal. Zeal consecrated avarice. Proselytes and gold mines were sought with equal ardour. In the very year in which the Saxons, maddened by the exactions of Rome, broke loose from her yoke, the Spaniards, under the authority of Rome, made themselves masters of the empire and of the treasures of Montezuma. Thus Catholicism, which in the public mind of Northern Europe was associated with spoliation and oppression, was in the public mind of Spain associated with liberty, victory, dominion, wealth, and glory.

It is not therefore strange that the effect of the great outbreak of Protestantism in one part of Christendom should have been to produce an equally violent outbreak of Catholic zeal in another. Two reformations

were pushed on at once with equal energy and effect—a reformation of doctrine in the North, a reformation of manners and discipline in the South. In the course of a single generation the whole spirit of the Church of Rome underwent a change. From the halls of the Vatican to the most secluded hermitage of the Apennines the great revival was everywhere felt and seen. All the institutions anciently devised for the propagation and defence of the faith were furbished up and made efficient. Fresh engines of still more formidable power were constructed. Everywhere old religious communities were remodelled and new religious communities called into existence. Within a year after the death of Leo the order of Camaldoli was purified. The Capuchins restored the old Franciscan discipline—the midnight prayer and the life of silence. The Barnabites and the society of Somascha devoted themselves to the relief and education of the poor. To the Theatine order a still higher interest belongs. Its great object was the same with that of our early Methodists—to supply the deficiencies of the parochial clergy. The Church of Rome, wiser than the Church of England, gave every countenance to the good work. The members of the new brotherhood preached to great multitudes in the streets and in the fields, prayed by the beds of the sick, and administered the last sacraments to the dying. Foremost among them in zeal and devotion was Gian Pietro Caraffa, afterwards Pope Paul IV. In the convent of the Theatines at Venice, under the eye of Caraffa, a Spanish gentleman took up his abode, tended the poor in the hospitals, went about in rags, starved himself almost to death, and often sallied into the streets, mounted on stones, and, waving his hat to invite the passers-by, began to preach in a strange jargon of mingled Castilian and Tuscan. The Theatines were among the most zealous and rigid of men; but to this enthusiastic neophyte their discipline seemed lax and their movements sluggish; for his own mind, naturally passionate and imaginative, had passed

through a training which had given to all its peculiarities a morbid intensity and energy. In his early life he had been the very prototype of the hero of Cervantes. The single study of the young hidalgo had been chivalrous romance; and his existence had been one gorgeous day-dream of princesses rescued and infidels subdued. He had chosen a Dulcinea, 'no countess, no duchess'—these are his own words—'but one of far higher station'; and he flattered himself with the hope of laying at her feet the keys of Moorish castles and the jewelled turbans of Asiatic kings. In the midst of these visions of martial glory and prosperous love, a severe wound stretched him on a bed of sickness. His constitution was shattered and he was doomed to be a cripple for life. The palm of strength, grace, and skill in knightly exercises was no longer for him. He could no longer hope to strike down gigantic soldans, or to find favour in the sight of beautiful women. A new vision then arose in his mind and mingled itself with his old delusions in a manner which to most Englishmen must seem singular, but which those who know how close was the union between religion and chivalry in Spain will be at no loss to understand. He would still be a soldier; he would still be a knight errant; but the soldier and knight errant of the spouse of Christ. He would smite the Great Red Dragon. He would be the champion of the Woman clothed with the Sun. He would break the charm under which false prophets held the souls of men in bondage. His restless spirit led him to the Syrian deserts and to the chapel of the Holy Sepulchre. Thence he wandered back to the farthest West, and astonished the convents of Spain and the schools of France by his penances and vigils. The same lively imagination, which had been employed in picturing the tumult of unreal battles and the charms of unreal queens, now peopled his solitude with saints and angels. The Holy Virgin descended to commune with him. He saw the Saviour face to face with the eye of flesh. Even those mysteries of



religion which are the hardest trial of faith were in his case palpable to sight. It is difficult to relate without a pitying smile that, in the sacrifice of the mass, he saw transubstantiation take place, and that as he stood praying on the steps of the Church of St Dominic, he saw the Trinity in Unity, and wept aloud with joy and wonder. Such was the celebrated Ignatius Loyola, who in the great Catholic reaction bore the same part which Luther bore in the great Protestant movement.

Dissatisfied with the system of the Theatines, the enthusiastic Spaniard turned his face towards Rome. Poor, obscure, without a patron, without recommendations, he entered the city where now two princely temples, rich with painting and many-coloured marble, commemorate his great services to the Church; where his form stands sculptured in massive silver; where his bones, enshrined amidst jewels, are placed beneath the altar of God. His activity and zeal bore down all opposition; and under his rule the order of Jesuits began to exist and grew rapidly to the full measure of its gigantic powers. With what vehemence, with what policy, with what exact discipline, with what dauntless courage, with what self-denial, with what forgetfulness of the dearest private ties, with what intense and stubborn devotion to a single end, with what unscrupulous laxity and versatility in the choice of means, the Jesuits fought the battle of their Church, is written in every page of the annals of Europe during several generations. In the order of Jesus was concentrated the quintessence of the Catholic spirit; and the history of the order of Jesus is the history of the great Catholic reaction. That order possessed itself at once of all the strongholds which command the public mind—of the pulpit, of the press, of the confessional, of the academies. Wherever the Jesuit preached, the church was too small for the audience. The name of Jesuit on a title-page secured the circulation of a book. It was in the ears of the Jesuit that the powerful, the noble, and the beautiful, breathed the secret history of

their lives. It was at the feet of the Jesuit that the youth of the higher and middle classes were brought up from the first rudiments to the courses of rhetoric and philosophy. Literature and science, lately associated with infidelity or with heresy, now became the allies of orthodoxy. Dominant in the south of Europe, the great order soon went forth conquering and to conquer. In spite of oceans and deserts, of hunger and pestilence, of spies and penal laws, of dungeons and racks, of gibbets and quartering-blocks, Jesuits were to be found under every disguise and in every country—scholars, physicians, merchants, serving-men; in the hostile court of Sweden, in the old manor-house of Cheshire, among the hovels of Connaught; arguing, instructing, consoling, stealing away the hearts of the young, animating the courage of the timid, holding up the crucifix before the eyes of the dying. Nor was it less their office to plot against the thrones and lives of apostate kings, to spread evil rumours, to raise tumults, to inflame civil wars, to arm the hand of the assassin. Inflexible in nothing but in their fidelity to the Church, they were equally ready to appeal in her cause to the spirit of loyalty and to the spirit of freedom. Extreme doctrines of obedience and extreme doctrines of liberty, the right of rulers to misgovern the people, the right of every one of the people to plunge his knife in the heart of a bad ruler, were inculcated by the same man, according as he addressed himself to the subject of Philip or to the subject of Elizabeth. Some described these men as the most rigid, others as the most indulgent, of spiritual directors; and both descriptions were correct. The truly devout listened with awe to the high and saintly morality of the Jesuit. The gay cavalier who had run his rival through the body, the frail beauty who had forgotten her marriage vow, found in the Jesuit an easy, well-bred man of the world, tolerant of the little irregularities of people of fashion. The confessor was strict or lax according to the temper of the penitent. His first object was to drive no person out of

the pale of the Church. Since there were bad people, it was better that they should be bad Catholics than bad Protestants. If a person was so unfortunate as to be a bravo, a libertine, or a gambler, that was no reason for making him a heretic too.

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

The spirit which appeared so eminently in this order animated the whole Catholic world. The Court of Rome itself was purified. During the generation which preceded the Reformation, that court had been a scandal to the Christian name. Its annals are black with treason, murder, and incest. Even its more respectable members were utterly unfit to be ministers of religion. They were men like Leo X; men who, with the Latinity of the Augustan age, had acquired its atheistical and scoffing spirit. They regarded those Christian mysteries, of which they were stewards, just as the Augur Cicero and the Pontifex Maximus Cæsar regarded the Sibylline books and the pecking of the sacred chickens. Among themselves, they spoke of the Incarnation, the Eucharist, and the Trinity, in the same tone in which Cotta and Velleius talked of the oracle of Delphi or the voice of Faunus in the mountains. Their years glided by in a soft dream of sensual and intellectual voluptuousness. Choice cookery, delicious wines, lovely women, hounds, falcons, horses, newly-discovered manuscripts of the classics, sonnets and burlesque romances in the sweetest Tuscan, just as licentious as a fine sense of the graceful would permit, plate from the hand of

Benvenuto, designs for palaces by Michael Angelo, frescoes by Raphael, busts, mosaics, and gems, just dug up from among the ruins of ancient temples and villas—these things were the delight and even the serious business of their lives. Letters and the fine arts undoubtedly owe much to this not inelegant sloth. But when the great stirring of the mind of Europe began, when doctrine after doctrine was assailed, when nation after nation withdrew from communion with the successor of St Peter, it was felt that the Church could not be safely confided to chiefs whose highest praise was that they were good judges of Latin compositions, of paintings, and of statues; whose severest studies had a pagan character; and who were suspected of laughing in secret at the sacraments which they administered, and of believing no more of the Gospel than of the *Morgante Maggiore*. Men of a very different class now rose to the direction of ecclesiastical affairs, men whose spirit resembled that of Dunstan and of Becket. The Roman Pontiffs exhibited in their own persons all the austerity of the early anchorites of Syria. Paul IV brought to the Papal throne the same fervent zeal which had carried him into the Theatine convent. Pius V, under his gorgeous vestments, wore day and night the hair shirt of a simple friar; walked barefoot in the streets at the head of processions; found, even in the midst of his most pressing avocations, time for private prayer; often regretted that the public duties of his station were unfavourable to growth in holiness; and edified his flock by innumerable instances of humility, charity, and forgiveness of personal injuries; while at the same time he upheld the authority of his see and the unadulterated doctrines of his Church with all the stubbornness and vehemence of Hildebrand. Gregory XIII exerted himself not only to imitate but to surpass Pius in the severe virtues of his sacred profession. As was the head, such were the members. The change in the spirit of the Catholic world may be traced in every walk of literature and of art. It will be at once

perceived by every person who compares the poem of Tasso with that of Ariosto, or the monuments of Sixtus V with those of Leo X.

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

Thus while the Protestant reformation proceeded rapidly at one extremity of Europe, the Catholic revival went on as rapidly at the other. About half a century after the great separation, there were, throughout the North, Protestant governments and Protestant nations. In the South were governments and nations actuated by the most intense zeal for the ancient Church. Between these two hostile regions lay, morally as well as geographically, a great debatable land. In France, Belgium, Southern Germany, Hungary, and Poland, the contest was still undecided. The governments of those countries had not renounced their connection with Rome; but the Protestants were numerous, powerful, bold, and active. In France they

formed a commonwealth within the realm, held fortresses, were able to bring great armies into the field, and had treated with their sovereign on terms of equality. In Poland the king was still a Catholic; but the Protestants had the upper hand in the Diet, filled the chief offices in the administration, and in the large towns took possession of the parish churches. 'It appeared,' says the Papal nuncio, 'that in Poland Protestantism would completely supersede Catholicism.' In Bavaria the state of things was nearly the same. The Protestants had a majority in the Assembly of the States, and demanded from the duke concessions in favour of their religion as the price of their subsidies. In Transylvania the House of Austria was unable to prevent the Diet from confiscating, by one sweeping decree, the estates of the Church. In Austria proper it was generally said that only one-thirtieth part of the population could be counted on as good Catholics. In Belgium the adherents of the new opinions were reckoned by hundreds of thousands.

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

It is moreover not to be dissembled that this wonderful triumph of the Papacy is to be chiefly attributed not to the force of arms, but to a great reflux in public

opinion. During the first half century after the commencement of the Reformation, the current of feeling in the countries on this side of the Alps and of the Pyrenees ran impetuously towards the new doctrines. Then the tide turned and rushed as fiercely in the opposite direction. Neither during the one period nor during the other did much depend upon the event of battles or sieges. The Protestant movement was hardly checked for an instant by the defeat at Muhlberg. The Catholic reaction went on at full speed in spite of the destruction of the Armada. It is difficult to say whether the violence of the first blow or of the recoil was the greater. Fifty years after the Lutheran separation, Catholicism could scarcely maintain itself on the shores of the Mediterranean. A hundred years after the separation, Protestantism could scarcely maintain itself on the shores of the Baltic. The causes of this memorable turn in human affairs well deserve to be investigated.

The contest between the two parties bore some resemblance to the fencing match in Shakespeare, 'Laertes wounds Hamlet; then, in scuffling, they change rapiers, and Hamlet wounds Laertes.' The war between Luther and Leo was a war between firm faith and unbelief, between zeal and apathy, between energy and indolence, between seriousness and frivolity, between a pure morality and vice. Very different was the war which degenerate Protestantism had to wage against regenerate Catholicism. To the debauchees, the poisoners, the atheists, who had worn the tiara during the generation which preceded the Reformation, had succeeded Popes who, in religious fervour and severe sanctity of manners, might bear a comparison with Cyprian or Ambrose. The order of Jesuits alone could show many men not inferior in sincerity, constancy, courage, and austerity of life, to the apostles of the Reformation. But while danger had thus called forth in the bosom of the Church of Rome many of the highest qualities of the Reformers, the Reformers had contracted some of the corruptions which had been

justly censured in the Church of Rome. They had become lukewarm and worldly. Their great old leaders had been borne to the grave and had left no successors. Among the Protestant princes there was little or no hearty Protestant feeling. Elizabeth herself was a Protestant rather from policy than from firm conviction. James I, in order to effect his favourite object of marrying his son into one of the great continental houses, was ready to make immense concessions to Rome, and even to admit a modified primacy in the Pope. Henry IV twice abjured the reformed doctrines from interested motives. The Elector of Saxony, the natural head of the Protestant party in Germany, submitted to become, at the most important crisis of the struggle, a tool in the hands of the Papists. Among the Catholic sovereigns on the other hand we find a religious zeal often amounting to fanaticism. Philip II was a Papist in a very different sense from that in which Elizabeth was a Protestant. Maximilian of Bavaria, brought up under the teaching of the Jesuits, was a fervent missionary wielding the powers of a prince. The Emperor Ferdinand II deliberately put his throne to hazard over and over again, rather than make the smallest concession to the spirit of religious innovation. Sigismund of Sweden lost a crown which he might have preserved if he would have renounced the Catholic faith. In short everywhere on the Protestant side we see languor; everywhere on the Catholic side we see ardour and devotion.

Not only was there at this time a much more intense zeal among the Catholics than among the Protestants, but the whole zeal of the Catholics was directed against the Protestants, while almost the whole zeal of the Protestants was directed against each other. Within the Catholic Church there were no serious disputes on points of doctrine. The decisions of the Council of Trent were received; and the Jansenian controversy had not yet arisen. The whole force of Rome was, therefore, effective for the purpose of carrying on the war against the Reforma-



tion. On the other hand the force which ought to have fought the battle of the Reformation was exhausted in civil conflict. While Jesuit preachers, Jesuit confessors, Jesuit teachers of youth overspread Europe, eager to expend every faculty of their minds and every drop of their blood in the cause of their Church, Protestant doctors were confuting, and Protestant rulers were punishing, sectaries who were just as good Protestants as themselves ;

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

In the Palatinate a Calvinistic prince persecuted the Lutherans. In Saxony a Lutheran prince persecuted the Calvinists. In Sweden everybody who objected to any of the articles of the Confession of Augsburg was banished. In Scotland Melville was disputing with other Protestants on questions of ecclesiastical government. In England the gaols were filled with men who, though zealous for the Reformation, did not exactly agree with the Court on all points of discipline and doctrine. Some were in ward for denying the tenet of reprobation; some for not wearing surplices. The Irish people might at that time have been, in all probability, reclaimed from Popery at the expense of half the zeal and activity which Whitgift employed in oppressing Puritans, and Martin Marprelate in reviling bishops.

As the Catholics in zeal and in union had a great advantage over the Protestants, so had they also an infinitely superior organisation. In truth, Protestantism, for aggressive purposes, had no organisation at all. The Reformed Churches were mere national Churches. The Church of England existed for England alone. It was an institution as purely local as the Court of Common Pleas, and was utterly without any machinery for foreign operations. The Church of Scotland, in the same manner, existed for Scotland alone. The operations of the Catholic Church, on the other hand, took in the whole world. Nobody at

Lambeth or at Edinburgh troubled himself about what was doing in Poland or Bavaria. But at Rome, Cracow and Munich were objects of as much interest as the purlieu of St John Lateran. Our island, the head of the Protestant interest, did not send out a single missionary or a single instructor of youth to the scene of the great spiritual war. Not a single seminary was established here for the purpose of furnishing a supply of such persons to foreign countries. On the other hand, Germany, Hungary, and Poland, were filled with able and active Catholic emissaries of Spanish or Italian birth; and colleges for the instruction of the northern youth were founded at Rome. The spiritual force of Protestantism was a mere local militia, which might be useful in case of an invasion, but could not be sent abroad, and could therefore make no conquests. Rome had such a local militia; but she had also a force disposable at a moment's notice for foreign service, however dangerous or disagreeable. If it was thought at headquarters that a Jesuit of Palermo was qualified by his talents and character to withstand the Reformers in Lithuania, the order was instantly given and instantly obeyed. In a month, the faithful servant of the Church was preaching, catechising, confessing beyond the Niemen.

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

If we went at large into this most interesting

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

In England it not unfrequently happens that a

tinker or coalheaver hears a sermon or falls in with a tract which alarms him about the state of his soul. If he be a man of excitable nerves and strong imagination, he thinks himself given over to the Evil Power. He doubts whether he has not committed the unpardonable sin. He imputes every wild fancy that springs up in his mind to the whisper of a fiend. His sleep is broken by dreams of the great judgment-seat, the open books, and the unquenchable fire. If, in order to escape from these vexing thoughts, he flies to amusement or to licentious indulgence, the delusive relief only makes his misery darker and more hopeless. At length a turn takes place. He is reconciled to his offended Maker. To borrow the fine imagery of one who had himself been thus tried, he emerges from the Valley of the Shadow of Death, from the dark land of gins and snares, of quagmires and precipices, of evil spirits and ravenous beasts. The sunshine is on his path. He ascends the Delectable Mountains, and catches from their summit a distant view of the shining city which is the end of his pilgrimage. Then arises in his mind a natural, and surely not a censurable desire, to impart to others the thoughts of which his own heart is full, to warn the careless, to comfort those who are troubled in spirit. The impulse which urges him to devote his whole life to the teaching of religion is a strong passion in the guise of a duty. He exhorts his neighbours; and if he be a man of strong parts, he often does so with great effect. He pleads as if he were pleading for his life, with tears and pathetic gestures and burning words; and he soon finds with delight, not perhaps wholly unmixed with the alloy of human infirmity, that his rude eloquence rouses and melts hearers who sleep very composedly while the rector preaches on the apostolical succession. Zeal for God, love for his fellow-creatures, pleasure in the exercise of his newly discovered powers, impel him to become a preacher. He has no quarrel with the establishment, no objection to its formularies, its government, or its vestments. He would gladly be

admitted among its humblest ministers; but, admitted or rejected, his vocation is determined. His orders have come down to him, not through a long and doubtful series of Arian and Popish bishops, but direct from on high. His commission is the same that on the mountain of Ascension was given to the Eleven. Nor will he, for lack of human credentials, spare to deliver the glorious message with which he is charged by the true Head of the Church. For a man thus minded, there is within the pale of the establishment no place. He has been at no college; he cannot construe a Greek author, nor write a Latin theme; and he is told that, if he remains in the communion of the Church, he must do so as a hearer, and that if he is resolved to be a teacher, he must begin by being a schismatic. His choice is soon made. He harangues on Tower Hill or in Smithfield. A congregation is formed. A license is obtained. A plain brick building, with a desk and benches, is run up, and named Ebenezer or Bethel. In a few weeks the Church has lost for ever a hundred families, not one of which entertained the least scruple about her articles, her liturgy, her government, or her ceremonies.

Far different is the policy of Rome. The ignorant enthusiast whom the Anglican Church makes an enemy, and, whatever the polite and learned may think, a most dangerous enemy, the Catholic Church makes a champion. She bids him nurse his beard, covers him with a gown and hood of coarse dark stuff, ties a rope round his waist, and sends him forth to teach in her name. He costs her nothing. He takes not a ducat away from the revenues of her beneficed clergy. He lives by the alms of those who respect his spiritual character and are grateful for his instructions. He preaches, not exactly in the style of Massillon, but in a way which moves the passions of uneducated hearers; and all his influence is employed to strengthen the Church of which he is a minister. To that Church he becomes as strongly attached as any of the cardinals whose scarlet carriages and liveries crowd the

entrance of the palace on the Quirinal. In this way the Church of Rome unites in herself all the strength of establishment and all the strength of dissent. With the utmost pomp of a dominant hierarchy above, she has all the energy of the voluntary system below. It would be easy to mention very recent instances in which the hearts of hundreds of thousands, estranged from her by the selfishness, sloth, and cowardice of the beneficed clergy, have been brought back by the zeal of the begging friars.

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

Place Ignatius Loyola at Oxford. He is certain to become the head of a formidable secession. Place John Wesley at Rome. He is certain to be the first General of a new society devoted to the interest and honour of the Church. Place St Teresa in London. Her restless enthusiasm ferments into madness, not untinged with craft. She becomes the prophetess, the mother of the faithful, holds disputations with the devil, issues sealed pardons to her adorers, and lies in of the Shiloh. Place Joanna Southcote at Rome. She founds an order of barefooted Carmelites, every one of whom is ready to suffer martyrdom for the

Church; a solemn service is consecrated to her memory; and her statue, placed over the holy water, strikes the eye of every stranger who enters St Peter's.

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

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

And now again the tide turned. Two violent outbreaks of religious feeling in opposite directions had given a character to the whole history of a whole century. Protestantism had at first driven back Catholicism to the Alps and the Pyrenees. Catholicism had rallied and had driven back Protestantism even to the German Ocean. Then the great southern reaction began to slacken, as the great northern movement had slackened before. The zeal of the Catholics became cool; their union was dissolved.

The paroxysm of religious excitement was over on both sides. The one party had degenerated as far from the spirit of Loyola, as the other from the spirit of Luther. During three generations religion had been the mainspring of politics. The revolutions and civil wars of France, Scotland, Holland, Sweden, the long struggle between Philip and Elizabeth, the bloody competition for the Bohemian crown, had all originated in theological disputes. But a great change now took place. The contest which was raging in Germany lost its religious character. It was now, on one side, less a contest for the spiritual ascendancy of the Church of Rome than for the temporal ascendancy of the House of Austria. On the other, it was less a contest for the reformed doctrines than for national independence. Governments began to form themselves into new combinations, in which community of political interest was far more regarded than community of religious belief. Even at Rome, the progress of the Catholic arms was observed with very mixed feelings. The Supreme Pontiff was a sovereign prince of the second rank, and was anxious about the balance of power as well as about the propagation of truth. It was known that he dreaded the rise of a universal monarchy even more than he desired the prosperity of the Universal Church. At length a great event announced to the world that the war of sects had ceased and that the war of states had succeeded. A coalition, including Calvinists, Lutherans and Catholics, was formed against the House of Austria. At the head of that coalition were the first statesman and the first warrior of the age; the former a prince of the Catholic Church, distinguished by the vigour and success with which he had put down the Huguenots; the latter a Protestant king who owed his throne to a revolution caused by hatred of Popery. The alliance of Richelieu and Gustavus marks the time at which the great religious struggle terminated. The war which followed was a war for the equilibrium of Europe. When at length the peace of Westphalia



was concluded, it appeared that the Church of Rome remained in full possession of a vast dominion, which in the middle of the preceding century she seemed to be on the point of losing. No part of Europe remained Protestant except that part which had become thoroughly Protestant before the generation which heard Luther preach had passed away.

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

The geographical frontier between the two religions has continued to run almost precisely where it ran at the close of the Thirty Years' War; nor has Protestantism given any proofs of that 'expansive power' which has been ascribed to it. But the Protestant boasts, and boasts most justly, that wealth, civilisation and intelligence have increased far more on the northern than on the southern side of the boundary; that countries so little favoured by nature as Scotland and Prussia are now among the most flourishing and best governed portions of the world, while the marble palaces of Genoa are deserted, while banditti infest the beautiful shores of Campania, while the fertile sea-coast of the Pontifical State is abandoned to buffaloes and wild boars. It cannot be doubted that, since the sixteenth century, the Protestant nations have made decidedly greater progress than their neighbours. The progress made by those nations in which Protestantism, though not finally successful, yet maintained a long struggle and left permanent

traces, has generally been considerable. But when we come to the Catholic land, to the part of Europe in which the first spark of reformation was trodden out as soon as it appeared, and from which proceeded the impulse which drove Protestantism back, we find at best a very slow progress, and on the whole a retrogression. Compare Denmark and Portugal. When Luther began to preach the superiority of the Portuguese was unquestionable. At present the superiority of the Danes is no less so. Compare Edinburgh and Florence. Edinburgh has owed less to climate, to soil and to the fostering care of rulers than any capital, Protestant or Catholic. In all these respects, Florence has been singularly happy. Yet whoever knows what Florence and Edinburgh were in the generation preceding the Reformation, and what they are now, will acknowledge that some great cause has during the last three centuries operated to raise one part of the European family and to depress the other. Compare the history of England and that of Spain during the last century. In arms, arts, sciences, letters, commerce, agriculture, the contrast is most striking. The distinction is not confined to this side of the Atlantic. The colonies planted by England in America have immeasurably outgrown in power those planted by Spain. Yet we have no reason to believe that at the beginning of the sixteenth century the Castilian was in any respect inferior to the Englishman. Our firm belief is that the North owes its great civilisation and prosperity chiefly to the moral effect of the Protestant Reformation; and that the decay of the southern countries of Europe is to be mainly ascribed to the great Catholic revival.

About a hundred years after the final settlement of the boundary line between Protestantism and Catholicism began to appear the signs of the fourth great peril of the Church of Rome. The storm which was now rising against her was of a very different kind from those which had preceded it. Those who had formerly attacked her had questioned only a part

of her doctrines. A school was now growing up which rejected the whole. The Albigenses, the Lollards, the Lutherans, the Calvinists had a positive religious system and were strongly attached to it. The creed of the new sectaries was altogether negative. They took one of their premises from the Protestants and one from the Catholics. From the latter they borrowed the principle that Catholicism was the only pure and genuine Christianity. With the former they held that some parts of the Catholic system were contrary to reason. The conclusion was obvious. Two propositions, each of which separately is compatible with the most exalted piety, formed, when held in conjunction, the groundwork of a system of irreligion. The doctrine of Bossuet, that transubstantiation is affirmed in the Gospel, and the doctrine of Tillotson that transubstantiation is an absurdity, when put together, produced by logical necessity the inferences of Voltaire.

Had the sect which was rising at Paris been a sect of mere scoffers, it is very improbable that it would have left deep traces of its existence in the institutions and manners of Europe. Mere negation, mere Epicurean infidelity, as Lord Bacon most justly observes, has never disturbed the peace of the world. It furnishes no motive for action. It inspires no enthusiasm. It has no missionaries, no crusaders, no martyrs. If the Patriarch of the Holy Philosophical Church had contented himself with making jokes about Saul's asses and David's wives, and with criticising the poetry of Ezekiel in the same narrow spirit in which he criticised that of Shakespeare, the Church would have had little to fear. But it is due to him and to his compeers to say that the real secret of their strength lay in the truth which was mingled with their errors and in the generous enthusiasm which was hidden under their flippancy. They were men who with all their faults, moral and intellectual, sincerely and earnestly desired the improvement of the condition of the human race; whose blood boiled at the

sight of cruelty and injustice; who made manful war, with every faculty which they possessed, on what they considered as abuses; and who on many signal occasions placed themselves gallantly between the powerful and the oppressed. While they assailed Christianity with a rancour and an unfairness disgraceful to men who called themselves philosophers, they yet had, in far greater measure than their opponents, that charity towards men of all classes and races which Christianity enjoins. Religious persecution, judicial torture, arbitrary imprisonment, the unnecessary multiplication of capital punishments, the delay and chicanery of tribunals, the exactions of farmers of the revenue, slavery, the slave trade, were the constant subjects of their lively satire and eloquent disquisitions. When an innocent man was broken on the wheel at Toulouse; when a youth, guilty only of an indiscretion, was beheaded at Abbeville; when a brave officer, borne down by public injustice, was dragged, with a gag in his mouth, to die on the Place de Grève; a voice instantly went forth from the banks of Lake Lemane, which made itself heard from Moscow to Cadiz, and which sentenced the unjust judges to the contempt and detestation of all Europe. The really efficient weapons with which the philosophers assailed the evangelical faith were borrowed from the evangelical morality. The ethical and dogmatical parts of the Gospel were unhappily turned against each other. On the one side was a Church boasting of the purity of a doctrine derived from the Apostles, but disgraced by the massacre of St Bartholomew, by the murder of the best of kings, by the war of Cevennes, by the destruction of Port-Royal. On the other side was a sect laughing at the Scriptures, shooting out the tongue at the sacraments, but ready to encounter principalities and powers in the cause of justice, mercy, and toleration.

Irreligion, accidentally associated with philanthropy, triumphed for a time over religion accidentally associated with political and social abuses.

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

influence. The rulers of Prussia, of Russia, of Austria, and of many smaller states, were supposed to be among the initiated.

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

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

The movement went on with increasing speed. The first generation of the new sect passed away. The doctrines of Voltaire were inherited and exaggerated by successors who bore to him the same relation which the Anabaptists bore to Luther, or the Fifth-Monarchy men to Pym. At length the Revolution came. Down went the old Church of France, with all its pomp and wealth. Some of its priests purchased a maintenance by separating themselves from Rome and by becoming the authors of a fresh schism. Some, rejoicing in the new license, flung away their sacred vestments, proclaimed that their whole life had been an imposture, insulted and persecuted the religion of which they had been ministers, and distinguished themselves, even in the Jacobin Club and the Commune of Paris, by the excess of their impudence and ferocity. Others, more faithful to their principles, were butchered by scores without a trial, drowned, shot, hung on lamp-posts. Thousands fled from their country to take sanctuary under the shade of hostile altars. The churches were closed; the bells were silent; the shrines were plundered; the

silver crucifixes were melted down. Buffoons, dressed in copes and surplices, came dancing the *carmagnole* even to the bar of the Convention. The bust of Marat was substituted for the statues of the martyrs of Christianity. A prostitute, seated in state in the chancel of Notre Dame, received the adoration of thousands, who exclaimed that at length, for the first time, those ancient Gothic arches had resounded with the accents of truth. The new unbelief was as intolerant as the old superstition. To show reverence for religion was to incur the suspicion of disaffection. It was not without imminent danger that the priest baptized the infant, joined the hands of lovers, or listened to the confession of the dying. The absurd worship of the Goddess of Reason was indeed of short duration; but the deism of Robespierre and Lepaux was not less hostile to the Catholic faith than the atheism of Cloutz and Chaumette.

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

It is not strange that, in the year 1799, even sagacious observers should have thought that at length the

hour of the Church of Rome was come. An infidel power ascendant, the Pope dying in captivity, the most illustrious prelates of France living in a foreign country on Protestant alms, the noblest edifices, which the munificence of former ages had consecrated to the worship of God, turned into temples of Victory, or into banqueting-houses for political societies, or into Theophilanthropic chapels—such signs might well be supposed to indicate the approaching end of that long domination.

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

Some future historian, as able and temperate as Professor Ranke, will, we hope, trace the progress of



the Catholic revival of the nineteenth century. We feel that we are drawing too near our own time, and that if we go on we shall be in danger of saying much which may be supposed to indicate, and which will certainly excite, angry feelings. We will therefore make only one more observation, which in our opinion is deserving of serious attention.

During the eighteenth century, the influence of the Church of Rome was constantly on the decline. Unbelief made extensive conquests in all the Catholic countries of Europe, and in some countries obtained a complete ascendancy. The Papacy was at length brought so low as to be an object of derision to infidels, and of pity, rather than of hatred, to Protestants. During the nineteenth century, this fallen Church has been gradually rising from her depressed state and reconquering her old dominion. No person who calmly reflects on what, within the last few years, has passed in Spain, in Italy, in South America, in Ireland, in the Netherlands, in Prussia, even in France, can doubt that her power over the hearts and minds of men is now greater far than it was when the *Encyclopædia* and the *Philosophical Dictionary* appeared. It is surely remarkable that neither the moral revolution of the eighteenth century, nor the moral counter-revolution of the nineteenth, should in any perceptible degree have added to the domain of Protestantism. During the former period, whatever was lost to Catholicism was lost also to Christianity; during the latter, whatever was regained by Christianity in Catholic countries was regained also by Catholicism. We should naturally have expected that many minds, on the way from superstition to infidelity, or on the way back from infidelity to superstition, would have stopped at an intermediate point. Between the doctrines taught in the schools of the Jesuits and those which were maintained at the little supper parties of the Baron Holbach, there is a vast interval in which the human mind, it should seem, might find for itself some resting-place more satisfactory than either of the two

extremes. And at the time of the Reformation millions found such a resting-place. Whole nations then renounced Popery without ceasing to believe in a first cause, in a future life, or in the Divine authority of Christianity. In the last century, on the other hand, when a Catholic renounced his belief in the real presence, it was a thousand to one that he renounced his belief in the Gospel too; and when the reaction took place, with belief in the Gospel came back belief in the real presence.

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

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

## WALTER BAGEHOT

### *SHAKESPEARE—THE MAN*

1853

The greatest of English poets, it is often said, is but a name. 'No letter of his writing, no record of his conversation, no character of him drawn with any fulness by a contemporary,' have been extracted by antiquaries from the piles of rubbish which they have sifted. Yet of no person is there a clearer picture in the popular fancy. You seem to have known Shakespeare—to have seen Shakespeare—to have been friends with Shakespeare. We would attempt a slight delineation of the popular idea which has been formed, not from loose tradition or remote research, not from what some one says some one else said that the poet said, but from data which are at least undoubted, from the sure testimony of his certain works.

Some extreme sceptics, we know, doubt whether it is possible to deduce anything as to an author's character from his works. Yet surely people do not keep a tame steam-engine to write their books; and if those books were really written by a man, he must have been a man who could write them; he must have had the thoughts which they express, have acquired the knowledge they contain, have possessed the style in which we read them. The difficulty is a defect of the critics. A person who knows nothing of an author he has read, will not know much of an author whom he has seen.

First of all, it may be said that Shakespeare's works could only be produced by a first-rate imagination working on a first-rate experience. It is often difficult to make out whether the author of a poetic creation is drawing from fancy, or drawing from experience; but for art on a certain scale, the two must concur. Out of nothing, nothing can be created. Some plastic power is required, however great may be the material. And when such works as *Hamlet* and *Othello*, still more, when both they and others not unequal, have been created by a single mind, it may be fairly said, that not only a great imagination but a full conversancy with the world was necessary to their production. The whole powers of man under the most favourable circumstances, are not too great for such an effort. We may assume that Shakespeare had a great experience.

To a great experience one thing is essential, an experiencing nature. It is not enough to have opportunity, it is essential to feel it. Some occasions come to all men; but to many they are of little use, and to some they are none. What, for example, has experience done for the distinguished Frenchman, the name of whose essay is prefixed to this paper? M. Guizot is the same man that he was in 1820, or, we believe, as he was in 1814. Take up one of his lectures, published before he was a practical statesman; you will be struck with the width of view, the amplitude and the solidity of the reflections; you will be amazed that a mere literary teacher could produce anything so wise; but take up afterwards an essay published since his fall—and you will be amazed to find no more. Napoleon the First is come and gone—the Bourbons of the old *régime* have come and gone—the Bourbons of the new *régime* have had their turn. M. Guizot has been first minister of a citizen king; he has led a great party; he has pronounced many a great *discours* that was well received by the second elective assembly in the world. But there is no trace of this in his writings. No one would guess from them that their author had

ever left the professor's chair. It is the same, we are told, with small matters: when M. Guizot walks the street, he seems to see nothing; the head is thrown back, the eye fixed, and the mouth working. His mind is no doubt at work, but it is not stirred by what is external. Perhaps it is the internal activity of mind that overmasters the perceptive power. Anyhow there might have been an *émeute* in the street and he would not have known it; there have been revolutions in his life, and he is scarcely the wiser. Among the most frivolous and fickle of civilised nations he is alone. They pass from the game of war to the game of peace, from the game of science to the game of art, from the game of liberty to the game of slavery, from the game of slavery to the game of license; he stands like a schoolmaster in the playground, without sport and without pleasure, firm and sullen, slow and awful.

A man of this sort is a curious mental phenomenon. He appears to get early—perhaps to be born with—a kind of dry schedule or catalogue of the universe; he has a ledger in his head, and has a title to which he can refer any transaction; nothing puzzles him, nothing comes amiss to him, but he is not in the least the wiser for anything. Like the book-keeper, he has his heads of account, and he knows them, but he is no wiser for the particular items. After a busy day, and after a slow day, after a few entries, and after many, his knowledge is exactly the same: take his opinion of Baron Rothschild, he will say: 'Yes, he keeps an account with us'; of Humphrey Brown: 'Yes, we have that account, too.' Just so with the class of minds which we are speaking of, and in greater matters. Very early in life they come to a certain and considerable acquaintance with the world; they learn very quickly all they can learn, and naturally they never, in any way, learn any more. Mr Pitt is, in this country, the type of the character. Mr Alison, in a well-known passage, makes it a matter of wonder that he was fit to be a Chancellor of the Exchequer at twenty-three, and it is a great

wonder. But it is to be remembered that he was no more fit at forty-three. As somebody said, he did not grow, he was cast. Experience taught him nothing, and he did not believe that he had anything to learn. The habit of mind in smaller degrees is not very rare, and might be illustrated without end. Hazlitt tells a story of West, the painter, that is in point: When some one asked him if he had ever been to Greece, he answered: 'No; I have read a descriptive catalogue of the principal objects in that country, and I believe I am as well conversant with them as if I had visited it.' No doubt he was just as well conversant, and so would be any *doctrinaire*.

But Shakespeare was not a man of this sort. If he walked down a street, he knew what was in that street. His mind did not form in early life a classified list of all the objects in the universe, and learn no more about the universe ever after. From a certain fine sensibility of nature, it is plain that he took a keen interest not only in the general and coarse outlines of objects, but in their minutest particulars and gentlest gradations. You may open Shakespeare and find the clearest proofs of this; take the following:—

'When last the young Orlando parted from you,  
 He left a promise to return again  
 Within an hour; and, pacing through the forest,  
 Chewing the food of sweet and bitter fancy,  
 Lo, what befel! he threw his eye aside,  
 And mark what object did present itself!  
 Under an oak, whose boughs were moss'd with age,  
 And high top bald with dry antiquity,  
 A wretched ragged man, o'ergrown with hair,  
 Lay sleeping on his back: about his neck  
 A green and gilded snake had wreath'd itself,  
 Who with her head, nimble in threats, approach'd  
 The opening of his mouth; but suddenly  
 Seeing Orlando, it unlink'd itself,  
 And with indented glides did slip away  
 Into a bush; under which bush's shade  
 A lioness, with udders all drawn dry,  
 Lay couching, head on ground, with cat-like watch,

When that the sleeping man should stir; for 'tis  
 The royal disposition of that beast,  
 To prey on nothing that doth seem as dead:  
 This seen,' etc., etc.<sup>1</sup>

Or the more celebrated description of the hunt:—

'And when thou hast on foot the purblind hare,  
 Mark the poor wretch, to overshoot his troubles,  
 How he outruns the wind, and with what care  
 He cranks and crosses with a thousand doubles:  
 The many musets through the which he goes  
 Are like a labyrinth to amaze his foes.

'Sometime he runs among a flock of sheep,  
 To make the cunning hounds mistake their smell,  
 And sometime where earth-delving conies keep,  
 To stop the loud pursuers in their yell;  
 And sometimes sorteth with a herd of deer;  
 Danger deviseth shifts; wit waits on fear:

'For there his smell with others being mingled,  
 The hot scent-snuffing hounds are driven to doubt,  
 Ceasing their clamorous cry till they have singled,  
 With much ado, the cold fault cleanly out;  
 Then do they spend their mouths: Echo replies,  
 As if another chase were in the skies.

'By this, poor Wat, far off, upon a hill,  
 Stands on his hinder legs with listening ear,  
 To harken if his foes pursue him still;  
 Anon their loud alarums he doth hear;  
 And now his grief may be compared well  
 To one sore sick that hears the passing bell.

'Then thou shalt see the dew-bedabbled wretch  
 Turn, and return, indenting with the way;  
 Each envious briar his weary legs doth scratch,  
 Each shadow makes him stop, each murmur stay:  
 For misery is trodden on by many,  
 And being low, never relieved by any<sup>2</sup>.'

It is absurd, by the way, to say we know *nothing* about the man who wrote that; we know that he had been after a hare. It is idle to allege that mere

<sup>1</sup> *As You Like It*, IV. 3.

<sup>2</sup> *Venus and Adonis*.

imagination would tell him that a hare is apt to run among a flock of sheep, or that its so doing disconcerts the scent of hounds. But no single citation really represents the power of the argument. Set descriptions may be manufactured to order, and it does not follow that even the most accurate or successful of them was really the result of a thorough and habitual knowledge of the object. A man who knows little of Nature may write one excellent delineation, as a poor man may have one bright guinea. Real opulence consists in having many. What truly indicates excellent knowledge, is the habit of constant, sudden, and almost unconscious allusion, which implies familiarity, for it can arise from that alone,—and this very species of incidental, casual, and perpetual reference to ‘the mighty world of eye and ear<sup>1</sup>,’ is the particular characteristic of Shakespeare.

