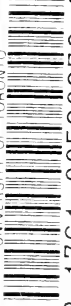


UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO



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ARISTOTLE'S
TREATISE ON POETRY,

TRANSLATED:

WITH
N O T E S

ON THE TRANSLATION, AND ON THE ORIGINAL;

AND

TWO DISSERTATIONS,
ON POETICAL, AND MUSICAL, IMITATION.

BY THOMAS TWINING, M.A.

THE SECOND EDITION,
IN TWO VOLUMES, [edited]
BY DANIEL TWINING, M.A.

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TO THIS EDITION.

HAD a new Edition of this Translation been called for at an earlier period, and at a time when its Author possessed the opportunities of health and leisure, it is impossible to say what alterations or additions he might have made. That in the progress of preparing it he would have made some is most probable. But his removal to a situation in which his time was more occupied by professional duties, together with the declining state of his health, seems to have prevented him from turning much of his attention towards the accomplishment of this design. It is certain, however, that the publication of another Edition had sometimes been in his contemplation; and that in consequence he had even written down a few short Memoranda;—but it does not appear that a necessity of making many alterations or additions had ever occurred to him.

The only new materials, then, which he has left for this Edition consist in a small collection of such REMARKS as were suggested to him by reading the Notes in Mr. Tyrwhitt's Edition of the Treatise on Poetry,—intended, as appears in his own hand-writing, merely “for his own use,

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in case he should ever publish a second Edition of his book ;”—and, likewise, a few marginal notes in his own copy of the first Edition. For the possession of these, as well as for assistance and advice in the use of them, I am unwilling to conceal, that I am indebted to my Father.*

That these REMARKS are not drawn up with all that care which the Author would have bestowed upon them before he presented them to the publick eye, will be apparent to the Reader on the slightest comparison of them with the old, and more finished Notes. But as nothing which proceeds from a mind habituated to reflection, upon a subject to which it has been particularly directed, can properly be deemed hasty, I have ventured to select some of these REMARKS for publication.

In making the Selection, I have rejected those which he had evidently reserved for future consideration. Those in which he has spoken with a stronger tone of decision,—whether admitting his own errors, or confirming his former opinions, or expressing his concurrence with the observations of Mr. Tyrwhitt,—I have thought it due to himself, to Mr. Tyrwhitt, and to the publick, to make known.

It is manifest that there are three † passages of

* Richard Twining, Esq. of Isleworth ;—brother of the Translator.

† See REMARKS 7. 32. 33.

TO THIS EDITION.

of the former Edition which would have engaged the particular attention of the Translator. But as he has not fully shewn, and perhaps in his own mind had not fully determined upon, the exact manner, and the very words, in which he would have altered either the passages in his Translation, or the Notes which relate to them, I have been compelled, however reluctantly, to retain both the Translation and the original Notes as I found them:—leaving it to every Reader to make his own application of the additional REMARKS.

*With respect, indeed, to Note 241. I may be permitted to say, that I retain it with little or no reluctance: because, though it be probable that the words—*αμα δε φησιν*,—received by Mr. Tyrwhitt into his Text, will in future be universally preferred, and in consequence the criticism here combated by the Translator be universally abandoned, yet, the Note will, I think, remain a fair as well as an honourable testimony, that the taste, learning, and unbiassed judgment of the Author, had at least guarded him from assenting to that erroneous interpretation,—sanctioned as it was by very eminent men,—which would have towered, and in a great degree explained away, one of the most beautiful passages of the Iliad.*

THE EDITOR.

Stilton, Octr 1, 1812.

ERRATA:

VOL. I.

- p. 117. last line but one - - for si - - - - read is.
127. margin - - - - - for Historain - read Historian.
145. note 6, last l. but 4, for philosopher, read philosophy.
236. line 16 and note ^m, for λογῶν - - - read λογῶν.
280. line 5 - - - - - for γενεσθαι - - read γενεσθαι.

VOL. II.