In this respect Shakespeare had the advantage of one whom, in many points, he much resembled—Sir Walter Scott. For a great poet, the organisation of the latter was very blunt; he had no sense of smell, little sense of taste, almost no ear for music (he knew a few, perhaps three, Scotch tunes, which he avowed that he had learnt in sixty years, by hard labour and mental association), and not much turn for the minutiae of Nature in any way. The effect of this may be seen in some of the best descriptive passages of his poetry, and we will not deny that it does (although proceeding from a sensuous defect), in a certain degree, add to their popularity. He deals with the main outlines and great points of Nature, never attends to any others, and in this respect he suits the comprehension and knowledge of many who know only those essential and considerable outlines. Young people, especially, who like big things, are taken with Scott, and bored by Wordsworth, who knew too much. And after all, the two poets are in proper harmony, each with his own scenery. Of all beautiful scenery the Scotch is the roughest and barest, as the English is the most

<sup>1</sup> Wordsworth: *Tintern Abbey*.



complex and cultivated. What a difference is there between the minute and finished delicacy of Rydal Water and the rough simplicity of Loch Katrine! It is the beauty of civilisation beside the beauty of barbarism. Scott has himself pointed out the effect of this on arts and artists.

‘Or see yon weather-beaten hind,  
Whose sluggish herds before him wind,  
Whose tattered plaid and rugged cheek  
His Northern clime and kindred speak;  
Through England’s laughing meads he goes,  
And England’s wealth around him flows;  
Ask if it would content him well,  
At ease in those gay plains to dwell,  
Where hedgerows spread a verdant screen,  
And spires and forests intervene,  
And the neat cottage peeps between?  
No, not for these would he exchange  
His dark Lochaber’s boundless range,  
Not for fair Devon’s meads forsake  
Ben Nevis grey and Garry’s lake.

‘Thus while I ape the measures wild  
Of tales that charmed me yet a child,  
Rude though they be, still, with the chime,  
Return the thoughts of early time;  
And feelings roused in life’s first day,  
Glow in the line and prompt the lay.  
Then rise those crags, that mountain tower,  
Which charmed my fancy’s wakening hour.  
Though no broad river swept along,  
To claim perchance heroic song;  
Though sighed no groves in summer gale,  
To prompt of love a softer tale;  
Though scarce a puny streamlet’s speed  
Claimed homage from a shepherd’s reed,  
Yet was poetic impulse given  
By the green hill and clear blue heaven.  
It was a barren scene and wild,  
Where naked cliffs were rudely piled,  
But ever and anon between,  
Lay velvet tufts of loveliest green;  
And well the lonely infant knew  
Recesses where the wallflower grew,

And honeysuckle loved to crawl  
Up the low crag and ruined wall.

'From me, thus nurtured, dost thou ask  
The classic poet's well-conned task?  
Nay, Erskine, nay—On the wild hill  
Let the wild heathbell flourish still;  
Cherish the tulip, prune the vine,  
But freely let the woodbine twine,  
And leave untrimmed the eglantine.  
Nay, my friend, nay—Since oft thy praise  
Hath given fresh vigour to my lays,  
Since oft thy judgment could refine  
My flattened thought or cumbrous line,  
Still kind, as is thy wont, attend,  
And in the minstrel spare the friend.  
Though wild as cloud, as stream, as gale,  
Flow forth, flow unrestrained, my tale<sup>1</sup>.'

And this is wise, for there is beauty in the North as well as in the South. Only it is to be remembered that the beauty of the Trossachs is the result of but a few elements—say birch and brushwood, rough hills and narrow dells, much heather and many stones—while the beauty of England is one thing in one district and one in another; is here the combination of one set of qualities, and there the harmony of opposite ones, and is everywhere made up of many details and delicate refinements; all which require an exquisite delicacy of perceptive organisation, a seeing eye, a minutely hearing ear. Scott's is the strong admiration of a rough mind; Shakespeare's, the nice minuteness of a susceptible one.

A perfectly poetic appreciation of nature contains two elements, a knowledge of facts, and a sensibility to charms. Everybody who may have to speak to some naturalists will be well aware how widely the two may be separated. He will have seen that a man may study butterflies and forget that they are beautiful, or be perfect in the 'Lunar theory' without knowing what most people mean by the moon. Generally such

<sup>1</sup> *Marmion*, Introduction to canto III.

people prefer the stupid parts of nature—worms and Cochinchina fowls. But Shakespeare was not obtuse. The lines—

‘Daffodils

That come before the swallow dares, and take  
The winds of March with beauty; violets dim,  
But sweeter than the lids of Juno’s eyes,  
Or Cytherea’s breath<sup>1</sup>’

seem to show that he knew those feelings of youth, to which beauty is more than a religion.

In his mode of delineating natural objects Shakespeare is curiously opposed to Milton. The latter, who was still by temperament, and a schoolmaster by trade, selects a beautiful object, puts it straight out before him and his readers, and accumulates upon it all the learned imagery of a thousand years; Shakespeare glances at it and says something of his own. It is not our intention to say that, as a describer of the external world, Milton is inferior; in *set* description we rather think that he is the better. We only wish to contrast the mode in which the delineation is effected. The one is like an artist who dashes off any number of picturesque sketches at any moment; the other like a man who has lived at Rome, has undergone a thorough training, and by deliberate and conscious effort, after a long study of the best masters, can produce a few great pictures. Milton, accordingly, as has been often remarked, is careful in the choice of his subjects; he knows too well the value of his labour to be very ready to squander it; Shakespeare, on the contrary, describes anything that comes to hand, for he is prepared for it whatever it may be, and what he paints he paints without effort. Compare any passage from Shakespeare—for example, those quoted before—and the following passage from Milton:—

‘Southward through Eden went a river large,  
Nor changed his course, but through the shaggy hill  
Passed underneath ingulf’d; for God had thrown  
That mountain as His garden mould, high raised

<sup>1</sup> *A Winter’s Tale*, IV. 4.

Upon the rapid current, which through veins  
 Of porous earth, with kindly thirst up-drawn,  
 Rose a fresh fountain, and with many a rill  
 Water'd the garden; thence united fell  
 Down the steep glade, and met the nether flood,  
 Which from his darksome passage now appears  
 And now divided into four main streams  
 Runs diverse, wandering many a famous realm  
 And country, whereof here needs no account;  
 But rather to tell how,—if art could tell,—  
 How from that sapphire fount the crisp'd brooks,  
 Rolling on orient pearl and sands of gold,  
 With mazy error under pendent shades  
 Ran nectar, visiting each plant; and fed  
 Flowers worthy of Paradise, which not nice art  
 In beds and curious knots, but Nature boon  
 Poured forth profuse on hill, and dale, and plain,  
 Both where the morning sun firm warmly smote  
 The open field, and where the unpierced shade  
 Imbrown'd the noontide bowers. Thus was this place  
 A happy rural seat of various view;  
 Groves whose rich trees wept odorous gums and balm;  
 Others whose fruit, burnish'd with golden rind,  
 Hung amiable (Hesperian fables true,  
 If true, here only), and of delicious taste:  
 Betwixt them lawns, or level downs, and flocks  
 Grazing the tender herb, were interposed:  
 Or palmy hillock, or the flowery lap  
 Of some irriguous valley spread her store;  
 Flowers of all hue, and without thorn the rose<sup>1</sup>.

Why, you could draw a map of it. It is *not* 'Nature boon,' but 'nice art in beds and curious knots'; it is exactly the old (and excellent) style of artificial gardening, by which any place can be turned into trim hedgerows, and stiff borders, and comfortable shades; but there are no straight lines in Nature or Shakespeare. Perhaps the contrast may be accounted for by the way in which the two poets acquired their knowledge of scenes and scenery. We think we demonstrated before that Shakespeare was a sportsman,

<sup>1</sup> *Paradise Lost*, book IV.

but if there be still a sceptic or a dissentient, let him read the following remarks on dogs:—

‘My hounds are bred out of the Spartan kind,  
So flew’d, so sanded; and their heads are hung  
With ears that sweep away the morning dew,  
Crook-kne’d and dewlapp’d like Thessalian bulls;  
Slow in pursuit, but match’d in mouth like bells,  
Each under each. A cry more tunable  
Was never holloa’d to nor cheer’d with horn  
In Crete, in Sparta, nor in Thessaly<sup>1</sup>.’

‘Judge when you hear<sup>2</sup>.’ It is evident that the man who wrote this was a judge of dogs, was an out-of-door sporting man, full of natural sensibility, not defective in ‘daintiness of ear,’ and above all things, apt to cast on Nature random, sportive, half-boyish glances, which reveal so much, and bequeath such abiding knowledge. Milton, on the contrary, went out to see Nature. He left a narrow cell, and the intense study which was his ‘portion in this life,’ to take a slow, careful, and reflective walk. In his treatise on education he has given us his notion of the way in which young people should be familiarised with natural objects. ‘But,’ he remarks, ‘to return to our institute; besides these constant exercises at home, there is another opportunity of gaining pleasure from pleasure itself abroad; in those vernal seasons of the year when the air is calm and pleasant, it were an injury and sullenness against Nature, not to go out and see her riches and partake in her rejoicing in heaven and earth. I should not therefore be a persuader to them of studying much in these, after two or three years, that they have well laid their grounds, but to ride out in companies, with prudent and staid guides, to all quarters of the land; learning and observing all places of strength, all commodities of building and of soil, for towns and tillage, harbours and ports of trade. Sometimes

<sup>1</sup> *Midsummer Night's Dream*, IV. 1.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, next line.

taking sea as far as our navy, to learn there also what they can in the practical knowledge of sailing and of sea-fight.' Fancy 'the prudent and staid guides.' What a machinery for making pedants. Perhaps Shakespeare would have known that the conversation would be in this sort: 'I say, Shallow, that mare is going in the knees. She has never been the same since you larked her over the fivebar, while Moleyes was talking clay and agriculture. I do not hate Latin so much, but I hate "argillaceous earth"; and what use is *that* to a fellow in the Guards, I should like to know?' Shakespeare had himself this sort of boyish buoyancy. He was not 'one of the staid guides.' We might further illustrate it. Yet this would be tedious enough, and we prefer to go on and show what we mean by an experiencing nature in relation to men and women, just as we have striven to indicate what it is in relation to horses and hares.

The reason why so few good books are written, is that so few people that can write know anything. In general an author has always lived in a room, has read books, has cultivated science, is acquainted with the style and sentiments of the best authors, but he is out of the way of employing his own eyes and ears. He has nothing to hear and nothing to see. His life is a vacuum. The mental habits of Robert Southey, which about a year ago were so extensively praised in the public journals, are the type of literary existence, just as the praise bestowed on them shows the admiration excited by them among literary people. He wrote poetry (as if anybody could) before breakfast; he read during breakfast. He wrote history until dinner; he corrected proof-sheets between dinner and tea; he wrote an essay for the *Quarterly* afterwards; and after supper, by way of relaxation, composed the 'Doctor'—a lengthy and elaborate jest. Now, what can any one think of such a life—except how clearly it shows that the habits best fitted for communicating information, formed with the best care, and daily re-

gulated by the best motives, are exactly the habits which are likely to afford a man the least information to communicate. Southey had no events, no experiences. His wife kept house and allowed him pocket-money, just as if he had been a German professor devoted to accents, tobacco, and the dates of Horace's amours. And it is pitiable to think that so meritorious a life was only made endurable by a painful delusion. He thought that day by day, and hour by hour, he was accumulating stores for the instruction and entertainment of a long posterity. His epics were to be in the hands of all men, and his history of Brazil, the 'Herodotus of the South American Republics.' As if his epics were not already dead, and as if the people who now cheat at Valparaiso care a *real* who it was that cheated those before them. Yet it was only by a conviction like this that an industrious and caligraphic man (for such was Robert Southey), who might have earned money as a clerk, worked all his days for half a clerk's wages, at occupation much duller and more laborious. The critic in *The Vicar of Wakefield* lays down that you should *always* say that the picture would have been better if the painter had taken more pains; but in the case of the practised literary man, you should often enough say that the writings would have been much better if the writer had taken less pains. He says he has devoted his life to the subject—the reply is: 'Then you have taken the best way to prevent your making anything of it.' Instead of reading studiously what Burgersdicius and Ænæsidemus said men were, you should have gone out yourself, and seen (if you can see) what they are.

After all, the original way of writing books may turn out to be the best. The first author, it is plain, could not have taken anything from books, since there were no books for him to copy from; he looked at things for himself. Anyhow, the modern system fails, for where are the amusing books from voracious students and habitual writers? Not that we mean exactly to say that an author's hard reading is the cause of his

writing that which is hard to read. This would be near the truth, but not quite the truth. The two are concomitant effects of a certain defective nature. Slow men read well, but write ill. The abstracted habit, the want of keen exterior interests, the aloofness of mind from what is next it, all tend to make a man feel an exciting curiosity and interest about remote literary events, the toil of scholastic logicians, and the petty feuds of Argos and Lacedæmon; but they also tend to make a man very unable to explain and elucidate those exploits for the benefit of his fellows. What separates the author from his readers, will make it proportionately difficult for him to explain himself to them. Secluded habits do not tend to eloquence; and the indifferent apathy which is so common in studious persons is exceedingly unfavourable to the liveliness of narration and illustration which is needed for excellence in even the simpler sorts of writing. Moreover, in general it will perhaps be found that persons devoted to mere literature commonly become devoted to mere idleness. They wish to produce a great work, but they find they cannot. Having relinquished everything to devote themselves to this, they conclude on trial that this is impossible. They wish to write, but nothing occurs to them. Therefore they write nothing, and they do nothing. As has been said, they have nothing to do. Their life has no events, unless they are very poor. With any decent means of subsistence, they have nothing to rouse them from an indolent and musing dream. A merchant must meet his bills, or he is civilly dead and uncivilly remembered. But a student may know nothing of time and be too lazy to wind up his watch. In the retired citizen's journal in Addison's *Spectator*, we have the type of this way of spending the time: Mem. Morning 8 to 9, 'Went into the parlour and tied on my shoe-buckles.' This is the sort of life for which studious men commonly relinquish the pursuits of business and the society of their fellows.

Yet all literary men are not tedious, neither are



they all slow. One great example even these most tedious times have luckily given us, to show us what may be done by a really great man even now, the same who before served as an illustration—Sir Walter Scott. In his lifetime people denied he was a poet, but nobody said that he was not ‘the best fellow’ in Scotland—perhaps that was not much—or that he had not more wise joviality, more living talk, more graphic humour, than any man in Great Britain. ‘Wherever we went,’ said Mr Wordsworth, ‘we found his name acted as an *open sesame*, and I believe that in the character of the *sheriff’s* friends, we might have counted on a hearty welcome under any roof in the border country.’ Never neglect to talk to people with whom you are casually thrown, was his precept, and he exemplified the maxim himself. ‘I believe,’ observes his biographer, ‘that Scott has somewhere expressed in print his satisfaction, that amid all the changes of our manners, the ancient freedom of personal intercourse may still be indulged between a master and an *out-of-door* servant; but in truth he kept by the old fashion, even with domestic servants, to an extent which I have hardly ever seen practised by any other gentleman. He conversed with his coachman if he sat by him, as he often did, on the box—with his footman, if he chanced to be in the rumble. Indeed, he did not confine his humanity to his own people; any steady-going servant of a friend of his was soon considered as a sort of friend too, and was sure to have a kind little colloquy to himself at coming or going.’ ‘Sir Walter speaks to every man as if he was his blood relation,’ was the expressive comment of one of these dependants. It was in this way that he acquired the great knowledge of various kinds of men, which is so clear and conspicuous in his writings; nor could that knowledge have been acquired on easier terms, or in any other way. No man could describe the character of Dandie Dinmont, without having been in Lidderdale. Whatever has been once in a book may be put into a book again;

but an original character, taken at first hand from the sheepwalks and from Nature, must be seen in order to be known. A man, to be able to describe—indeed, to be able to know—various people in life, must be able at sight to comprehend their essential features, to know how they shade one into another, to see how they diversify the common uniformity of civilised life. Nor does this involve simply intellectual or even imaginative pre-requisites, still less will it be facilitated by exquisite senses or subtle fancy. What is wanted is, to be able to appreciate mere clay—which mere mind never will. If you will describe the people,—nay, if you will write for the people, you must be one of the people. You must have led their life, and must wish to lead their life. However strong in any poet may be the higher qualities of abstract thought or conceiving fancy, unless he can actually sympathise with those around him, he can never describe those around him. Any attempt to produce a likeness of what is not really *liked* by the person who is describing it, will end in the creation of what may be correct, but is not living—of what may be artistic, but is likewise artificial.

Perhaps this is the defect of the works of the greatest dramatic genius of recent times—Goethe. His works are too much in the nature of literary studies; the mind is often deeply impressed by them, but one doubts if the author was. He saw them as he saw the houses of Weimar and the plants in the act of metamorphosis. He had a clear perception of their fixed condition and their successive transitions, but he did not really (if we may so speak) comprehend their motive power. So to say, he appreciated their life, but not their liveliness. Niebuhr, as is well known, compared the most elaborate of Goethe's works—the novel *Wilhelm Meister*—to a menagerie of tame animals, meaning thereby, as we believe, to express much the same distinction. He felt that there was a deficiency in mere vigour and rude energy. We have a long train and no engine—a great accumulation of

excellent matter, arranged and ordered with masterly skill, but not animated with over-buoyant and unbounded play. And we trace this not to a defect in imaginative power, a defect which it would be a simple absurdity to impute to Goethe, but to the tone of his character and the habits of his mind. He moved hither and thither through life, but he was always a man apart. He mixed with unnumbered kinds of men, with courts and academies, students and women, camps and artists, but everywhere he was with them, yet not of them. In every scene he was there, and he made it clear that he was there with a reserve and as a stranger. He went there to *experience*. As a man of universal culture and well skilled in the order and classification of human life, the fact of any one class or order being beyond his reach or comprehension seemed an absurdity, and it was an absurdity. He thought that he was equal to moving in any description of society, and he was equal to it; but then on that exact account he was absorbed in none. There were none of surpassing and immeasurably preponderating captivation. No scene and no subject were to him what Scotland and Scotch nature were to Sir Walter Scott. 'If I did not see the heather once a year, I should die,' said the latter; but Goethe would have lived without it, and it would not have cost him much trouble. In every one of Scott's novels there is always the spirit of the old moss trooper—the flavour of the ancient border; there is the intense sympathy which enters into the most living moments of the most living characters—the lively energy which *becomes* the energy of the most vigorous persons delineated. *Marmion* was 'written' while he was galloping on horseback. It reads as if it were so.

Now it appears that Shakespeare not only had that various commerce with, and experience of men, which was common both to Goethe and to Scott, but also that he agrees with the latter rather than with the former in the kind and species of that experience. He was not merely with men, but of men; he was not

a 'thing apart', with a clear intuition of what was in those around him; he had in his own nature the germs and tendencies of the very elements that he described. He knew what was in man, for he felt it in himself. Throughout all his writings you see an amazing sympathy with common people, rather an excessive tendency to dwell on the common features of ordinary lives. You feel that common people could have been cut out of him, but not without his feeling it; for it would have deprived him of a very favourite subject—of a portion of his ideas to which he habitually recurred.

*Leon.* What would you with me, honest neighbour?

*Dog.* Marry, sir, I would have some confidence with you, that discerns you nearly.

*Leon.* Brief, I pray you; for you see 'tis a busy time with me.

*Dog.* Marry, this it is, sir.

*Verg.* Yes, in truth it is, sir.

*Leon.* What is it, my good friends?

*Dog.* Goodman Verges, sir, speaks a little off the matter: an old man, sir, and his wits are not so blunt, as, God help, I would desire they were; but, in faith, honest as the skin between his brows.

*Verg.* Yes, I thank God, I am as honest as any man living, that is an old man, and no honester than I.

*Dog.* Comparisons are odorous:—*palabras*, neighbour Verges.

*Leon.* Neighbours, you are tedious.

*Dog.* It pleases your worship to say so, but we are the poor duke's officers; but, truly, for mine own part, if I were as tedious as a king, I could find in my heart to bestow it all of your worship.

*Leon.* I would fain know what you have to say.

*Verg.* Marry, sir, our watch to-night, excepting your worship's presence, have ta'en a couple of as arrant knaves as any in Messina.

*Dog.* A good old man, sir; he will be talking; as they say, When the age is in, the wit is out; God help us! it is a world to see!—Well said, i' faith, neighbour Verges:—well, God's a good man; an two men ride of a horse, one must

ride behind:—An honest soul, i' faith, sir; by my troth he is, as ever broke bread; but God is to be worshipped: All men are not alike; alas, good neighbour!

*Leon.* Indeed, neighbour, he comes too far short of you.

*Dog.* Gifts that God gives,—etc., etc.<sup>1</sup>

*Stafford.* Ay, sir.

*Cade.* By her he had two children at one birth.

*Staff.* That's false.

*Cade.* Ay, there's the question; but, I say, 'tis true:  
The elder of them, being put to nurse,  
Was by a beggar-woman stol'n away:  
And, ignorant of his birth and parentage,  
Became a bricklayer, when he came to age;  
His son am I; deny it, if you can.

*Dick.* Nay, 'tis too true; therefore he shall be king.

*Smith.* Sir, he made a chimney in my father's house, and the bricks are alive at this day to testify it; therefore, deny it not?<sup>2</sup>

Shakespeare was too wise not to know that for most of the purposes of human life stupidity is a most valuable element. He had nothing of the impatience which sharp logical narrow minds habitually feel when they come across those who do not apprehend their quick and precise deductions. No doubt he talked to the stupid players, to the stupid door-keeper, to the property man, who considers paste jewels 'very preferable, besides the expense'—talked with the stupid apprentices of stupid Fleet Street, and had much pleasure in ascertaining what was their notion of *King Lear*. In his comprehensive mind it was enough if every man hitched well into his own place in human life. If every one were logical and literary, how would there be scavengers, or watchmen, or caulkers, or coopers? Narrow minds will be 'subdued to what' they 'work in.' The 'dyer's hand'<sup>3</sup> will not more clearly carry off its tint, nor will what is moulded

<sup>1</sup> *Much Ado about Nothing*, 111. 5.

<sup>2</sup> *King Henry VI*, IV. 2.

<sup>3</sup> Shakespeare: *Sonnet*, CXI.

more precisely indicate the confines of the mould. A patient sympathy, a kindly fellow-feeling for the narrow intelligence necessarily induced by narrow circumstances—a narrowness which, in some degrees, seems to be inevitable, and is perhaps more serviceable than most things to the wise conduct of life—this, though quick and half-bred minds may despise it, seems to be a necessary constituent in the composition of manifold genius. ‘How shall the world be served?’ asks the host in Chaucer. We must have cart-horses as well as race-horses, draymen as well as poets. It is no bad thing, after all, to be a slow man and to have one idea a year. You don’t make a figure, perhaps, in argumentative society, which requires a quicker species of thought, but is that the worse?

*Hol. Via,* Goodman Dull; thou hast spoken no word all this while.

*Dull.* Nor understood none either, sir.

*Hol. Allons,* we will employ thee.

*Dull.* I’ll make one in a dance or so, or I will play on the tabor to the worthies, and let them dance the hay.

*Hol.* Most dull, honest Dull, to our sport away!<sup>1</sup>

And such, we believe, was the notion of Shakespeare.

S. T. Coleridge has a nice criticism which bears on this point. He observes that in the narrations of uneducated people in Shakespeare, just as in real life, there is a want of prospectiveness and a superfluous amount of regressiveness. People of this sort are unable to look a long way in front of them, and they wander from the right path. They get on too fast with one half, and then the other hopelessly lags. They can tell a story exactly as it is told to them (as an animal can go step by step where it has been before), but they can’t calculate its bearings beforehand, or see how it is to be adapted to those to whom they are speaking, nor do they know how much they have thoroughly told and how much they have not. ‘I went up the street, then I went down the street;

<sup>1</sup> *Love’s Labour’s Lost*, v. 1.

no, first went down and then—but you do not follow me; I go before you, sir.’ Thence arises the complex style usually adopted by persons not used to narration. They tumble into a story and get on as they can. This is scarcely the sort of thing which a man could foresee. Of course a metaphysician can account for it, and, like Coleridge, assure you that if he had not observed it, he could have predicted it in a moment; but, nevertheless, it is too refined a conclusion to be made out from known premises by common reasoning. Doubtless there is some reason why negroes have woolly hair (and if you look into a philosophical treatise, you will find that the author could have made out that it would be so, if he had not, by a mysterious misfortune, known from infancy that it was the fact),—still one could never have supposed it oneself. And in the same manner, though the profounder critics may explain in a satisfactory and refined manner, how the confused and undulating style of narration is peculiarly incident to the mere multitude, yet it is most likely that Shakespeare derived his acquaintance with it from the fact, from actual hearing, and not from what may be the surer, but is the slower, process of metaphysical deduction. The best passage to illustrate this is that in which the nurse gives a statement of Juliet’s age; but it will not exactly suit our pages. The following of Mrs Quickly will suffice:—

‘Tilly-fally, Sir John, never tell me; your ancient swaggerer comes not in my doors. I was before Master Tizzick, the Deputy, t’other day; and, as he said to me,—it was no longer ago than Wednesday last,—Neighbour Quickly, says he;—Master Dumb, our minister, was by then;—Neighbour Quickly, says he, receive those that are civil; for, saith he, you are in an ill name:—now, he said so, I can tell you whereupon; for, says he, you are an honest woman, and well thought on; therefore take heed to what guests you receive: Receive, says he, no swaggering companions.—There comes none here;—you would bless you to hear what he said:—no, I’ll no swaggerers<sup>1</sup>’

<sup>1</sup> 2 *King Henry IV*, II. 4.

Now, it is quite impossible that this, any more than the political reasoning on the parentage of Cade, which was cited before, should have been written by one not habitually and sympathisingly conversant with the talk of the illogical classes. Shakespeare felt, if we may say so, the force of the bad reasoning. He did not, like a sharp logician, angrily detect a flaw, and set it down as a fallacy of reference or a fallacy of amphibology. This is not the English way, though Dr Whately's logic has been published so long (and, as he says himself, must now be deemed to be irrefutable, since no one has ever offered any refutation of it). Yet still people in this country do not like to be committed to distinct premises. They like a Chancellor of the Exchequer to say: 'It has during very many years been maintained by the honourable member for Montrose that two and two make four, and I am free to say, that I think there is a great deal to be said in favour of that opinion; but, without committing her Majesty's Government to that proposition as an abstract sentiment, I will go so far as to assume two and two are not sufficient to make five, which with the permission of the House, will be a sufficient basis for all the operations which I propose to enter upon during the present year.' We have no doubt Shakespeare reasoned in that way himself. Like any other Englishman, when he had a clear course before him, he rather liked to shuffle over little hitches in the argument, and on that account he had a great sympathy with those who did so too. He would never have interrupted Mrs Quickly; he saw that her mind was going to and fro over the subject; he saw that it was coming right, and this was enough for him, and will be also enough of this topic for our readers.

We think we have proved that Shakespeare had an enormous specific acquaintance with the common people; that this can only be obtained by sympathy. It likewise has a further condition.

In spiritedness, the style of Shakespeare is very like to that of Scott. The description of a charge of



cavalry in Scott reads, as was said before, as if it was written on horseback. A play by Shakespeare reads as if it were written in a playhouse. The great critics assure you that a theatrical audience must be kept awake, but Shakespeare knew this of his own knowledge. When you read him, you feel a sensation of motion, a conviction that there is something 'up,' a notion that not only is something being talked about, but also that something is being done. We do not imagine that Shakespeare owed this quality to his being a player, but rather that he became a player because he possessed this quality of mind. For after, and notwithstanding, everything which has been, or may be, said against the theatrical profession, it certainly does require from those who pursue it a certain quickness and liveliness of mind. Mimics are commonly an elastic sort of persons, and it takes a little levity of disposition to enact even the 'heavy fathers.' If a boy joins a company of strolling players, you may be sure that he is not a 'good boy'; he may be a trifle foolish, or a thought romantic, but certainly he is not slow. And this was in truth the case with Shakespeare. They say, too, that in the beginning he was a first-rate link-boy; and the tradition is affecting, though we fear it is not quite certain. Anyhow, you feel about Shakespeare that he could have been a link-boy. In the same way you feel he may have been a player. You are sure at once that he could not have followed any sedentary kind of life. But wheresoever there was anything *acted* in earnest or in jest, by way of mock representation or by way of serious reality, there he found matter for his mind. If anybody could have any doubt about the liveliness of Shakespeare, let them consider the character of Falstaff. When a man has created *that* without a capacity for laughter, then a blind man may succeed in describing colours. Intense animal spirits are the single sentiment (if they be a sentiment) of the entire character. If most men were to save up all the gaiety of their whole lives, it would come about to the gaiety of one speech in Falstaff.

A morose man might have amassed many jokes, might have observed many details of jovial society, might have conceived a Sir John, marked by rotundity of body, but could hardly have imagined what we call his rotundity of mind. We mean that the animal spirits of Falstaff give him an easy, vague, diffusive sagacity which is peculiar to him. A morose man, Iago, for example, may know anything, and is apt to know a good deal; but what he knows is generally all in corners. He knows number 1, number 2, number 3, and so on, but there is not anything continuous, or smooth, or fluent in his knowledge. Persons conversant with the works of Hazlitt will know in a minute what we mean. Everything which he observed he seemed to observe from a certain soreness of mind; he looked at people because they offended him; he had the same vivid notion of them that a man has of objects which grate on a wound in his body. But there is nothing at all of this in Falstaff; on the contrary, everything pleases him, and everything is food for a joke. Cheerfulness and prosperity give an easy abounding sagacity of mind which nothing else does give. Prosperous people bound easily over all the surface of things which their lives present to them; very likely they keep to the surface; there are things beneath or above to which they may not penetrate or attain, but what is on any part of the surface, that they know well. 'Lift not the painted veil which those who live call life<sup>1</sup>,' and they do not lift it. What is sublime or awful above, what is 'sightless and drear'<sup>2</sup> beneath,—these they may not dream of. Nor is any one piece or corner of life so well impressed on them as on minds less happily constituted. It is only people who have had a tooth out, that really know the dentist's waiting-room. Yet such people, for the time at least, know nothing but that and their tooth. The easy and sympathising friend who accompanies them knows everything; hints gently at the contents of the

<sup>1</sup> Shelley: *Sonnet* (1818).

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

*Times*, and would cheer you with Lord Palmerston's replies. So, on a greater scale, the man of painful experience knows but too well what has hurt him, and where and why; but the happy have a vague and rounded view of the round world, and such was the knowledge of Falstaff.

It is to be observed that these high spirits are not a mere excrescence or superficial point in an experiencing nature; on the contrary, they seem to be essential, if not to its idea or existence, at least to its exercise and employment. How are you to know people without talking to them, but how are you to talk to them without tiring yourself? A common man is exhausted in half an hour; Scott or Shakespeare could have gone on for a whole day. This is, perhaps, peculiarly necessary for a painter of English life. The basis of our national character seems to be a certain energetic humour, which may be found in full vigour in old Chaucer's time, and in great perfection in at least one of the popular writers of this age, and which is, perhaps, most easily described by the name of our greatest painter—Hogarth. It is amusing to see how entirely the efforts of critics and artists fail to naturalise in England any other sort of painting. Their efforts are fruitless; for the people painted are not English people: they may be Italians, or Greeks, or Jews, but it is quite certain that they are foreigners. We should not fancy that modern art ought to resemble the mediæval. So long as artists attempt the same class of paintings as Raphael, they will not only be inferior to Raphael, but they will never please, as they might please, the English people. What we want is what Hogarth gave us—a representation of ourselves. It may be that we are wrong, that we ought to prefer something of the old world, some scene in Rome or Athens, some tale from Carmel or Jerusalem; but, after all, we do not. These places are, we think, abroad, and had their greatness in former times; we wish a copy of what now exists, and of what we have seen. London we know, and Manchester we know,

but where are all these? It is the same with literature, Milton excepted, and even Milton can hardly be called a popular writer; all great English writers describe English people, and in describing them, they give, as they must give, a large comic element; and, speaking generally, this is scarcely possible, except in the case of cheerful and easy-living men. There is, no doubt, a biting satire, like that of Swift, which has for its essence misanthropy. There is the mockery of Voltaire, which is based on intellectual contempt; but this is not our English humour—it is not that of Shakespeare and Falstaff; ours is the humour of a man who laughs when he speaks, of flowing enjoyment, of an experiencing nature.

Yet it would be a great error if we gave anything like an exclusive prominence in this aspect of Shakespeare. Thus he appeared to those around him—in some degree they knew that he was a cheerful, and humorous, and happy man; but of his higher gift they knew less than we. A great painter of men must (as has been said) have a faculty of conversing, but he must also have a capacity for solitude. There is much of mankind that a man can only learn from himself. Behind every man's external life, which he leads in company, there is another which he leads alone, and which he carries with him apart. We see but one aspect of our neighbour, as we see but one side of the moon; in either case there is also a dark half, which is unknown to us. We all come down to dinner, but each has a room to himself. And if we would study the internal lives of others, it seems essential that we should begin with our own. If we study this our *datum*, if we attain to see and feel how this influences and evolves itself in our social and (so to say) public life, then it is possible that we may find in the lives of others the same or analogous features; and if we do not, then at least we may suspect that those who want them are deficient likewise in the secret agencies which we feel produce them in ourselves. The metaphysicians assert, that

people originally picked up the idea of the existence of other people in this way. It is orthodox doctrine that a baby says: 'I have a mouth, mamma has a mouth: therefore I'm the same species as mamma. I have a nose, papa has a nose: therefore papa is the same genus as me.' But whether or not this ingenious idea really does or does not represent the actual process by which we originally obtain an acquaintance with the existence of minds analogous to our own, it gives unquestionably the process by which we obtain our notion of that part of those minds which they never exhibit consciously to others, and which only becomes predominant in secrecy and solitude and to themselves. Now, that Shakespeare has this insight into the musing life of man, as well as into his social life, is easy to prove; take, for instance, the following passages:—

'This battle fares like to the morning's war,  
When dying clouds contend with growing light;  
What time the shepherd, blowing of his nails,  
Can neither call it perfect day nor night.  
Now sways it this way, like a mighty sea,  
Forc'd by the tide to combat with the wind;  
Now sways it that way, like the self-same sea  
Forc'd to retire by fury of the wind:  
Sometime, the flood prevails; and then, the wind:  
Now, one the better; then, another best;  
Both tugging to be victors, breast to breast,  
Yet neither conqueror, nor conquered;  
So is the equal poise of this fell war.  
Here on this molehill will I sit me down.  
To whom God will, there be the victory!  
For Margaret my queen, and Clifford too,  
Have chid me from the battle; swearing both  
They prosper best of all when I am thence.  
Would I were dead! if God's good will were so;  
For what is in this world but grief and woe?  
Oh God! methinks it were a happy life,  
To be no better than a homely swain:  
To sit upon a hill, as I do now,  
To carve out dials quaintly, point by point,  
Thereby to see the minutes how they run:  
How many make the hour full complete,

How many hours bring about the day,  
 How many days will finish up the year,  
 How many years a mortal man may live.  
 When this known, then to divide the time:  
 So many hours must I tend my flock;  
 So many hours must I take my rest;  
 So many hours must I contemplate;  
 So many hours must I sport myself;  
 So many days my ewes have been with young;  
 So many weeks ere the poor fools will yeau;  
 So many years ere I shall shear the fleece;  
 So minutes, hours, days, weeks, months, and years,  
 Pass'd over to the end they were created,  
 Would bring white hairs unto a quiet grave.  
 Ah, what a life were this! how sweet! how lovely!  
 Gives not the hawthorn bush a sweeter shade  
 To shepherds, looking on their silly sheep  
 Than doth a rich embroider'd canopy  
 To kings, that fear their subjects' treachery?  
 O yes, it doth; a thousand-fold it doth.  
 And to conclude,—the shepherd's homely curds,  
 His cold thin drink out of his leather bottle,  
 His wonted sleep under a fresh tree's shade,  
 All which secure and sweetly he enjoys,  
 Is far beyond a prince's delicates,  
 His viands sparkling in a golden cup,  
 His body couchèd in a curious bed,  
 When care, mistrust, and treason wait on him!<sup>1</sup>

'A fool, a fool!—I met a fool i' the forest,  
 A motley fool!—a miserable world;—  
 As I do live by food, I met a fool;  
 Who laid him down and basked him in the sun,  
 And railed on lady Fortune in good terms,  
 In good set terms,—and yet a motley fool.  
 "Good-morrow, fool," quoth I: "No, sir," quoth he,  
 "Call me not fool, till heaven hath sent me fortune":  
 And then he drew a dial from his poke,  
 And looking on it with lack-lustre eye,  
 Says, very wisely, "It is ten o'clock:  
 Thus may we see," quoth he, "how the world wags;  
 'Tis but an hour ago since it was nine;  
 And after one hour more, 'twill be eleven;  
 And so, from hour to hour, we ripe and ripe,

<sup>1</sup> 3 *King Henry VI*, II. 5.

And then, from hour to hour, we rot and rot,  
 And thereby hangs a tale." When I did hear  
 The motley fool thus moral on the time,  
 My lungs began to crow like chanticleer,  
 That fools should be so deep-contemplative;  
 And I did laugh, sans intermission,  
 An hour by his dial<sup>1</sup>.

No slight versatility of mind and pliancy of fancy could pass at will from scenes such as these to the ward of Eastcheap and the society which heard the chimes at midnight. One of the reasons of the rarity of great imaginative works is that in very few cases is this capacity for musing solitude combined with that of observing mankind. A certain constitutional though latent melancholy is essential to such a nature. This is the exceptional characteristic in Shakespeare. All through his works you feel you are reading the popular author, the successful man; but through them all there is a certain tinge of musing sadness pervading, and, as it were, softening their gaiety. Not a trace can be found of 'eating cares' or narrow and mind-contracting toil, but everywhere there is, in addition to shrew sagacity and buoyant wisdom, a refining element of chastening sensibility, which prevents sagacity from being rough, and shrewdness from becoming cold. He had an eye for either sort of life:—

'Why, let the stricken deer go weep,  
 The hart ungallèd play;  
 For some must watch, and some must sleep,  
 Thus runs the world away<sup>2</sup>.'

In another point also Shakespeare, as he was, must be carefully contrasted with the estimate that would be formed of him from such delineations as that of Falstaff, and that was doubtless frequently made by casual, though only by casual, frequenters of the Mermaid. It has been said that the mind of Shakespeare contained within it the mind of Scott; it remains to

<sup>1</sup> *As You Like It*, II. 7.

<sup>2</sup> *Hamlet*, III. 2.

be observed that it contained also the mind of Keats. For, beside the delineation of human life, and beside also the delineation of Nature, there remains also for the poet a third subject—the delineation of *fancies*. Of course these, be they what they may, are like to, and were originally borrowed from, either man or Nature—from one or from both together. We know but two things in the simple way of direct experience, and whatever else we know must be in some mode or manner compacted out of them. Yet ‘books are a substantial world, both pure and good,’ and so are fancies too. In all countries, men have devised to themselves a whole series of half-divine creations—mythologies Greek and Roman, fairies, angels, beings who may be, for aught we know, but with whom, in the meantime, we can attain to no conversation. The most known of these mythologies are the Greek, and what is, we suppose, the second epoch of the Gothic, the fairies; and it so happens that Shakespeare has dealt with them both, and in a remarkable manner. We are not, indeed, of those critics who profess simple and unqualified admiration for the poem of *Venus and Adonis*. It seems intrinsically, as we know it from external testimony to have been, a juvenile production, written when Shakespeare’s nature might be well expected to be crude and unripened. Power is shown, and power of a remarkable kind; but it is not displayed in a manner that will please or does please the mass of men. In spite of the name of its author, the poem has never been popular—and surely this is sufficient. Nevertheless, it is remarkable as a literary exercise, and as a treatment of a singular, though unpleasant subject. The fanciful class of poems differ from others in being laid, so far as their scene goes, in a perfectly unseen world. The type of such productions is Keats’s *Endymion*. We mean that it is the type, not as giving the abstract perfection of this sort of art, but because it shows and embodies both its excellences and defects in a very marked and prominent manner. In that poem there are no passions



and no actions, there is no art and no life; but there is beauty, and that is meant to be enough, and to a reader of one and twenty it is enough and more. What are exploits or speeches? what is Cæsar or Coriolanus? what is a tragedy like *Lear*, or a real view of human life in any kind whatever, to people who do not know and do not care what human life is? In early youth it is, perhaps, not true that the passions, taken generally, are particularly violent, or that the imagination is in any remarkable degree powerful; but it is certain that the fancy (which though it be, in the last resort, but a weak stroke of that same faculty, which, when it strikes hard, we call imagination, may yet for this purpose be looked on as distinct) is particularly wakeful, and that the gentler species of passions are more absurd than they are afterwards. And the literature of this period of human life runs naturally away from the real world; away from the less ideal portion of it, from stocks and stones, and aunts and uncles, and rests on mere half-embodied sentiments, which in the hands of great poets assume a kind of semi-personality, and are, to the distinction between things and persons, 'as moonlight unto sunlight, and as water unto wine<sup>1</sup>.' The Sonnets of Shakespeare belong exactly to the same school of poetry. They are not the sort of verses to take any particular hold upon the mind permanently and for ever, but at a certain period they take too much. For a young man to read in the spring of the year among green fields and in gentle air, they are the ideal. As First of April poetry they are perfect.

The *Midsummer Night's Dream* is of another order. If the question were to be decided by *Venus and Adonis*, in spite of the unmeasured panegyrics of many writers, we should be obliged in equity to hold, that as a poet of mere fancy Shakespeare was much inferior to the late Mr Keats and even to meaner men. Moreover, we should have been prepared with

<sup>1</sup> Tennyson: *Locksley Hall*.

some refined reasonings to show that it was unlikely that a poet with so much hold on reality, in life and Nature, both in solitude and in society, should have also a similar command over *unreality*: should possess a command not only of flesh and blood, but of the imaginary entities which the self-inworking fancy brings forth—impalpable conceptions of mere mind: *quædam simulacra miris pallentia modis*<sup>1</sup>, thin ideas, which come we know not whence, and are given us we know not why. But, unfortunately for this ingenious, if not profound suggestion, Shakespeare, in fact, possessed the very faculty which it tends to prove that he would not possess. He could paint Poins and Falstaff, but he excelled also in fairy legends. He had such

‘Seething brains;  
Such shaping fantasies that apprehend  
More than cool reason ever comprehends?’

As, for example, the idea of Puck, or Queen Mab, of Ariel, or such a passage as the following:—

‘*Puck*. How now, spirit! whither wander you?

*Fai*. Over hill, over dale,  
Thorough bush, thorough briar,  
Over park, over pale,  
Thorough flood, thorough fire,  
I do wander everywhere,  
Swifter than the moones sphere;  
And I serve the fairy queen,  
To dew her orbs upon the green:  
The cowslips tall her pensioners be:  
In their gold coats spots you see;  
Those be rubies, fairy favours,  
In those freckles live their savours:

I must go seek some dew-drops here,  
And hang a pearl in every cowslip’s ear.  
Farewell, thou lob of spirits, I’ll be gone;  
Our queen and all our elves come here anon.

*Puck*. The king doth keep his revels here to-night;  
Take heed the queen come not within his sight.  
For Oberon is passing fell and wrath,

<sup>1</sup> Lucretius, l. 124.

<sup>2</sup> *Midsummer Night’s Dream*, v. 1.

Because that she, as her attendant, hath  
 A lovely boy, stolen from an Indian king;  
 She never had so sweet a changeling:  
 And jealous Oberon would have the child  
 Knight of his train, to trace the forests wild:  
 But she, perforce, withholds the lovèd boy,  
 Crowns him with flowers, and makes him all her joy  
 And now they never meet in grove, or green,  
 By fountain clear, or spangled star-light sheen  
 But they do square; that all their elves, for fear,  
 Creep into acorn-cups, and hide them there.

*Fai.* Either I mistake your shape and making quite,  
 Or else you are that shrewd and knavish sprite  
 Call'd Robin Good-fellow: are not you he  
 That fright the maidens of the villagery;  
 Skim milk; and sometimes labour in the quern,  
 And bootless make the breathless housewife churn;  
 And sometimes make the drink to bear no barm;  
 Misdread night-wanderers, laughing at their harm?  
 Those that Hobgoblin call you, and sweet Puck,  
 You do their work, and they shall have good luck:  
 Are not you he?

*Puck.* Thou speak'st aright;  
 I am that merry wanderer of the night.  
 I jest to Oberon, and make him smile,  
 When I a fat and bean-fed horse beguile,  
 Neighing in likeness of a filly foal:  
 And sometime lurk I in a gossip's bowl,  
 In very likeness of a roasted crab;  
 And, when she drinks, against her lips I bob,  
 And on her wither'd dew-lap pour the ale.  
 The wisest aunt, telling the saddest tale,  
 Sometime for three-foot stool mistaketh me;  
 Then slip I from beneath, down topples she,  
 And *tailor* cries, and falls into a cough;  
 And then the whole quire hold their hips, and laugh;  
 And waxen in their mirth, and neeze and swear  
 A merrier hour was never wasted there.—  
 But room, Fairy, here comes Oberon.

*Fai.* And here my mistress:—Would that he were  
 gone!<sup>1</sup>

Probably he believed in these things. Why not?  
 Everybody else believed in them then. They suit our

<sup>1</sup> *Midsummer Night's Dream*, II. 1.

climate. As the Greek mythology suits the keen Attic sky, the fairies, indistinct and half-defined, suit a land of wild mists and gentle airs. They confuse the 'maidens of the villagery'; they are the paganism of the South of England.

Can it be made out what were Shakespeare's political views? We think it certainly can, and that without difficulty. From the English historical plays, it distinctly appears that he accepted, like everybody then, the Constitution of his country. His lot was not cast in an age of political controversy, nor of reform. What was, was from of old. The Wars of the Roses had made it very evident how much room there was for the evils incident to an hereditary monarchy, for instance, those of a controverted succession, and the evils incident to an aristocracy, as want of public spirit and audacious selfishness, to arise and continue within the realm of England. Yet they had not repelled, and had barely disconcerted, our conservative ancestors. They had not become Jacobins; they did not concur—and history, except in Shakespeare, hardly does justice to them—in Jack Cade's notion that the laws should come out of his mouth, or that the commonwealth was to be reformed by interlocutors in this scene:

*Geo.* I tell thee, Jack Cade the clothier means to dress the Commonwealth, and turn it, and set a new nap on it.

*John.* So he had need, for 'tis threadbare. Well, I say it was never merry world in England since gentlemen came up.

*Geo.* O miserable age! Virtue is not regarded in handicrafts-men.

*John.* The nobility think scorn to go in leather aprons.

*Geo.* Nay more: the king's council are no good workmen.

*John.* True; and yet it is said, Labour in thy vocation; which is as much as to say, as let the magistrates be labouring men, and therefore should we be magistrates.

*Geo.* Thou hast hit it, for there is no better sign of a brave mind than a hard hand.

*John.* I see them! I see them!<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 2 *King Henry VI*, IV. 2.

The English people did see them, and know them, and therefore have rejected them. An audience which, *bona fide*, entered into the merit of this scene, would never believe in everybody's suffrage. They would know that there is such a thing as nonsense, and when a man has once attained to that deep conception, you may be sure of him ever after. And though it would be absurd to say that Shakespeare originated this idea, or that the disbelief in simple democracy is owing to his teaching or suggestions, yet it may, nevertheless, be truly said, that he shared in the peculiar knowledge of men—and also possessed the peculiar constitution of mind—which engender this effect. The author of *Coriolanus* never believed in a mob, and did something towards preventing anybody else from doing so. But this political idea was not exactly the strongest in Shakespeare's mind. We think he had two other stronger, or as strong. First, the feeling of loyalty to the ancient polity of this country—not because it was good, but because it existed. In his time, people no more thought of the origin of the monarchy than they did of the origin of the Mendip Hills. The one had always been there, and so had the other. God (such was the common notion) had made both, and one as much as the other. Everywhere, in that age, the common modes of political speech assumed the existence of certain utterly national institutions, and would have been worthless and nonsensical except on that assumption. This national habit appears as it ought to appear in our national dramatist. A great divine tells us that the Thirty-nine Articles are 'forms of thought'; inevitable conditions of the religious understanding: in politics, 'kings, lords, and commons' are, no doubt, 'forms of thought,' to the great majority of Englishmen; in these they live, and beyond these they never move. You can't reason on the removal (such is the notion) of the English Channel, nor St George's Channel, nor can you of the English Constitution, in like manner. It is to most of us, and to the

happiest of us, a thing immutable, and such, no doubt, it was to Shakespeare, which, if any one would have proved, let him refer at random to any page of the historical English plays.

The second peculiar tenet which we ascribe to his political creed, is a disbelief in the middle classes. We fear he had no opinion of traders. In this age, we know, it is held that the keeping of a shop is equivalent to a political education. Occasionally, in country villages, where the trader sells everything, he is thought to know nothing, and has no vote; but in a town where he is a householder (as, indeed, he is in the country), and sells only one thing—there we assume that he knows everything. And this assumption is, in the opinion of some observers, confirmed by the fact. Sir Walter Scott used to relate, that when, after a trip to London, he returned to Tweedside, he always found the people in that district knew more of politics than the Cabinet. And so it is with the mercantile community in modern times. If you are a Chancellor of the Exchequer, it is possible that you may be acquainted with finance; but if you sell figs it is certain that you will. Now we nowhere find this laid down in Shakespeare. On the contrary, you will generally find that when a 'citizen' is mentioned, he generally does or says something absurd. Shakespeare had a clear perception that it is possible to bribe a class as well as an individual, and that personal obscurity is but an insecure guarantee for political disinterestedness.

'Moreover, he hath left you all his walks,  
His private arbours and new-planted orchards  
On this side Tiber; he hath left them you,  
And to your heirs for ever: common pleasures,  
To walk abroad and recreate yourselves.  
Here was a Cæsar! when comes such another<sup>1</sup>?'

He everywhere speaks in praise of a tempered and ordered and qualified polity, in which the pecuniary

<sup>1</sup> *Julius Cæsar*, III. 2.

classes have a certain influence, but no more, and shows in every page a keen sensibility to the large views and high-souled energies, the gentle refinements and disinterested desires, in which those classes are likely to be especially deficient. He is particularly the poet of personal nobility, though, throughout his writings, there is a sense of freedom, just as Milton is the poet of freedom, though with an underlying reference to personal nobility; indeed, we might well expect our two poets to combine the appreciation of a rude and generous liberty with that of a delicate and refined nobleness, since it is the union of these two elements that characterises our society and their experience.

There are two things—good-tempered sense and ill-tempered sense. In our remarks on the character of Falstaff, we hope we have made it very clear that Shakespeare had the former; we think it nearly as certain that he possessed the latter also. An instance of this might be taken from that contempt for the perspicacity of the *bourgeoisie* which we have just been mentioning. It is within the limits of what may be called malevolent sense, to take extreme and habitual pleasure in remarking the foolish opinions, the narrow notions, and fallacious deductions which seem to cling to the pompous and prosperous man of business. Ask him his opinion of the currency question, and he puts 'bills' and 'bullion' together in a sentence, and he does not seem to care what he puts between them. But a more proper instance of (what has an odd sound), the malevolence of Shakespeare is to be found in the play of *Measure for Measure*. We agree with Hazlitt, that this play seems to be written, perhaps more than any other, *con amore*, and with a relish; and this seems to be the reason why, notwithstanding the unpleasant nature of its plot, and the absence of any very attractive character, it is yet one of the plays which take hold on the mind most easily and most powerfully. Now the entire character of Angelo, which is the expressive feature of the piece, is nothing

but a successful embodiment of the pleasure, the malevolent pleasure, which a warm-blooded and expansive man takes in watching the rare, the dangerous and inanimate excesses of the constrained and cold-blooded. One seems to see Shakespeare, with his bright eyes and his large lips and buoyant face, watching with a pleasant excitement the excesses of his thin-lipped and calculating creation, as though they were the excesses of a real person. It is the complete picture of a natural hypocrite, who does not consciously disguise strong impulses, but whose very passions seem of their own accord to have disguised themselves and retreated into the recesses of the character, yet only to recur even more dangerously when their proper period is expired, when the will is cheated into security by their absence, and the world (and, it may be, the 'judicious person' himself) is impressed with a sure reliance in his chilling and remarkable rectitude.

It has, we believe, been doubted whether Shakespeare was a man much conversant with the intimate society of women. Of course no one denies that he possessed a great knowledge of them—a capital acquaintance with their excellences, faults, and foibles; but it has been thought that this was the result rather of imagination than of society, of creative fancy rather than of perceptive experience. Now that Shakespeare possessed, among other singular qualities, a remarkable imaginative knowledge of women, is quite certain, for he was acquainted with the soliloquies of women. A woman we suppose, like a man, must be alone, in order to speak a soliloquy. After the greatest possible intimacy and experience, it must still be imagination, or fancy at least, which tells any man what a woman thinks of herself and to herself. There will still—get as near the limits of confidence or observation as you can—be a space which must be filled up from other means. Men can only divine the truth—reserve, indeed, is a part of its charm. Seeing, therefore, that Shakespeare had done what necessarily and certainly



must be done without experience, we were in some doubt whether he might not have dispensed with it altogether. A grave reviewer cannot know these things. We thought indeed of reasoning that since the delineations of women in Shakespeare were admitted to be first-rate, it should follow,—at least there was a fair presumption,—that no means or aid had been wanting to their production, and that consequently we ought, in the absence of distinct evidence, to assume that personal intimacy as well as solitary imagination had been concerned in their production. And we meant to cite the ‘questions about Octavia,’ which Lord Byron, who thought he had the means of knowing, declared to be ‘women all over.’

But all doubt was removed and all conjecture set to rest by the coming in of an ably-dressed friend from the external world, who mentioned that the language of Shakespeare’s women was essentially female language; that there were certain points and peculiarities in the English of cultivated English women, which made it a language of itself, which must be heard familiarly in order to be known. And he added, ‘Except a greater use of words of Latin derivation, as was natural in an age when ladies received a learned education, a few words not now proper, a few conceits that were the fashion of the time, and there is the very same English in the women’s speeches in Shakespeare.’ He quoted—

‘Think not I love him, though I ask for him;  
 ’Tis but a pceevish boy:—yet he talks well;—  
 But what care I for words? yet words do well,  
 When he that speaks them pleases those that hear.  
 It is a pretty youth:—not very pretty:—  
 But, sure, he’s proud; and yet his pride becomes him;  
 He’ll make a proper man: The best thing in him  
 Is his complexion; and faster than his tongue  
 Did make offence, his eye did heal it up.  
 He is not tall; yet for his years he’s tall:  
 His leg is but so-so: and yet ’tis well.  
 There was a pretty redness in his lip;  
 A little riper and more lusty red

Than that mix'd in his cheek; 'twas just the difference  
 Betwixt the constant red and mingled damask.  
 There be some women, Silvius, had they mark'd him  
 In parcels as I did, would have gone near  
 To fall in love with him: but, for my part,  
 I love him not, nor hate him not; and yet  
 I have more cause to hate him than to love him:  
 For what had he to do to chide at me?  
 He said mine eyes were black, and my hair black,  
 And, now I am remember'd, scorn'd at me:  
 I marvel why I answer'd not again:  
 But that's all one<sup>1</sup>;

and the passage of Perdita's cited before about the  
 daffodils that—

'take  
 The winds of March with beauty; violets dim,  
 But sweeter than the lids of Juno's eyes,  
 Or Cytherea's breath';

and said that these were conclusive. But we have  
 not, ourselves, heard young ladies converse in that  
 manner.

Perhaps it is in his power of delineating women,  
 that Shakespeare contrasts most strikingly with the  
 greatest master of the art of dialogue in antiquity—  
 we mean Plato. It will, no doubt, be said that the  
 delineation of women did not fall within Plato's plan;  
 that men's life was in that age so separate and pre-  
 dominant that it could be delineated by itself and  
 apart; and no doubt these remarks are very true.  
 But what led Plato to form that plan? What led  
 him to select that peculiar argumentative aspect of  
 life, in which the masculine element is in so high a  
 degree superior? We believe that he did it because  
 he felt that he could paint that kind of scene much  
 better than he could paint any other. If a person  
 will consider the sort of conversation that was held  
 in the cool summer morning, when Socrates was  
 knocked up early to talk definitions and philosophy  
 with Protagoras, he will feel, not only that women

<sup>1</sup> *As You Like It*, III. 5.

would fancy such dialogues to be certainly stupid, and very possibly to be without meaning, but also that the side of character which is there presented is one from which not only the feminine but even the epicene element is nearly, if not perfectly, excluded. It is the intellect surveying and delineating intellectual characteristics. We have a dialogue of thinking faculties; the character of every man is delineated by showing us, not his mode of action or feeling, but his mode of thinking, alone and by itself. The pure mind, purged of all passion and affection, strives to view and describe others in like manner; and the singularity is, that the likenesses so taken are so good,—that the accurate copying of the merely intellectual effects and indications of character gives so true and so firm an impression of the whole character,—that a daguerreotype of the mind should almost seem to be a delineation of the life. But though in the hand of a consummate artist, such a way of representation may in some sense succeed in the case of men, it would certainly seem sure to fail in the case of women. The mere intellect of a woman is a mere nothing. It originates nothing, it transmits nothing, it retains nothing; it has little life of its own, and therefore it can hardly be expected to attain any vigour. Of the lofty Platonic world of the ideas, which the soul in the old doctrine was to arrive at by pure and continuous reasoning, women were never expected to know anything. Plato (though Mr Grote denies that he was a practical man) was much too practical for that; he reserved his teaching for people whose belief was regulated and induced in some measure by abstract investigations; who had an interest in the pure and (as it were) geometrical truth itself; who had an intellectual character (apart from and accessory to their other character) capable of being viewed as a large and substantial existence, Shakespeare's being, like a woman's, worked as a whole. He was capable of intellectual abstractedness, but commonly he was touched with the sense of earth.

One thinks of him as firmly set on our coarse world of common clay, but from it he could paint the moving essence of thoughtful feeling—which is the best refinement of the best women. Imogen or Juliet would have thought little of the conversation of Gorgias.

On few subjects has more nonsense been written than on the learning of Shakespeare. In former times, the established tenet was, that he was acquainted with the entire range of the Greek and Latin classics, and familiarly resorted to Sophocles and Æschylus as guides and models. This creed reposed not so much on any painful or elaborate criticism of Shakespeare's plays, as on one of the *a priori* assumptions permitted to the indolence of the wise old world. It was then considered clear, by all critics, that no one could write good English who could not also write bad Latin. Questioning scepticism has rejected this axiom, and refuted with contemptuous facility the slight attempt which had been made to verify this case of it from the evidence of the plays themselves. But the new school, not content with showing that Shakespeare was no formed or elaborate scholar, propounded the idea that he was quite ignorant, just as Mr Croker 'demonstrates' that Napoleon Bonaparte could scarcely write or read. The answer is, that Shakespeare wrote his plays, and that those plays show not only a very powerful, but also a very cultivated mind. A hard student Shakespeare was not, yet he was a happy and pleased reader of interesting books. He was a natural reader; when a book was dull he put it down, when it looked fascinating he took it up, and the consequence is, that he remembered and mastered what he read. Lively books, read with lively interest, leave strong and living recollections; the instructors, no doubt, say that they ought not to do so, and inculcate the necessity of dry reading. Yet the good sense of a busy public has practically discovered that what is read easily is recollected easily, and what is read with difficulty is remembered with more. It is

certain that Shakespeare read the novels of his time, for he has founded on them the stories of his plays; he read Plutarch, for his words still live in the dialogue of the 'proud Roman' plays; and it is remarkable that Montaigne is the only philosopher that Shakespeare can be proved to have read, because he deals more than any other philosopher with the first impressions of things which exist. On the other hand, it may be doubted if Shakespeare would have perused his commentators. Certainly, he would have never read a page of this review, and we go so far as to doubt whether he would have been pleased with the admirable discourses of M. Guizot, which we ourselves, though ardent admirers of his style and ideas, still find it a little difficult to *read*;—and what would he have thought of the following speculations of an anonymous individual, whose notes have been recently published in a fine octavo by Mr Collier, and, according to the periodical essayists, 'contribute valuable suggestions to the illustration of the immortal bard'?

‘THE TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA

‘ACT I. SCENE I.

‘P. 92. The reading of the subsequent line has hitherto been

“’Tis true; for you are over boots in love”;

but the manuscript corrector of the Folio, 1632, has changed it to

“’Tis true; *but* you are over boots in love,”

which seems more consistent with the course of the dialogue; for Proteus, remarking that Leander had been “more than over shoes in love,” with Hero, Valentine answers, that Proteus was even more deeply in love than Leander. Proteus observes of the fable of Hero and Leander—

“That’s a deep story of a deeper love,

*For* he was more than over shoes in love.”

Valentine retorts—

“’Tis true; *but* you are over boots in love.”

*For* instead of *but* was perhaps caught by the compositor from the preceding line.

It is difficult to fancy Shakespeare perusing a volume of such annotations, though we allow that we admire them ourselves. As to the controversy on his school learning, we have only to say, that though the alleged imitations of the Greek tragedians are mere nonsense, yet there is clear evidence that Shakespeare received the ordinary grammar-school education of his time, and that he had derived from the pain and suffering of several years, not exactly an acquaintance with Greek or Latin, but, like Eton boys, a firm conviction that there are such languages.

Another controversy has been raised as to whether Shakespeare was religious. In the old editions it is commonly enough laid down that, when writing his plays, he had no desire to fill the Globe Theatre, but that his intentions were of the following description. 'In this play,' *Cymbeline*, 'Shakespeare has strongly depicted the frailties of our nature, and the effect of vicious passions on the human mind. In the fate of the Queen we behold the adept in perfidy justly sacrificed by the arts she had, with unnatural ambition, prepared for others; and in reviewing her death and that of Cloten, we may easily call to mind the words of Scripture,' etc. And of *King Lear* it is observed with great confidence, that Shakespeare, '*no doubt*, intended to mark particularly the afflicting character of children's ingratitude to their parents, and the conduct of Goneril and Regan to each other; *especially* in the former's poisoning the latter, and laying hands on *herself*, we are taught that those who want gratitude towards their parents (who gave them their being, fed them, nurtured them to *man's* estate) will not scruple to commit more barbarous crimes, and easily to forget that, by destroying their body, they destroy their soul also.' And Dr Ulrici, a very learned and illegible writer, has discovered that in every one of his plays Shakespeare had in view the inculcation of the peculiar sentiments and doctrines of the Christian religion, and considers the *Midsummer Night's Dream* to be a specimen of the lay or amateur

sermon. This is what Dr Ulrici thinks of Shakespeare; but what would Shakespeare have thought of Dr Ulrici? We believe that 'Via, goodman Dull,' is nearly the remark which the learned professor would have received from the poet to whom his very careful treatise is devoted. And yet, without prying into the Teutonic mysteries, a gentleman of missionary aptitudes might be tempted to remark that in many points Shakespeare is qualified to administer a rebuke to people of the prevalent religion. Meeting a certain religionist is like striking the corner of a wall. He is possessed of a firm and rigid persuasion that you must leave off this and that, stop, cry, be anxious, be advised, and, above all things, refrain from doing what you like, for nothing is so bad for any one as that. And in quite another quarter of the religious hemisphere, we occasionally encounter gentlemen who have most likely studied at the feet of Dr Ulrici, or at least of an equivalent Gamaliel, and who, when we, or such as we, speaking the language of mortality, remark of a pleasing friend: 'Nice fellow, so and so! Good fellow as ever lived!' reply sternly, upon an unsuspecting reviewer, with—'Sir, is he an *earnest* man?' To which, in some cases, we are unable to return a sufficient answer. Yet Shakespeare, differing, in that respect at least, from the disciples of Carlyle, had, we suspect, an objection to grim people, and we fear would have liked the society of Mercutio better than that of a dreary divine, and preferred Ophelia or 'that Juliet' to a female philanthropist of sinewy aspect. And, seriously, if this world is not all evil, he who has understood and painted it best must probably have some good. If the underlying and almighty essence of this world be good, then it is likely that the writer who most deeply approached to that essence will be himself good. There is a religion of week-days as well as of Sundays, of 'cakes and ale'<sup>1</sup> as well as of pews and altar cloths. This England lay before

<sup>1</sup> *Twelfth Night*, II. 3.

Shakespeare as it lies before us all, with its green fields, and its long hedgerows, and its many trees, and its great towns, and its endless hamlets, and its motley society, and its long history, and its bold exploits, and its gathering power, and he saw that they were good. To him, perhaps, more than to any one else, has it been given to see that they were a great unity, a great religious object; that if you could only descend to the inner life, to the deep things, to the secret principles of its noble vigour, to the essence of character, to what we know of Hamlet and seem to fancy of Ophelia, we might, so far as we are capable of so doing, understand the nature which God has made. Let us, then, think of him not as a teacher of dry dogmas, or a sayer of hard sayings, but as—

‘A priest to us all,  
Of the wonder and bloom of the world’<sup>1</sup>—

a teacher of the hearts of men and women; one from whom may be learned something of that inmost principle that ever modulates—

‘With murmurs of the air,  
And motions of the forests and the sea,  
And voice of living beings, and woven hymns  
Of night and day and the deep heart of man’<sup>2</sup>.

We must pause, lest our readers reject us, as the Bishop of Durham the poor curate, because he was ‘mystical and confused.’

Yet it must be allowed that Shakespeare was worldly, and the proof of it is, that he succeeded in the world. Possibly this is the point on which we are most richly indebted to tradition. We see generally indeed in Shakespeare’s works the popular author, the successful dramatist; there is a life and play in his writings rarely to be found, except in those who have had habitual good luck, and who, by the tact of experience, feel the minds of their readers at every word, as

<sup>1</sup> Matthew Arnold: *The Youth of Nature*.

<sup>2</sup> Shelley: *Alastor*.



a good rider feels the mouth of his horse. But it would have been difficult quite to make out whether the profits so accruing had been profitably invested—whether the genius to create such illusions was accompanied with the care and judgment necessary to put out their proceeds properly in actual life. We could only have said that there was a general impression of entire calmness and equability in his principal works, rarely to be found where there is much pain, which usually makes gaps in the work and dislocates the balance of the mind. But happily here, and here almost alone, we are on sure historical ground. The reverential nature of Englishmen has carefully preserved what they thought the great excellence of their poet—that he made a fortune<sup>1</sup>. It is certain that Shakespeare was proprietor of the Globe Theatre—that he made money there, and invested the same in land at Stratford-on-Avon, and probably no circumstance in his life ever gave him so much pleasure. It was a great thing that he, the son of the wool-comber, the poacher, the good-for-nothing, the vagabond (for so we fear the phrase went in Shakespeare's youth), should return upon the old scene a substantial man, a person of capital, a freeholder, a gentleman to be respected, and over whom even a burgess could not affect the least superiority. The great pleasure in life is doing what people say you cannot do. Why did Mr Disraeli take the duties of the Exchequer with so much relish? Because people said he was a novelist, an *ad captandum* man, and—*monstrum horrendum!*—a Jew, that

<sup>1</sup> The only antiquarian thing which can be fairly called an anecdote of Shakespeare is, that Mrs Alleyne, a shrewd woman in those times, and married to Mr Alleyne, the founder of Dulwich Hospital, was one day, in the absence of her husband, applied to on some matter by a player who gave a reference to Mr Hemmings (the 'notorious' Mr Hemmings, the commentators say) and to Mr Shakespeare of the Globe, and that the latter, when referred to, said: 'Yes, certainly, he knew him, and he was a rascal and good-for-nothing.' The proper speech of a substantial man, such as it is worth while to give a reference to.

could not add up. No doubt it pleased his inmost soul to do the work of the red-tape people better than those who could do nothing else. And so with Shakespeare: it pleased him to be respected by those whom he had respected with boyish reverence, but who had rejected the imaginative man—on their own ground and in their own subject, by the only title which they would regard—in a word, as a moneyed man. We seem to see him eyeing the burgesses with good-humoured fellowship and genial (though suppressed and half-unconscious) contempt, drawing out their old stories, and acquiescing in their foolish notions, with everything in his head and easy sayings upon his tongue,—a full mind and a deep dark eye, that played upon an easy scene—now in fanciful solitude, now in cheerful society; now occupied with deep thoughts, now, and equally so, with trivial recreations, forgetting the dramatist in the man of substance, and the poet in the happy companion; beloved and even respected, with a hope for every one and a smile for all.

# JOHN HENRY NEWMAN

## *LITERATURE*

1858

Wishing to address you, Gentlemen, at the commencement of a new Session, I tried to find a subject for discussion, which might be at once suitable to the occasion, yet neither too large for your time, nor too minute or abstruse for your attention. I think I see one for my purpose in the very title of your Faculty. It is the Faculty of Philosophy and Letters. Now the question may arise as to what is meant by 'Philosophy,' and what is meant by 'Letters.' As to the other Faculties, the subject-matter which they profess is intelligible, as soon as named, and beyond all dispute. We know what Science is, what Medicine, what Law, and what Theology; but we have not so much ease in determining what is meant by Philosophy and Letters. Each department of that twofold province needs explanation: it will be sufficient, on an occasion like this, to investigate one of them. Accordingly I shall select for remark the latter of the two, and attempt to determine what we are to understand by Letters or Literature, in what Literature consists, and how it stands relatively to Science. We speak, for instance, of ancient and modern literature, the literature of the day, sacred literature, light literature; and our lectures in this place are devoted to classical literature and English literature. Are Letters, then, synonymous

with books? This cannot be, or they would include in their range Philosophy, Law, and, in short, the teaching of all the other Faculties. Far from confusing these various studies, we view the works of Plato or Cicero sometimes as philosophy, sometimes as literature; on the other hand, no one would ever be tempted to speak of Euclid as literature, or of Matthiæ's Greek Grammar. Is, then, literature synonymous with composition? with books written with an attention to style? is literature fine writing? again, is it studied and artificial writing?

There are excellent persons who seem to adopt this last account of Literature as their own idea of it. They depreciate it, as if it were the result of a mere art or trick of words. Professedly indeed, they are aiming at the Greek and Roman classics, but their criticisms have quite as great force against all literature as against any. I think I shall be best able to bring out what I have to say on the subject by examining the statements which they make in defence of their own view of it. They contend then, 1. that fine writing, as exemplified in the Classics, is mainly a matter of conceits, fancies, and prettinesses, decked out in choice words; 2. that this is the proof of it, that the classics will not bear translating;—(and this is why I have said that the real attack is upon literature altogether, not the classical only; for, to speak generally, all literature, modern as well as ancient, lies under this disadvantage. This, however, they will not allow; for they maintain,) 3. that Holy Scripture presents a remarkable contrast to secular writings on this very point, viz. in that Scripture does easily admit of translation, though it is the most sublime and beautiful of all writings.

Now I will begin by stating these three positions in the words of a writer, who is cited by the estimable Catholics in question as a witness, or rather as an advocate, in their behalf, though he is far from being able in his own person to challenge the respect which is inspired by themselves.

‘There are two sorts of eloquence,’ says this writer, ‘the one indeed scarce deserves the name of it, which consists chiefly in laboured and polished periods, an over-curious and artificial arrangement of figures, tinselled over with a gaudy embellishment of words, which glitter, but convey little or no light to the understanding. This kind of writing is for the most part much affected and admired by the people of weak judgment and vicious taste; but it is a piece of affectation and formality the sacred writers are utter strangers to. It is a vain and boyish eloquence; and, as it has always been esteemed below the great geniuses of all ages, so much more so with respect to those writers who were actuated by the spirit of Infinite Wisdom, and therefore wrote with that force and majesty with which never man writ. The other sort of eloquence is quite the reverse to this, and which may be said to be the true characteristic of the Holy Scriptures; where the excellence does not arise from a laboured and far-fetched elocution, but from a surprising mixture of simplicity and majesty, which is a double character, so difficult to be united that it is seldom to be met with in compositions merely human. We see nothing in Holy Writ of affectation and superfluous ornament...Now, it is observable that the most excellent profane authors, whether Greek or Latin, lose most of their graces whenever we find them literally translated. Homer’s famed representation of Jupiter—his cried-up description of a tempest, his relation of Neptune’s shaking the earth and opening it to its centre, his description of Pallas’s horses, with numbers of other long-since admired passages, flag, and almost vanish away, in the vulgar Latin translation.

‘Let any one but take the pains to read the common Latin interpretations of Virgil, Theocritus, or even of Pindar, and one may venture to affirm he will be able to trace out but few remains of the graces which charmed him so much in the original. The natural conclusion from hence is, that in the classical authors,

the expression, the sweetness of the numbers, occasioned by a musical placing of words, constitute a great part of their beauties; whereas, in the sacred writings, they consist more in the greatness of the things themselves than in the words and expressions. The ideas and conceptions are so great and lofty in their own nature that they necessarily appear magnificent in the most artless dress. Look but into the Bible, and we see them shine through the most simple and literal translations. That glorious description which Moses gives of the creation of the heavens and the earth, which Longinus...was so greatly taken with, has not lost the least whit of its intrinsic worth, and though it has undergone so many translations, yet triumphs over all, and breaks forth with as much force and vehemence as in the original...In the history of Joseph, where Joseph makes himself known, and weeps aloud upon the neck of his dear brother Benjamin, that all the house of Pharaoh heard him, at that instant none of his brethren are introduced as uttering aught, either to express their present joy or palliate their former injuries to him. On all sides there immediately ensues a deep and solemn silence; a silence infinitely more eloquent and expressive than anything else that could have been substituted in its place. Had Thucydides, Herodotus, Livy, or any of the celebrated classical historians, been employed in writing this history, when they came to this point they would doubtless have exhausted all their fund of eloquence in furnishing Joseph's brethren with laboured and studied harangues, which, however fine they might have been in themselves, would nevertheless have been unnatural, and altogether improper on the occasion.'

This is eloquently written, but it contains, I consider, a mixture of truth and falsehood, which it will be my business to discriminate from each other. Far be it from me to deny the unapproachable grandeur and simplicity of Holy Scripture; but I shall maintain that the classics are, as human compositions, simple

and majestic and natural too. I grant that Scripture is concerned with things, but I will not grant that classical literature is simply concerned with words. I grant that human literature is often elaborate, but I will maintain that elaborate composition is not unknown to the writers of Scripture. I grant that human literature cannot easily be translated out of the particular language to which it belongs; but it is not at all the rule that Scripture can easily be translated either;—and now I address myself to my task:—

Here, then, in the first place, I observe, Gentlemen, that Literature, from the derivation of the word, implies writing, not speaking; this, however, arises from the circumstance of the copiousness, variety, and public circulation of the matters of which it consists. What is spoken cannot outrun the range of the speaker's voice, and perishes in the uttering. When words are in demand to express a long course of thought, when they have to be conveyed to the ends of the earth, or perpetuated for the benefit of posterity, they must be written down, that is, reduced to the shape of literature; still, properly speaking, the terms, by which we denote this characteristic gift of man, belong to its exhibition by means of the voice, not of handwriting. It addresses itself, in its primary idea, to the ear, not to the eye. We call it the power of speech, we call it language, that is, the use of the tongue; and, even when we write, we still keep in mind what was its original instrument, for we use freely such terms in our books as 'saying,' 'speaking,' 'telling,' 'talking,' 'calling'; we use the terms 'phraseology' and 'diction'; as if we were still addressing ourselves to the ear.

Now I insist on this, because it shows that speech, and therefore literature, which is its permanent record, is essentially a personal work. It is not some production or result, attained by the partnership of several persons, or by machinery, or by any natural process, but in its very idea it proceeds, and must proceed,

from some one given individual. Two persons cannot be the authors of the sounds which strike our ear; and, as they cannot be speaking one and the same speech, neither can they be writing one and the same lecture or discourse,—which must certainly belong to some one person or other, and is the expression of that one person's ideas and feelings,—ideas and feelings personal to himself, though others may have parallel and similar ones,—proper to himself, in the same sense as his voice, his air, his countenance, his carriage, and his action, are personal. In other words, Literature expresses, not objective truth, as it is called, but subjective; not things, but thoughts.

Now this doctrine will become clearer by considering another use of words, which does relate to objective truth, or to things; which relates to matters, not personal, not subjective to the individual, but which, even were there no individual man in the whole world to know them or to talk about them, would exist still. Such objects become the matter of Science, and words indeed are used to express them, but such words are rather symbols than language, and however many we use, and however we may perpetuate them by writing, we never could make any kind of literature out of them, or call them by that name. Such, for instance, would be Euclid's Elements; they relate to truths universal and eternal; they are not mere thoughts, but things: they exist in themselves, not by virtue of our understanding them, not in dependence upon our will, but in what is called the *nature* of things, or at least on conditions external to us. The words, then, in which they are set forth are not language, speech, literature, but rather, as I have said, symbols. And, as a proof of it, you will recollect that it is possible, nay usual, to set forth the propositions of Euclid in algebraical notation, which, as all would admit, has nothing to do with literature. What is true of mathematics is true also of every study, so far forth as it is scientific; it makes use of words as the mere vehicle of things, and is thereby withdrawn from the province of literature.



Thus metaphysics, ethics, law, political economy, chemistry, theology, cease to be literature in the same degree as they are capable of a severe scientific treatment. And hence it is that Aristotle's works on the one hand, though at first sight literature, approach in character, at least a great number of them, to mere science; for even though the things which he treats of and exhibits may not always be real and true, yet he treats them as if they were, not as if they were the thoughts of his own mind; that is, he treats them scientifically. On the other hand, Law or Natural History has before now been treated by an author with so much of colouring derived from his own mind as to become a sort of literature; this is especially seen in the instance of Theology, when it takes the shape of Pulpit Eloquence. It is seen too in historical composition, which becomes a mere specimen of chronology, or a chronicle, when divested of the philosophy, the skill, or the party and personal feelings of the particular writer. Science, then, has to do with things, literature with thoughts; science is universal, literature is personal; science uses words merely as symbols, but literature uses language in its full compass, as including phraseology, idiom, style, composition, rhythm, eloquence, and whatever other properties are included in it.

Let us then put aside the scientific use of words, when we are to speak of language and literature. Literature is the personal use or exercise of language. That this is so is further proved from the fact that one author uses it so differently from another. Language itself in its very origination would seem to be traceable to individuals. Their peculiarities have given it its character. We are often able in fact to trace particular phrases or idioms to individuals; we know the history of their rise. Slang surely, as it is called, comes of, and breathes of the personal. The connection between the force of words in particular languages and the habits and sentiments of the nations speaking them has often been pointed out.

And, while the many use language as they find it, the man of genius uses it indeed, but subjects it withal to his own purposes, and moulds it according to his own peculiarities. The throng and succession of ideas, thoughts, feelings, imaginations, aspirations, which pass within him, the abstractions, the juxtapositions, the comparisons, the discriminations, the conceptions, which are so original in him, his views of external things, his judgments upon life, manners, and history, the exercises of his wit, of his humour, of his depth, of his sagacity, all these innumerable and incessant creations, the very pulsation and throbbing of his intellect, does he image forth, to all does he give utterance, in a corresponding language, which is as multiform as this inward mental action itself and analogous to it, the faithful expression of his intense personality, attending on his own inward world of thought as its very shadow: so that we might as well say that one man's shadow is another's as that the style of a really gifted mind can belong to any but himself. It follows him about *as* a shadow. His thought and feeling are personal, and so his language is personal.

Thought and speech are inseparable from each other. Matter and expression are parts of one: style is a thinking out into language. This is what I have been laying down, and this is literature; not *things*, not the verbal symbols of things; not on the other hand mere *words*; but thoughts expressed in language. Call to mind, Gentlemen, the meaning of the Greek word which expresses this special prerogative of man over the feeble intelligence of the inferior animals. It is called Logos: what does Logos mean? it stands both for *reason* and for *speech*, and it is difficult to say which it means more properly. It means both at once: why? because really they cannot be divided, —because they are in a true sense one. When we can separate light and illumination, life and motion, the convex and the concave of a curve, then will it be possible for thought to tread speech under foot, and

to hope to do without it—then will it be conceivable that the vigorous and fertile intellect should renounce its own double, its instrument of expression, and the channel of its speculations and emotions.

Critics should consider this view of the subject before they lay down such canons of taste as the writer whose pages I have quoted. Such men as he is consider fine writing to be an *addition from without* to the matter treated of,—a sort of ornament superinduced, or a luxury indulged in, by those who have time and inclination for such vanities. They speak as if *one* man could do the thought, and *another* the style. We read in Persian travels of the way in which young gentlemen go to work in the East, when they would engage in correspondence with those who inspire them with hope or fear. They cannot write one sentence themselves; so they betake themselves to the professional letter-writer. They confide to him the object they have in view. They have a point to gain from a superior, a favour to ask, an evil to deprecate; they have to approach a man in power, or to make court to some beautiful lady. The professional man manufactures words for them, as they are wanted, as a stationer sells them paper, or a schoolmaster might cut their pens. Thought and word are, in their conception, two things, and thus there is a division of labour. The man of thought comes to the man of words; and the man of words, duly instructed in the thought, dips the pen of desire into the ink of devotedness, and proceeds to spread it over the page of desolation. Then the nightingale of affection is heard to warble to the rose of loveliness, while the breeze of anxiety plays around the brow of expectation. This is what the Easterns are said to consider fine writing; and it seems pretty much the idea of the school of critics to whom I have been referring.

We have an instance in literary history of this very proceeding nearer home, in a great University, in the latter years of the last century. I have referred to it before now in a public lecture elsewhere; but it is too

much in point here to be omitted. A learned Arabic scholar had to deliver a set of lectures before its doctors and professors on an historical subject in which his reading had lain. A linguist is conversant with science rather than with literature; but this gentleman felt that his lectures must not be without a style. Being of the opinion of the Orientals, with whose writings he was familiar, he determined to buy a style. He took the step of engaging a person, at a price, to turn the matter which he had got together into ornamental English. Observe, he did not wish for mere grammatical English, but for an elaborate, pretentious style. An artist was found in the person of a country curate, and the job was carried out. His lectures remain to this day, in their own place in the protracted series of annual Discourses to which they belong, distinguished amid a number of heavyish compositions by the rhetorical and ambitious diction for which he went into the market. This learned divine, indeed, and the author I have quoted, differ from each other in the estimate they respectively form of literary composition; but they agree together in this,—in considering such composition a trick and a trade; they put it on a par with the gold plate and the flowers and the music of a banquet, which do not make the viands better, but the entertainment more pleasurable; as if language were the hired servant, the mere mistress of the reason, and not the lawful wife in her own house.

But can they really think that Homer, or Pindar, or Shakespeare, or Dryden, or Walter Scott, were accustomed to aim at diction for its own sake, instead of being inspired with their subject, and pouring forth beautiful words because they had beautiful thoughts? this is surely too great a paradox to be borne. Rather, it is the fire within the author's breast which overflows in the torrent of his burning, irresistible eloquence; it is the poetry of his inner soul, which relieves itself in the Ode or the Elegy; and his mental attitude and bearing, the beauty of his moral countenance, the

force and keenness of his logic, are imaged in the tenderness, or energy, or richness of his language. Nay, according to the well-known line, 'facit indignatio *versus*'; not the words alone, but even the rhythm, the metre, the verse, will be the contemporaneous offspring of the emotion or imagination which possesses him. 'Poeta nascitur, non fit,' says the proverb; and this is in numerous instances true of his poems, as well as of himself. They are born, not framed; they are a strain rather than a composition; and their perfection is the monument, not so much of his skill as of his power. And this is true of prose as well as of verse in its degree: who will not recognize in the vision of Mirza a delicacy and beauty of style which is very difficult to describe, but which is felt to be in exact correspondence to the ideas of which it is the expression?

And, since the thoughts and reasonings of an author have, as I have said, a personal character, no wonder that his style is not only the image of his subject, but of his mind. That pomp of language, that full and tuneful diction, that felicitousness in the choice and exquisiteness in the collocation of words, which to prosaic writers seems artificial, is nothing else but the mere habit and way of a lofty intellect. Aristotle, in his sketch of the magnanimous man, tells us that his voice is deep, his motions slow, and his stature commanding. In like manner, the elocution of a great intellect is great. His language expresses, not only his great thoughts, but his great self. Certainly he might use fewer words than he uses; but he fertilizes his simplest ideas, and germinates into a multitude of details, and prolongs the march of his sentences, and sweeps round to the full diapason of his harmony, as if *κῦδ'εἰ γαίῳ*, rejoicing in his own vigour and richness of resource. I say, a narrow critic will call it verbiage, when really it is a sort of fulness of heart, parallel to that which makes the merry boy whistle as he walks, or the strong man, like the smith in the novel, flourish his club when there is no one to fight with.