- p. 104. line 9 - - - - - for verteux - - read vertueux.
155. note ^b - - - - - for v. 1638 - - read v. 1368.
181. - - - - - for Ttetzcs - - read Tzetzes.
219. line 9, word παραφυλαττεσθαι, word should be in italics.
307. note ^b, last line - for κασαν - - - - read πασαν.

P R E F A C E

TO THE FIRST EDITION.

WHOEVER recollects, that, in writing a preface, he presumes, in some degree or other, to call the attention of the public more particularly to himself, will hardly be disposed to say more than he thinks necessary, and will say even that with some reluctance. To be allowed, however, to explain his own design, in his own defence, is a privilege which every writer may justly claim; and I am too sensible of the imperfection of the following work to deliver it up in silent confidence to the public judgment.

It may be said, I think, universally, of all translation, that it should give the *thoughts* of the original with all the accuracy possible, and the *language* as closely as is consistent with the purpose, which every man who writes must necessarily have in view—that of being read with satisfaction. No work can be read with satisfaction if it is ill written; and every translation is undoubtedly ill written, that does not, as far, at least,

least, as *language* is concerned, read like an original; that, on the contrary, to every reader, at once discovers itself to be translation, by that constrained uncouthness of expression, harshness of phrase, and embarrassment of meaning, which necessarily result from the transfusion of idiom out of one language into another. A work so translated may be said to be translated into *broken English*. For the effect is much the same, whether we are imperfectly acquainted with the language *in which*, or adhere too servilely to the language *from which*, we speak: whether we write English in Greek, or Greek in English. In both cases we write one language in the idiom of another.

But in steering from this rock, the translator, if he takes too wide a compass, will be in danger of running upon another. It is singular, that Pope, in one of his early letters, should have pointed out, by a sensible and true observation, the very defect, and perhaps the only general defect, of his own Homer. In a letter to Mr. Cromwell^a he says, “ Let the sense be ever so
“ exactly rendered, unless an author LOOKS
“ LIKE HIMSELF, in his HABIT and MANNER,
“ ’tis a disguise, and not a translation.” Now, let every other merit possible be allowed to Pope’s translation, it surely cannot be denied, that

^a Letter 24.

that we have there a *manner*, a *look*, a *habit*, very widely different from that of Homer himself.—But poetical translation is attended with peculiar difficulty, and demands peculiar indulgence. The translator of prose into prose has far less excuse, when he departs so widely from the words of his author, as to retain no resemblance to his manner; and least of all, perhaps, would such liberty be excusable in a version of Aristotle, in whose writings, however perplexing on many other accounts, a translator is seldom embarrassed by any of those delicate “blossoms of elocution,” which “drop off so easily” at his touch.

An English translator, it has been said, “is to exhibit his author’s thoughts in such a dress of diction as the author would have given them, had his language been English^b.” An idea of translation, to which nothing can be objected, but the difficulty, I might perhaps have said, the impossibility, of its practical application. The rule, therefore, is not rule enough. It leaves too much to the fancy and the prejudices of the translator; who will naturally imagine, that his *own*, or his *favourite*, style, whatever it be, is precisely that, which the author, had he written English, would have preferred. Perhaps the *end* of this rule cannot any way be more securely answered in practice, than by the observance of
the

^b Dr. Johnson’s *Life of Dryden*, p. 125.

the rule I first mentioned—to depart no farther from the expression of the original, than is fairly required by the different genius of the two languages.