Shakespeare furnishes us with frequent instances of this peculiarity, and all so beautiful, that it is difficult to select for quotation. For instance, in *Macbeth* :—

‘Canst thou not minister to a mind diseased,  
Pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow,  
Raze out the written troubles of the brain,  
And, with some sweet oblivious antidote,  
Cleanse the foul bosom of that perilous stuff,  
Which weighs upon the heart?’

Here a simple idea, by a process which belongs to the orator rather than to the poet, but still comes from the native vigour of genius, is expanded into a many-membered period.

The following from *Hamlet* is of the same kind :—

‘Tis not alone my inky cloak, good mother,  
Nor customary suits of solemn black,  
Nor windy suspiration of forced breath,  
No, nor the fruitful river in the eye,  
Nor the dejected haviour of the visage,  
Together with all forms, modes, shows of grief,  
That can denote me truly.’

Now, if such declamation, for declamation it is, however noble, be allowable in a poet, whose genius is so far removed from pompousness or pretence, much more is it allowable in an orator, whose very province it is to put forth words to the best advantage he can. Cicero has nothing more redundant in any part of his writings than these passages from Shakespeare. No lover then at least of Shakespeare may fairly accuse Cicero of gorgeousness of phraseology or diffuseness of style. Nor will any sound critic be tempted to do so. As a certain unaffected neatness and propriety and grace of diction may be required of any author who lays claim to be a classic, for the same reason that a certain attention to dress is expected of every gentleman, so to Cicero may be allowed the privilege of the ‘os magna sonaturum,’

of which the ancient critic speaks. His copious, majestic, musical flow of language, even if sometimes beyond what the subject-matter demands, is never out of keeping with the occasion or with the speaker. It is the expression of lofty sentiments in lofty sentences, the 'mens magna in corpore magno.' It is the development of the inner man. Cicero vividly realised the *status* of a Roman senator and statesman, and the 'pride of place' of Rome, in all the grace and grandeur which attached to her; and he imbibed, and became, what he admired. As the exploits of Scipio or Pompey are the expression of this greatness in deed, so the language of Cicero is the expression of it in word. And, as the acts of the Roman ruler or soldier represent to us, in a manner special to themselves, the characteristic magnanimity of the lords of the earth, so do the speeches or treatises of her accomplished orator bring it home to our imaginations as no other writing could do. Neither Livy, nor Tacitus, nor Terence, nor Seneca, nor Pliny, nor Quintilian, is an adequate spokesman for the Imperial City. They write Latin; Cicero writes Roman.

You will say that Cicero's language is undeniably studied, but that Shakespeare's is as undeniably natural and spontaneous; and that this is what is meant, when the Classics are accused of being mere artists of words. Here we are introduced to a further large question, which gives me the opportunity of anticipating a misapprehension of my meaning. I observe, then, that, not only is that lavish richness of style, which I have noticed in Shakespeare, justifiable on the principles which I have been laying down, but, what is less easy to receive, even elaborateness in composition is no mark of trick or artifice in an author. Undoubtedly the works of the Classics, particularly the Latin, *are* elaborate; they have cost a great deal of time, care, and trouble. They have had many rough copies; I grant it. I grant also that there are writers of name, ancient and modern, who

really are guilty of the absurdity of making sentences, as the very end of their literary labour. Such was Isocrates; such were some of the sophists; they were set on words, to the neglect of thoughts or things; I cannot defend them. If I must give an English instance of this fault, much as I love and revere the personal character and intellectual vigour of Dr Johnson, I cannot deny that his style often outruns the sense and the occasion, and is wanting in that simplicity which is the attribute of genius. Still, granting all this, I cannot grant, notwithstanding, that genius never need take pains,—that genius may not improve by practice,—that it never incurs failures, and succeeds the second time,—that it never finishes off at leisure what it has thrown off in the outline at a stroke.

Take the instance of the painter or the sculptor; he has a conception in his mind which he wishes to represent in the medium of his art;—the Madonna and Child, or Innocence, or Fortitude, or some historical character or event. Do you mean to say he does not study his subject? does he not make sketches? does he not even call them ‘studies’? does he not call his workroom a *studio*? is he not ever designing, rejecting, adopting, correcting, perfecting? Are not the first attempts of Michael Angelo and Raffaele extant, in the case of some of their most celebrated compositions? Will any one say that the Apollo Belvidere is not a conception patiently elaborated into its proper perfection? These departments of taste are, according to the received notions of the world, the very province of genius, and yet we call them *arts*; they are the ‘Fine Arts.’ Why may not that be true of literary composition which is true of painting, sculpture, architecture, and music? Why may not language be wrought as well as the clay of the modeller? why may not words be worked up as well as colours? why should not skill in diction be simply subservient and instrumental to the great prototypal ideas which are the contemplation of a Plato or a Virgil? Our greatest poet tells us,



'The poet's eye, in a fine frenzy rolling,  
Doth glance from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven,  
And, as imagination bodies forth  
The forms of things unknown, the poet's pen  
Turns them to shapes, and gives to airy nothing  
A local habitation and a name.'

Now, is it wonderful that that pen of his should sometimes be at fault for a while,—that it should pause, write, erase, re-write, amend, complete, before he satisfies himself that his language has done justice to the conceptions which his mind's eye contemplated?

In this point of view, doubtless, many or most writers are elaborate; and those certainly not the least whose style is furthest removed from ornament, being simple and natural, or vehement, or severely business-like and practical. Who so energetic and manly as Demosthenes? Yet he is said to have transcribed Thucydides many times over in the formation of his style. Who so gracefully natural as Herodotus? yet his very dialect is not his own, but chosen for the sake of the perfection of his narrative. Who exhibits such happy negligence as our own Addison? yet artistic fastidiousness was so notorious in his instance that the report has got abroad, truly or not, that he was too late in his issue of an important state-paper, from his habit of revision and re-composition. Such great authors were working by a model which was before the eyes of their intellect, and they were labouring to say what they had to say, in such a way as would most exactly and suitably express it. It is not wonderful that other authors, whose style is not simple, should be instances of a similar literary diligence. Virgil wished his *Æneid* to be burned, elaborate as is its composition, because he felt it needed more labour still, in order to make it perfect. The historian Gibbon in the last century is another instance in point. You must not suppose I am going to recommend his style for imitation, any more than his principles; but I refer to him as the example of a writer

feeling the task which lay before him, feeling that he had to bring out into words for the comprehension of his readers a great and complicated scene, and wishing that those words should be adequate to his undertaking. I think he wrote the first chapter of his History three times over; it was not that he corrected or improved the first copy; but he put his first essay, and then his second, aside—he recast his matter, till he had hit the precise exhibition of it which he thought demanded by his subject.

Now in all these instances, I wish you to observe, that what I have admitted about literary workmanship differs from the doctrine which I am opposing in this,—that the mere dealer in words cares little or nothing for the subject which he is embellishing, but can paint and gild anything whatever to order; whereas the artist, whom I am acknowledging, has his great or rich visions before him, and his only aim is to bring out what he thinks or what he feels in a way adequate to the thing spoken of, and appropriate to the speaker.

The illustration which I have been borrowing from the Fine Arts will enable me to go a step further. I have been showing the connection of the thought with the language in literary composition; and in doing so I have exposed the unphilosophical notion, that the language was an extra which could be dispensed with, and provided to order according to the demand. But I have not yet brought out, what immediately follows from this, and which was the second point which I had to show, viz. that to be capable of easy translation is no test of the excellence of a composition. If I must say what I think, I should lay down, with little hesitation, that the truth was almost the reverse of this doctrine. Nor are many words required to show it. Such a doctrine, as is contained in the passage of the author whom I quoted when I began, goes upon the assumption that one language is just like another language,—that every language has all the ideas, turns of thought, delicacies of expression, figures, associations, abstractions, points of view, which every other

language has. Now, as far as regards Science, it is true that all languages are pretty much alike for the purposes of Science; but even in this respect some are more suitable than others, which have to coin words, or to borrow them, in order to express scientific ideas. But if languages are not all equally adapted even to furnish symbols for those universal and eternal truths in which Science consists, how can they reasonably be expected to be all equally rich, equally forcible, equally musical, equally exact, equally happy in expressing the idiosyncratic peculiarities of thought of some original and fertile mind, who has availed himself of one of them? A great author takes his native language, masters it, partly throws himself into it, partly moulds and adapts it, and pours out his multitude of ideas through the variously ramified and delicately minute channels of expression which he has found or framed:—does it follow that this his personal presence (as it may be called) can forthwith be transferred to every other language under the sun? Then may we reasonably maintain that Beethoven's *piano* music is not really beautiful, because it cannot be played on the hurdy-gurdy. Were not this astonishing doctrine maintained by persons far superior to the writer whom I have selected for animadversion, I should find it difficult to be patient under a gratuitous extravagance. It seems that a really great author must admit of translation, and that we have a test of his excellence when he reads to advantage in a foreign language as well as in his own. Then Shakespeare is a genius because he can be translated into German, and *not* a genius because he cannot be translated into French. Then the multiplication-table is the most gifted of all conceivable compositions, because it loses nothing by translation, and can hardly be said to belong to any one language whatever. Whereas I should rather have conceived that, in proportion as ideas are novel and recondite, they would be difficult to put into words, and that the very fact of their having insinuated themselves into one language would diminish the

chance of that happy accident being repeated in another. In the language of savages you can hardly express any idea or act of the intellect at all: is the tongue of the Hottentot or Esquimaux to be made the measure of the genius of Plato, Pindar, Tacitus, St Jerome, Dante, or Cervantes?

Let us recur, I say, to the illustration of the Fine Arts. I suppose you can express ideas in painting which you cannot express in sculpture; and the more an artist is of a painter, the less he is likely to be of a sculptor. The more he commits his genius to the methods and conditions of his own art, the less he will be able to throw himself into the circumstances of another. Is the genius of Fra Angelico, of Francia, or of Raffaele disparaged by the fact that he was able to do that in colours which no man that ever lived, which no Angel, could achieve in wood? Each of the Fine Arts has its own subject-matter; from the nature of the case you can do in one what you cannot do in another; you can do in painting what you cannot do in carving; you can do in oils what you cannot do in fresco; you can do in marble what you cannot do in ivory; you can do in wax what you cannot do in bronze. Then, I repeat, applying this to the case of languages, why should not genius be able to do in Greek what it cannot do in Latin? and why are its Greek and Latin works defective because they will not turn into English? That genius, of which we are speaking, did not make English; it did not make all languages, present, past, and future; it did not make the laws of *any* language: why is it to be judged of by that in which it had no part, over which it has no control?

And now we are naturally brought on to our third point, which is on the characteristics of Holy Scripture as compared with profane literature. Hitherto we have been concerned with the doctrine of these writers, viz. that style is an *extra*, that it is a mere artifice, and that hence it cannot be translated; now we come to their fact, viz. that Scripture has no such artificial style, and that Scripture can easily be

translated. Surely their fact is as untenable as their doctrine.

Scripture easy of translation! then why have there been so few good translators? why is it that there has been such great difficulty in combining the two necessary qualities, fidelity to the original and purity in the adopted vernacular? why is it that the authorized versions of the Church are often so inferior to the original as compositions, except that the Church is bound above all things to see that the version is doctrinally correct, and in a difficult problem is obliged to put up with defects in what is of secondary importance, provided she secure what is of first? If it were so easy to transfer the beauty of the original to the copy, she would not have been content with her received version in various languages which could be named.

And then in the next place, Scripture not elaborate! Scripture not ornamented in diction, and musical in cadence! Why, consider the Epistle to the Hebrews—where is there in the classics any composition more carefully, more artificially written? Consider the book of Job—is it not a sacred drama, as artistic, as perfect, as any Greek tragedy of Sophocles or Euripides? Consider the Psalter—are there no ornaments, no rhythm, no studied cadences, no responsive members, in that divinely beautiful book? And is it not hard to understand? are not the Prophets hard to understand? is not St Paul hard to understand? Who can say that these are popular compositions? who can say that they are level at first reading with the understandings of the multitude?

That there are portions indeed of the inspired volume more simple both in style and in meaning, and that these are the more sacred and sublime passages, as, for instance, parts of the Gospels, I grant at once; but this does not militate against the doctrine I have been laying down. Recollect, Gentlemen, my distinction when I began. I have said Literature is one thing, and that Science is another; that Literature

has to do with ideas, and Science with realities; that Literature is of a personal character, that Science treats of what is universal and eternal. In proportion, then, as Scripture excludes the personal colouring of its writers, and rises into the region of pure and mere inspiration, when it ceases in any sense to be the writing of man, of St Paul or St John, of Moses or Isaias, then it comes to belong to Science, not Literature. Then it conveys the things of heaven, unseen verities, divine manifestations, and them alone—not the ideas, the feelings, the aspirations, of its human instruments, who, for all that they were inspired and infallible, did not cease to be men. St Paul's epistles, then, I consider to be literature in a real and true sense, *as* personal, *as* rich in reflection and emotion, as Demosthenes or Euripides; and, without ceasing to be revelations of objective truth, they are expressions of the subjective notwithstanding. On the other hand, portions of the Gospels, of the book of Genesis, and other passages of the Sacred Volume, are of the nature of Science. Such is the beginning of St John's Gospel, which we read at the end of Mass. Such is the Creed. I mean, passages such as these are the mere enunciation of eternal things, without (so to say) the medium of any human mind transmitting them to us. The words used have the grandeur, the majesty, the calm, unimpassioned beauty of Science; they are in no sense Literature, they are in no sense personal; and therefore they are easy to apprehend, and easy to translate.

Did time admit I could show you parallel instances of what I am speaking of in the Classics, inferior to the inspired word in proportion as the subject-matter of the classical authors is immensely inferior to the subjects treated of in Scripture—but parallel, inasmuch as the classical author or speaker ceases for the moment to have to do with Literature, as speaking of things objectively, and rises to the serene sublimity of Science. But I should be carried too far if I began.

I shall then merely sum up what I have said, and come to a conclusion. Reverting, then, to my original question, what is the meaning of Letters, as contained, Gentlemen, in the designation of your Faculty, I have answered, that by Letters or Literature is meant the expression of thought in language, where by 'thought' I mean the ideas, feelings, views, reasonings, and other operations of the human mind. And the Art of Letters is the method by which a speaker or writer brings out in words, worthy of his subject, and sufficient for his audience or readers, the thoughts which impress him. Literature, then, is of a personal character; it consists in the enunciations and teachings of those who have a right to speak as representatives of their kind, and in whose words their brethren find an interpretation of their own sentiments, a record of their own experience, and a suggestion for their own judgments. A great author, Gentlemen, is not one who merely has a *copia verborum*, whether in prose or verse, and can, as it were, turn on at his will any number of splendid phrases and swelling sentences; but he is one who has something to say and knows how to say it. I do not claim for him, as such, any great depth of thought, or breadth of view, or philosophy, or sagacity, or knowledge of human nature, or experience of human life, though these additional gifts he may have, and the more he has of them the greater he is; but I ascribe to him, as his characteristic gift, in a large sense the faculty of Expression. He is master of the two-fold Logos, the thought and the word, distinct, but inseparable from each other. He may, if so be, elaborate his compositions, or he may pour out his improvisations, but in either case he has but one aim, which he keeps steadily before him, and is conscientious and single-minded in fulfilling. That aim is to give forth what he has within him; and from his very earnestness it comes to pass that, whatever be the splendour of his diction or the harmony of his periods, he has with him the charm of an incommunicable simplicity. Whatever be his

subject, high or low, he treats it suitably and for its own sake. If he is a poet, 'nil molitur *ineptè*.' If he is an orator, then too he speaks, not only 'distinctè' and 'splendidè,' but also '*aptè*.' His page is the lucid mirror of his mind and life—

'Quo fit, ut omnis  
Votiva pateat veluti descripta tabella  
Vita senis.'

He writes passionately, because he feels keenly; forcibly, because he conceives vividly; he sees too clearly to be vague; he is too serious to be otiose; he can analyze his subject, and therefore he is rich; he embraces it as a whole and in its parts, and therefore he is consistent; he has a firm hold of it, and therefore he is luminous. When his imagination wells up, it overflows in ornament; when his heart is touched, it thrills along his verse. He always has the right word for the right idea, and never a word too much. If he is brief, it is because few words suffice; when he is lavish of them, still each word has its mark, and aids, not embarrasses, the vigorous march of his elocution. He expresses what all feel, but all cannot say; and his sayings pass into proverbs among his people, and his phrases become household words and idioms of their daily speech, which is tessellated with the rich fragments of his language, as we see in foreign lands the marbles of Roman grandeur worked into the walls and pavements of modern palaces.

Such pre-eminently is Shakespeare among ourselves; such pre-eminently Virgil among the Latins; such in their degree are all those writers who in every nation go by the name of Classics. To particular nations they are necessarily attached from the circumstance of the variety of tongues, and the peculiarities of each; but so far they have a catholic and ecumenical character, that what they express is common to the whole race of man, and they alone are able to express it.

If then the power of speech is a gift as great as any



that can be named,—if the origin of language is by many philosophers even considered to be nothing short of divine,—if by means of words the secrets of the heart are brought to light, pain of soul is relieved, hidden grief is carried off, sympathy conveyed, counsel imparted, experience recorded, and wisdom perpetuated,—if by great authors the many are drawn up into unity, national character is fixed, a people speaks, the past and the future, the East and the West are brought into communication with each other,—if such men are, in a word, the spokesmen and prophets of the human family,—it will not answer to make light of Literature or to neglect its study; rather we may be sure that, in proportion as we master it in whatever language, and imbibe its spirit, we shall ourselves become in our own measure the ministers of like benefits to others, be they many or few, be they in the obscurer or the more distinguished walks of life,—who are united to us by social ties, and are within the sphere of our personal influence.

# JOHN RUSKIN

## SIR JOSHUA AND HOLBEIN

1860

Long ago discarded from our National Gallery, with the contempt logically due to national or English pictures,—lost to sight and memory for many a year in the Ogygian seclusions of Marlborough House—there have reappeared at last, in more honourable exile at Kensington, two great pictures by Sir Joshua Reynolds. Two, with others; but these alone worth many an entanglement among the cross-roads of the West, to see for half-an-hour by spring sunshine:—the *Holy Family*, and the *Graces*, side by side now in the principal room. Great, as was ever work wrought by man. In placid strength, and subtlest science, unsurpassed:—in sweet felicity, incomparable.

If you truly want to know what good work of painter's hand is, study those two pictures from side to side, and miss no inch of them (you will hardly, eventually, be inclined to miss one): in some respects there is no execution like it; none so open in the magic. For the work of other great men is hidden in its wonderfulness—you cannot see how it was done. But in Sir Joshua's there is no mystery: it is all amazement. No question but that the touch was so laid; only that it *could* have been so laid, is a marvel for ever. So also there is no painting so majestic in sweetness. He is lily-sceptred: his power blossoms,

but burdens not. All other men of equal dignity paint more slowly; all others of equal force paint less slightly. Tintoret lays his line like a king marking the boundaries of conquered lands; but Sir Joshua leaves it as a summer wind its trace on a lake; he could have painted on a silken veil, where it fell free, and not bent it.

Such at least is his touch when it is life that he paints: for things lifeless he has a severer hand. If you examine that picture of the *Graces* you will find it reverses all the ordinary ideas of expedient treatment. By other men flesh is firmly painted, but accessories lightly. Sir Joshua paints accessories firmly<sup>1</sup>, flesh lightly;—nay, flesh not at all, but spirit. The wreath of flowers he feels to be material; and gleam by gleam strikes fearlessly the silver and violet leaves out of the darkness. But the three maidens are less substantial than rose petals. No flushed nor frosted tissue that ever faded in night wind is so tender as they; no hue may reach, no line measure, what is in them so gracious and so fair. Let the hand move softly—itself as a spirit; for this is Life, of which it touches the imagery.

‘And yet ——’

Yes: you do well to pause. There is a ‘yet’ to be thought of. I did not bring you to these pictures to see wonderful work merely, or womanly beauty merely. I brought you chiefly to look at that Madonna, believing that you might remember other Madonnas, unlike her; and might think it desirable to consider wherein the difference lay:—other Madonnas not by Sir Joshua, who painted Madonnas but seldom. Who perhaps, if truth must be told, painted them never: for surely this dearest pet of an English girl, with the little curl of lovely hair under her ear, is *not* one.

<sup>1</sup> As showing gigantic power of hand, joined with utmost accuracy and rapidity, the folds of drapery under the breast of the Virgin are, perhaps, as marvellous a piece of work as could be found in any picture, of whatever time or master.

Why did not Sir Joshua—or could not—or would not Sir Joshua—paint Madonnas? neither he, nor his great rival-friend Gainsborough? Both of them painters of women, such as since Giorgione and Correggio had not been; both painters of men, such as had not been since Titian. How is it that these English friends can so brightly paint that particular order of humanity which we call ‘gentlemen and ladies,’ but neither heroes, nor saints, nor angels? Can it be because they were both country-bred boys, and for ever after strangely sensitive to courtliness? Why, Giotto also was a country-bred boy. Allegri’s native Correggio, Titian’s Cadore, were but hill villages; yet these men painted, not the court, nor the drawing-room, but the Earth: and not a little of Heaven besides: while our good Sir Joshua never trusts himself outside the park palings. He could not even have drawn the strawberry girl, unless she had got through a gap in them—or rather, I think, she must have been let in at the porter’s lodge, for her strawberries are in a pottle ready for the ladies at the Hall. Giorgione would have set them, wild and fragrant, among their leaves, in her hand. Between his fairness, and Sir Joshua’s May-fairness, there is a strange, impassable limit—as of the white reef that in Pacific isles encircles their inner lakelets, and shuts them from the surf and sound of sea. Clear and calm they rest, reflecting fringed shadows of the palm-trees, and the passing of fretted clouds across their own sweet circle of blue sky. But beyond, and round and round their coral bar, lies the blue of sea and heaven together—blue of eternal deep.

You will find it a pregnant question, if you follow it forth, and leading to many others, not trivial, why it is, that in Sir Joshua’s girl, or Gainsborough’s we always think first of the Ladyhood; but in Giotto’s, of the Womanhood? Why, in Sir Joshua’s hero, or Vandyck’s, it is always the Prince or the Sir whom we see first; but in Titian’s the man.

Not that Titian's gentlemen are less finished than Sir Joshua's; but their gentlemanliness<sup>1</sup> is not the principal thing about them; their manhood absorbs, conquers, wears it as a despised thing. Nor—and this is another stern ground of separation—will Titian make a gentleman of every one he paints. He will make him so if he is so, not otherwise; and this not merely in general servitude to truth, but because in his sympathy with deeper humanity, the courtier is not more interesting to him than any one else. 'You have learned to dance and fence; you can speak with clearness, and think with precision; your hands are small, your senses acute, and your features well-shaped. Yes: I see all this in you, and will do it justice. You shall stand as none but a well-bred man could stand; and your fingers shall fall on the sword-hilt as no fingers could but those that knew the grasp of it. But for the rest, this grisly fisherman, with rusty cheek and rope-frayed hand, is a man as well as you, and might possibly make several of you, if souls were divisible. His bronze colour is quite as interesting to me, Titian, as your paleness, and his hoary spray of stormy hair takes the light as well as your waving curls. Him also will I paint, with such picturesqueness as he may have; yet not putting the picturesqueness first in him, as in you I have not put the gentlemanliness first. In him I see a strong human creature, contending with all hardship: in you also a human creature, uncontending, and possibly not strong. Contention or strength, weakness or picturesqueness, and all other such accidents in either, shall have due place. But the

<sup>1</sup> The reader must observe that I use the word here in a limited sense, as meaning only the effect of careful education, good society, and refined habits of life, on average temper and character. Of deep and true gentlemanliness—based as it is on intense sensibility and sincerity, perfected by courage, and other qualities of race; as well as of that union of insensibility with cunning, which is the essence of vulgarity, I shall have to speak at length in another place.

immortality and miracle of you—this clay that burns, this colour that changes—are in truth the awful things in both: these shall be first painted—and last.'

With which question respecting treatment of character we have to connect also this further one: How is it that the attempts of so great painters as Reynolds and Gainsborough are, beyond portraiture, limited almost like children's! No domestic drama—no history—no noble natural scenes, far less any religious subject:—only market carts; girls with pigs; woodmen going home to supper; watering places; grey cart-houses in fields, and such like. Reynolds, indeed, once or twice touched higher themes,—‘among the chords his fingers laid,’ and recoiled; wisely; for, strange to say, his very sensibility deserts him when he leaves his courtly quiet. The horror of the subjects he chose (Cardinal Beaufort and Ugolino) showed inherent apathy: had he felt deeply, he would not have sought for this strongest possible excitement of feeling,—would not willingly have dwelt on the worst conditions of despair—the despair of the ignoble. His religious subjects are conceived even with less care than these. Beautiful as it is, this Holy Family by which we stand has neither dignity nor sacredness, other than those which attach to every group of gentle mother and ruddy babe; while his Faiths, Charities, or other well-ordered and emblem-fitted virtues are even less lovely than his ordinary portraits of women.

It was a faultful temper, which having so mighty a power of realization at command, never became so much interested in any fact of human history as to spend one touch of heartfelt skill upon it;—which, yielding momentarily to indolent imagination, ended, at best, in a Puck, or a Thais; a Mercury as Thief, or a Cupid as Linkboy. How wide the interval between this gently trivial humour, guided by the wave of a feather, or arrested by the enchantment of a smile,—and the habitual dwelling of the thoughts of the great

own way, with the earnestness and silent swell of the strong river—not unconscious of the awe, nor of the sanctities of his life. The snows of the eternal Alps giving forth their strength to it; the blood of the St Jakob brook poured into it as it passes by—not in vain. He also could feel his strength coming from white snows far off in heaven. He also bore upon him the purple stain of the earth sorrow. A grave man, knowing what steps of men keep truest time to the chanting of Death. Having grave friends also;—the same singing heard far off, it seems to me, or, perhaps, even low in the room, by that family of Sir Thomas More; or mingling with the hum of bees in the meadows outside the towered walls of Basle; or making the words of the book more tuneable, which meditative Erasmus looks upon. Nay, that same soft Death-music is on the lips of Holbein's Madonna. Who, among many, is the Virgin you had best compare with the one before whose image we have stood so long.

Holbein's is at Dresden, companioned by the Madonna di San Sisto; but both are visible enough to you here, for, by a strange coincidence, they are (at least so far as I know) the only two great pictures in the world which have been faultlessly engraved.

The received tradition respecting the Holbein Madonna is beautiful; and I believe the interpretation to be true. A father and mother have prayed to her for the life of their sick child. She appears to them, her own Christ in her arms. She puts down her Christ beside them—takes their child into her arms instead. It lies down upon her bosom, and stretches its hand to its father and mother, saying farewell.

This interpretation of the picture has been doubted, as nearly all the most precious truths of pictures have been doubted, and forgotten. But even supposing it erroneous, the design is not less characteristic of Holbein. For that there are signs of suffering on the features of the child in the arms of the Virgin, is beyond question; and if this child be intended for the Christ,

it would not be doubtful to my mind, that, of the two—Raphael and Holbein—the latter had given the truest aspect and deepest reading of the early life of the Redeemer. Raphael sought to express His power only; but Holbein His labour and sorrow.

There are two other pictures which you should remember together with this (attributed, indeed, but with no semblance of probability, to the elder Holbein, none of whose work, preserved at Basle, or elsewhere, approaches in the slightest degree to their power), the St Barbara and St Elizabeth<sup>1</sup>. I do not know among the pictures of the great sacred schools any at once so powerful, so simple, so pathetically expressive of the need of the heart that conceived them. Not ascetic, nor quaint, nor feverishly or fondly passionate, nor wrapt in withdrawn solemnities of thought. Only entirely true—entirely pure. No depth of glowing heaven beyond them—but the clear sharp sweetness of the northern air: no splendour of rich colour, striving to adorn them with better brightness than of the day: a grey glory, as of moonlight without mist, dwelling on face and fold of dress;—all faultless-fair. Creatures they are, humble by nature, not by self condemnation: merciful by habit, not by tearful impulse; lofty without consciousness; gentle without weakness; wholly in this present world, doing its work calmly; beautiful with all that holiest life can reach—yet already freed from all that holiest death can cast away.

<sup>1</sup> Pinacothek of Munich.



## MATTHEW ARNOLD

MARCUS AURELIUS

1863

Mr Mill says, in his book on Liberty, that 'Christian morality is in great part merely a protest against paganism: its ideal is negative rather than positive, passive rather than active.' He says, that, in certain most important respects, 'it falls far below the best morality of the ancients.' Now the object of systems of morality is to take possession of human life, to save it from being abandoned to passion or allowed to drift at hazard, to give it happiness by establishing it in the practice of virtue: and this object they seek to attain by prescribing to human life fixed principles of action, fixed rules of conduct. In its uninspired as well as in its inspired moments, in its days of languor and gloom as well as in its days of sunshine and energy, human life has thus always a clue to follow, and may always be making way towards its goal. Christian morality has not failed to supply to human life aids of this sort. It has supplied them far more abundantly than many of its critics imagine. The most exquisite document, after those of the New Testament, of all that the Christian spirit has ever inspired,—the *Imitation*.—by no means contains the whole of Christian morality: nay, the disparagers of this morality would think themselves sure of triumphing if one agreed to look for it in the *Imitation* only. But even

the *Imitation* is full of passages like these: 'Vita sine proposito languida et vaga est';—'Omni die renovare debemus propositum nostrum, dicentes: nunc hodie perfecte incipiamus, quia nihil est quod hactenus fecimus';—'Secundum propositum nostrum est cursus profectus nostri';—'Raro etiam unum vitium perfecte vincimus, et ad *quotidianum* profectum non accendimur';—'Semper aliquid certi proponendum est';—'Tibi ipsi violentiam frequenter fac': (*A life without a purpose is a languid, drifting thing;—Every day we ought to renew our purpose, saying to ourselves: This day let us make a sound beginning, for what we have hitherto done is nought;—Our improvement is in proportion to our purpose;—We hardly ever manage to get completely rid even of one fault, and do not set our hearts on daily improvement;—Always place a definite purpose before thee;—Get the habit of mastering thine inclination.*) These are moral precepts, and moral precepts of the best kind. As rules to hold possession of our conduct, and to keep us in the right course through outward troubles and inward perplexity, they are equal to the best ever furnished by the great masters of morals—Epictetus or Marcus Aurelius.

But moral rules, apprehended as ideas first, and then rigorously followed as laws, are, and must be, for the sage only. The mass of mankind have neither force of intellect enough to apprehend them clearly as ideas, nor force of character enough to follow them strictly as laws. The mass of mankind can be carried along a course full of hardship for the natural man, can be borne over the thousand impediments of the narrow way, only by the tide of a joyful and bounding emotion. It is impossible to rise from reading Epictetus or Marcus Aurelius without a sense of constraint and melancholy, without feeling that the burden laid upon man is well-nigh greater than he can bear. Honour to the sages who have felt this, and yet have borne it! Yet, even for the sage, this sense of labour and sorrow in his march towards the goal constitutes

a relative inferiority; the noblest souls of whatever creed, the pagan Empedocles as well as the Christian Paul, have insisted on the necessity of an inspiration, a living emotion, to make moral action perfect; an obscure indication of this necessity is the one drop of truth in the ocean of verbiage with which the controversy on justification by faith has flooded the world. But, for the ordinary man, this sense of labour and sorrow constitutes an absolute disqualification; it paralyses him; under the weight of it, he cannot make way towards the goal at all. The paramount virtue of religion is, that it has *lighted up* morality; that it has supplied the emotion and inspiration needful for carrying the sage along the narrow way perfectly, for carrying the ordinary man along it at all. Even the religions with most dross in them have had something of this virtue; but the Christian religion manifests it with unexampled splendour. 'Lead me, Zeus and Destiny!' says the prayer of Epictetus, 'whithersoever I am appointed to go: I will follow without wavering; even though I turn coward and shrink, I shall have to follow all the same.' The fortitude of that is for the strong, for the few; even for them the spiritual atmosphere with which it surrounds them is bleak and gray. But, 'Let Thy loving spirit lead me forth into the land of righteousness';—'The Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory';—'Unto you that fear My Name shall the Sun of Righteousness arise with healing in his wings,' says the Old Testament; 'Born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God';—'Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God';—'Whatsoever is born of God, overcometh the world,' says the New. The ray of sunshine is there, the glow of a divine warmth;—the austerity of the sage melts away under it, the paralysis of the weak is healed; he who is vivified by it renews his strength; 'all things are possible to him'; 'he is a new creature.'

Epictetus says: 'Every matter has two handles,

one of which will bear taking hold of, the other not. If thy brother sin against thee, lay not hold of the matter by this, that he sins against thee; for by this handle the matter will not bear taking hold of. But rather lay hold of it by this, that he is thy brother, thy born mate; and thou wilt take hold of it by what will bear handling.' Jesus, asked whether a man is bound to forgive his brother as often as seven times, answers: 'I say not unto thee, until seven times, but until seventy times seven.' Epictetus here suggests to the reason grounds for forgiveness of injuries which Jesus does not; but it is vain to say that Epictetus is on that account a better moralist than Jesus, if the warmth, the emotion, of Jesus's answer fires his hearer to the practice of forgiveness of injuries, while the thought in Epictetus's leaves him cold. So with Christian morality in general: its distinction is not that it propounds the maxim, 'Thou shalt love God and thy neighbour,' with more development, closer reasoning, truer sincerity, than other moral systems; it is that it propounds this maxim with an inspiration which wonderfully catches the hearer and makes him act upon it. It is because Mr Mill has attained to the perception of truths of this nature, that he is,—instead of being, like the school from which he proceeds, doomed to sterility,—a writer of distinguished mark and influence, a writer deserving all attention and respect; it is (I must be pardoned for saying) because he is not sufficiently leavened with them, that he falls just short of being a great writer.

That which gives to the moral writings of the Emperor Marcus Aurelius their peculiar character and charm, is their being suffused and softened by something of this very sentiment whence Christian morality draws its best power. Mr Long has recently published in a convenient form a translation of these writings, and has thus enabled English readers to judge Marcus Aurelius for themselves; he has rendered his countrymen a real service by so doing. Mr Long's reputation as a scholar is a sufficient

guarantee of the general fidelity and accuracy of his translation; on these matters, besides, I am hardly entitled to speak, and my praise is of no value. But that for which I and the rest of the unlearned may venture to praise Mr Long is this; that he treats Marcus Aurelius's writings, as he treats all the other remains of Greek and Roman antiquity which he touches, not as a dead and dry matter of learning, but as documents with a side of modern applicability and living interest, and valuable mainly so far as this side in them can be made clear; that as in his notes on Plutarch's Roman Lives he deals with the modern epoch of Cæsar and Cicero, not as food for schoolboys, but as food for men, and men engaged in the current of contemporary life and action, so in his remarks and essays on Marcus Aurelius he treats this truly modern striver and thinker not as a Classical Dictionary hero, but as a present source from which to draw 'example of life, and instruction of manners.' Why may not a son of Dr Arnold say, what might naturally here be said by any other critic, that in this lively and fruitful way of considering the men and affairs of ancient Greece and Rome, Mr Long resembles Dr Arnold?

One or two little complaints, however, I have against Mr Long, and I will get them off my mind at once. In the first place, why could he not have found gentler and juster terms to describe the translation of his predecessor, Jeremy Collier,—the redoubtable enemy of stage plays,—than these: 'a most coarse and vulgar copy of the original?' As a matter of taste, a translator should deal leniently with his predecessor; but putting that out of the question, Mr Long's language is a great deal too hard. Most English people who knew Marcus Aurelius before Mr Long appeared as his introducer, knew him through Jeremy Collier. And the acquaintance of a man like Marcus Aurelius is such an imperishable benefit, that one can never lose a peculiar sense of obligation towards the man who confers it. Apart from this claim upon one's tenderness, however, Jeremy Collier's version

deserves respect for its genuine spirit and vigour, the spirit and vigour of the age of Dryden. Jeremy Collier too, like Mr Long, regarded in Marcus Aurelius the living moralist, and not the dead classic; and his warmth of feeling gave to his style an impetuosity and rhythm which from Mr Long's style (I do not blame it on that account) are absent. Let us place the two side by side. The impressive opening of Marcus Aurelius's fifth book, Mr Long translates thus:—

'In the morning when thou risest unwillingly, let this thought be present: I am rising to the work of a human being. Why then am I dissatisfied if I am going to do the things for which I exist and for which I was brought into the world? Or have I been made for this, to lie in the bedclothes and keep myself warm?—But this is more pleasant.—Dost thou exist then to take any pleasure, and not at all for action or exertion?'

Jeremy Collier has:—

'When you find an unwillingness to rise early in the morning, make this short speech to yourself: "I am getting up now to do the business of a man; and am I out of humour for going about that which I was made for, and for the sake of which I was sent into the world? Was I then designed for nothing but to doze and batten beneath the counterpane? I thought action had been the end of your being."''

In another striking passage, again, Mr Long has:—

'No longer wonder at hazard; for neither wilt thou read thy own memoirs, nor the acts of the ancient Romans and Hellenes, and the selections from books which thou wast reserving for thy old age. Hasten then to the end which thou hast before thee, and, throwing away idle hopes, come to thine own aid, if thou carest at all for thyself, while it is in thy power.'

Here his despised predecessor has:—

'Don't go too far in your books and overgrasp yourself. Alas, you have no time left to peruse your

diary, to read over the Greek and Roman history: come, don't flatter and deceive yourself; look to the main chance, to the end and design of reading, and mind life more than notion: I say, if you have a kindness for your person, drive at the practice and help yourself, for that is in your own power.'

It seems to me that here for style and force Jeremy Collier can (to say the least) perfectly stand comparison with Mr Long. Jeremy Collier's real defect as a translator is not his coarseness and vulgarity, but his imperfect acquaintance with Greek; this is a serious defect, a fatal one; it rendered a translation like Mr Long's necessary. Jeremy Collier's work will now be forgotten, and Mr Long stands master of the field; but he may be content, at any rate, to leave his predecessor's grave unharmed, even if he will not throw upon it, in passing, a handful of kindly earth.

Another complaint I have against Mr Long is, that he is not quite idiomatic and simple enough. It is a little formal, at least, if not pedantic, to say *Ethic* and *Dialectic*, instead of *Ethics* and *Dialectics*, and to say 'Hellenes and Romans' instead of 'Greeks and Romans.' And why, too,—the name of Antoninus being preoccupied by Antoninus Pius,—will Mr Long call his author Marcus *Antoninus* instead of Marcus *Aurelius*? Small as these matters appear, they are important when one has to deal with the general public, and not with a small circle of scholars; and it is the general public that the translator of a short masterpiece on morals, such as is the book of Marcus Aurelius, should have in view; his aim should be to make Marcus Aurelius's work as popular as the *Imitation*, and Marcus Aurelius's name as familiar as Socrates's. In rendering or naming him, therefore, punctilious accuracy of phrase is not so much to be sought as accessibility and currency; everything which may best enable the Emperor and his precepts *volitare per ora virum*. It is essential to render him in language perfectly plain and unprofessional, and to call him by the name by which he is best and most

distinctly known. The translators of the Bible talk of *pence* and not *denarii*, and the admirers of Voltaire do not celebrate him under the name of Arouet.

But, after these trifling complaints are made, one must end, as one began, in unfeigned gratitude to Mr Long for his excellent and substantial reproduction in English of an invaluable work. In general the substantiality, soundness, and precision of Mr Long's rendering are (I cannot but think) as conspicuous as the living spirit with which he treats antiquity; and these qualities are particularly desirable in the translator of a work like that of Marcus Aurelius, of which the language is often corrupt, almost always hard and obscure. Any one who wants to appreciate Mr Long's merits as a translator may read, in the original and in Mr Long's translation, the seventh chapter of the tenth book; he will see how, through all the dubiousness and involved manner of the Greek, Mr Long has firmly seized upon the clear thought which is certainly at the bottom of that troubled wording, and, in distinctly rendering this thought, has at the same time thrown round its expression a characteristic shade of painfulness and difficulty which just suits it. And Marcus Aurelius's book is one which, when it is rendered as accurately as Mr Long renders it, even those who know Greek tolerably well may choose to read rather in the translation than in the original. For not only are the contents here incomparably more valuable than the external form, but this form, the Greek of a Roman, is not exactly one of those styles which have a physiognomy, which are an essential part of their author, which stamp an indelible impression of him on the reader's mind. An old Lyons commentator finds, indeed, in Marcus Aurelius's Greek, something characteristic, something specially firm and imperial; but I think an ordinary mortal will hardly find this: he will find crabbed Greek, without any great charm of distinct physiognomy. The Greek of Thucydides and Plato has this charm, and he who reads them in a translation, however accurate, loses



it, and loses much in losing it; but the Greek of Marcus Aurelius, like the Greek of the New Testament, and even more than the Greek of the New Testament, is wanting in it. If one could be assured that the English Testament were made perfectly accurate, one might be almost content never to open a Greek Testament again; and, Mr Long's version of Marcus Aurelius being what it is, an Englishman who reads to live, and does not live to read, may henceforth let the Greek original repose upon its shelf.

The man whose thoughts Mr Long has thus faithfully reproduced, is perhaps the most beautiful figure in history. He is one of those consoling and hope-inspiring marks, which stand for ever to remind our weak and easily discouraged race how high human goodness and perseverance have once been carried, and may be carried again. The interest of mankind is peculiarly attracted by examples of signal goodness in high places; for that testimony to the worth of goodness is the most striking which is borne by those to whom all the means of pleasure and self-indulgence lay open, by those who had at their command the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them. Marcus Aurelius was the ruler of the grandest of empires; and he was one of the best of men. Besides him, history presents one or two sovereigns eminent for their goodness, such as Saint Louis or Alfred. But Marcus Aurelius has, for us moderns, this great superiority in interest over Saint Louis or Alfred, that he lived and acted in a state of society modern by its essential characteristics, in an epoch akin to our own, in a brilliant centre of civilisation. Trajan talks of 'our enlightened age' just as glibly as the *Times* talks of it. Marcus Aurelius thus becomes for us a man like ourselves, a man in all things tempted as we are. Saint Louis inhabits an atmosphere of mediæval Catholicism, which the man of the nineteenth century may admire, indeed, may even passionately wish to inhabit, but which, strive as he will, he cannot really inhabit. Alfred belongs to a state of society (I say it

with all deference to the *Saturday Review* critic who keeps such jealous watch over the honour of our Saxon ancestors) half barbarous. Neither Alfred nor Saint Louis can be morally and intellectually as near to us as Marcus Aurelius.

The record of the outward life of this admirable man has in it little of striking incident. He was born at Rome on the 26th of April, in the year 121 of the Christian era. He was nephew and son-in-law to his predecessor on the throne, Antoninus Pius. When Antoninus died, he was forty years old, but from the time of his earliest manhood he had assisted in administering public affairs. Then, after his uncle's death in 161, for nineteen years he reigned as emperor. The barbarians were pressing on the Roman frontier, and a great part of Marcus Aurelius's nineteen years of reign was passed in campaigning. His absences from Rome were numerous and long. We hear of him in Asia Minor, Syria, Egypt, Greece; but, above all, in the countries on the Danube, where the war with the barbarians was going on,—in Austria, Moravia, Hungary. In these countries much of his *Journal* seems to have been written; parts of it are dated from them; and there, a few weeks before his fifty-ninth birthday, he fell sick and died<sup>1</sup>. The record of him on which his fame chiefly rests is the record of his inward life,—his *Journal*, or *Commentaries*, or *Meditations*, or *Thoughts*, for by all these names has the work been called. Perhaps the most interesting of the records of his outward life is that which the first book of this work supplies, where he gives an account of his education, recites the names of those to whom he is indebted for it, and enumerates his obligations to each of them. It is a refreshing and consoling picture, a priceless treasure for those, who, sick of the 'wild and dreamlike trade of blood and guile,' which seems to be nearly the whole that history has to offer to our view, seek eagerly for that

<sup>1</sup> He died on the 17th of March, A.D. 180.

substratum of right thinking and well-doing which in all ages must surely have somewhere existed, for without it the continued life of humanity would have been impossible. 'From my mother I learnt piety and beneficence, and abstinence not only from evil deeds but even from evil thoughts; and further, simplicity in my way of living, far removed from the habits of the rich.' Let us remember that, the next time we are reading the sixth satire of Juvenal. 'From my tutor I learnt' (hear it, ye tutors of princes!) 'endurance of labour, and to want little, and to work with my own hands, and not to meddle with other people's affairs, and not to be ready to listen to slander.' The vices and foibles of the Greek sophist or rhetorician—the *Græculus esuriens*—are in everybody's mind; but he who reads Marcus Aurelius's account of his Greek teachers and masters, will understand how it is that, in spite of the vices and foibles of individual *Græculi*, the education of the human race owes to Greece a debt which can never be overrated. The vague and colourless praise of history leaves on the mind hardly any impression of Antoninus Pius: it is only from the private memoranda of his nephew that we learn what a disciplined, hard-working, gentle, wise, virtuous man he was; a man who, perhaps, interests mankind less than his immortal nephew only because he has left in writing no record of his inner life,—*caret quia vate sacro*. Of the outward life and circumstances of Marcus Aurelius, beyond these notices which he has himself supplied, there are few of much interest and importance. There is the fine anecdote of his speech when he heard of the assassination of the revolted Avidius Cassius, against whom he was marching; *he was sorry, he said, to be deprived of the pleasure of pardoning him*. And there are one or two more anecdotes of him which show the same spirit. But the great record for the outward life of a man who has left such a record of his lofty inward aspirations as that which Marcus Aurelius has left, is the clear consenting voice of all his contemporaries,—high and

low, friend and enemy, pagan and Christian,—in praise of his sincerity, justice, and goodness. The world's charity does not err on the side of excess, and here was a man occupying the most conspicuous station in the world, and professing the highest possible standard of conduct;—yet the world was obliged to declare that he walked worthily of his profession. Long after his death, his bust was to be seen in the houses of private men through the wide Roman empire; it may be the vulgar part of human nature which busies itself with the semblance and doings of living sovereigns, it is its nobler part which busies itself with those of the dead; these busts of Marcus Aurelius, in the homes of Gaul, Britain, and Italy, bore witness, not to the inmates' frivolous curiosity about princes and palaces, but to their reverential memory of the passage of a great man upon the earth.

Two things, however, before one turns from the outward to the inward life of Marcus Aurelius, force themselves upon one's notice, and demand a word of comment; he persecuted the Christians, and he had for his son the vicious and brutal Commodus. The persecution at Lyons, in which Attalus and Pothinus suffered, the persecution at Smyrna, in which Polycarp suffered, took place in his reign. Of his humanity, of his tolerance, of his horror of cruelty and violence, of his wish to refrain from severe measures against the Christians, of his anxiety to temper the severity of these measures when they appeared to him indispensable, there is no doubt: but, on the one hand, it is certain that the letter, attributed to him, directing that no Christian should be punished for being a Christian, is spurious; it is almost certain that his alleged answer to the authorities of Lyons, in which he directs that Christians persisting in their profession shall be dealt with according to the law, is genuine. Mr Long seems inclined to try and throw doubt over the persecution at Lyons, by pointing out that the letter of the Lyons Christians relating it, alleges it to have been attended by miraculous and incredible incidents. 'A man,' he

says, 'can only act consistently by accepting all this letter or rejecting it all, and we cannot blame him for either.' But it is contrary to all experience to say that because a fact is related with incorrect additions, and embellishments, therefore it probably never happened at all; or that it is not, in general, easy for an impartial mind to distinguish between the fact and the embellishments. I cannot doubt that the Lyons persecution took place, and that the punishment of Christians for being Christians was sanctioned by Marcus Aurelius. But then I must add that nine modern readers out of ten, when they read this, will, I believe, have a perfectly false notion of what the moral action of Marcus Aurelius, in sanctioning that punishment, really was. They imagine Trajan, or Antoninus Pius, or Marcus Aurelius, fresh from the perusal of the Gospel, fully aware of the spirit and holiness of the Christian saints ordering their extermination because he loved darkness rather than light. Far from this, the Christianity which these emperors aimed at repressing was, in their conception of it, something philosophically contemptible, politically subversive, and morally abominable. As men, they sincerely regarded it much as well-conditioned people, with us, regard Mormonism; as rulers, they regarded it much as Liberal statesmen, with us, regard the Jesuits. A kind of Mormonism, constituted as a vast secret society, with obscure aims of political and social subversion, was what Antoninus Pius and Marcus Aurelius believed themselves to be repressing when they punished Christians. The early Christian apologists again and again declare to us under what odious imputations the Christians lay, how general was the belief that these imputations were well-grounded, how sincere was the horror which the belief inspired. The multitude, convinced that the Christians were atheists who ate human flesh and thought incest no crime, displayed against them a fury so passionate as to embarrass and alarm their rulers. The severe expressions of Tacitus, *exitiabilis superstitio—odio humani generis convicti*, show how deeply the

prejudices of the multitude imbued the educated class also. One asks oneself with astonishment how a doctrine so benign as that of Christ can have incurred misrepresentation so monstrous. The inner and moving cause of the misrepresentation lay, no doubt, in this,—that Christianity was a new spirit in the Roman world, destined to act in that world as its dissolvent; and it was inevitable that Christianity in the Roman world, like democracy in the modern world, like every new spirit with a similar mission assigned to it, should at its first appearance occasion an instinctive shrinking and repugnance in the world which it was to dissolve. The outer and palpable causes of the misrepresentation were, for the Roman public at large, the confounding of the Christians with the Jews, that isolated, fierce, and stubborn race, whose stubbornness, fierceness, and isolation, real as they were, the fancy of a civilised Roman yet further exaggerated; the atmosphere of mystery and novelty which surrounded the Christian rites; the very simplicity of Christian theism: for the Roman statesman, the character of secret assemblages which the meetings of the Christian community wore, under a State-system as jealous of unauthorised associations as the Code Napoleon.

A Roman of Marcus Aurelius's time and position could not well see the Christians except through the mist of these prejudices. Seen through such a mist, the Christians appeared with a thousand faults not their own; but it has not been sufficiently remarked that faults, really their own, many of them assuredly appeared with besides, faults especially likely to strike such an observer as Marcus Aurelius, and to confirm him in the prejudices of his race, station, and rearing. We look back upon Christianity after it has proved what a future it bore within it, and for us the sole representatives of its early struggles are the pure and devoted spirits through whom it proved this; Marcus Aurelius saw it with its future yet unshown, and with the tares among its professed progeny not less conspicuous than the wheat. Who can doubt that among

the professing Christians of the second century, as among the professing Christians of the nineteenth, there was plenty of folly, plenty of rabid nonsense, plenty of gross fanaticism? who will even venture to affirm that, separated in great measure from the intellect and civilisation of the world for one or two centuries, Christianity, wonderful as have been its fruits, had the development perfectly worthy of its inestimable germ? Who will venture to affirm that, by the alliance of Christianity with the virtue and intelligence of men like the Antonines,—of the best product of Greek and Roman civilisation, while Greek and Roman civilisation had yet life and power,—Christianity and the world, as well as the Antonines themselves, would not have been gainers? That alliance was not to be. The Antonines lived and died with an utter misconception of Christianity; Christianity grew up in the Catacombs, not on the Palatine. Marcus Aurelius incurs no moral reproach by having authorised the punishment of the Christians; he does not thereby become in the least what we mean by a *persecutor*. One may concede that it was impossible for him to see Christianity as it really was;—as impossible as for even the moderate and sensible Fleury to see the Antonines as they really were;—one may concede that the point of view from which Christianity appeared something anti-civil and anti-social, which the State had the faculty to judge and the duty to suppress, was inevitably his. Still, however, it remains true that this sage, who made perfection his aim, and reason his law, did Christianity an immense injustice, and rested in an idea of State-attributes which was illusive. And this is, in truth, characteristic of Marcus Aurelius, that he is blameless, yet, in a certain sense, unfortunate; in his character, beautiful as it is, there is something melancholy, circumscribed, and ineffectual.

For of his having such a son as Commodus, too, one must say that he is not to be blamed on that account, but that he is unfortunate. Disposition and

temperament are inexplicable things; there are natures on which the best education and example are thrown away; excellent fathers may have, without any fault of theirs, incurably vicious sons. It is to be remembered also, that Commodus was left, at the perilous age of nineteen, master of the world; while his father, at that age, was but beginning a twenty years' apprenticeship to wisdom, labour, and self-command, under the sheltering teachership of his uncle Antoninus. Commodus was a prince apt to be led by favourites; and if the story is true which says that he left, all through his reign, the Christians untroubled, and ascribes this lenity to the influence of his mistress Marcia, it shows that he could be led to good as well as to evil; for such a nature to be left at a critical age with absolute power, and wholly without good counsel and direction, was the more fatal. Still one cannot help wishing that the example of Marcus Aurelius could have availed more with his own only son; one cannot but think that with such virtue as his there should go, too, the ardour which removes mountains, and that the ardour which removes mountains might have even won Commodus; the word *ineffectual* again rises to one's mind; Marcus Aurelius saved his own soul by his righteousness, and he could do no more. Happy they who can do this! but still happier, who can do more!

Yet, when one passes from his outward to his inward life, when one turns over the pages of his *Meditations*,—entries jotted down from day to day, amid the business of the city or the fatigues of the camp, for his own guidance and support, meant for no eye but his own, without the slightest attempt at style, with no care, even, for correct writing, not to be surpassed for naturalness and sincerity;—all disposition to carp and cavil dies away, and one is overpowered by the charm of a character of such purity, delicacy, and virtue. He fails neither in small things nor in great; he keeps watch over himself both that the great springs of action may be right in him, and that the



minute details of action may be right also. How admirable in a hard-tasked ruler, and a ruler, too, with a passion for thinking and reading, is such a memorandum as the following:—

‘Not frequently nor without necessity to say to any one, or to write in a letter, that I have no leisure; nor continually to excuse the neglect of duties required by our relation to those with whom we live, by alleging urgent occupation.’

And, when that ruler is a Roman emperor, what an ‘idea’ is this to be written down and meditated by him:—

‘The idea of a polity in which there is the same law for all, a polity administered with regard to equal rights and equal freedom of speech, and the idea of a kingly government which respects most of all the freedom of the governed.’

And, for all men who ‘drive at practice,’ what practical rules may not one accumulate out of these *Meditations*:—

‘The greatest part of what we say or do being unnecessary, if a man takes this away, he will have more leisure and less uneasiness. Accordingly, on every occasion, a man should ask himself: “Is this one of the unnecessary things?” Now a man should take away not only unnecessary acts, but also unnecessary thoughts, for thus superfluous acts will not follow after.’

And again:—

‘We ought to check in the series of our thoughts everything that is without a purpose and useless, but most of all the over-curious feeling and the malignant; and a man should use himself to think of those things only about which if one should suddenly ask, “What hast thou now in thy thoughts?” with perfect openness thou mightest immediately answer, “This or That”; so that from thy words it should be plain that everything in thee is simple and benevolent, and such as befits a social animal, and one that cares not for thoughts about sensual enjoyments, or any rivalry

or envy and suspicion, or anything else for which thou wouldst blush if thou shouldst say thou hadst it in thy mind.'

So, with a stringent practicalness worthy of Franklin, he discourses on his favourite text, *Let nothing be done without a purpose*. But it is when he enters the region where Franklin cannot follow him, when he utters his thoughts on the ground-motives of human action, that he is most interesting; that he becomes the unique, the incomparable Marcus Aurelius. Christianity uses language very liable to be misunderstood when it seems to tell men to do good, not, certainly, from the vulgar motives of worldly interest, or vanity, or love of human praise, but 'that their Father which seeth in secret may reward them openly.' The motives of reward and punishment have come, from the misconception of language of this kind, to be strangely overpressed by many Christian moralists, to the deterioration and disfigurement of Christianity. Marcus Aurelius says, truly and nobly:—

'One man, when he has done a service to another, is ready to set it down to his account as a favour conferred. Another is not ready to do this, but still in his own mind he thinks of the man as his debtor, and he knows what he has done. A third in a manner does not even know what he has done, *but he is like a vine which has produced grapes, and seeks for nothing more after it has once produced its proper fruit*. As a horse when he has run, a dog when he has caught the game, a bee when it has made its honey, so a man when he has done a good act, does not call out for others to come and see, but he goes on to another act, as a vine goes on to produce again the grapes in season. Must a man, then, be one of these, who in a manner acts thus without observing it? Yes.'

And again:—

'What more dost thou want when thou hast done a man a service? Art thou not content that thou hast done something conformable to thy nature, and dost thou seek to be paid for it, *just as if the eye*

*demanded a recompense for seeing, or the feet for walking?'*

Christianity, in order to match morality of this strain, has to correct its apparent offers of external reward, and to say: *The kingdom of God is within you.*

I have said that it is by its accent of emotion that the morality of Marcus Aurelius acquires a special character, and reminds one of Christian morality. The sentences of Seneca are stimulating to the intellect; the sentences of Epictetus are fortifying to the character; the sentences of Marcus Aurelius find their way to the soul. I have said that religious emotion has the power to *light up* morality: the emotion of Marcus Aurelius does not quite light up his morality, but it suffuses it; it has not power to melt the clouds of effort and austerity quite away, but it shines through them and glorifies them; it is a spirit, not so much of gladness and elation, as of gentleness and sweetness; a delicate and tender sentiment, which is less than joy and more than resignation. He says that in his youth he learned from Maximus, one of his teachers, '*cheerfulness in all circumstances as well as in illness; and a just admixture in the moral character of sweetness and dignity*': and it is this very admixture of sweetness with his dignity which makes him so beautiful a moralist. It enables him to carry even into his observation of nature, a delicate penetration, a sympathetic tenderness, worthy of Wordsworth; the spirit of such a remark as the following seems to me to have no parallel in the whole range of Greek and Roman literature:—

'Figs, when they are quite ripe, gape open; and in the ripe olives the very circumstance of their being near to rottenness adds a peculiar beauty to the fruit. And the ears of corn bending down, and the lion's eyebrows, and the foam which flows from the mouth of wild boars, and many other things,—though they are far from being beautiful, in a certain sense,—still, because they come in the course of nature, have a

beauty in them, and they please the mind; so that if a man should have a feeling and a deeper insight with respect to the things which are produced in the universe, there is hardly anything which comes in the course of nature which will not seem to him to be in a manner disposed so as to give pleasure.'

But it is when his strain passes to directly moral subjects that his delicacy and sweetness lend to it the greatest charm. Let those who can feel the beauty of spiritual refinement read this, the reflection of an emperor who prized mental superiority highly:—

'Thou sayest, "Men cannot admire the sharpness of thy wits." Be it so; but there are many other things of which thou canst not say, "I am not formed for them by nature." Show those qualities, then, which are altogether in thy power,—sincerity, gravity, endurance of labour, aversion to pleasure, contentment with thy portion and with few things, benevolence, frankness, no love of superfluity, freedom from trifling, magnanimity. Dost thou not see how many qualities thou art at once able to exhibit, as to which there is no excuse of natural incapacity and unfitness, and yet thou still remainest voluntarily below the mark? Or art thou compelled, through being defectively furnished by nature, to murmur, and to be mean, and to flatter, and to find fault with thy poor body, and to try to please men, and to make great display, and to be so restless in thy mind? No, indeed; but thou mightest have been delivered from these things long ago. Only, if in truth thou canst be charged with being rather slow and dull of comprehension, thou must exert thyself about this also, not neglecting nor yet taking pleasure in thy dulness.'

The same sweetness enables him to fix his mind, when he sees the isolation and moral death caused by sin, not on the cheerless thought of the misery of this condition, but on the inspiring thought that man is blest with the power to escape from it:—

'Suppose that thou hast detached thyself from the natural unity,—for thou wast made by nature a part,

but now thou hast cut thyself off,—yet here is this beautiful provision, that it is in thy power again to unite thyself. God has allowed this to no other part,—after it has been separated and cut asunder, to come together again. But consider the goodness with which he has privileged man; for he has put it in his power, when he has been separated, to return and to be united and to resume his place.'

It enables him to control even the passion for retreat and solitude, so strong in a soul like his, to which the world could offer no abiding city:—

'Men seek retreat for themselves, houses in the country, seashores, and mountains; and thou, too, art wont to desire such things very much. But this is altogether a mark of the most common sort of men, for it is in thy power whenever thou shalt choose to retire into thyself. For nowhere either with more quiet or more freedom from trouble does a man retire than into his own soul, particularly when he has within him such thoughts that by looking into them he is immediately in perfect tranquillity. Constantly, then, give to thyself this retreat, and renew thyself; and let thy principles be brief and fundamental, which, as soon as thou shalt recur to them, will be sufficient to cleanse the soul completely, and to send thee back free from all discontent with the things to which thou returnest.'

Against this feeling of discontent and weariness, so natural to the great for whom there seems nothing left to desire or to strive after, but so enfeebling to them, so deteriorating, Marcus Aurelius never ceased to struggle. With resolute thankfulness he kept in remembrance the blessings of his lot; the true blessings of it, not the false:—

'I have to thank Heaven that I was subjected to a ruler and a father (Antoninus Pius) who was able to take away all pride from me, and to bring me to the knowledge that it is possible for a man to live in a palace without either guards, or embroidered dresses, or any show of this kind; but that it is in such a man's power to bring himself very near to the

fashion of a private person, without being for this reason either meaner in thought or more remiss in action with respect to the things which must be done for public interest...I have to be thankful that my children have not been stupid nor deformed in body; that I did not make more proficiency in rhetoric, poetry, and the other studies, by which I should perhaps have been completely engrossed, if I had seen that I was making great progress in them;...that I knew Apollonius, Rusticus, Maximus;...that I received clear and frequent impressions about living according to nature, and what kind of a life that is, so that, so far as depended on Heaven, and its gifts, help, and inspiration, nothing hindered me from forthwith living according to nature, though I still fall short of it through my own fault, and through not observing the admonitions of Heaven, and, I may almost say, its direct instructions; that my body has held out so long in such a kind of life as mine; that though it was my mother's lot to die young, she spent the last years of her life with me; that whenever I wished to help any man in his need, I was never told that I had not the means of doing it; that, when I had an inclination to philosophy, I did not fall into the hands of a sophist.'

And, as he dwelt with gratitude on these helps and blessings vouchsafed to him, his mind (so, at least, it seems to me) would sometimes revert with awe to the perils and temptations of the lonely height where he stood, to the lives of Tiberius, Caligula, Nero, Domitian, in their hideous blackness and ruin; and then he wrote down for himself such a warning entry as this, significant and terrible in its abruptness:—

'A black character, a womanish character, a stubborn character, bestial, childish, animal, stupid, counterfeit, scurrilous, fraudulent, tyrannical!'

Or this:—

'About what am I now employing my soul? On every occasion I must ask myself this question, and enquire, What have I now in this part of me which they call the ruling principle, and whose soul have

I now?—that of a child, or of a young man, or of a weak woman, or of a tyrant, or of one of the lower animals in the service of man, or of a wild beast?’

The character he wished to attain he knew well, and beautifully he has marked it, and marked, too, his sense of shortcoming:—

‘When thou hast assumed these names,—good, modest, true, rational, equal-minded, magnanimous,—take care that thou dost not change these names; and, if thou shouldst lose them, quickly return to them. If thou maintainest thyself in possession of these names without desiring that others should call thee by them, thou wilt be another being, and wilt enter on another life. For to continue to be such as thou hast hitherto been, and to be torn in pieces and defiled in such a life, is the character of a very stupid man, and one overfond of his life, and like those half-devoured fighters with wild beasts, who though covered with wounds and gore still entreat to be kept to the following day, though they will be exposed in the same state to the same claws and bites. Therefore fix thyself in the possession of these few names: and if thou art able to abide in them, abide as if thou wast removed to the Happy Islands.’

For all his sweetness and serenity, however, man’s point of life ‘between two infinities’ (of that expression Marcus Aurelius is the real owner) was to him anything but a Happy Island, and the performances on it he saw through no veils of illusion. Nothing is in general more gloomy and monotonous than declamations on the hollowness and transitoriness of human life and grandeur: but here, too, the great charm of Marcus Aurelius, his emotion, comes in to relieve the monotony and to break through the gloom; and even on this eternally used topic he is imaginative, fresh, and striking:—

‘Consider, for example, the times of Vespasian. Thou wilt see all these things, people marrying, bringing up children, sick, dying, warring, feasting, trafficking, cultivating the ground, flattering, obstinately arrogant, suspecting, plotting, wishing for

somebody to die, grumbling about the present, loving, heaping up treasure, desiring to be consuls or kings. Well then that life of these people no longer exists at all. Again, go to the times of Trajan. All is again the same. Their life too is gone. But chiefly thou shouldst think of those whom thou hast thyself known distracting themselves about idle things, neglecting to do what was in accordance with their proper constitution, and to hold firmly to this and to be content with it.'

Again:—

'The things which are much valued in life are empty, and rotten, and trifling; and people are like little dogs, biting one another, and little children quarrelling, crying, and then straightway laughing. But fidelity, and modesty, and justice, and truth are fled

"Up to Olympus from the wide-spread earth."

What then is there which still detains thee here?'

And once more:—

'Look down from above on the countless herds of men, and their countless solemnities, and the infinitely varied voyagings in storms and calms, and the differences among those who are born, who live together, and die. And consider too the life lived by others in olden time, and the life now lived among barbarous nations, and how many know not even thy name, and how many will soon forget it, and how they who perhaps now are praising thee will very soon blame thee, and that neither a posthumous name is of any value, nor reputation, nor anything else.'

He recognised, indeed, that (to use his own words) 'the prime principle in man's constitution is the social'; and he laboured sincerely to make not only his acts towards his fellow-men, but his thoughts also, suitable to this conviction:—

'When thou wishest to delight thyself, think of the virtues of those who live with thee; for instance, the activity of one, and the modesty of another, and



the liberality of a third, and some other good quality of a fourth.'

Still, it is hard for a pure and thoughtful man to live in a state of rapture at the spectacle afforded to him by his fellow-creatures; above all it is hard, when such a man is placed as Marcus Aurelius was placed, and has had the meanness and perversity of his fellow-creatures thrust, in no common measure, upon his notice,—has had, time after time, to experience how 'within ten days thou wilt seem a god to those to whom thou art now a beast and an ape.' His true strain of thought as to his relations with his fellow-men is rather the following. He has been enumerating the higher consolations which may support a man at the approach of death, and he goes on:—

'But if thou requirest also a vulgar kind of comfort which shall reach thy heart, thou wilt be made best reconciled to death by observing the objects from which thou art going to be removed, and the morals of those with whom thy soul will no longer be mingled. For it is no way right to be offended with men, but it is thy duty to care for them and to bear with them gently; and yet to remember that thy departure will not be from men who have the same principles as thyself. For this is the only thing, if there be any, which could draw us the contrary way and attach us to life, to be permitted to live with those who have the same principles as ourselves. But now thou seest how great is the distress caused by the difference of those who live together, so that thou mayest say: "Come quick, O death, lest perchance I too should forget myself."'

*O faithless and perverse generation! how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you?* Sometimes this strain rises even to passion:—

'Short is the little which remains to thee of life. Live as on a mountain. Let men see, let them know, a real man, who lives as he was meant to live. If they cannot endure him, let them kill him. For that is better than to live as men do.'

It is remarkable how little of a merely local and temporary character, how little of those *scoriæ* which a reader has to clear away before he gets to the precious ore, how little that even admits of doubt or question, the morality of Marcus Aurelius exhibits<sup>1</sup>. In general, the action he prescribes is action which

<sup>1</sup> Perhaps there is one exception. He is fond of urging as a motive for man's cheerful acquiescence in whatever befalls him, that 'whatever happens to every man *is for the interest of the universal*'; that the whole contains nothing *which is not for its advantage*; that everything which happens to a man is to be accepted, 'even if it seems disagreeable, *because it leads to the health of the universe.*' And the whole course of the universe, he adds, has a providential reference to man's welfare: '*all other things have been made for the sake of rational beings.*' Religion has in all ages freely used this language, and it is not religion which will object to Marcus Aurelius's use of it; but science can hardly accept as severely accurate this employment of the terms *interest* and *advantage*; even to a sound nature and a clear reason the proposition that things happen 'for the interest of the universal,' as men conceive of interest, may seem to have no meaning at all, and the proposition that 'all things have been made for the sake of rational beings' may seem to be false. Yet even to this language, not irresistibly cogent when it is thus absolutely used, Marcus Aurelius gives a turn which makes it true and useful, when he says: 'The ruling part of man can make a material for itself out of that which opposes it, as fire lays hold of what falls into it, and rises higher by means of this very material';—when he says: 'What else are all things except exercises for the reason? Persevere then until thou shalt have made all things thine own, as the stomach which is strengthened makes all things its own, as the blazing fire makes flame and brightness out of everything that is thrown into it';—when he says: 'Thou wilt not cease to be miserable till thy mind is in such a condition, that, what luxury is to those who enjoy pleasure, such shall be to thee, in every matter which presents itself, the doing of the things which are conformable to man's constitution; for a man ought to consider as an enjoyment everything which it is in his power to do according to his own nature,—and it is in his power everywhere.' In this sense it is, indeed, most true that 'all things have been made for the sake of rational beings'; that 'all things work together for good.'

every sound nature must recognise as right, and the motives he assigns are motives which every clear reason must recognise as valid. And so he remains the especial friend and comforter of scrupulous and difficult, yet pure-hearted and upward-striving souls, in those ages most especially that walk by sight, not by faith, but yet have no open vision; he cannot give such souls, perhaps, all they yearn for, but he gives them much; and what he gives them, they can receive.

Yet no, it is not for what he thus gives them that such souls love him most! it is rather because of the emotion which gives to his voice so touching an accent, it is because he too yearns as they do for something unattained by him. What an affinity for Christianity had this persecutor of the Christians! The effusion of Christianity, its relieving tears, its happy self-sacrifice, were the very element, one feels, for which his soul longed; they were near him, they brushed him, he touched them, he passed them by. One feels, too, that the Marcus Aurelius one knows must still have remained, even had they presented themselves to him, in a great measure himself; he would have been no Justin;—but how would they have affected him? in what measure would it have changed him? Granted that he might have found, like the *Alogi* of modern times, in the most beautiful of the Gospels, the Gospel which has leavened Christendom most powerfully, the Gospel of St John, too much Greek metaphysics, too much *gnosis*; granted that this Gospel might have looked too like what he knew already to be a total surprise to him: what, then, would he have said to the Sermon on the Mount, to the twenty-sixth chapter of St Matthew? What would have become of his notions of the *exitiabilis superstitio*, of the ‘obstinacy of the Christians’? Vain question! yet the greatest charm of Marcus Aurelius is that he makes us ask it. We see him wise, just, self-governed, tender, thankful, blameless; yet, with all this, agitated, stretching out his arms for something beyond,—*tendentemque manus ripe ulterioris amore*.

## ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

### *A PENNY PLAIN AND TWOPENCE COLOURED*

1884

These words will be familiar to all students of Skelt's Juvenile Drama. That national monument, after having changed its name to Park's, to Webb's, to Redington's, and last of all to Pollock's, has now become, for the most part, a memory. Some of its pillars, like Stonehenge, are still afoot, the rest clean vanished. It may be the Museum numbers a full set; and Mr Ionides perhaps, or else her gracious Majesty, may boast their great collections; but to the plain private person they are become, like Raphaels, unattainable. I have at different times, possessed *Aladdin*, *The Red Rover*, *The Blind Boy*, *The Old Oak Chest*, *The Wood Dæmon*, *Jack Sheppard*, *The Miller and his Men*, *Der Freischiütz*, *The Smuggler*, *The Forest of Bondy*, *Robin Hood*, *The Water-man*, *Richard I*, *My Poll and my Partner Joe*, *The Inchncape Bell* (imperfect), and *Three-Fingered Jack*, *The Terror of Jamaica*; and I have assisted others in the illumination of *The Maid of the Inn* and *The Battle of Waterloo*. In this roll-call of stirring names you read the evidences of a happy childhood; and though not half of them are still to be procured of any living stationer, in the mind of their once happy owner all survive, kaleidoscopes of changing pictures, echoes of the past.

There stands, I fancy, to this day (but now how fallen!) a certain stationer's shop at a corner of the wide thoroughfare that joins the city of my childhood with the sea. When, upon any Saturday, we made a party to behold the ships, we passed that corner; and since in those days I loved a ship as a man loves Burgundy or daybreak, this of itself had been enough to hallow it. But there was more than that. In the Leith Walk window, all the year round, there stood displayed a theatre in working order, with a 'forest set,' a 'combat,' and a few 'robbers carousing' in the slides; and below and about, dearer tenfold to me! the plays themselves, those budgets of romance, lay tumbled one upon another. Long and often have I lingered there with empty pockets. One figure, we shall say, was visible in the first plate of characters, bearded, pistol in hand, or drawing to his ear the clothyard arrow; I would spell the name: was it Macaire, or Long Tom Coffin, or Grindoff, 2d dress? O, how I would long to see the rest! how—if the name by chance were hidden—I would wonder in what play he figured, and what immortal legend justified his attitude and strange apparel! And then to go within, to announce yourself as an intending purchaser, and, closely watched, be suffered to undo those bundles and breathlessly devour those pages of gesticulating villains, epileptic combats, bosky forests, palaces and war-ships, frowning fortresses and prison vaults—it was a giddy joy. That shop, which was dark and smelt of Bibles, was a lodestone rock for all that bore the name of boy. They could not pass it by, nor, having entered, leave it. It was a place besieged; the shopmen, like the Jews rebuilding Salem, had a double task. They kept us at the stick's end, frowned us down, snatched each play out of our hand ere we were trusted with another; and, incredible as it may sound, used to demand of us upon our entrance, like banditti, if we came with money or with empty hand. Old Mr Smith himself, worn out with my eternal vacillation, once swept the

treasures from before me, with the cry: 'I do not believe, child, that you are an intending purchaser at all!' These were the dragons of the garden; but for such joys of paradise we could have faced the Terror of Jamaica himself. Every sheet we fingered was another lightning glance into obscure, delicious story; it was like wallowing in the raw stuff of story-books. I know nothing to compare with it save now and then in dreams, when I am privileged to read in certain unwrit stories of adventure, from which I awake to find the world all vanity. The *crux* of Buridan's donkey was as nothing to the uncertainty of the boy as he handled and lingered and doated on these bundles of delight; there was a physical pleasure in the sight and touch of them which he would jealously prolong; and when at length the deed was done, the play selected, and the impatient shopman had brushed the rest into the gray portfolio, and the boy was forth again, a little late for dinner, the lamps springing into light in the blue winter's even, and *The Miller*, or *The Rover*, or some kindred drama clutched against his side—on what gay feet he ran, and how he laughed aloud in exultation! I can hear that laughter still. Out of all the years of my life, I can recall but one home-coming to compare with these, and that was on the night when I brought back with me the *Arabian Entertainments* in the fat, old, double-columned volume with the prints. I was just well into the story of the Hunchback, I remember, when my clergyman-grandfather (a man we counted pretty stiff) came in behind me. I grew blind with terror. But instead of ordering the book away, he said he envied me. Ah, well he might!

The purchase and the first half-hour at home, that was the summit. Thenceforth the interest declined by little and little. The fable, as set forth in the play-book, proved to be not worthy of the scenes and characters: what fable would not? Such passages as: 'Scene 6. The Hermitage. Night set scene. Place back of scene 1, No. 2, at back of stage and

hermitage, Fig. 2, out of set piece, R. H. in a slanting direction'—such passages, I say, though very practical, are hardly to be called good reading. Indeed, as literature, these dramas did not much appeal to me. I forget the very outline of the plots. Of *The Blind Boy*, beyond the fact that he was a most injured prince and once, I think, abducted, I know nothing. And *The Old Oak Chest*, what was it all about? that proscrip (1st dress), that prodigious number of banditti, that old woman with the broom, and the magnificent kitchen in the third act (was it in the third?)—they are all fallen in a deliquium, swim faintly in my brain, and mix and vanish.

I cannot deny that joy attended the illumination; nor can I quite forgive that child who, wilfully foregoing pleasure, stoops to 'twopence coloured.' With crimson lake (hark to the sound of it—crimson lake!—the horns of elf-land are not richer on the ear)—with crimson lake and Prussian blue a certain purple is to be compounded which, for cloaks especially, Titian could not equal. The latter colour with gamboge, a hated name although an exquisite pigment, supplied a green of such a savoury greenness that to-day my heart regrets it. Nor can I recall without a tender weakness the very aspect of the water where I dipped my brush. Yes, there was pleasure in the painting. But when all was painted, it is needless to deny it, all was spoiled. You might, indeed, set up a scene or two to look at; but to cut the figures out was simply sacrilege; nor could any child twice court the tedium, the worry, and the long-drawn disenchantment of an actual performance. Two days after the purchase the honey had been sucked. Parents used to complain; they thought I wearied of my play. It was not so: no more than a person can be said to have wearied of his dinner when he leaves the bones and dishes; I had got the marrow of it and said grace.

Then was the time to turn to the back of the play-book and to study that enticing double file of names, where poetry, for the true child of Skelt,

reigned happy and glorious like her Majesty the Queen. Much as I have travelled in these realms of gold, I have yet seen, upon that map or abstract, names of El Dorados that still haunt the ear of memory, and are still but names. *The Floating Beacon*—why was that denied me? or *The Wreck Ashore*? *Sixteen-String Jack* whom I did not even guess to be a highwayman, troubled me awake and haunted my slumbers; and there is one sequence of three from that enchanted calender that I still at times recall, like a loved verse of poetry: *Lodoiska*, *Silver Palace*, *Echo of Westminster Bridge*. Names, bare names, are surely more to children than we poor, grown-up, obliterated fools remember.

The name of Skelt itself has always seemed a part and parcel of the charm of his productions. It may be different with the rose, but the attraction of this paper drama sensibly declined when Webb had crept into the rubric: a poor cuckoo, flaunting in Skelt's nest. And now we have reached Pollock, sounding deeper gulfs. Indeed, this name of Skelt appears so stagey and piratic, that I will adopt it boldly to design these qualities. Skeltery, then, is a quality of much art. It is even to be found, with reverence be it said, among the works of nature. The stagey is its generic name; but it is an old, insular, home-bred staginess; not French, domestically British; not of to-day, but smacking of O. Smith, Fitzball, and the great age of melodrama: a peculiar fragrance haunting it; uttering its unimportant message in a tone of voice that has the charm of fresh antiquity. I will not insist upon the art of Skelt's purveyors. These wonderful characters that once so thrilled our soul with their bold attitude, array of deadly engines and incomparable costume, to-day look somewhat pallidly; the extreme hard favour of the heroine strikes me, I had almost said with pain; the villain's scowl no longer thrills me like a trumpet; and the scenes themselves, those once unparalleled landscapes, seem the efforts of a prentice hand. So much of fault we find; but on



the other side the impartial critic rejoices to remark the presence of a great unity of gusto; of those direct clap-trap appeals, which a man is dead and buriable when he fails to answer; of the footlight glamour, the ready-made, bare-faced, transpontine picturesque, a thing not one with cold reality, but how much dearer to the mind!

The scenery of Skeltdom—or shall we say, the kingdom of Transpontus?—had a prevailing character. Whether it set forth Poland as in *The Blind Boy*, or Bohemia with *The Miller and his Men*, or Italy with *The Old Oak Chest*, still it was Transpontus. A botanist could tell it by the plants. The holly-hock was all pervasive, running wild in deserts; the dock was common, and the bending reed; and overshadowing these were poplar, palm, potato tree, and *Quercus Skeltica*—brave growths. The caves were all embowelled in the Surreyside formation; the soil was all betrodde by the light pump of T. P. Cooke. Skelt, to be sure, had yet another, an oriental string: he held the gorgeous east in fee; and in the new quarter of Hyères, say, in the garden of the Hotel des Iles d'Or, you may behold these blessed visions realised. But on these I will not dwell; they were an outwork; it was in the occidental scenery that Skelt was all himself. It had a strong flavour of England; it was a sort of indigestion of England and drop-scenes, and I am bound to say was charming. How the roads wander, how the castle sits upon the hill, how the sun eradiates from behind the cloud, and how the congregated clouds themselves up-roll as stiff as bolsters! Here is the cottage interior, the usual first flat, with the cloak upon the nail, the rosaries of onions, the gun and powder-horn and corner-cupboard; here is the inn (this drama must be nautical, I foresee Captain Luff and Bold Bob Bowsprit) with the red curtain, pipes, spittoons, and eight-day clock; and there again is that impressive dungeon with the chains, which was so dull to colour. England, the hedgerow elms, the thin brick houses,

windmills, glimpses of the navigable Thames—England, when at last I came to visit it, was only Skelt made evident: to cross the border was, for the Scotsman, to come home to Skelt; there was the inn-sign and there the horse-trough, all foreshadowed in the faithful Skelt. If, at the ripe age of fourteen years, I bought a certain cudgel, got a friend to load it, and thenceforward walked the tame ways of the earth my own ideal, radiating pure romance—still I was but a puppet in the hand of Skelt; the original of that regretted bludgeon, and surely the antitype of all the bludgeon kind, greatly improved from Cruikshank, had adorned the hand of Jonathan Wild, pl. 1. ‘This is mastering me,’ as Whitman cries, upon some lesser provocation. What am I? what are life, art, letters, the world, but what my Skelt has made them? He stamped himself upon my immaturity. The world was plain before I knew him, a poor penny world; but soon it was all coloured with romance. If I go to the theatre to see a good old melodrama, ’tis but Skelt a little faded. If I visit a bold scene in nature, Skelt would have been bolder; there had certainly been a castle on that mountain, and the hollow tree—that set piece—I seem to miss it in the foreground. Indeed, out of this cut-and-dry, dull, swaggering, obtrusive, and infantile art, I seem to have learned the very spirit of my life’s enjoyment; met there the shadows of the characters I was to read about and love in a late future; got the romance of *Der Freischütz* long ere I was to hear of Weber or the mighty Formes; acquired a gallery of scenes and characters with which, in the silent theatre of the brain, I might enact all novels and romances; and took from these rude cuts an enduring and transforming pleasure. Reader—and yourself?

A word of moral: it appears that B. Pollock, late J. Redington, No. 73 Hoxton Street, not only publishes twenty-three of these old stage favourites, but owns the necessary plates and displays a modest readiness to issue other thirty-three. If you love art,

folly, or the bright eyes of children, speed to Pollock's, or to Clarke's of Garrick Street. In Pollock's list of publicanda I perceive a pair of my ancient aspirations: *Wreck Ashore* and *Sixteen-String Jack*; and I cherish the belief that when these shall see once more the light of day, B. Pollock will remember this apologist. But, indeed, I have a dream at times that is not all a dream. I seem to myself to wander in a ghostly street—E. W., I think, the postal district—close below the fool's-cap of St Paul's, and yet within easy hearing of the echo of the Abbey bridge. There in a dim shop, low in the roof and smelling strong of glue and foot-lights, I find myself in quaking treaty with great Skelt himself, the aboriginal, all dusty from the tomb. I buy, with what a choking heart—I buy them all, all but the pantomimes; I pay my mental money, and go forth; and lo! the packets are dust.

## NOTES

### THOMAS CARLYLE: ON HISTORY

Thomas Carlyle (1795—1881), born at Ecclefechan, Dumfriesshire, was the son of a stonemason. A poor Scottish boy had then (and still has) a much greater chance than his English equal of gaining an education worthy of his natural gifts; and so, in spite of poverty at home, Carlyle proceeded from the village school to the Annan Grammar School, and thence to the University of Edinburgh, where his later studies were pursued with the purpose of fitting himself for the ministry. He soon found, however, that he had no vocation for the clerical life, and very little for the pedagogic, into which he had stumbled in 1814. The real call came from literature; and he answered with a mass of miscellaneous writing and a great burst of hard reading, during which he encountered the influence that did most towards shaping his whole life—the influence of German literature, and, in particular, of Goethe. By 1822 he was in London, hard at work producing essays, translations, and biographies arising mainly from his German studies; but it was not till more than ten years later that the first really characteristic Carlyle work appeared in the shape of *Sartor Resartus*, a critical-satirical fantasia upon things-in-general, presented gravely as a philosophy of clothes. In steady succession came other books that we specially associate with his name—the *French Revolution* (1837), *Heroes and Hero-Worship* (1841), and a series of brilliant attacks on the greed and materialism of the age in *Chartism* (1839), *Past and Present* (1843), and *Latter-day Pamphlets* (1850). *Cromwell* appeared in 1845, and his longest work, *Frederick the Great*, between 1858 and 1865. He died at Chelsea in 1881. His long life linked the Georgian to the Victorian era, and his vivid, caustic, and often unkind *Reminiscences* of men like Lamb and Coleridge, published after his death, were specially interesting to a generation that knew those famous writers only in print.

Even in an age of intellectual giants, Carlyle was a remarkable and outstanding figure. He had the personal greatness that impresses national feeling and influences national conduct. Like a

nineteenth-century Elijah, he was fiercely honest, violently sincere, and unquenchably zealous in denouncing social sin and demanding social repentance. But that is not all. In literature, too, Carlyle takes a very high place as an historian and moralist expressing himself in the most vivid of styles. Scarcely anyone has equalled him in painting a character or in focussing the tendencies of an age. But the very strength of his individuality makes much of his work unsuitable for school-reading: the young student is likely to imitate the vices and not the merits of his fiery and thunderous style; and so Carlyle is represented here by one of his early essays, a quiet piece, in which, however, something of his characteristic eloquence is discernible.

p. 1, l. 1. **Clio.** Over the arts and sciences known to the Greeks—over History, Poetry, Tragedy, Comedy, Dancing, Astronomy, etc.—presided nine goddesses called Muses, who inspired the chosen bard or artist in his labours. The Muses were the daughters of Zeus and Mnemosyne (or Memory) and the first of them was Clio, the Muse of History.

p. 1, l. 13. **The Sibylline Books.** See note on p. 192.

p. 1, l. 18. **Quipo-threads.** In ancient Peru records were kept and messages transmitted by a system of knots in cords of various colours. Wampum is the name given by American Indians to strings of beads or shells. The point of the whole passage is that there is scarcely any nation so barbarous as to be unwilling to record, in some way, its deeds of bravery. Thus even the Indian's scalps are recorded history, of a kind.

p. 1, l. 24. **He would fain unite himself,** etc. The thought is that of certain stanzas in Gray's *Elegy*; notably this:

For who, to dumb forgetfulness a prey,  
This pleasing anxious being e'er resigned,  
Left the warm precincts of the cheerful day,  
Nor cast one longing, lingering look behind?

p. 2, l. 37. **Hume or Robertson,** etc. David Hume (1711—1776) was a famous historian and philosopher. His *History of England*, begun in 1754, and left unfinished, was continued by another famous writer, Smollett. Hume's philosophical writings are now esteemed above his history. William Robertson (1721—1793) was a Scottish divine who wrote a history of Scotland, a history of the reign of Charles V, and a history of America. Much admired in his own day, Robertson is not greatly read in this. For Herodotus, see p. 213. Jean Froissart (1333—1419) was born in Flanders and became an official at the court of Edward III. He wrote a long Chronicle of the part of the Hundred Years' War that fell within his knowledge and experience. The point of the passage depends upon the fact that Hume and Robertson wrote formal and elaborate histories, while Herodotus and Froissart wrote in a chatty, anecdotal fashion.

p. 3, l. 11. **Philosophy teaching by Experience.** This is Carlyle's variation of a passage occurring in the *Letters on the Study and Use of History* by Henry St John, Viscount Bolingbroke, the famous Tory statesman of Queen Anne's reign. 'I have read' (he writes) 'somewhere or other,—in Dionysius of Halicarnassus, I think—that History is Philosophy teaching by examples.' For the present purpose it is not necessary to trace the quotation to any remoter source.

p. 3, l. 18. **Marlborough.** John Churchill, Duke of Marlborough (1650—1722), the famous politician and soldier, victor at Blenheim, Kamillies, Oudenarde and Malplaquet.

p. 3, l. 31. **Which questions,** etc. The sentence is a little tangled. The old monks who wrote history were quite ready, in the simplicity of their faith, to settle such fundamental matters as the final aim and object of the stream of human life and events that they depicted. The modern philosophic historian does not even attempt to face these difficulties.

p. 4, l. 30. **He who first led,** etc. Hannibal (247—183 B.C.), the greatest of Carthaginian soldiers, hero of many struggles in the long conflict between the mighty Mediterranean powers of Carthage and Rome. In spite of dreadful obstacles he crossed the Alps from southern Gaul into Italy—most probably by the Little St Bernard Pass—and inflicted two crushing defeats on the Romans, one at Lake Trasimene (217) and another at Cannæ (216).

p. 4, l. 39. **Marathons and Morgartens.** Marathon is the name of a village twenty-six miles from Athens, the scene of a decisive victory of the Greeks over the invading Persians (490 B.C.). The news of the triumph was brought to Athens by the great runner Pheidippides, who reached the city in an hour, cried 'Rejoice, we conquer!'—and fell dead. The battle of Morgarten (1315), at which the Duke Leopold of Austria was defeated by the Swiss, was the first important step in the establishment of Swiss independence.

p. 5, l. 6. **Dracos and Hampdens.** Dracon (or Draco) was the compiler of the first code of laws in Athens about 621 B.C. The severity of his system, which punished almost every offence by death, gave rise to the word Draconian, meaning excessively rigorous. John Hampden (1594—1643) took a leading share in the controversies of Charles I's reign, and, by his protest against Ship Money, did much to make impossible the levying of taxes by royal prerogative. The point of the passage is that we of to-day really owe more to the nameless artists, thinkers and craftsmen of all ages and countries, than to the few great patriots and law-makers whose names are preserved in history.

p. 5, l. 27. **The old story of Sir Walter Raleigh.** I cannot trace this story further back than the *Letters of Literature* (1785), written by the Scottish antiquary John Pinkerton under the pen-name of Robert Heron. In that version, however, there is only

one witness, not three. As, proverbially, a tale never loses in the telling, the other witnesses may have crept in during the half-century of repetition between Heron's *Letters* and Carlyle's essay. This is the story as told in Letter 31: 'Sir Walter Raleigh, when confined in the Tower, had prepared the second volume of his immortal *History* for the press. He was standing at the window of his apartment, ruminating on the office of an historian, and on the sacred regard which he ought to pay to the truth, when of a sudden, his attention was excited by an uproar in the court into which his prospect was directed. He saw one man strike another, whom by his dress he judged an officer, and who, drawing his sword, ran the assailant through the body; who did not however fall till he had knocked down the officer with his fist. The officer was instantly seized, while lying senseless, and carried away by the servants of justice; while at the same time the body of the man he had murdered was borne off by some persons, apparently his friends, who, with great difficulty pierced through the vast crowd that was now gathered round. Next day an acquaintance of Sir Walter called on him; a man, of whose severe probity and honour, Sir Walter was convinced from innumerable proofs, and rated his friendship accordingly. Raleigh, after their first compliments, told the story of yesterday's fray; which had impressed him deeply, as being a spectator of the whole affair. What was his surprise, when his friend told him that he was perfectly mistaken in his whole story! That his officer was no officer, but a servant of a foreign ambassador; that this apparent officer gave the first blow: that he did not draw his sword, but the other drew it, and it was wrested out of his hands, but not till after he had run its owner through the body with it: that after this, a foreigner in the mob knocked the murderer down, in order that he should not escape: that some foreigners had carried off the servant's body: and that orders had arrived from court for the murderer to be tried instantly, and no favour shewn, as the person murdered was one of the principal attendants of the Spanish ambassador. "Sir," says Raleigh, "allow me to say that, though I may be mistaken as to the officership of the murderer, yet I know of a certainty, that all my other circumstances are strictly true; because I was a spectator of the whole transaction, which passed on that very spot opposite, where you see a stone of the pavement a little raised above the rest." "Sir Walter," says the friend, "upon that very stone did I stand during the whole affair, and received this little scratch in my cheek, in wresting the sword out of the fellow's hand: and as I shall answer to God, you are totally mistaken." "You grow warm, my friend, let us talk of other matters," said Sir Walter; and after some conversation his friend departed.

'Raleigh took up the manuscript of the second volume of his history, then just completed; "How many falsehoods are here?" said he. "If I cannot judge of the truth of an event that passes under my eyes, how shall I truly narrate those which have passed thousands of years before my birth; or even those that happened

since my existence? 'Truth, I sacrifice to thee!' The fire was already feeding on his invaluable work, the labour of years: and he calmly sat till it was utterly consumed, and the sable ghost of the last leaf flitted up the chimney.'

p. 6, l. 4. **Crossing of the Rubicon.** The Rubicon, a tiny stream near Rimini, formed part of the boundary between Cisalpine Gaul and Italia proper. Cisalpine Gaul was part of the great province governed by Cæsar; and when, in 53 B.C., as the result of Pompey's intrigues, Cæsar was ordered by the senate of Rome to disband his forces and resign his power, the great leader, instead of obeying, crossed the Rubicon with his army, and thus became the invader of his own country. After this momentous step, only two courses were possible: either Rome must crush and destroy Cæsar, or Cæsar must subdue and govern Rome. As we know, Cæsar triumphed, and became master of Italy and of the world. The phrase 'To cross the Rubicon' has become proverbial for taking any momentous, irrevocable step.

p. 6, l. 5. **Impeachment of Strafford.** Thomas Wentworth, Earl of Strafford (1593—1641), the most able and masterful of Charles I's advisers, believed in the efficacy of vigorous personal government by the sovereign. Thus he was the greatest obstacle in the way of the constitutional parliamentary party headed by Pym, and his removal was absolutely necessary to the success of the struggle against royal tyranny. Strafford was impeached by the Long Parliament in 1641, and, when the impeachment was altered to a 'bill of attainder' to which the royal assent was necessary, Charles meanly abandoned his faithful servant, and Strafford was beheaded.

p. 6, l. 5. **Convocation of the Notables.** The accession of Louis XVI in 1774 found France in a dreadful condition,—the populace degraded and brutalized by poverty and crushing exactions, and the government itself bankrupt, and unable either to decrease its expenses or increase its revenue. Many expedients were tried, and, at last, one minister, Calonne, decided to summon a council of the nobles—the nobles being the greatest obstacle in the way of reform. This Convocation of the Notables met on February 22, 1787, and apparently did nothing; but one suggestion—made by Lafayette—was adopted, namely a summoning of the States-General, the great French representative assembly, that had not met since 1614. From this time change after change was proposed and made, until in 1789 came the greatest change of all, the visible outbreak of the Revolution.

The essence of Carlyle's meaning is that each of the events described in the last three notes was a turning-point in the world's history, though not recognised as such at the time.

p. 8, l. 7. **Palimpsest.** Parchment being a stout and expensive writing material, old manuscripts were sometimes used again after the original script had been scraped out or partly



obliterated. Such a re-written parchment was called a palimpsest. It sometimes happened that, to discerning eyes, the scraped-out original writing disclosed some gem of thought or fragment of immortal verse otherwise unknown. That is the idea in the text.

p. 8, l. 32. **Aries and Libra.** Two constellations at opposite points of the celestial horizon—the first and seventh of the twelve ‘Signs of the Zodiac’ marking the apparent path of the sun during the course of the year.

p. 9, l. 13. **Enthusiasm.** This word was formerly used in a derogatory sense, and signified fanaticism, or wrong-headed zeal for some absurd belief.

p. 10, l. 7. **Famous victory.** An obvious reference to Southey’s familiar lines *After Blenheim*.

p. 10, l. 14. **Spigot.** The tap which was inserted in the bung-hole of a cask to draw off its contents. ‘Oh base Hungarian wight! Wilt thou the spigot wield?’ asks Pistol of Bardolph (turned tapster) in the *Merry Wives*.

p. 10, l. 23. **Catholic.** Not, of course, Catholic (with a capital), but catholic or universal as opposed to sectarian or local.

p. 11, l. 23. **Ecumenic Council-halls.** In the early centuries of the Christian Church false beliefs arose and it was necessary for the Church to arrive at a collective decision about the disputed points. For this purpose representative councils of the whole Church were summoned—such councils being Universal or Ecumenical Councils.

p. 12, l. 23. **Bruckers and Buhles.** Johann Jakob Brucker of Augsburg (1696—1770) wrote a lengthy *Critical History of Philosophy*. Johann Gottlieb Böhle of Brunswick (1763—1821) wrote elaborate treatises on the history of philosophy.

p. 12, l. 24. **Enfields.** William Enfield (1741—1797), a dissenting minister, author of many theological works, compiler of the popular *Speaker*, a literary anthology chosen for elocutionary purposes. He adapted into English (1791) Brucker’s *Critical History of Philosophy* mentioned above.

p. 13, l. 12. **Eichhorns and Wartons.** Johann Gottfried Eichhorn (1752—1827), German theologian and historian, author of many theological works, and also of a *History of Literature from the Origins to the Present Day*, and a *History of Intellectual Culture and Modern Literature*. Thomas Warton (1728—1790), fellow of Trinity College, Oxford, Professor of Poetry, and Poet Laureate. His works were many, but his chief title to fame is the *History of English Poetry*—still deservedly reprinted and read.

p. 13, l. 19. **Montesquieu and Hallam.** Montesquieu (1689—1755), French noble, scientist, and philosopher, whose famous constitutional treatise *The Spirit of Laws* (1748) attacked the current despotism in France, and was one of the hidden forces that

helped to bring about the Revolution. Henry Hallam (1777—1859), a famous English historian, wrote a *View of the State of Europe in the Middle Ages*, an *Introduction to the Literature of Europe during the 15th, 16th and 17th Centuries*, and a *Constitutional History of England*, to which Carlyle especially alludes.

p. 13, l. 24. **Goguets and Beckmanns.** Antoine Ives Goguet (1716—1758), a learned French historian and lawyer, wrote a great treatise on the Origin of Laws, Arts and Sciences. Johann Beckmann (1739—1811), a German scientist, wrote an elaborate history of discoveries and inventions.

## THOMAS BABINGTON MACAULAY: RANKE'S HISTORY OF THE POPES

Thomas Babington Macaulay (1800—1859) was born at Rothley Temple, Leicestershire, son of Zachary Macaulay, one of the leaders of the movement for the abolition of slavery. He was educated at a private school, and proceeded to Trinity College, Cambridge, in 1818. He was a brilliant student and debater, and was irresistibly attracted to literature. His first really striking piece of work was the essay on Milton contributed to the *Edinburgh Review* in 1825, the beginning of a long and remarkable connection with that once famous periodical. He entered Parliament in 1830 as a Whig, strongly supported the Reform Bill, and became, in 1834, adviser to the Supreme Council of India. After his return to England in 1838 he began the famous *History of England* which gained, as it deserved, a wide popularity; for it was most brilliantly written, and it made known a significant period of our history that had hitherto been but slightly regarded. He was made a peer in 1857 and died in London two years later. His biography by his nephew, Sir G. O. Trevelyan, is a most delightful volume.

Macaulay has often been accused of unfairness. It is true that he was a sturdy Whig and wrote frankly from that standpoint; but then most people have views of their own and write more or less frankly from their own standpoints. The greater a man is, the more likely he is to assert strongly the beliefs that he holds strongly. In that case, the unfairness of a known bias can always be discounted. But Macaulay's desire to be clear and downright in style, to paint incidents vividly, and to sketch characters incisively sometimes made him unfair in another way. He exaggerated. However, there is no denying his clearness, his vigour, or his vividness. His thought cannot be called noble or his views elevated; but his command of his matter is superb and his presentment of it masterly. He had something to say—not very subtle, not very deep, but extremely interesting; and he said it clearly and distinctly. There are many

greater writers than Macaulay; there are few more readable. Two special qualities of his style may be noticed: his concreteness and his allusiveness. Thus, he does not say: 'The Catholic Church was great and respected in the darkest ages of modern history—before the sixth century, before the fifth, even before the fourth'; but in his peculiarly concrete, allusive way he writes: 'She was great and respected before the Saxon had set foot in Britain, before the Frank had passed the Rhine, when Grecian eloquence still flourished in Antioch, when idols were still worshipped in the temple of Mecca.' Observe the difference: in the one case, the past is merely recorded; in the other it is peopled. Of his general allusiveness (one result of his marvellous memory) no more need be said than this, that the present essay has required far more annotation than any other in the volume.

On the whole it is a specially characteristic production of the writer's, showing both his strength and his weakness. In matter it is admirable, in thought rather trivial. It makes a most stimulating summary of many centuries of history. It is well planned, and interesting throughout. Further, its point of view is European rather than merely British, and it should leave the reader with a keen desire to widen the boundaries of his historical reading. However, it is certainly not very deep, and its excursions into philosophical argument are not very valuable. Affairs of the spirit were not Macaulay's strong point; but, on the other hand, it is certain that his weakness in spiritual insight is scarcely likely to trouble the young student. This, at least, is worthy of notice. Macaulay was a strong Protestant, and wrote with a distinct religious bias against the Roman Church; yet he pays to Catholicism a tribute that is at once noble, generous and sincere. English people often forget that Catholicism means mediæval Europe and much of modern Europe: they sometimes think it is merely one among the many sects with places of worship in England. Catholicism is not only a religious fact: it is also an historical fact. Many writers of history have confused the two—Macaulay among them; but not here. Here, on religious grounds, he is the uncompromising enemy of the Papal system; but, writing as an historian, he reverences its virtues even when denouncing its crimes.

p. 15, l. 3. **Professor Ranke.** Leopold von Ranke (1795—1886), the author of the book upon which Macaulay founded his essay, was a German historian of enormous industry and output. His works include histories of France, of England, of Prussia, and of several southern European states, and are remarkable for their accuracy and statesmanlike breadth of view. The *History of the Popes* was first published in 1834, and was revised by Ranke as recently as 1885.

p. 15, l. 5. **Dishonest French version.** A translation of Ranke's work by J. Halber, edited with an introduction by A. de Saint-Chéron, appeared in Paris in 1836. The introduction speaks with pious approval of the Protestant Ranke's impartiality; but the

actual text, with equal piety, and without acknowledgment, is carefully sub-edited in the interests of Catholicism. Ranke was very angry at this dishonesty and appreciated the more Mrs Austin's accurate version.

p. 15, l. 15. **The accomplished lady.** Sarah Taylor (1793—1867), a clever writer on education, and a careful translator of several famous French and German books. She married, in 1820, John Austin, the author of a famous treatise on jurisprudence.

p. 16, l. 4. **Two great ages of civilization.** That is, it is a link between Roman and modern civilisation. The Pantheon, founded by Agrippa 27 B.C., and dedicated by Pope Boniface IV to Christian worship in 609 under the name of Santa Maria Rotonda, is the only Roman building of classical times still in a state of complete preservation. The building originally contained statues of certain of the gods, but the purpose of the founder is unknown. The name *Pantheon* was taken to signify a place or abode of all the gods; but a sounder derivation is from *Pantheum*, meaning a most sacred place. The Flavian amphitheatre, better known to modern readers as the Colosseum or Coliseum, was founded by Vespasian and consecrated by Titus, A.D. 80. These emperors belonged to the Flavian family, hence the name.

p. 16, l. 13. **Pepin.** Pepin, son of Charles Martel and father of Charlemagne, became king of the Franks in 751, and was crowned by Pope Stephen II. Napoleon was crowned by Pope Pius VII.

p. 16, l. 15. **The republic of Venice.** The Republic of Venice grew out of settlements made at the head of the Adriatic after the invasion of Italy by Attila in 451 A.D. It was extinguished by Napoleon (see Wordsworth's famous sonnet), its territories being divided between France and Austria by the Treaty of Campo Formio (1797).

p. 16, l. 25. **Confronted Attila.** For the embassy of Pope Leo the Great to Attila, when 'the pressing eloquence of Leo, his majestic aspect, and sacerdotal robes excited the veneration of Attila for the spiritual father of the Christians,' see Gibbon's *Decline and Fall*, chap. 35.

p. 16, l. 25. **The number of her children.** A recent controversial book (McCabe, *The Decay of the Church of Rome*, 1909) endeavours to prove that the Roman Church has lost many millions of its adherents during the last century; but even if the writer's figures be correct, the force of Macaulay's argument remains unimpaired, for these losses to Rome have not been gains to the Protestant Churches.

p. 17, l. 3. **Before the Saxon**, etc. The first English settlements in Britain were made during the fifth century. The Franks crossed the Rhine under Clovis and established themselves in Gaul at the end of the fifth century, though there was an earlier crossing

(360) when Julian was Cæsar in the west. Greek eloquence was at its height in Antioch when that city was Julian's capital. Paganism flourished in Mecca before the rise of Mahomet at the end of the sixth century.

p. 18, l. 3. **The inductive sciences.** The inductive sciences are those in which laws are discovered after the consideration of many facts. Such laws are thus always subject to modification in the light of fresh facts. The natural sciences—physics, biology, etc.—are examples of inductive sciences.

p. 18, l. 10. **Taylor's theorem.** Brook Taylor (1685—1731) was an eminent Cambridge mathematician. His theorem is one of the established general rules in higher mathematics.

p. 18, l. 11. **Harvey's doctrine.** William Harvey (1578—1657), the famous physician who first enunciated the theory of the circulation of the blood, in a treatise published in 1628.

p. 18, l. 14. **Natural religion.** Natural religion, the evidences of a Deity in the works of nature; the correlative of revealed religion, which is recorded in the Bible or preserved by the Church.

p. 18, l. 17. **Thales or Simonides.** Thales, earliest of Greek natural philosophers, flourished about the sixth century B.C. He is said to have foretold an eclipse of the sun, and to have taught that water is the elemental principle of all things. Simonides: There are two Greek writers of this name, (1) Simonides of Amorgos, a satirical reflective poet, who flourished in the seventh century B.C., and (2) Simonides of Ceos, a famous lyric poet, who flourished during the sixth century B.C. But neither can be called a philosopher in the same sense as Thales.

p. 18, l. 24. **The reasoning by which Socrates, etc.** This incident is related in the fourth chapter of Xenophon's *Memorabilia* of Socrates (pp. 24—26, 'Everyman' edition). The argument is too long to quote. Its substance is that since Aristodemus admires the genius of Polycletus in statuary and of Zeuxis in painting, he ought surely to admire still more the power that could frame, not copies, but original living creatures. Further, the endowing of these living creatures with numerous organs, each with a special function, is sure evidence in favour of design in creation and against blind chance. The first two chapters of Paley's *Natural Theology* (published in 1802) point out that a watch is an elaborate piece of work containing many parts each with a special purpose; next, that such a work could never occur by mere chance but must be expressly framed by some skilful craftsman; and further, that the vast, incalculable realm of nature, far outsoaring in wonder and complexity any, even the most elaborate, of man's works, could never have occurred by mere chance or blind law, but must have been brought into being by some almighty creator. Macaulay's point is that since Paley can find no better argument than the one used more than two thousand years earlier by Socrates, it is highly

improbable that any better argument ever will be found. That is, theology is not an inductive, or progressive science.

p. 18, l. 40. **Franklin.** Benjamin Franklin (1706—1790), the famous American printer, journalist, politician and natural philosopher, who played a great part in the quarrel between England and the American colonies, especially in negotiating the alliance between the colonies and France; he demonstrated the identity of lightning and electricity, and suggested the use of lightning-conductors.

p. 19, l. 5. **Locke or Clarke.** John Locke (1632—1704), the famous English philosopher, author of the *Essay concerning Human Understanding*, *Thoughts on Education*, etc. Samuel Clarke (1675—1729), the well-known English theologian and philosopher; chief work, *Discourse concerning the Being and Attributes of God*.

p. 19, l. 15. **Zadig.** Voltaire (1694—1778), the great French poet, historian, and philosopher. His *Zadig* (1747) is a satirical and very amusing Eastern romance. The praise given to Zadig is that 'he knew as much as any one has known in any age, that is to say—next to nothing.'

p. 19, l. 18. **Ionia.** Part of Asiatic Greece. Its more or less mythical colonisation took place about 1300—1000 B.C. The belief that the book of Job belongs to pre-Mosaic times is now quite abandoned. Parts of the book are older than others and much of it belongs probably to the seventh century B.C.

p. 19, l. 23. **Eliphaz and Zophar.** These are two of the friends who argue with Job about the meaning and purpose of his afflictions. Job was an 'Idumean Emir,' that is, a chief dwelling in Idumea, the region on the edge of the Syrian desert, north of Arabia.

p. 20, l. 12. **Ptolemy.** The Alexandrian astronomer who flourished during the second century of the Christian era. His famous doctrine that the earth is the centre of the universe round which the heavenly bodies revolve was generally believed till it was opposed by the doctrine of Copernicus, the Polish astronomer (1473—1543), that the sun is the centre of the universe.

p. 20, l. 14. **Galileo.** The Copernican theory was supported by the famous Italian philosopher Galileo (1564—1642), who endured great persecution at the hands of the ecclesiastical authorities because his view that the sun stood still and the earth moved was held to be contrary to religion. The universe of Milton's *Paradise Lost* follows the Ptolemaic view, and there is a curious discussion between Adam and Raphael in Bk VIII as to whether that or the newer Copernican theory is the true one.

p. 20, l. 20. **Sir Thomas More.** Sir Thomas More, the famous lawyer, was born in 1478, and succeeded Wolsey as Lord Chancellor in 1529. He was beheaded in 1535 for refusing to take an oath

affirming that King Henry VIII was Supreme Head of the Church in England.

p. 20, l. 38. **The prophecies of Brothers.** Richard Brothers, born 1757 in Newfoundland, was a religious fanatic who, in 1793, declared that he was Prince of the Hebrews, and appointed to lead the Jews back to the Promised Land. In the next year he published *A Revealed Knowledge of the Prophecies and Times*, and foretold that George III would shortly die. He spent many years in an asylum and died in 1824.

p. 20, l. 38. **The miracles of Prince Hohenlohe.** Prince Hohenlohe-Waldenburg-Schillingsfürst (1794—1849), the Hungarian noble who entered the Church and became a member of a religious order, is interesting to modern readers mainly on account of his miracles of healing. He operated solely by prayer, and refused help to none who asked. He even told his patients the very hour when their disease would leave them. His method was thus what we should call 'faith-healing,' and anticipated the modern legitimate treatment of certain cases by mental suggestion, and the more doubtful procedure of Christian Scientists and Peculiar People.

p. 21, l. 17. **Pascal.** Blaise Pascal (1623—1662), theologian, man of science, and man of letters—one of the greatest of Frenchmen. He became a Port Royalist (see note, p. 199) and defended the Jansenist Arnauld in a series of superbly ironical *Provincial Letters* against the Jesuits. Still more famous are his *Pensées*, a number of detached thoughts 'on man and fate and all existence.' It is in the first-named work that he makes the judgment to which Macaulay refers.

p. 21, l. 29. **Bayle and Chillingworth.** Pierre Bayle, a French philosopher, was born in 1647 and died in 1706. He was a Catholic for a very short time, and his later works were held to have a sceptical tendency. William Chillingworth (1602—1643), an English theologian who became a Catholic. When asked to write an account of his conversion, he examined the question so carefully that he was re-converted to a Protestant belief.

p. 21, l. 33. **Ossian.** Ossian is the name of the ancient Gaelic bard to whom James Macpherson (1736—1796) attributed certain Celtic epics collected and translated by himself. Great controversy was aroused by the poems, and there is no doubt that much of the alleged Ossianic verse was written by Macpherson. Macpherson took Johnson's searching criticism in very bad part, and threatened violence. For the famous letter in which Johnson replied to Macpherson's threat, see Boswell's *Life*. That he was willing to believe in second sight appears mainly in the *Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland*, and also in at least three passages of Boswell.

p. 21, l. 36. **The Cock Lane Ghost.** During the year 1762 mysterious knockings were heard in a house in Cock Lane, Stockwell, now a London suburb. Parsons, the owner of the house,

averred that the noises were caused by the ghost of a murdered woman knocking on her coffin. The affair caused much sensation, until it was found that the rappings were caused by Parsons' daughter knocking on a board concealed in her bed. It is too much to say that Johnson was 'willing to believe' in this story. He was certainly willing to see if there were any truth in the affair, and, in fact, he helped to expose it. The earthquake of Lisbon took place in December, 1755. It is hardly correct to say that Johnson disbelieved in this event. An article of his in the *Literary Magazine* suggests that current reports to the effect that 'Lisbon is no more' were no doubt wild exaggerations.

p. 21, l. 38. **We have seen**, etc. The 'prophesying, interpreting, talking unknown tongues' refer to events in the sensational ministry of Edward Irving (1792—1834). He preached at the Scottish Church in Hatton Garden, London, on the second coming of Christ, carried his sensational prophecies further at the church in Regent's Square, and was finally deposed for heretical opinions. His influence over his followers was enormous, and they formed a new body called the Catholic Apostolic Church—the chief seat of their worship being situate in Gordon Square. The 'miraculous cures' are those of Prince Hohenlohe before referred to. The 'messages from God' were those of Brothers (see p. 187), who wrote in 1792 to the King and the Government that God had ordered him to make known to the House of Commons that now was the time when the Fifth Monarchy—that of the Saints—was at hand. Another 'divine' messenger to the House was Drummond, a follower of Irving.

p. 22, l. 6. **An old woman**. The 'prophetess' referred to is Joanna Southcott, born about 1750. She appropriated to herself the Biblical description: 'a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet and upon her head a crown of twelve stars' (Rev. xii. 1). She published several prophetic books, and, later, announced that she was about to give birth to the Child described in Rev. xii. 5. Her numerous followers devoutly believed in her, and their belief long survived her death in 1814.

p. 22, l. 21. **Bleibt stets**, etc. From the 'Prologue in Heaven,' introductory to *Faust*. Mephistopheles, the scoffing fiend, says:

[Man] sticks to the same old way,

And is as whimsical as on Creation's day.

p. 23, l. 1. **Beautiful language of Oc**. In medieval times the word for 'yes' was 'oil' in northern France and 'oc' in southern. Thus Provence was part of the 'oc' region. A province of France was actually named 'Languedoc,' that is, 'the land of the language of oc.'

p. 24, l. 9. **The Paulician theology**. The Paulicians were an eastern sect who arose about the middle of the seventh century. They paid special reverence to the apostle Paul and his writings, and laid stress on the doctrine that it is by faith and not by works



that a man is justified in the eyes of God. This doctrine of 'justification by faith' was strongly held by all the Protestant Reformers, among whom one of the greatest was John Calvin (1509—1564).

p. 24, l. 12. **The Manichees.** The disciples of a certain Mani who flourished in the third century. He taught that all things sprang from two opposing forces of light and darkness, good and evil.

p. 25, l. 4. **The gay science.** The art of the troubadours, i.e., love-poetry.

p. 25, l. 11. **The Albigensian heresy.** The Paulician-Manichæan belief described above. The people were named Albigenses from the town of Alby, N.E. of Toulouse. The father of Simon de Montfort was one of the leaders in the war against the Albigenses (1208).

p. 25, l. 19. **This period.** The thirteenth century. Francis of Assisi (1182—1226) is the lovable saint who founded the Franciscan order of friars, a body of men whose unwearied personal service among the poor and outcast resembles that of the modern Salvation Army. Dominic (1170—1221), a native of Castile, founded the preaching order of friars named after him. The Franciscans were called 'Grey Friars,' and the Dominicans 'Black Friars' from the colour of their gowns. The Inquisition (as such) was established in the thirteenth century, though its more familiar activities came later.

p. 25, l. 36. **Frederic II** (1194—1250). Grandson of 'Barbarossa' (Frederick I).

p. 26, l. 2. **Manfred** (1232—1266). King of Sicily, son of Frederick II, slain at the battle of Benevento against the French.

p. 26, l. 3. **Conradin** (1252—1268), nephew of Manfred, led the Sicilians and Neapolitans against the French, but was defeated and captured at Tagliacozzo, and executed by the direction of Pope Clement VI.

p. 26, l. 16. **The fiercest of the Roman Pontiffs.** Boniface VIII, seized by Philip at Anagni in 1303. He died later in the same year.

p. 26, l. 20. **The great Florentine.** Dante. See *Purg.* Canto XX, ll. 85—90 (Cary's version). Many of the actors and incidents in the struggle between the Empire and the Papacy are of course referred to in Dante's great poem.

p. 26, l. 25. **Beyond the Alps.** To Avignon.

p. 26, l. 26. **The great schism.** 1378 to 1417.

p. 26, l. 27. **Two Popes.** Urban VI and Clement VII.

p. 26, l. 38. **John Wycliffe.** (1325?—1384.) First of the great English reformers, and zealous opponent of Papal power in

England. His views, spread by a band of itinerant preachers, became immensely popular, and gained him many followers (called Lollards) whose influence persisted in spite of burnings and torturings, and prepared the way for the Reformation. His tracts written in homely English to reach the less learned of readers make him the father of English prose—just as his contemporary Chaucer is the father of English poetry.

p. 27, l. 2. **Bohemia.** John Hus (1369—1415) was a Bohemian disciple of Wycliffe. He was persecuted for many years and finally burnt. Jerome of Prague was another Wycliffite, and, like his friend Hus, perished at the stake (1416).

p. 27, l. 13. **The Council of Constance.** 1414 to 1417.

p. 27, l. 18. **The most distinguished teachers, etc.** Hus and Jerome.

p. 27, l. 31. **The invention of printing.** This art was invented (or revived, or developed) about 1450. The honour of being the sole and original inventor has been claimed, by various enthusiasts, for Fust, Gutenberg, Schöffer, Coster, and several others.

p. 27, l. 37. **The preaching of Luther against Indulgences.** Sin, according to the Catholic view, incurs two kinds of punishment—that here, and that hereafter. The present or temporal punishment is remitted by prayer, alms, fasting, etc., or by Indulgences granted by the Church for certain considerations. The sale of Indulgences became a great scandal in pre-Reformation times, and was attacked by many notable men, especially the German monk, Martin Luther, who began a campaign against the practice in 1517 by drawing out a series of arguments against Indulgences and nailing them to the door of the church at Wittenberg.

p. 27, l. 40. **The treaty of Westphalia.** The treaty which ended the Thirty Years' War, 1648.

p. 28, l. 18. **The Roman Camera.** The Papal Court.

p. 28, l. 30. **The bull of Leo.** Luther's campaign against Indulgences developed between 1517 and 1520 into a vigorous attack on all the abuses of the Church. In the latter year Leo X condemned the teachings of Luther in a bull which the bold reformer publicly scorned by burning it before a great crowd of the Wittenberg doctors, students, and citizens.

p. 29, l. 27. **Trajan and Pliny.** Trajan (98—117), a great Roman emperor, who persecuted Christianity, not because he was enthusiastic about Paganism, but because the new religion seemed a dangerous departure from the useful old religion of the state. Pliny the Younger (62—114), a Roman author, wrote an account of the eruption that destroyed Pompeii, and an elaborate eulogy of the emperor Trajan; but he holds an abiding place in literature by right of his many *Letters*. His religious views resembled Trajan's. In some celebrated letters to that emperor, he attacked Christianity

as a degraded superstition; but he had no exalted admiration for the old Paganism, which, indeed, he regarded as little more than a necessary, because traditional, part of the respectability of life.

p. 29, l. 28. **Savonarola**, etc. The great Florentine preacher (1452—1498) familiarized to all English readers by George Eliot's *Romola*. He was a Puritan among Catholics, and attacked the current frivolity and luxury which the practice of Rome sanctioned and encouraged. He was tortured, strangled, and burnt. His 'spirit' was that of a reformer, not that of a schismatic. He attacked, not the doctrines, but the morals and discipline of the Church. Machiavelli (1469—1527), the great Florentine statesman and political philosopher, with whom Macaulay contrasts Savonarola, was frankly critical of Christian doctrine; and, while believing religion necessary to the state, believed also that clericalism was dangerous.

p. 30, l. 6. **The last Gothic king**. Roderick, defeated by the Moors at the battle of Xeres (711) and drowned while escaping.

p. 30, l. 8. **Entered Granada**. Granada, the Moorish capital in Spain, fell in 1492.

p. 30, l. 16. **A Papal bull**. The bull of 1493 which defined the spheres of influence of Spain and Portugal in the newly discovered West and the newly accessible East.

p. 30, l. 28. **In the very year**, etc. The Saxon revolt began in 1521. In that year was completed the violent conquest of Montezuma's dominion of Mexico by the Spanish commander Hernando Cortes.

p. 31, l. 14. **The death of Leo**. Leo X died in 1521.

p. 31, l. 14. **The order of Camaldoli**. A reformed congregation of Benedictine monks founded by St Romuald of Ravenna in the eleventh century.

p. 31, l. 15. **The Capuchins**. A sixteenth century Franciscan named Matthew de Baschi believed that the friars of his order were not as strict as those in the days of their founder, and that the cowl (or 'capuche') was not of the original kind. He therefore formed (1526) a new order of brothers, called the Capuchins, among whom the original discipline was restored.

p. 31, l. 17. **The Barnabites**. An order of clergy founded at Milan in the sixteenth century for the purpose of teaching, preaching, etc. They were called Barnabites because their first assemblies were held in the church of St Barnabas at Milan.

p. 31, l. 17. **The society of Somascha**. An order of clergy formed in the sixteenth century to undertake the work of founding and maintaining asylums for orphans. The chief institution was at Somascha, between Milan and Bergamo—hence the name of the order.

p. 31, l. 19. **The Theatine order.** An order of clergy founded by Giovanni Pietro Caraffa (1476—1559), bishop of Chieti, afterwards Pope Paul IV, in concert with Cajetan (1469—1534). The order took its name from Theate, the ancient name for Chieti. The Theatines not only preached, but laboured among the sick and the criminals.

p. 32, l. 27. **The Great Red Dragon.** See Revelation, chap. xii.

p. 33, l. 8. **Ignatius Loyola**, founder of the Society of Jesus, was born in Spain in 1491. His leg was shattered at the siege of Pampeluna (1512). He founded his famous order in 1534, and secured Papal approval of its rules in 1540. He died in Rome in the year 1556.

p. 33, l. 14. **Two princely temples.** Sant' Ignazio and the Gesù—the latter a particularly gorgeous church. The remains of Ignatius are kept in a sarcophagus beneath the high altar of the Gesù.

p. 35, l. 26. **They regarded those Christian mysteries, etc.** That is, with polite contempt. The sacred Sibylline books, according to tradition, were nine in number, and were offered by the Sibyl Amalthea of Cumæ to Tarquin the Proud. He refused them, whereupon the Sibyl burnt three and offered him the rest. He again refused them, and the prophetess burned three more. Tarquin then bought the remaining three at the price originally demanded for the nine, and these surviving books were solemnly kept in the Capitol as sacred possessions. The early Romans attached much importance to omens and especially to the auspices, or signs given by birds, the manner in which the creatures ate being specially significant. The auspices were taken by the augurs—a college of prophets dating from the oldest days of the city. The pontifex maximus was chief of the priestly order which had charge of all sacred functions. By the time of Cæsar (100—44 B.C.) and Cicero (106—43 B.C.) the religious mysteries associated with the augurs and pontifices had ceased to command respect, but the offices were maintained and held for political and secular reasons.

p. 35, l. 32. **Cotta and Velleius, etc.** Two of the speakers in Cicero's dialogue *On the Nature of the Gods*. They take a very sceptical view of the ancient deities and speak with scant respect of the traditional mysteries. The oracle of Delphi was an opening in the ground on one of the slopes of Mt Parnassus. From the chasm came a vapour which inspired a priestess who inhaled it to utter obscure prophecies which were supposed to be the words of Apollo. Faunus, the Latin equivalent of the Greek Pan, god of shepherds and tillers of the soil, also foretold the future in dreams and strange voices to those who slept within his precincts after appropriate sacrifices. Cultured and sceptical Romans of a later age scoffed at such mysteries as mere superstitions, respectable only for their antiquity.

p. 36, l. 1. **Benvenuto.** Benvenuto Cellini (1500—1571), the great Florentine metal-worker. He has described his wild and adventurous life in a famous *Autobiography*.

p. 36, l. 1. **Michael Angelo.** Michelangelo Buonarroti (1475—1564), Florentine painter, sculptor, architect, and poet, was the grandest and most forceful of all the artists of the Renaissance. His greatest paintings are the decorations on the walls and ceiling of the Sistine Chapel in Rome.

p. 36, l. 2. **Raphael.** Raffaello Santi (1483—1520), born at Urbino, was one of the noblest of Italian painters. He is fairly well represented in the English national collections, though many of his greatest works are frescoes painted on the walls of chambers in the Vatican.

p. 36, l. 17. '**Morgante Maggiore.**' This is the name (meaning 'Morgante the Giant') of a poetic romance of chivalry written in 1481 by the Florentine poet Luigi Pulci (1432—1484). The poem relates many incredible adventures and is really written (as *Don Quixote* was, more than a century later) to ridicule the absurdities of the popular romances of chivalry. Byron has translated the first canto of this poem.

p. 36, l. 24. **Pius V.** This pope (1504—1572) ruled during some of the Reformation struggles, and is interesting to us as the pontiff who in 1570 launched a bull of deposition against Queen Elizabeth and released her subjects from their allegiance. Another bull of his, issued in 1568, claimed a supremacy of the pope over all temporal sovereigns like that urged in the eleventh century by Hildebrand (Gregory VII), who reduced the Emperor Henry IV to submission and enforced from him a humiliating penance. It is interesting to remember that William the Conqueror in England, while granting great liberty to the Church, steadfastly refused to acknowledge the temporal supremacy of Hildebrand.

p. 36, l. 35. **Gregory XIII.** This pope (1502—1585) was specially zealous in the cause of education. His name is immortalized in the term 'Gregorian Calendar' through his reform in the method of computing time. The change made by Gregory in 1582 was not adopted in England till 1751. It was Gregory XIII who had a special medal struck to celebrate the massacre on St Bartholomew's Day (1572).

p. 37, l. 1. **The poem of Tasso, etc.** *Orlando Furioso* was written early in the sixteenth century by Ludovico Ariosto (1474—1533); *Gerusalemme Liberata* (Jerusalem Delivered) by Torquato Tasso (1544—1595) in the latter part of the same century. The difference implied by Macaulay is that the first is a romantic poem of love and chivalry, the second an epic of the Crusades. The other comparison has the same point. Sixtus V was a vigorous and reforming pope from 1585 to 1590, while, on the other hand, Leo X, who ruled from 1513 to 1522, was a cultured, sceptical man

of the world rather than a spiritual pontiff. The buildings which Leo inspired are Pagan in style and character, while those of Sixtus are much severer; and, to make room for them and the new roads he made, he had no scruples about destroying the remains of Pagan antiquity.

p. 37, l. 20. **'Of the Benefits of the Death of Christ.'** By Aonio Paleario. A copy of the original Italian work (dated 1543) exists in the library of St John's College, Cambridge, and the book, in an English version, has been several times reprinted.

p. 37, l. 26. **The second decade of Livy.** Titus Livius Patavinus (59 B.C.—17 A.D.) was perhaps the greatest of Roman historians. Much of his work has totally disappeared. The first ten books exist; but the second decade, and many of the later books have vanished.

p. 39, l. 9. **Mühlberg.** The Emperor Charles V defeated his Protestant subjects at Mühlberg, in Saxony (1547). The famous equestrian portrait of the emperor by Titian represents him at this battle.

p. 39, l. 30. **The tiara.** The Papal crown. Alexander VI was both debauchee and poisoner, and Leo X, if not exactly an atheist, was certainly not an orthodox Christian.

p. 39, l. 34. **Cyprian and Ambrose.** St Cyprian, a great bishop during the third century, who attacked the claims of the bishop of Rome to universal dominion, and was martyred (258) by the Emperor Valerian. St Ambrose, the famous bishop of Milan during the fourth century, was remarkable for the strictness of his own life and his fearless denunciation of sin, no matter how important the sinner—even the Emperor Theodosius being denied admission to the services of the Church until he had made a public repentance of his share in the massacre of Thessalonica (390).

p. 40, l. 11. **Henry IV.** Not the English king, but the great 'Henri Quatre' of song and story. He was born in 1553, was carefully educated as a Protestant, and became ruler of the Pyrenean kingdom of Navarre, and leader of the Huguenots. His first abjuration of Protestantism was made in Paris to escape death at the Massacre of St Bartholomew (1572). Four years later he returned to Protestantism. He succeeded to the French crown in 1589, and, finding that his position as Protestant king in a Catholic state was difficult and dangerous, he again abjured (1593) to conciliate the nobles and people of France, and especially of Paris, saying of that city that 'it was worth a Mass.'

p. 40, l. 37. **Council of Trent.** A great Council of the Church assembled in 1545 at Trent (on the Adige) to discuss the ecclesiastical position after the Protestant Reformation. The sittings lasted at intervals until 1563, and the decrees of the Council laid upon the Catholic Church a strict system of morals and doctrine.

p. 40, l. 38. **The Jansenian controversy.** Cornelius Jansen (1585—1638), a Dutch theologian, attacked certain teachings of the Jesuits in a book that appeared just before his death. His views—which may be called a sort of Puritan Catholicism—were violently opposed by the Jesuits and were officially condemned by the pope in 1642. Many great thinkers, however (notably Pascal), took the Jansenist side, and a great controversy raged in France on the matter for nearly a hundred years.

p. 41, l. 10. **Cumque superba**, etc. Lucan I. 10. 'Though proud Babylon might have been despoiled of its trophies, they preferred to wage a war which could bring no triumphs.'

p. 41, l. 12. **The Palatinate.** A state of the Empire on the Rhine, prominent later in the Thirty Years' War.

p. 41, l. 15. **The Confession of Augsburg.** The statement of Lutheran Protestant doctrine drawn up by Luther and Melancthon in 1530.

p. 41, l. 16. **Melville.** Andrew Melville (1545—1662), a zealous Scottish Presbyterian who played a leading part in the religious and political controversies of his time.

p. 41, l. 22. **The tenet of reprobation**, etc. The Calvinistic doctrine that some are predestined to future punishment.

p. 41, l. 26. **Whitgift.** John Whitgift (1533?—1604), Elizabeth's zealous Archbishop of Canterbury, who, while Calvinistic enough to hold the doctrine of reprobation (see above), was Churchman enough to persecute the Puritans for their views on Church government and their hatred of forms and ceremonies.

p. 41, l. 27. **Martin Marprelate.** The Puritans of Elizabeth's reign who had derived their views on Church discipline from Calvin objected strongly to Church government by bishops. They were roughly dealt with by Whitgift for refusing to obey the Act of Uniformity (1559) and retaliated by issuing a stream of most violent and scurrilous tracts written by several authors under the general pseudonym of 'Martin Marprelate,' the episcopal system, as the name implies, being the subject of special attack.

p. 42, l. 4. **St John Lateran.** In the south-east quarter of Rome. It is the 'mother church' of the city—and, indeed, of the Catholic world.

p. 42, l. 22. **Lithuania.** North of Poland and west of Russia proper. It is mentioned by Macaulay as being sufficiently remote from Palermo in Sicily to convey a clear idea of the widespread activity of the Jesuits.

p. 43, l. 40. **A tinker**, etc. The paragraph that follows is a summary of the spiritual life of Bunyan.

p. 44, l. 14. **Of one who had**, etc. Bunyan.

p. 44, l. 35. **The apostolical succession.** The doctrine that

the only valid priests are those ordained by valid bishops. This means that there must be no break in the line of ordination from the first 'laying on of hands' by the Apostles. The High Church movement was in vigorous action at the time when Macaulay wrote; so that many rectors would be preaching on the apostolical succession—either for or against it.

p. 45, l. 4. **Arian bishops.** Arius (born about 260) was a priest of Alexandria, who maintained that Christ was not co-equal and co-eternal with God. His views aroused such fierce controversy that a great Council was called at Nicæa (325) where Arius presented his views and was strongly opposed by Athanasius. The Council affirmed the doctrine of the Trinity, and thus the views of Arius were condemned; but they persisted for another century in the Eastern Church, and even longer among the Teutonic tribes that overthrew the Roman Empire.

p. 45, l. 35. **Massillon.** Jean Baptiste Massillon (1663—1742), the good and gentle bishop of Clermont in France, was a great preacher—perhaps the noblest of all pulpit orators.

p. 46, l. 1. **The Quirinal.** The Quirinal is one of the 'Seven Hills' upon which Rome is built, and its name is given to a palace begun in the sixteenth century, and used as a summer residence of the popes. Since 1870, however, it has been the palace of the king of Italy, so that obviously the carriages of the cardinals no longer crowd its entrance.

p. 46, l. 25. **Countess of Huntingdon.** Selina, Countess of Huntingdon (1707—1791), was a noble lady who came under the religious influence of Wesley and Whitefield. She formed a branch of the Methodists called 'The Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion' (just as the main body is called 'The Wesleyan Methodist Connexion'), founded many chapels, and instituted a college for the training of ministers—now at Cambridge.

p. 46, l. 26. **Mrs Fry.** Elizabeth Fry (1780—1845) was the daughter of a rich banker (one of the Gurneys). Both before and after her marriage she devoted herself to works of charity, especially to labour in the prisons, where, at this time, women with their children were herded together in circumstances of unutterable horror.

p. 46, l. 33. **St Teresa.** St Teresa (1515—1582) was a noble lady of Castile. She entered a Carmelite convent, and in course of time founded other religious houses where the strictness of the ancient Carmelite rule was revived and fully practised. Her book, *The Way of Perfection*, is a most popular work of extreme devotion, and her sanctity is hymned by the English poet Crashaw. The allusions here are explained in the earlier note on Joanna Southcott.

p. 47, l. 11. **The Protestant party was...vanquished.** In this paragraph the allusions are to the earlier part of the Thirty Years' War which began in 1618 in a dispute about the crown of Bohemia.



The Protestant revolutionists chose Frederick, ruler of the Palatinate and son-in-law of our own James I; but the legal sovereign was Ferdinand, the emperor, and head of the house of Austria. The Catholics, i.e. the adherents of the Austrian house, were at first entirely successful. The king of Denmark alluded to is Christian IV

p. 47, l. 20. **Ivry.** Henry IV as a Protestant leader defeated the army of the Catholic League at Ivry in 1590. The battle is the subject of a well-known ballad by Macaulay.

p. 47, l. 29. **The ramparts of Stralsund.** The Imperial armies under the famous Wallenstein and Tilly had been victorious in all the Protestant provinces, but received their first serious check at Stralsund (1628).

p. 48, l. 27. **A great event,** etc. Macaulay is here referring to the later part of the Thirty Years' War. When Catholic triumph in that war seemed to mean merely the triumph of the house of Austria, the primary religious nature of the struggle was lost sight of, and Catholic powers were ready to join with Protestants against other Catholics. The coalition here mentioned was that of Catholic France and Protestant Sweden against Catholic Austria.

p. 48, l. 31. **The first statesman.** Cardinal Richelieu (1585—1642), the great foreign minister of France.

p. 48, l. 32. **The first warrior.** Gustavus Adolphus (1594—1632), king of Sweden. He took a leading part in the great Thirty Years' War between the Protestants and Catholics, and gained many wonderful victories, at the last of which, Lützen, he was killed.

p. 49, l. 13. **The head of a coalition.** The allusion here is to the War of the Grand Alliance (1689—1697) against Louis XIV's aggressive policy of expansion. The coalition included England, Holland, Savoy, Spain, and some of the German states.

p. 49, l. 16. **In the time of Anne.** Macaulay is here referring to the War of the Spanish Succession (1704—1713) in which the English allies took the side of the Catholic Archduke Charles against the Catholic Philip who was supported by France and Spain.

p. 50, l. 36. **The fourth great peril.** The philosophical rationalism of the eighteenth century especially associated with the names of Diderot and Voltaire.

p. 51, l. 15. **Bossuet.** Jacques Bossuet (1627—1704) was a great French theologian and pulpit orator.

p. 51, l. 16. **Tillotson.** John Robert Tillotson (1630—1694), Archbishop of Canterbury and great pulpit orator. His views were what would now be called very 'Low Church,' and naturally his inferences from Scripture would be very unlike those of Bossuet.

p. 51, l. 24. **Bacon most justly observes.** 'Atheism did never perturb states; for it makes men wary of themselves, as looking no further.' *Essay, Of Superstition.*

p. 51, l. 28. **The Patriarch of the Holy Philosophical Church.** Voltaire, who made the stories of the Scriptures and the dogmas of the Church the subject of biting ridicule.

p. 52, l. 15. **An innocent man.** Jean Calas, a Protestant tradesman of Toulouse, was accused by the Church of having murdered his son for proposing to become a Catholic. He was sentenced to death and broken on the wheel in 1762. Voltaire took up the case, and owing to his efforts, the poor dead man was declared innocent and his family received monetary compensation; but no punishment was meted out to the Churchmen who had invented the monstrous lie. The supposed murdered son had really committed suicide.

p. 52, l. 17. **A youth,** etc. Macaulay's 'beheaded' is a strangely inadequate statement of an atrocious case. The Chevalier de la Barre was a youth of less than twenty, and inclined to the wildness and impiety fashionable in eighteenth-century France. In these he seems to have been encouraged by his relative, the extremely unreverend Abbess of a religious order at Abbeville, a lady to whom a certain magistrate named Duval had paid amorous attentions. One day two crucifixes in public places of Abbeville were found wantonly and indecently disfigured. Suspicion fell on La Barre and some of his companions, and Duval, jealous of the young man's favour with the Abbess, urged the ecclesiastical authorities to punish him. La Barre was seized. One of his companions escaped, and another, a lad of sixteen, confessed, in fear of torture, that La Barre had frequently sung blasphemous and atheistical songs. La Barre was put to the torture and confessed that he was guilty of the crucifix outrage; but no proof was ever forthcoming, nor were the crucifixes mentioned in his sentence. At any rate, he had behaved foolishly and wickedly, and deserved, as Voltaire acknowledged, severe punishment. But what actually happened was this: he was adjudged guilty of 'Wickedly and from impiety passing with deliberate steps before the holy sacrament without taking off the hat or kneeling; singing blasphemous songs, etc.'; and he was sentenced to be put to torture for the purpose of extorting the names of his accomplices; to have his tongue torn out by the roots with red-hot pincers of iron; to have his right hand cut off at the door of the principal church at Abbeville; to be drawn in a cart to the market-place and there burned to death by slow fire. The case was carried to Paris, but the Church fought bitterly, and the only result of the appeal was that La Barre was allowed to be beheaded before his body was burned. Five executioners accompanied him back to Abbeville, and on July 1, 1766, the hideous atrocity was perpetrated. Attempts to tear out the tongue failed; and all this and the rest were borne by the poor lad with the utmost resignation and fortitude. Voltaire had fully believed that the sentence would never be carried out, and he was inexpressibly shocked. He wrote vigorous letters to all his influential friends,

and a popular pamphlet that gave the dreadful story the widest circulation. He rescued the boy who had escaped. He wrote further, and laboured till his death to get the memory of La Barre cleared.

p. 52, l. 18. **A brave officer.** The Comte de Lally was a noble Frenchman (1702—1766) who distinguished himself by service against the British in India during the Seven Years' War. After much vigorous fighting he was besieged in Pondicherry, which he was finally compelled to surrender in 1761 after a ten months' siege. He was charged with cowardice, and in 1766 his enemies at home secured his condemnation and execution after a long imprisonment. Voltaire supported the efforts of Lally's son to clear his father's memory, and the cause of justice was at last successful in 1778, when a royal decree reversed the iniquitous sentence. The son, Marquis de Lally-Tollendal, distinguished himself by taking the side of reform in the early days of the Revolution. It is interesting to recall that Voltaire exerted himself to prevent the political murder of our Admiral Byng in 1757, and described the execution in a contemptuous chapter of his *Candide*, concluding with the famous remark that in England it is thought advisable to kill an admiral now and then in order to encourage the others.

p. 52, l. 20. **The Place de Grève.** The square in which for several centuries the public executions in Paris took place.

p. 52, l. 21. **Lake Lemán.** Voltaire lived at Ferney, near Geneva.

p. 52, l. 32. **The best of kings.** Henri IV, stabbed in 1610 by a Catholic fanatic named Ravaillac.

p. 52, l. 32. **The war of Cevennes.** This was a religious war brought about by the Revocation (in 1685) of the Edict of Nantes which had granted toleration to Protestants. Dreadful cruelties were committed during its course by the Catholic troopers under Marshal Villars. The Protestants of the Cevennes who had taken arms after the Revocation were led by Jean Cavalier, and were generally called the 'Camiards' from the sort of smock they wore over their clothes. All over France the Protestants suffered. If taken while trying to escape the men were sent to the galleys, the women into slavery, and the children into convents. Many, however, did escape, some to England, where they brought the manufactures that the great minister Colbert had taken such pains to establish.

p. 52, l. 33. **Port-Royal.** Antoine Arnauld (1612—1694), a brilliant French theologian, became head of a religious house at Port-Royal, where, with some friends, the chief being the great Pascal, he led the Jansenist attack on the Jesuits in a series of vigorous writings. The Jesuits, however, had friends at Court. The Port-Royalists were hunted down, and Arnauld had to go into hiding to escape death.

p. 54, l. 1. **The rulers of Prussia, etc.** Frederick the Great of Prussia, Catherine II of Russia, and the Emperor Joseph II.

p. 54, l. 23. **Anabaptists...Fifth-Monarchy men.** Macaulay's point is that the views of the Anabaptists and Fifth Monarchy men were mere caricatures of the sober Protestantism of Luther and the sober Puritanism of Pym. The Anabaptists believed that infant baptism was sinful, and that any person so baptised must, when adult, receive a second baptism. One of their leaders, John of Leyden, set up a spiritual kingdom at Münster in 1534, and established community of goods, plurality of wives, and other practices believed to be authorised by Scripture. The Fifth Monarchy men were English Puritan fanatics, who laid stress upon Daniel's prophecy of the four kingdoms of the earth, and believed that the time had come for establishing the fifth monarchy, that of the Saints, as described in Daniel vii. 18.

p. 54, l. 33. **The Jacobin Club and the Commune of Paris.** The fiercest spirits of the French Revolution.

p. 55, l. 2. **The carmagnole.** A popular song and dance during the wildest times of the Revolution. The Convention was the representative body which replaced the Legislative Assembly in 1792.

p. 55, l. 3. **Marat.** One of the most virulent of revolutionaries (1743—1793). He was assassinated by Charlotte Corday.

p. 55, l. 6. **Chancel of Notre Dame.** The worship of Reason was solemnly established in 1793, a woman being enthroned to represent that quality.

p. 55, l. 16. **Lepaux, etc.** Lepaux, Cloutz and Chaumette were minor figures in the French Revolution.

p. 55, l. 30. **The Cisalpine republic.** During the early years of Napoleon's military glory the Lombard states and northern Italy generally as far south as the States of the Church were united into a Cisalpine Republic; the old Republic of Genoa became the Ligurian Republic, and the kingdom of Naples the Parthenopean Republic—all under French control.

p. 55, l. 31. **The shrine of Loretto.** A place of pilgrimage in Italy, supposed to be the house of the Virgin Mary, translated thither.

p. 55, l. 35. **The Castle of St Angelo.** The fortress of the popes on the Tiber in Rome.

p. 55, l. 35. **The successor of St Peter.** Pope Pius VI, who, after captivity in several places, died at Valence, 1799.

p. 56, l. 8. **Theophilanthropic chapels.** Theophilanthropy—the sacred love of mankind—was a new form of religion that arose in France during the Revolutionary period. Lepaux, before referred to, was its founder.

p. 56, l. 12. **The milk-white hind.** In Dryden's allegorical poem, *The Hind and the Panther*, the Catholic Church is represented by a hind :

A milk-white Hind, immortal and unchanged,  
Fed on the lawns and in the forest ranged ;  
Without unspotted, innocent within,  
She found no danger, for she knew no sin.  
Yet had she oft been chased with horns and hounds,  
And Scythian shafts; and many-winged wounds  
Aimed at her heart; was often forced to fly,  
And doomed to death, though fated not to die.

p. 56, l. 27. **The republic of Holland was gone,** etc. French conquest in 1793 made Holland into the Batavian Republic. The elective German or Holy Roman Empire ceased to exist in 1806, and its place was partly taken by the new hereditary Austrian Empire. The Republic of Venice was extinguished in 1797. The Helvetic League of Switzerland became the Helvetic Republic in 1798. The house of Bourbon (the French Royal house) and the Parlements (the judicial assemblies of France) ceased to exist at the Revolution. The French Republic became an Empire under Napoleon in 1804; Napoleon's conquests in northern Italy were consolidated into a Kingdom of Italy in 1805; and the Confederation of the Rhine, a united group of German states subject to France, was formed by Napoleon in 1806. All these changes were due to the Revolution, and most of them to Napoleon.

p. 57, l. 22. **The 'Encyclopædia.'** The great work edited by Diderot (1713—1784), which became the great literary reservoir into which all the keen philosophical criticism of government and religion was poured. It began to appear in 1751.

p. 57, l. 23. **The 'Philosophical Dictionary.'** This was one of the famous works of Voltaire attacking the religious and ecclesiastical system of his day. It contained, among other things, his contributions to the *Encyclopædia*. Possession of a copy of this was one of the facts that helped to condemn La Barre.

p. 57, l. 37. **Baron Holbach.** Baron Holbach (1723—1789), born in Germany, became French by sentiment and settlement. He was a philosopher like Voltaire, holding extreme views on the subject of religion—one of his doctrines being that the notion of God was invented by priests and kings for their own profit.

## WALTER BAGEHOT: SHAKESPEARE THE MAN

Walter Bagehot (1826—1877) was a Somerset man. He was educated at a school in Bristol, and at University College, London, where one of his friends was R. H. Hutton, whose charming biographical sketch of him is prefixed to the *Literary Studies*. He read for the Bar, but decided finally to follow the family career of banking—his father being the head of ‘Stuckey’s,’ the famous West of England firm whose ‘paper’ has been preferred by honest Somerset farmers to that of the Bank of England. The name of Walter Bagehot is specially associated with finance, for not only was he concerned with the management of a banking business, but he married the daughter of James Wilson, the founder of *The Economist*, and presently succeeded to the editorship of that famous organ of high finance. The conduct of this paper brought him into close touch with English politics, and the intimacy of his acquaintance is shown in a most suggestive series of essays forming the volume called *The English Constitution*. Two other books, *Lombard Street* and *Economic Studies*, reflect his knowledge of financial theory and practice. It will be seen, then, that Bagehot differs from all the other writers represented in this volume in being a man of affairs as well as a man of letters. His business life influenced his writing considerably, and one trace of its effect can be seen in the scorn he expresses here for mere bookworms who try to write of man without knowing men. One might say that all his literary work is the product of two Walter Bagehots. The robust common-sense, the air of practicality, the keenly critical observation—a sort of ‘auditing’ of famous reputations—are the contribution of the man of business; while the highly original style, the terseness, the wealth of epigram, the unexpected sallies of humour and cynicism, are the contribution of the man of letters. His *Literary Studies* and *Biographical Studies* form a body of most stimulating and enlightening literature, and represent the purely critical spirit of the nineteenth century at its best. (Pronounced ‘Bajot.’)

p. 59, title. ‘Shakespeare the Man.’ A later essay with the same title is to be found in Mr A. C. Bradley’s admirable *Oxford Lectures on Poetry*.

p. 60, l. 23. **The distinguished Frenchman.** Guizot. In accordance with the literary convention of the day, Bagehot wrote his essay as a ‘review’ of certain books. In such an essay, the topical books are perhaps briefly mentioned, but seldom discussed. They are a mere excuse, a starting-point. The essay of Macaulay in this volume is a further example of the review-essay. One of the two books named at the head of Bagehot’s paper is a study of Shakespeare by François Guizot (1787—1874), who was a voluminous writer on French and English historical subjects as well

as a distinguished statesman. He was for a time French ambassador in London.

His political career began in 1814, after the retirement of Napoleon to Elba. He was a leader of the Liberal opposition which overthrew the attempted absolutism of Charles X at the Revolution of 1830; and in 1840 he became first minister of the 'citizen-king' Louis Philippe. He supported that sovereign's reactionary attempts to rule by a personal régime of benevolent despotism, and when the Revolution of 1848 overthrew the monarchy Guizot escaped to London. This is the 'fall' to which Bagehot refers. Guizot tried to lead an opposition to the new Republic; but when its president Louis Napoleon triumphantly declared himself Emperor with the title 'Napoleon III,' Guizot felt that his own political defeat was final. From 1851 he took no part in affairs of state, and devoted himself to his historical compositions.

p. 61, l. 8. **An émeute.** A riot.

p. 61, l. 38. **Mr Alison.** Archibald Alison (1792—1867), a once famous lawyer and historian. His principal work was a *History of Europe from 1789 to 1851*. He was made a baronet in 1852.

p. 62, l. 6. **Hazlitt.** William Hazlitt (1778—1830), the famous essayist. The West referred to is Benjamin West (1738—1820), a painter of some importance in his day, but now very slightly regarded. He was born in Pennsylvania, and settled in England, where he painted many vast pictures, chiefly historical in character. He became President of the Royal Academy in 1792.

p. 62, l. 13. **Doctrinaire.** A doctrinaire is a person who holds strong views of life or government, and is prepared to carry them to an immoderate extreme without any compromise, or regard for results.

p. 62, l. 38. **Indented glides.** 'Glides' is here a noun—wavy glidings.

p. 63, l. 9. **He cranks.** He twists and turns.

p. 63, l. 10. **Musets.** Holes or gaps in a hedge.

p. 63, l. 14. **Earth-delving conies.** Burrowing rabbits.

p. 63, l. 21. **Cold fault.** The loss of the scent.

p. 63, l. 24. **Poor Wat.** Familiar name for the hare.

p. 67, l. 8. **Cytherea's breath.** Cytherea was one of the many names of the goddess Venus.

p. 68, l. 13. **Mazy error.** 'Error' is used in its strictly literal sense of 'wandering.'

p. 68, l. 15. **Nice art.** 'Nice' in its old sense of 'over-choice,' or 'too particular.'

p. 68, l. 24. **Hesperian fables.** The old stories of the Garden of the Hesperides where grew trees bearing mysterious apples of gold. The 'golden apples' were undoubtedly oranges, much magnified by report.

p. 69, l. 4. **So flewed, so sanded.** With large hanging cheeks and of sandy colour.

p. 69, l. 6. **Dewlapped like Thessalian bulls.** With loose flesh hanging from the throat. Thessaly was the central part of Greece—a northern province of modern Greece.

p. 69, l. 20. **Treatise on education.** Milton wrote a *Tractate on Education* in the form of an elaborate letter.

p. 70, l. 10. **Argillaceous earth.** Clay soil.

p. 70, l. 36. **The 'Doctor.'** Robert Southey (1774—1843), Poet Laureate, essayist, historian, was much more important in his own age than this, which knows him chiefly as the writer of the brief *Life of Nelson* and of some admirable short poems. *The Doctor* is a vast miscellany into which is collected a diversified assortment of fact, fancy, and fiction.

p. 71, l. 15. **Care a real.** A 'real' was a Spanish coin, the phrase being Bagehot's humorous perversion of our own 'care twopence' (or similar sums).

p. 71, l. 19. **Half a clerk's wages.** Southey, however, died worth £12,000.

p. 71, l. 21. **The critic in 'The Vicar of Wakefield.'** See Chapter xx.

p. 71, l. 30. **Burgersdicius and Æncesidemus.** Merely used as typifying pedantic compilers of useless learning.

p. 72, l. 8. **Petty feuds of Argos and Lacedæmon.** The unimportant disputes between small Greek states—and therefore not worth too close study by men of to-day.

p. 73, l. 17. **His biographer.** J. G. Lockhart, Scott's son-in-law.

p. 73, l. 38. **Dandie Dinmont.** The excellent Lidderdale farmer in Scott's *Guy Mannering*.

p. 74, l. 29. **Weimar.** Goethe lived for the last fifty-seven years of his life at the court of the Grand Duke of Weimar.

p. 74, l. 29. **plants in the act of metamorphosis.** Goethe was much interested in science, and his works include botanical and optical treatises.

p. 74, l. 36. **'Wilhelm Meister.'** Well known in England through Carlyle's translation.

p. 76, l. 26. **Palabras.** A Spanish word meaning 'words.' It also occurs in the *Taming of the Shrew*, 'Paucas pallabris,' meaning few words.



p. 80, l. 8. **fallacy of reference**, etc. Logical terms that do not need to be explained, since Bagehot uses them merely to ridicule the over-clever people who are fond of calling simple things by difficult names.

p. 80, l. 9. **Dr Whately's logic**. Richard Whately (1787—1863) played a large part in the religious controversies of the nineteenth century. He became Archbishop of Dublin in 1831. His works (mainly theological) include a once popular treatise on logic.

p. 83, l. 1. **Lord Palmerston's replies**. Lord Palmerston (1784—1865), the famous statesman of the mid-Victorian era, was, when Foreign Secretary, famous for his rather truculent replies both to ministers abroad and to critics at home. His brusque, John Bullish assertiveness caused considerable trouble in diplomatic matters, but earned him immense popularity among the general public. Long after his death, the average Englishman wished for another 'Pam' to enforce upon 'the foreigners' respect for British superiority.

p. 83, l. 20. **One of the popular writers of this age**. Dickens.

p. 83, l. 22. **Hogarth**. William Hogarth (1697—1764), the famous moral and satirical painter. His works are valuable illustrations of the less admirable side of eighteenth-century social life. Bagehot calls him 'our greatest painter,' for Ruskin's historic championship of Turner and other great landscape artists was, at the date of this essay, only in the early stages of its influence; but though one would hardly go so far now, he could certainly be called one of the most English of painters. His best work, the series called 'Marriage à la Mode,' is in the National Gallery; so too are 'Calais Gate' and many portraits. Two other important sets, 'The Rake's Progress' and 'The Election,' are in the interesting Soane Museum in London. One of Charles Lamb's admirable essays in criticism deals with the work of Hogarth.

p. 87, l. 9. **The ward of Eastcheap**, etc. A reference to the Boar's Head scenes in the two parts of *Henry IV*. The 'society that heard the chimes at midnight' assembled at the house of Mr Justice Shallow—see 2 *Henry IV*, Act III, Scene ii.

p. 87, l. 21. **eating cares**. A reference to Milton's *L'Allegro*.

p. 87, l. 35. **Frequenters of the Mermaid**. 'The creator of Falstaff could have been no stranger to tavern life, and he doubtless took part with zest in the convivialities of men of letters. Tradition reports that Shakespeare joined, at the Mermaid Tavern in Bread Street, in those meetings of Jonson and his associates which Beaumont described in his poetical *Letter to Jonson*:

What things have we seen

Done at the Mermaid? heard words that have been

So nimble, and so full of subtle flame,

As if that every one from whence they came

Had meant to put his whole wit in a jest,  
And had resolved to live a fool the rest  
Of his dull life.'

(Sidney Lee, *Shakespeare's Life and Work*.)

p. 89, l. 37. **The late Mr Keats.** Keats had died in 1821. Even by 1853, the date of this essay, it could hardly be said that he had taken an unchallengeable place in the ranks of immortal poets.

p. 90, l. 7. **Quædam simulacra**, etc. Lucretius, l. 123: 'certain phantoms pale in wondrous wise.'

p. 91, l. 35. **And 'tailor' cries.** An exclamation, the meaning of which is much disputed.

'Neeze,' in a neighbouring line, is 'sneeze.'

p. 92, l. 21. **Jacobins.** The members of the Jacobins' club were the most uncompromising of the Revolutionists in France. The term came to be generally used in England of discontented persons who desired to abolish the advantages and privileges of rank.

p. 93, l. 4. **Everybody's suffrage.** Although the right of voting was greatly extended by the Reform Bill of 1832, it was still (1853) very restricted. The ordinary householder and the ordinary workman had no vote. Hence the famous 'People's Charter' of 1846 included, as one of its 'points,' universal suffrage, or the right of every man, propertied or not, to have a vote. This demand was felt, at the time, to be absurdly extreme, and the point is not even yet conceded, though likely to be in the near future; but the franchise was greatly extended in 1867 by Disraeli, and in 1884 by Gladstone.

p. 93, l. 31. **A great divine.** Frederick Denison Maurice (1805—1872), leader of the Christian Socialist Movement, founder of the Working Men's College and of the Queen's College for women.

p. 94, l. 11. **Has no vote.** Bagehot was writing before the great extensions of the franchise mentioned in the note above.

p. 97, l. 12. **Questions about Octavia.** A reference to *Antony and Cleopatra*, Act III, Sc. iii, where Cleopatra (who loves Antony) questions Charmian jealously about Octavia, whom Antony had married for political reasons. Byron might be presumed to know the ways of women since so many women had been in love with him because of his handsome appearance and romantic character.

p. 98, l. 37. **When Socrates was knocked up**, etc. The views of Socrates, the great Greek philosopher (fifth century B.C.), were expressed in elaborate dialogues or conversations recorded by his disciple Plato. The knocking up of Socrates in the early morning and the ensuing discussion are described in the dialogue named *Protagoras* from the false philosopher whose views are exposed by Socrates.

p. 99, l. 5. **The epicene element.** The word 'epicene' is a grammatical term signifying 'common in gender.' However, the word is sometimes used to describe those people who seem to hover, in character, between the two sexes—the effeminate man and the masculine woman. Bagehot means that the dialogues of Plato appeal only to a strong, virile intellect, free from sentimentality.

p. 99, l. 17. **A daguerreotype.** The first photographs were called daguerreotypes from Daguerre (1789—1851), a Frenchman, one of the several persons who discovered the first processes of photography early in the nineteenth century.

p. 99, l. 29. **Mr Grote.** George Grote (1794—1871), a banker who devoted himself to historical and political literature. His greatest work is the famous *History of Greece*, but he wrote, as well, separate treatises on Plato and Aristotle.

p. 100, l. 6. **Gorgias.** One of the characters in Plato's dialogue of that name.

p. 100, l. 14. **a priori assumptions.** Principles that are assumed to exist in order to explain certain results. The phrase is used by Bagehot to mean notions that no one had thought of questioning.

p. 100, l. 24. **Mr Croker.** John Wilson Croker (1780—1857), a notorious writer on the side of the Court and Tory party in the early years of the nineteenth century. He is the original of Rigby, the corrupt and fawning politician in Disraeli's novel *Coningsby*, and he is the subject of a slashing attack by Macaulay in the essay on Dr Johnson. He wrote very many essays for the *Quarterly Review*; and among his published volumes is a collection of *Essays on the French Revolution*.

p. 101, l. 5. **Montaigne.** Gonzalo's description of a perfect Commonwealth is based upon one of the *Essays of Montaigne* (1533—1592), first and best of all essayists.

p. 101, l. 18. **Mr Collier.** John Payne Collier (1789—1833) was a journalist and a keen student of the old drama. He is principally remembered for his alleged 'discoveries' in Shakespeare. He asserted that in an old folio of Shakespeare he had bought there were marginal notes and corrections written in a seventeenth-century handwriting. He collected these corrections and published them as *Notes and Emendations to the text of Shakespeare's Plays from early Manuscript Corrections in a Copy of the Folio of 1632, etc.* This is the second of the two books placed by Bagehot at the head of his article—the first being Guizot's work to which earlier reference has been made. Collier's corrections aroused a storm of controversy, and an examination of the folio volume proved them to be fabrications of his own. Bagehot quotes a specimen. His remark 'we allow that we admire them ourselves' is of course sarcastic.

p. 102, l. 35. **Dr Ulrici.** Hermann Ulrici (1806—1884) was a German philosopher who wrote, among many other things, an elaborate and laborious treatise on Shakespeare's dramatic art, containing extremely dull descriptions of what Dr Ulrici conceived that Shakespeare meant by his plays. Bagehot calls him 'illegible' because his work is dreary and 'unreadable.'

p. 105, l. 29. **An ad captandum man.** A person who bids for popular applause; so, a showy, shallow person, one who 'plays to the gallery.' 'Monstrum horrendum' (Virgil, *Æneid* III. 658), a dreadful monster—part of the description of the blinded Cyclops, Polyphemus.

## JOHN HENRY NEWMAN: LITERATURE

John Henry Newman (1801—1890) was born in the City of London not far from the place where Liverpool Street Station now stands. He was educated at Ealing, and proceeded to Trinity College, Oxford, 1817. From early years he was intended for the ministry, and in 1828 he became Vicar of St Mary's, Oxford, a church that his wonderful preaching and magical charm of personality made a centre of attraction and influence. The careful study of early ecclesiastical history caused him reluctantly and painfully to abandon the 'Low' Church beliefs in which he had been brought up, and to adopt gradually views that many people held to be dangerously like Catholicism. Much of the deep distress he felt at his unsettled spiritual condition can be traced in his poems, especially in that called 'The Pillar of the Cloud,' known literally to everyone as the hymn 'Lead, Kindly Light.' The new 'High' Church views held by him and his friends were put forth in a series of *Tracts for the Times*, many of which provoked a storm of opposition, especially the ninetieth, written in 1841 by Newman himself. Several of the 'Tractarians,' as they were called, joined the Roman Church; and, after a great spiritual conflict, Newman himself followed in 1845, shattering the hopes of many devout Anglicans who had been fascinated by his preaching and writing, and had looked upon him as their leader. As a Catholic, he entered the brotherhood of the Oratorians, and established a branch of that order at Edgbaston, near Birmingham, where nearly all the rest of his long life was spent, and where he died in 1890. He had been made a Cardinal by Leo XIII in 1879.

Apart from his historical importance, first as the most influential figure in the modern High Church movement, and next as the acknowledged leader of the broad-minded and enlightened section of English Catholics, Newman has great literary importance as one of the masters of English prose. This fact is concealed from many

readers not specifically interested in theology by the unattractive titles of most of his books. They suggest not merely theology, but controversial theology, which is rarely amiable and even more rarely productive of good reading. Such an impression is totally false in the case of Newman; and the student may turn to almost any of his works with the certainty of enjoying the charm of a winning personality and the grace of a clear, supple, and exquisitely expressive prose style. All the following represent him at his best: *The Idea of a University*; *Lectures on the Present Position of Catholics*; *Lectures on Anglican Difficulties*; the *Apologia pro vita sua* (a sort of spiritual autobiography); *Discussions and Arguments*; *Essays*; and *Historical Sketches*. Even the sermons must not be overlooked;—indeed, the opening paragraphs of one, entitled *The Second Spring*, may be called without fear of contradiction a piece of perfect prose. Some of his verses, too, are good, especially the wonderful *Dream of Gerontius*.

What Newman says about literature in the present essay is the result of his own experience. Few writers are so individual in style as he; yet that style was developed by the repeated imitation of others—even of styles as diverse as those of Addison and Gibbon, Steele and Johnson. In all that he wrote, his one aim was to say as clearly as possible everything that he meant, from the plainest matter down to the finest shades. He tells us that, in preparing a new book, he would write and re-write, put the work away for a time, take it up, and re-write once more. Even when it had been to the printers he would fiercely correct, and correct again, and still be dissatisfied. There is, however, no trace of such labour in the finished product, which, in ease and urbanity, is surpassed by no prose in the language. It is not an instrument of one note. It is at will ironical or majestic, indignant or pathetic; and it has yet another quality: the prose of some men is admirable; the prose of Newman is lovable.

p. 107, l. 1. **Gentlemen.** This essay was originally written as a lecture, the audience being students of the Catholic University in Dublin. The places, however, in which Newman may be said to speak definitely as a Catholic to Catholics are very few in number, and so unimportant as to be negligible.

p. 108, l. 36. **A writer.** Laurence Sterne (1713—1768), the famous author of *Tristram Shandy* and *A Sentimental Journey*. The quotation is from Sermon XLII.

p. 109, l. 4. **Over-curious.** Used in its older sense of 'over-elaborate.'

p. 109, l. 28. **Homer's famed representation, etc.** The description of Jupiter occurs at l. 528 of the *Iliad*: 'The son of Cronos spake, and nodded his shadowed brows, while the ambrosial locks flowed waving from his immortal head; and great Olympus quaked and trembled at his nod.' The relation of Neptune's shaking the

earth is found at xx. 54 of the *Iliad*. Perhaps it is best given in Lord Derby's translation :

Thundered on high the Sire of Gods and men  
 With awful din ; while Neptune shook beneath  
 The boundless earth and lofty mountain tops.  
 The spring-abounding Ida quaked and rocked  
 From her firm basis to her loftiest peak,  
 And Troy's proud city, and the ships of Greece.  
 Pluto, the infernal monarch, heard alarmed,  
 And, springing from his throne, cried out in fear,  
 Lest Neptune, breaking through the solid earth,  
 To mortals and Immortals should lay bare  
 His dark and drear abode, of gods abhorred.

The description of a tempest is no doubt that in *Odyssey* v. It is given here in Worsley's version :

Even as he spoke a mighty wave uncurled  
 Downward, around him with a hideous leap.  
 He from the torn deck violently hurled,  
 Nor able in his clasp the helm to keep,  
 Fell at a distance in the swirling deep ;  
 And the fierce hurricane split the groaning mast.  
 For mingled in a wild convulsive sweep  
 Madly the universal winds rushed past,  
 And in the foaming flood canvas and sailyard cast.  
 Long time he lay submerged in the great wave,  
 Nor could recover from the ruinous stroke,  
 Encumbered with the robes Calypso gave ;  
 Yet from the dark depths at the last upbroke,  
 Sputtering the salt seawater, nigh to choke.  
 Nor even then did he forget the ship  
 In the wild buffetings whereto he woke,  
 But struggling, clutched it with an iron grip,  
 And the bark clomb, and sat hoping Death's toils to slip.  
 Her all the while the mighty waves o'erpower,  
 And whirl in dire distraction to and fro.  
 As when the north wind, in autumnal hour,  
 O'er the wide champaign thistledown doth blow,  
 Clinging together as it can, even so,  
 Dashed by the winds she drifted here and there  
 In the mid billows. Now did Notus throw  
 The bark to Boreas ; nor did Eurys spare  
 His ire, then spewed her forth for Zephyrus to tear.

'Pallas's horses' should be really 'Hera's horses,' though in *Iliad* v Athene rides in the chariot. Generally, Athene has no horses or car. This is doubtless the passage referred to :

She urged her horses : nothing loth, they flew  
 Midway between the earth and starry Heaven ;

Far as his sight extends, who from on high  
Looks from his watch-tower o'er the dark-blue sea,  
So far at once the neighing horses bound.  
But when to Troy they came, beside the streams  
Where Simöis' and Scamander's waters meet,  
The white-armed Goddess stayed her flying steeds,  
Loosed from the car, and veiled in densest cloud.

p. 109, l. 36. **Virgil**, etc. Virgil (70—19 B.C.) was the greatest of Latin poets. His epic, the *Æneid*, celebrates the life and adventures of Æneas, the Trojan hero and legendary founder of the Latin people; his *Georgics* describe in verse the arts of the husbandman; and his *Eclogues* are exquisite pastorals (of the type familiarized to English readers by Milton's *Lycidas*) closely modelled on the *Idylls* of Theocritus, the Sicilian poet, who flourished in the third century B.C. Pindar (522—443 B.C.) is the greatest of Greek lyric poets. His many odes are elaborate compositions celebrating various aspects of Greek ceremonial life—victories, triumphs, processions, etc. Gray calls two of his most famous poems Pindaric Odes.

p. 110, l. 12. **Longinus**. A Greek philosopher of the third century. His famous treatise *On the Sublime* is a classic of literary criticism. Longinus criticises Homer for degrading the gods into men when he describes their quarrels, combats, wounds and tears, and points out the superiority of passages where the poet suggests deity in its majesty and perfection. He supports his contention thus:

'So likewise the Jewish legislator—no ordinary person—having conceived a just idea of the power of God, has nobly expressed it in the beginning of his law. And God said—What?—"Let there be light"; and there was light. "Let the earth be"; and the earth was.'

p. 110, l. 26. **Thucydides**, etc. See notes on p. 213.

p. 115, l. 40. **A public lecture elsewhere**. In the third of his *Lectures on the Present Position of Catholics in England*, Newman relates, at somewhat greater length, this story of 'a certain learned Mr White, well known in the University of Oxford, Professor of Arabic in that seat of learning,' and his adventure in hiring a Devonshire curate to translate his bald matter into a decorated 'style.'

p. 117, l. 3. **Facit indignatio versus**. Juvenal i. 19: 'Si natura negat, facit indignatio versus'; that is, 'If nature gives no talent, indignation (at public evils) fashions the verses.'

p. 117, l. 7. **Poeta nascitur**, etc. The poet is born, not made. It is a proverbial saying.

p. 117, l. 14. **The vision of Mirza**. A famous *Spectator* paper by Addison. See the *Selections from the Spectator* in this series.

p. 117, l. 25. **Aristotle in his sketch**, etc. The magnanimous man is described with scientific fulness in Bk IV, Chap. 3 of Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*. The passage to which Newman particularly refers is this: 'The gait of the magnanimous man is slow, his voice deep, and his language stately; for he who only feels anxiety about few things is not apt to be in a hurry; and he who thinks highly of nothing is not vehement; and shrillness and quickness of speaking arise from these things.'

p. 117, l. 35. **κῦδεῖ γάλων**. Exulting in his strength.

p. 118, l. 38. **Os magna sonaturum**. Horace, *Satires* I. 4. 44; 'a diction capable of expressing great ideas.' Horace (65—8 B.C.) is called 'the ancient critic,' because one of his poems deals with some aspects of the art of poetry.

p. 119, l. 6. **Mens magna in corpore magno**. A great soul in a noble body. Adapted from the 'mens sana,' etc. of Juvenal X. 356.

p. 119, l. 12. **Scipio**. Publius Cornelius Scipio (237—183 B.C.), called Africanus from his great victories over the Carthaginians.

p. 119, l. 12. **Pompey**. Cneius Pompeius Magnus, great Roman soldier, at first an ally of Cæsar and next his rival. He led the army of Cæsar's enemies, but was totally defeated at Pharsalia (48 B.C.) and fled to Egypt, where he was murdered.

p. 119, l. 20. **Livy nor Tacitus**, etc. Quoted as representative examples of Latin literature. Livy and Tacitus were great historians; Terence and Seneca dramatists, the latter philosopher as well; Pliny was most famous as a writer of letters; and Quintilian as an orator and writer on oratory.

p. 120, l. 3. **Isocrates**. The great Athenian orator who flourished about 400 B.C. His many orations have all the good qualities of great speeches—except (as Newman hints) greatness of matter. He must not, of course, be confused with the philosopher Socrates.

p. 120, l. 3. **The sophists**. The sophists were teachers of rhetoric in Greece. The word is generally used to mean those shallow people who value form above matter.

p. 120, l. 25. **Michael Angelo and Raffaele**. See note on p. 193.

p. 120, l. 27. **Apollo Belvidere**. The famous statue, found in the fifteenth century, and now one of the greatest treasures of the Vatican Museum:

in his eye  
And nostril, beautiful disdain and might  
And majesty, flash their full lightnings by,  
Developing in that one glance the Deity.

*Childe Harold*, IV. 161.



p. 120, l. 39. **Our greatest poet tells us.** Shakespeare, in the *Midsummer Night's Dream*, Act v, Sc. i.

p. 121, l. 18. **Demosthenes.** The greatest of Greek orators, flourished during the fourth century B.C.

p. 121, l. 19. **Thucydides.** The greatest of Greek historians, flourished during the fifth century B.C.

p. 121, l. 21. **Herodotus.** The 'Father of History' was the first Greek historian to make history something more than a bald narrative of fact. He flourished during the fifth century B.C., somewhat earlier than Thucydides. He wrote, not in the 'Attic' dialect of Athens, but in the 'Ionic,' of which, in an older form, Homer was the great exemplar.

p. 121, l. 24. **Addison.** Joseph Addison (1672—1719) was not only a famous essayist, but a busy politician on the Whig side during the reigns of Anne and George I. The story referred to is Newman's variation of the remark made by Pope to Spence that Addison could not give a common order in writing from his endeavouring always to word it too finely. The various legends about Addison's unfitness for public life are mere invention. He was a good, though not a great minister; and the numerous official letters of his that actually exist show that his alleged unproductiveness is a fable.

p. 121, l. 36. **The historian Gibbon.** Edward Gibbon (1737—1794), whose *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* is the greatest of English historical works. His style is as majestic as his theme—'cursed Gibbonian fine writing' Charles Lamb called it; and his principles, being not only anti-ecclesiastical, but also anti-Christian, were naturally not such as a Catholic priest could recommend to Catholic students. Hence Newman's disparagement.

p. 124, l. 14. **Fra Angelico.** Guido di Pietri (1387—1455) was a Dominican friar—'Brother Angelico' being his religious name—who was also a great painter. The best of his pictures, the Coronation of the Virgin, is in the Louvre, but innumerable reproductions have made it familiar even to the untravelled. He is represented in the National Gallery by a 'Christ in Glory,' a picture in five compartments, showing Christ surrounded by the angelic choir and groups of kneeling figures—two hundred and sixty-five in number.

p. 124, l. 14. **Francia.** Francesco Raibolini (1450—1517), generally called Francia, was a famous religious painter. His 'lunette' (picture with a curved upper half) of the entombment of Christ is one of the best-known pictures in the National Gallery.

p. 125, l. 7. **Authorized versions...so inferior.** Newman here speaks as a Catholic, and his judgment is true only of versions authorized by the Catholic Church. In general (as Matthew Arnold indicates on p. 149), the English 'Authorized Version' surpasses, as literature, the originals from which it was made.

p. 125, l. 24. **Sophocles or Euripides.** Sophocles (496—405 B.C.), Euripides (480—406 B.C.) were great Greek writers of tragedy.

p. 127, l. 19. **Copia verborum.** A full flow of words.

p. 128, l. 2. **Nil molitur inepte.** Horace, *Art of Poetry*, 140: 'he enters on no pointless task.' The other words explain themselves.

p. 128, l. 6. **Quo fit, etc.** Horace, *Satires* II. I. 32. 'Hence it comes about that the whole life of an ancient writer is revealed as though portrayed upon some picture dedicated in thanks to the gods.'

## JOHN RUSKIN: SIR JOSHUA AND HOLBEIN

John Ruskin (1819—1900) was born in Camberwell, London, the son of wealthy parents. He went to Oxford and was soon drawn to the study of art. His first important work, *Modern Painters*, began to appear in 1843 and immediately attracted attention, first because of its provocative views, and next because of its magnificence of style. It asserted with boldness and conviction the superiority of modern landscapes, and especially those of Turner, over the more formal and classic representations of natural scenes, and it proclaimed the greatness of early Italian artists whose work had been generally regarded as rude and rustic, and only tolerable on the ground of its antiquity. *The Seven Lamps of Architecture* and *The Stones of Venice* followed a few years later, and deepened the impression of force and splendour made by the earlier work. In these three treatises Ruskin had insisted on the moral value of art. Some of his later books—for example, *Sesame and Lilies* and *The Crown of Wild Olive*—deal more directly with life and conduct, and are only incidentally critical. The strongest, and probably the most enduring part of his work, is that which attacks the social and economic injustice of the age. It is shown at its best in *Munera Pulveris* and *Unto this Last*. The six works named above are representative of the range and variety of his style and matter; but they form only a portion of his enormous output.

Ruskin's mind and character formed themselves early. From the beginning his views were definite and distinct, and they were expressed dogmatically and imperiously. Even the manner of expression, though 'changed in outward lustre,' remained essentially the same. The splendour of his latest prose was mitigated: its florid ornament became less luxuriant, its rhetoric less rotund; but its strength and character remained unaltered. In *Modern Painters* Ruskin is a prose poet. His descriptions are accumulations of

splendour, and, in this respect, are excelled by those of no other writer. Most readers of good taste, however, will prefer the chastened prose of his later years. Its magnificence may be less, but its force is even greater. In *Modern Painters* one feels that the writer is trying to say everything as splendidly as possible, in *Fors Clavigera* as clearly as possible; and the balance of conviction is with the later style. The present essay is a good, though perhaps a gentle, example of this stronger style, which is seen at its best in *Unto this Last*.

Ruskin was one of the greatest moral and æsthetic forces of the nineteenth century. He helped to shape English views of art, life and nature for nearly three generations, and his influence was invariably good. Even though we differ from him now in this and that, it was he who helped us to have the power of judgment. His life was noble. His benefactions were many. He wrote, lectured and taught without stint to raise the moral standard of life; and if he preached that bodily labour was good, he was ready to shoulder pick and spade to approve the doctrine in his own person. His prose is great; but his life was greater still.

p. 130, l. 2. **Logically due.** Ruskin means that English people are, as a rule, indifferent or contemptuous towards English art.

p. 130, l. 4. **Ogygian seclusions.** Ogyges was a mythical Bœotian king, during whose reign occurred a great inundation called the Ogygian flood. Thus Ogygian has much the same meaning as our 'antediluvian'—dim, distant, fabled, prehistoric.

p. 130, l. 4. **Marlborough House, etc.** During the middle of the nineteenth century, part of the present National Gallery building was occupied by the Royal Academy, and some of the national pictures had to be hung elsewhere. Thus, from 1850 to 1859, the Vernon Collection, together with some other British pictures, was at Marlborough House; and when that building was needed as the town-house of the Prince of Wales (afterwards Edward VII) the pictures were lent to H.M. Office of Works and the South Kensington Museum.

p. 130, l. 6. **Sir Joshua Reynolds.** Sir Joshua Reynolds (1723—1792), one of the greatest of English artists, was born in Devonshire, but is generally associated with London where he lived and worked during the height of his fame, and where he enjoyed the intimacy of Dr Johnson, Burke, Garrick and Goldsmith at the celebrated Club. He is equally famous for his dignified portraits and for his pictures of children. He is well represented in the national collections, and his best works have been made familiar in countless reproductions. His writings on art are quite admirable.

p. 130, l. 9. **The 'Holy Family.'** A beautiful group painted by Sir Joshua in 1788, representing Joseph and Mary with the infant Jesus and John the Baptist. The picture, like many others painted at this time, had sadly deteriorated by the middle of the nineteenth

century, and was withdrawn from public exhibition. It was replaced in the National Gallery in 1907 after a restoration that is a triumph of skilful treatment. An excellent reproduction in colour has been issued by the Medici Society of London.

p. 130, l. 10. **The 'Graces.'** This is a fanciful portrait of the three daughters of Sir William Montgomery who are painted as 'The Graces decorating a Statue of Hymen.'

p. 131, l. 3. **Tintoret.** Jacobo Robusti (1518—1594), called Tintoretto ('the little dyer') from his father's trade, was a great Venetian painter. His pictures, other than portraits, usually depict some great event in sacred history, and are enormous compositions crowded with figures. He is represented in the National Gallery by a fine 'St George and the Dragon.'

p. 132, l. 3. **Gainsborough.** Thomas Gainsborough (1727—1788), one of the greatest of English painters. Ruskin calls him the 'rival-friend' of Reynolds, because they were friends and neighbours (Reynolds in Leicester Square and Gainsborough in Pall Mall) and were in great demand at the same time as painters of portraits. Thus, each painted famous portraits of Mrs Siddons, and their pictures of 'Perdita' Robinson hang now almost side by side at Hertford House. Gainsborough painted landscapes as well as portraits, and is well represented in the national collections. One of Sir Joshua's 'Discourses' expressly criticises the art of Gainsborough.

p. 132, l. 4. **Giorgione.** Giorgio Barbarelli (1478—1511), called Giorgione, was a famous painter of the Venetian School. Very few genuine pictures by him exist, and there are none of any importance in the national collections. The magnificently coloured 'Three Philosophers' (or 'The Three Wise Men') at Vienna and a beautiful 'Portrait of a Man Unknown' (claimed as Giorgione's) in a private English collection have been well reproduced in colour by the Medici Society; while numerous photographs of the Dresden 'Venus' have made that romantic picture very well known. Picture-lovers of to-day would be inclined to think of Giorgione more as a painter of men than of women.

p. 132, l. 5. **Correggio.** Antonio Allegri (1494—1534), called Correggio because he was born in that little north Italian town, was a famous painter of sacred and classical subjects. At first over-praised and then over-depreciated, he is now recognised as a great figure in the second rank of artists. His 'Education of Cupid' is a very popular picture in the National Gallery.

p. 132, l. 6. **Titian.** Tiziano Vecelli (1477—1576), one of the supremely great artists of the world, was born at Cadore in the romantic Dolomite region of Tyrol. His work is remarkable for magnificence of design and splendour of colour, and its wide range includes portraits of celebrities like the Emperor Charles V, and of unknown persons like the famous 'Man with the Glove' in the Louvre,

together with pictures representing subjects drawn from sacred and profane history. He is well represented in England—his 'Bacchus and Ariadne' in the National Gallery being one of the best known, as it is one of the greatest, pictures in that collection.

p. 132, l. 12. **Giotto.** Giotto (1266—1337) was born in a small village near Florence. He may be called the Father of Modern Painting because he introduced naturalness and simplicity into the stiff and awkward religious art of his time. His work is not well known save to travellers (though his portrait of Dante is familiar in reproductions), for much of it is in fresco, that is, painted upon the walls of churches or buildings in Italian towns. The beautiful campanile or bell-tower at Florence was designed by Giotto.

p. 132, l. 18. **The strawberry girl.** Now in the Wallace Collection at Hertford House, London.

p. 132, l. 24. **Sir Joshua's May-fairness.** His worldliness, Mayfair being a fashionable residential district in London.

p. 132, l. 39. **Vandyck.** Antony Vandyck (1599—1641) was born at Antwerp, and, after studying with Rubens, visited Italy. He came in 1632 to England and spent much of the rest of his life here. His work falls into two main classes: sacred pictures and portraits; and in all he is noble, graceful, and dignified. He is well represented in England, where his portraits of Charles I have made that monarch perhaps the most instantly recognised of English kings.

p. 133, l. 18. **This grisly fisherman.** The 'well-bred man' with fingers on sword-hilt might very well be the Philip II in the Prado or at Naples; but the 'grisly fisherman' does not seem to occur in any of Titian's pictures. The St Christopher of the Ducal Palace at Venice answers some of the requirements, but he is far from 'grisly.' Mr Charles Ricketts, who knows more of Titian than most people, tells me that he thinks the passage is a mere literary flourish without reference to any actual picture.

p. 133, l. 40. **In another place.** Ruskin reverts to this theme in his *Modern Painters*.

p. 134, l. 18. **Cardinal Beaufort and Ugolino.** Sir Joshua painted 'The Death of Cardinal Beaufort' as an illustration of 2 *Henry VI*, Act III. It has often been reproduced in illustrated Shakespeares. Ugolino is the subject of the dreadful story told by Dante in *Inferno* xxxiii. Count Ugolino, a proud and treacherous tyrant, having betrayed the Pisans, was seized by the infuriated citizens and cast with two sons and two grandsons into a tower, the door of which was locked and the key thrown into the Arno. Here in this Tower of Famine they perished miserably of thirst and hunger. Sir Joshua's picture of this—so unlike his gentler art—is in a private collection; but a sketch for the head of Ugolino is in the National Gallery.

p. 134, l. 28. **Faiths, Charities, etc.** Sir Joshua designed a stained-glass window for the chapel at New College, Oxford, representing the Seven Cardinal Virtues.

p. 134, l. 36. **Puck, etc.** These are all the names of actual pictures by Reynolds—none of them in the public galleries of England.

p. 135, l. 27. **Meaner men.** The editors of the Library Edition indicate that when Ruskin wrote these words he was thinking of Barry, West, Opie, Fuseli, and Haydon.

p. 135, l. 32. **The Heraclidæ.** The mighty and rightful rulers—an allusion to the conquerors of southern Greece who claimed, in justification of their rule, to be descendants of Heracles or Hercules.

p. 136, l. 14. **Madonna di San Sisto.** The masterpiece of Raphael in the Dresden Gallery. Countless reproductions have made it one of the best-known of pictures. The 'Mrs Pelham' to which Ruskin refers is a portrait by Sir Joshua, typical of his gentle pictures of women.

p. 136, l. 20. **Hans Holbein.** There were two Hans Holbeins, the elder (1460—1524) (referred to later in this essay) a painter of indifferent merit, far surpassed by his son, Hans Holbein the younger (1497—1543), one of the greatest of all artists. He was born at Augsburg, but is chiefly associated with Basle, where he spent much of his life, painting many pictures and engraving many blocks for woodcuts. He visited England twice, becoming friendly with Sir Thomas More, and attracting the notice of Henry VIII to whom he became Court Painter. Here he drew and painted a magnificent series of English portraits—the King, More, Warham, Guildford, Norfolk—and here, in London, he died. Holbein is well represented in England, but many of his works are in private collections. The National Gallery contains two masterpieces, 'The Princess Christina' and 'The Ambassadors.' There are other portraits at Hampton Court, and a magnificent set of drawings at Windsor.

p. 136, l. 37. **The Hausmann George Gyzen.** Georg Gisze (as his name is generally spelt in Germany) was a merchant of the Steelyard. His portrait by Holbein is in the Royal Gallery at Berlin, and has been admirably reproduced in colours by the Medici Society of London.

p. 139, l. 12. **Family of Sir Thomas More.** Holbein painted a picture of More and his household, now lost; but the vigorous pen-and-ink sketch for it is still at Basle.

p. 139, l. 16. **Erasmus.** Holbein painted several portraits of the great Dutch reformer. The best-known is the splendid picture in the Louvre, in which Erasmus is represented in profile engaged in writing. Other portraits of Erasmus with a book are at Parma and Basle.

p. 139, l. 17. **Holbein's Madonna.** The famous Madonna painted for Meier, the burgomaster of Basle. The picture is familiar here in reproductions. It is now generally believed that the Dresden picture is only a copy, the original being at Darmstadt.

p. 140, l. 6. **Two other pictures.** The 'St Barbara' and 'St Elizabeth' to which Ruskin refers are the two wings of a triptych in the 'Pinakothek,' the gallery of Munich.

## MATTHEW ARNOLD: MARCUS AURELIUS

Matthew Arnold (1822—1888) was born at Laleham, on the Thames, not far from Windsor, eldest son of Dr Arnold, the famous head-master of Rugby. He was educated at Winchester and Rugby, and proceeded to Balliol College, Oxford. The old University city exercised a singular fascination upon him, and its influence colours much of his work directly and all of it indirectly. There is little to say of his later career. His life was the quiet and uneventful existence of a public servant who is at the same time a man of letters. He died quite suddenly at Liverpool of heart failure after hurrying for a vehicle.

Matthew Arnold is important in three spheres of activity—in education, in criticism, and in poetry. He became an inspector of schools in 1851 and exercised an enlightening, humanising influence in elementary education, where it was much needed, and wrote, in this official capacity, reports on English and foreign schools which form a valuable body of pedagogical literature. As a poet his place is high in the ranks of those who are below the best. He is not to be named with Shakespeare or Milton, with Wordsworth or Shelley, not even with his great contemporaries Tennyson and Browning; but he has his sure and appointed place; for his message and his style have distinct beauty and individuality. *Thyrsis* and *The Scholar Gipsy*, *Sohrab and Rustum*, *The Forsaken Merman*, *Rugby Chapel*, together with some exquisite short poems, are among the choicest, even though not the greatest, of our poetic possessions, and must form part of the reading of every educated Englishman. As a critic he exercised a most important influence on literary thought during the latter part of the nineteenth century. His manner was ironical, diffident, delicate; yet he exposed our national deficiencies in culture with much deadlier effect than if he had bullied and blustered in his prose. The sort of 'downrightness' and 'plain

bluntness' of honest John Bull—the quality that, admirable as it is in many ways, degenerates in most cases into national awkwardness and rusticity—was the object of his unsparing and courteous ridicule; and there is no doubt that we are much the better for his delicate, moderating influence. This critical work is to be found in his many volumes of essays (*Essays in Criticism*, *Mixed Essays*, *On the Study of Celtic Literature*, *Irish Essays*, *Discourses in America*) and in such volumes as *Culture and Anarchy*, and *Literature and Dogma*.

His prose has the unstudied grace and ease of first-rate conversation lightly touched with quiet humour and irony; but his verse strikes a very different note. He lived during that part of the nineteenth century when the teachings of natural science had unsettled the religious beliefs of many good men. Arnold was one who suffered. He wanted a faith, yet could not find one. Like his own *Forsaken Mermaid* he was forced to stand outside the church into which he would fain have entered. This hovering between faith and unbelief, this

Wandering between two worlds, one dead,  
The other powerless to be born,

makes him very representative of his time, and (more important) gives to all his work in verse a tone of wistful regret that is strangely moving.

p. 141, l. 1. **Mr Mill.** John Stuart Mill (1806—1873), the great English philosopher and political economist, author of *A System of Logic*, *Principles of Political Economy*, *On Liberty*, and other famous works.

p. 141, l. 21. '**The Imitation.**' *The Imitation of Christ*, greatest of all devotional books, was written (it is generally believed) early in the fifteenth century by a Dutch monk, Thomas of Kempen, usually called Thomas a Kempis (1379—1471). Those who have read George Eliot's *The Mill on the Floss* will recall the striking part played in this story by the *Imitation*.

p. 142, l. 23. **Epictetus.** Epictetus, born about the middle of the first century of the Christian era, was a crippled slave who was afterwards set free and became a great moral philosopher. He was banished from Rome by Domitian. His works—collected and written down by Arrian, one of his followers—have been well translated by the George Long whose version of Marcus Aurelius was the occasion of the present essay. Arnold, in an early sonnet, acknowledges how much he owed to

That halting slave, who in Nicopolis  
Taught Arrian, when Vespasian's brutal son  
Cleared Rome of what most shamed him.

p. 143, l. 2. **Empedocles.** Empedocles was a Greek philosopher of Sicily who flourished in the fifth century B.C. In popular story he is more famous for his death than his life; for it is alleged that, desiring to seem divine and to make a mysterious disappearance



from the world, he plunged into the crater of Mt Etna, but was betrayed by the casting up of his sandals. For this adventure Lamb includes him among the great 'fools' in his essay *All Fools' Day*; and Milton places him in the Paradise of Fools as

he who, to be deemed  
A god, leaped fondly into Etna flames.

Arnold makes him the subject of his poetic drama *Empedocles on Etna*.

p. 143, l. 7. **Justification by faith.** One of the great controversies of the Reformation period was whether a man is justified and made righteous by faith in the Saviour or by his good works. The Reformers insisted that faith alone justified a man; but their doctrine was rejected by Catholics at the Council of Trent. The Jansenists held a somewhat similar view. See the notes on Macaulay's essay in this volume.

p. 143, l. 25. **Let Thy loving spirit,** etc. The sources of the following quotations are respectively: Psalm cxliii. 10 (Prayer Book version); Isaiah lx. 19; Malachi iv. 2; John i. 13; John iii. 3; I. John v. 4.

p. 143, l. 38. **All things are possible.** Mark ix. 23.

p. 143, l. 39. **A new creature.** II. Corinthians v. 17.

p. 144, l. 10. **Seventy times seven.** Matthew xviii. 22.

p. 144, l. 25. **The school,** etc. The school of 'Utilitarian Philosophy,' specially associated with the names of Mill and Bentham. It was material rather than spiritual in character, and some of its aims have been condensed into the phrase 'The greatest happiness of the greatest number.'

p. 144, l. 35. **Mr Long.** George Long (1800—1879), a Cambridge man in the time of Macaulay. He became later a Professor of Classics.

p. 145, l. 28. **Jeremy Collier.** Jeremy Collier (1650—1726), a High Church and Jacobite clergyman whose *Short View of the Immorality of the English Stage* aroused great controversy at the end of the seventeenth century.

p. 147, l. 25. **Calls his author Marcus Antoninus.** The emperor's name was Marcus Verus Annianus Aurelius Antoninus. Mr Long might have pleaded, in answer to Matthew Arnold's objection, the great precedent of Gibbon, who calls the emperor sometimes Marcus, sometimes Marcus Antoninus, and never Marcus Aurelius.

p. 147, l. 38. **Volitare per ora virum.** Virgil, *Georgics* III. 8, 'to flutter through the mouths of men.'

p. 148, l. 3. **Arouet.** Voltaire's real name was François Marie Arouet.

p. 149, l. 27. **Saint Louis.** Louis IX, king of France from 1226 to 1270. He was not only a good man and a crusader, but also a reformer of the French legal and political system.

p. 149, l. 32. **Trajan.** The good and vigorous Roman emperor who ruled from A.D. 98 to 117.

p. 150, l. 1. **The 'Saturday Review' critic.** E. A. Freeman (1823—1892), the famous historian who wrote lengthily and authoritatively on early English history and other subjects.

p. 150, l. 37. **The whole that history has to offer.** Compare Gibbon: 'History, which is little more than the register of the crimes, follies, and misfortunes of mankind.' So Burke (*Reflections on the Revolution in France*): 'History consists, for the greater part, of the miseries brought upon the world by pride, ambition, avarice, revenge, lust, sedition, hypocrisy, ungoverned zeal, and all the train of disorderly appetites.'

p. 151, l. 9. **The sixth satire of Juvenal.** Juvenal was a Roman poet who flourished during the latter part of the first century A.D. His satires are attacks on the vices of the day. The sixth is a bitter criticism of the Roman wives and mothers.

p. 151, l. 15. **Græculus esuriens.** 'The greedy Greekling'—a term of contempt used by Juvenal (*Sat.* III. 78).

p. 151, l. 27. **Caret quia vate sacro.** Horace, *Odes* IV. 9. 28, 'because he lacks a heaven-sent bard.'

p. 151, l. 33. **Avidius Cassius.** In 175 Marcus Aurelius set out for the East where Avidius Cassius, urged by Faustina, wife of Aurelius, had revolted and proclaimed himself emperor.

p. 153, l. 24. **Mormonism.** The popular name given to the 'Church of the Latter-day Saints' founded in America by Joseph Smith (1805—1844) who wrote the *Book of Mormon* from instructions given, he alleged, by an angelic visitor who revealed to him the mysterious words of an ancient prophet named Mormon. The feature in Mormonism that aroused popular notice and indignation and to which Arnold refers was a plurality of wives; and this was suppressed later by the United States government.

p. 153, l. 39. **Exitiabilis superstitio,** etc. Tacitus, *Annals* xv. 44, 'The deadly superstition.' The most interesting, though not the most sympathetic, account of Christianity in the Roman Empire is to be found in the famous fifteenth and sixteenth chapters of Gibbon, and to those the student should refer. The passage of Tacitus from which Arnold quotes is as follows: 'In order to remove the imputation [of having set fire to Rome] Nero determined to transfer the guilt to others. For this purpose he punished, with exquisite torture, a race of men detested for their evil practices, by vulgar appellation called Christians. The name was derived from Christ, who, in the reign of Tiberius, suffered under Pontius Pilate,

the procurator of Judea. By that event the sect, of which he was the founder, received a blow, which, for a time, checked the growth of a dangerous superstition; but it soon revived, and spread with recruited vigour, not only in Judea, the soil that gave it birth, but even in the city of Rome, the common sink into which everything infamous and abominable flows like a torrent from all quarters of the world. Nero proceeded with his usual artifice. He found a set of profligate and abandoned wretches, who were induced to confess themselves guilty, and, on the evidence of such men, a number of Christians were convicted, not indeed upon clear evidence of their having set the city on fire, but rather on account of their sullen hatred of the whole human race. They were put to death with exquisite cruelty, and to their sufferings Nero added mockery and derision. Some were covered with the skins of wild beasts, and left to be devoured by dogs; others were nailed to the cross; numbers were burnt alive; and many, covered over with inflammable matter, were lighted up, when the day declined, to serve as torches during the night.....At length the cruelty of these proceedings filled every breast with compassion. Humanity relented in favour of the Christians. The manners of that people were, no doubt, of a pernicious tendency, and their crimes called for the hand of justice; but it was evident that they fell a sacrifice, not for the public good, but to glut the rage and cruelty of a single man.'

p. 154, l. 24. **The Code Napoleon.** The standard body of French civil law compiled during 1800—1804 by order of Napoleon and, in some ways, with his actual co-operation. The Code contains over two thousand articles regulating French civil relations.

p. 155, l. 18. **The Catacombs.** The Catacombs, the famous underground burial places in which the Christians sought refuge from persecution. The Palatine was the chief of the Roman hills, and upon it were built several of the Imperial palaces.

p. 155, l. 24. **Fleury.** Claude Fleury (1640—1723), a famous French writer of ecclesiastical history, not to be confused with Cardinal Fleury (1653—1743), the great peace-minister of France contemporary with our own peace-minister Walpole.

p. 159, l. 5. **The kingdom of God is within you.** Luke xvii. 21.

p. 159, l. 10. **Seneca.** The famous Roman tragedian and moral philosopher, born 4 B.C., ordered by Nero to kill himself A.D. 65. He was one of the favourite moralists of the Middle Ages, but he is now very little read.

p. 162, l. 9. **Apollonius, Rusticus, Maximus.** Three of Marcus's tutors.

p. 162, l. 29. **Tiberius, Caligula, Nero, Domitian.** Four of the most wicked of the Roman emperors, reigning respectively 14—37, 37—41, 54—68, 81—96 A.D. Some historians believe the wickedness of Tiberius to have been exaggerated in report.

p. 163, l. 23. **The Happy Islands.** The Fortunate Isles or Isles of the Blessed, mythically placed beyond the Pillars of Hercules, where the souls of heroes dwelt.

p. 163, l. 36. **Vespasian.** Roman emperor A.D. 69—79.

p. 165, l. 33. **O faithless,** etc. Matthew xvii. 17; also Luke ix. 41.

p. 167, l. 23. **Justin.** Justin the Martyr, an Eastern Christian of the second century, wrote a famous Apology or defence of Christianity addressed to the Emperor Antoninus Pius, the predecessor of Marcus Aurelius.

p. 167, l. 25. **Alogi.** A second-century sect that denied the divinity of Christ and the authenticity of St John's Gospel.

p. 167, l. 29. **Gnosis.** Literally 'knowledge,' but used specially of sacred, mystic knowledge.

p. 167, l. 39. **Tendentemque manus,** etc. Virgil, *Aeneid* vi. 314, 'Stretching forth their hands in longing for the farther shore.'

## ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON: A PENNY PLAIN AND TWOPENCE COLOURED

Robert Louis Stevenson (1850—1894) was born in Edinburgh. He was educated at the University of his native city, and called to the Scottish Bar. His father and grandfather were lighthouse engineers, and his knowledge of the sea, gained by participation in the cruises necessitated by the family calling, distinctly coloured much that he afterwards wrote. His earliest bent was for literature, and, in the essay called *A College Magazine*, he describes the hard apprenticeship to which he put himself with the object of learning how to write. His stories of adventure, *Treasure Island*, *Kidnapped*, *Catriona*, and *The Black Arrow*, are familiar to all. *The New Arabian Nights*, *The Dynamiters* and *The Wrong Box* are romances partly grotesque and partly farcical. Higher in value are *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, a terrible and unforgettable fable, *Weir of Hermiston*, a fine fragment of tragic story, and the collection of tales called *The Merry Men*. His maternal grandfather was a clergyman, and from him Stevenson humorously declared he had derived an incurable tendency to preach. Certainly the best of his writing is to be found in the various books of essays—*Virginibus Puerisque*, *Familiar Studies of Men and Books*, *Memories and Portraits*, *Across the Plains*—the last, perhaps, the

most entirely satisfying of all his volumes. His poems are generally subsidiary to his prose; but one volume, *A Child's Garden of Verses*, is an exquisite and enduring evocation of the joys and fears of childhood. Many other books are not enumerated here. Stevenson was consumptive, and his life was a continual Odyssey in search of health. To Switzerland, to California, and, at last, to the South Seas he journeyed, and journeyed in vain. The last five years of his life were spent at Samoa where he died suddenly in December, 1894.

The best biography of Stevenson is contained in his own letters; and, indeed, the best thing in all Stevenson's books is Stevenson himself. From nearly every page exhales the spirit of a brave, gay, romantic, boyish personality; and, just as the man fascinated all his friends, so his writing fascinates all his readers. His prose is enchantingly phrased and modulated. The words are chosen with curious and, sometimes, quaint felicity, and sentences of most pleasingly unforeseen turn abound in his best work. He was not a great writer—in the sense in which Shakespeare is great. He belongs to the order of men who produce little things and shape them lovingly and exquisitely. In the Elysian Fields where the souls of dead authors foregather, Robert Louis Stevenson should be seen not far from Charles Lamb.

p. 168, l. 2. **Skelt's Juvenile Drama.** It is just possible that some readers may be unfamiliar with this once popular amusement of childhood. A paper proscenium, coloured and mounted on cardboard, was set up on a box and formed a tiny stage. A play was bought, and, with it, sheets of the necessary scenery and characters, which were coloured, mounted on card, and cut out, the scenes being set up at the back of the mimic stage, and the characters, stuck in a tin clip with a long wire handle, pushed on and pulled off from the sides as the exigence of the scene demanded. The actual dialogue was read by the children playing, or, sometimes, by one solitary player, who in his sole imagination became producer, stage-manager and scene-shifter, as well as all the *dramatis persone* at once. Surely not every child will admit 'the tedium, the worry, and the long-drawn disenchantment of an actual performance' which Stevenson, later, charges against the Juvenile Drama!

p. 168, l. 8. **Mr Ionides.** Constantine Alexander Ionides (1833—1900), a Manchester merchant of Greek descent, was a great collector of pictures, drawings, etchings, etc. His collection was bequeathed to the nation and is now at South Kensington. Stevenson's suggestion that he or Queen Victoria possessed sets of 'Skelt's Juvenile Drama' is of course quite humorous.

p. 168, l. 14. **Der Freischütz.** Literally, 'The Free Shooters,' a romantic story of magic bullets cast with diabolic enchantments, familiar to all music-lovers in its form as an opera by Weber.

p. 169, l. 1. **But now how fallen.** A reminiscence of Satan's first speech, *Paradise Lost*, l. 84.

p. 169, l. 3. **The city of my childhood.** Edinburgh, connected with Leith, its port, by the 'wide thoroughfare' of Leith Walk.

p. 169, l. 33. **The Jews rebuilding Salem.** The Jews who returned from the Captivity and rebuilt the Temple and Holy City had a double task, first to build, and next to prevent any participation in the building of the mixed and unorthodox race of Samaritans who peopled the land during the Captivity. See the books of Ezra and Nehemiah.

p. 170, l. 11. **The crux of Buridan's donkey.** A 'crux' (plural 'cruces'), literally a 'cross,' is a 'problem' or 'an almost insuperable difficulty.' Jean Buridan was a fourteenth-century philosopher, Rector of the University of Paris. The famous crux associated with his name but, apparently, not propounded by him, may be stated thus: A perfect donkey, placed exactly midway between two perfectly equal bundles of hay, would be bound to starve, because, the attractions of the two bundles being exactly equal, he would be unable to turn away from one to go to the other. The crux is thus a humorous illustration of the difficulty of making up one's mind.

p. 171, l. 12. **A deliquium.** Literally, the liquid state following the absorption of atmospheric moisture by certain solids. Calcium chloride, for instance, rapidly liquefies on exposure to damp air.

p. 171, l. 17. **The horns of elf-land.**

O sweet and far from cliff and scar  
The horns of Elfland faintly blowing!

from one of the songs in Tennyson's *Princess*.

p. 171, l. 20. **Titian.** See p. 216.

p. 172, l. 2. **These realms of gold.** A reminiscence of Keats's sonnet 'On first looking into Chapman's Homer':

Much have I travelled in the realms of gold,  
And many goodly states and kingdoms seen.

p. 172, l. 17. **Different with the rose.** The allusion is, of course, to the familiar passage in *Romeo and Juliet*, Act II, Sc. ii:

What's in a name? That which we call a rose  
By any other name would smell as sweet.

p. 172, l. 28. **O. Smith, Fitzball.** Nineteenth-century authors of numerous totally forgotten melodramas.

p. 173, l. 5. **Transpontine.** A general note may serve for several allusions that follow. The fashionable theatres of London are on the north or Middlesex side of the river. Up to the early nineties, the theatres 'across the bridges'—the 'transpontine' theatres (chief of them being the Surrey Theatre in the Blackfriars Road)—purveyed the popular 'melodrama,'—the drama of strong 'domestic interest, full of clap-trap appeals' to popular sentiment and morals. Hence the allusions to the 'kingdom of Transpontus' and 'the Surrey-side formation.'

p. 173, l. 17. **Quercus Skeltica.** The 'Skeltic oak'—a mock botanical term, just as the 'Surreyside formation' is a mock geological term.

p. 173, l. 19. **T. P. Cooke.** Thomas Potter Cooke (1786—1864) was inspired with love of the sea by witnessing a nautical melodrama, and became, very appropriately, first a sailor, and then an actor specializing in nautical parts. He is said to have 'brought the smell of the sea across the footlights,' and to have been without rival in such parts as that of William, hero of *Black Eyed Susan*.

p. 173, l. 21. **The gorgeous east in fee.** A reminiscence of Wordsworth's sonnet 'On the Extinction of the Venetian Republic':

Once did she hold the gorgeous East in fee,  
And was the safeguard of the West.

p. 174, l. 1. **England, when at last I came to visit it.** For the first impressions of a Scotsman in England, see Stevenson's pleasant essay, *The Foreigner at Home*.

p. 174, l. 14. **Whitman.** Walt Whitman (1819—1892), probably the greatest of American poets, expressed freely his views of life in vivid strains of irregular verse, the best of his volumes being that entitled *Leaves of Grass*.

p. 174, l. 30. **Weber or the mighty Formes.** Carl Maria von Weber (1786—1826), composer of romantic operas, the best-known being *Der Freischütz*, others, such as *Euryanthe* and *Oberon*, being familiar to modern music-lovers only by their splendid overtures. Weber died in London. Karl Formes (1819—1889) was a great bass singer, one of whose most famous parts was that of Kaspar, in *Der Freischütz*. The name Formes, being German, must be pronounced in two syllables.

p. 175, l. 10. **The fool's-cap of St Paul's.** Surely not a happy term for the mighty dome!

p. 175, l. 17. **The packets are dust.** The implied lament that we cannot recapture the joys of childhood receives its most wonderful expression in the opening lines of Wordsworth's *Ode on the Intimations of Immortality, etc.*





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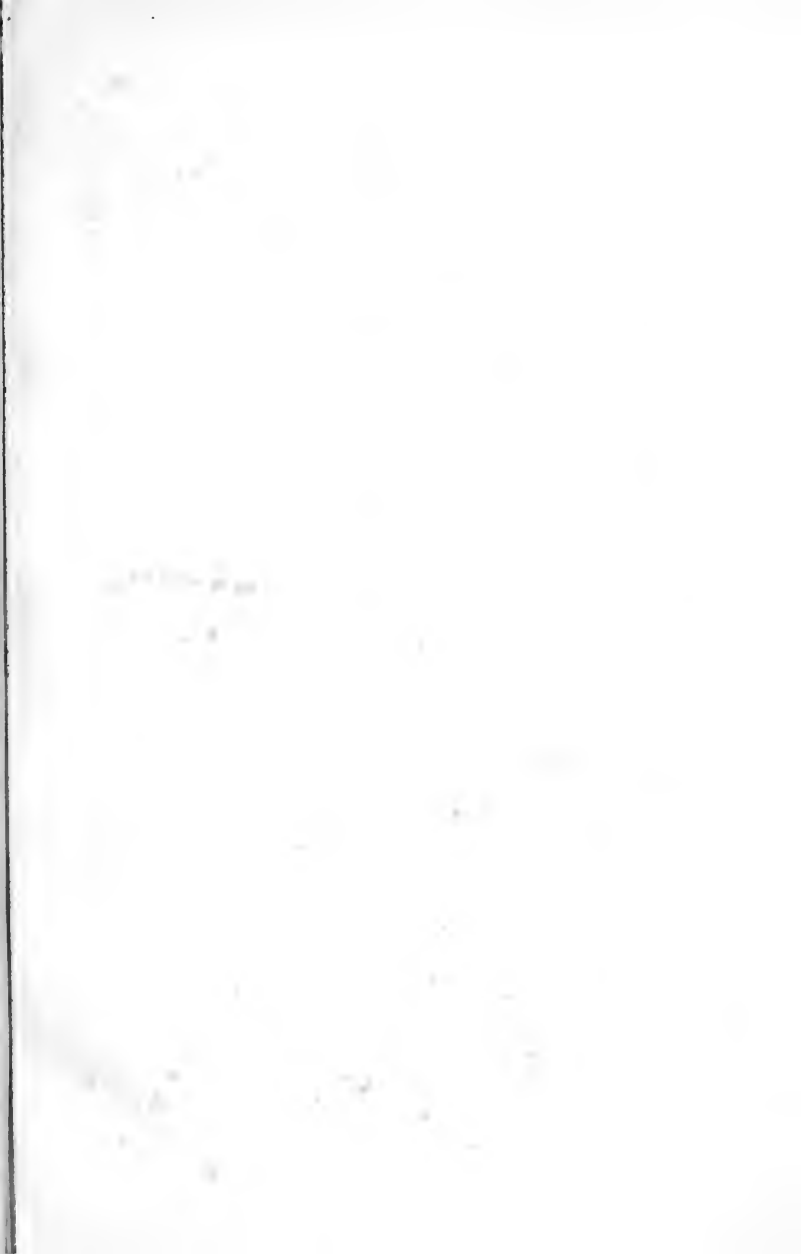
CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

London: FETTER LANE, E.C.

C. F. CLAY, MANAGER

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