In saying what I think ought to be done by every translator, I have of course said, not, I fear, what I *have* done, but certainly what I have *endeavoured* to do, myself. My object, in few words, was, to produce a version sufficiently close and accurate to satisfy those readers who are acquainted with the original, and, at the same time, sufficiently *English* to be read without disgust by those who are not.—Such a version, at the time when I was induced to undertake the task, was certainly among the *desiderata* of our literature. We had then no English translation that could be read with patience by any one competently acquainted either with the Greek language, or with his own. I know indeed of but two attempts^c. The one, published in 1705, a mere translation of Dacier's translation, notes,
and

^c Fabricius gives the following account of a translation by Rymer: “*Anglice, Rimero interprete, cum Renati Rapini Observationibus Poeticis, à Gallico in idem idioma translatis, Lond. 1674.*”—*Bib. Græc. vol. ii. p. 124.*—The best inquiries I have been able to make justify me in concluding this account to be a mistake, occasioned by Rymer's translation of *Rapin's Reflections on Aristotle's Treatise of Poesie, &c.* published in 1694, and to which he prefixed his famous critical Preface.

and preface; though professing, in the title-page, to be translated from the original Greek, and accompanied, indeed, by some marginal *improvements* from the Greek text, most of which, if admitted into the version, would make it still worse than it is.—The other is a translation from the Greek, I know not by whom, published in 1775. It may speak sufficiently for itself by a few specimens, which, from among many others of the same sort, I have given in the margin^d.

It would be doing injustice to the translation lately given to the public by Mr. Pye, to place it, in any view, however favourable, by the side of these. A particular and critical examination of its merits would come with little propriety from me. So much, however, I may be allowed to say, for it is an indisputable fact, that Mr. Pye's translation and mine are frequently very different; and that, in many passages, if he is right, I must confess myself to be wrong.

It is natural for me to wish, that I could secure the indulgence of the reader, by giving him

some

^d P. 3, and throughout, ἠθῆ is rendered “*morals*.”—p. 11, and εἶδ, αὐτοσχεδιασματα, “*self-formed images*.”—p. 31. πρὸς μὲν τὰς ἀγῶνας καὶ τὴν αἰσθησιν—“with regard to the *Controversies and the Conception*.”—p. 57. ἀτεχνότης—“*a degree nearer art*.”—p. 89. ἔχει δὲ πρὸς τὸ ἐστρεφένεσθαι το μὲγῶ πολὺ τι ἢ ἐποποιία ἰδίων.—“*Epic is thus much peculiar for lengthening the greatness*.”—p. 92. ἀδύνατα καὶ εἰκότα—“*Impossibilities and Suitable*.”

some idea of the uncommon difficulties, with which a translator of this work of Aristotle has to struggle. But they are such as can hardly be conceived, but by those who are well acquainted with the original; and even among them, I may venture to say, can be adequately conceived by those only, who have tried their strength against them by actual experiment. These difficulties arise from various sources: from the elliptic conciseness, and other peculiarities, of Aristotle's style, and from the nature of the work itself, which, in many parts of it at least, seems to have been intended for little more than a collection of hints, or short memorial notes, and has sometimes almost the appearance of a syllabus for lectures, or a table of contents^c; so that we might apply to it, in some degree, what Aristotle himself is said to have written to Alexander the Great, who had reprimanded him for having published some private lectures which that Prince had received from him: "They are published," answered

^c —"He has a dry conciseness, that makes one "imagine one is perusing a table of contents, rather than a book."—Gray's Letters, *Sect. 4. Let. 3.* The account Mr. Gray there gives of Aristotle's writings, though it is written with the sportive pleasantry of a familiar letter, is extremely just; except, perhaps, in one observation:—it seems hardly fair to conclude that Aristotle "lost himself," wherever his *readers* are *now* at a loss to find his meaning.

answered the philosopher, “and not published; “for they are intelligible only to those who have “been my pupils^f.” An answer, which does indeed give some countenance to the assertion of Ammonius, that the obscurity of Aristotle’s style was voluntary^g. Yet I hope the assertion is not true. I cannot persuade myself to give full credit to an account so degrading to a great philosopher. And surely it is but a perverse kind of apology, to assign, of all the causes of obscurity that *can* be assigned, the only one which leaves it totally without excuse. If, however, this was really the case, it must be confessed, that Aristotle succeeded well, and stood in little need of the admonition of the school-master mentioned by Quintilian, “qui discipulos ab-
“*scurare quæ dicerent juberet, Græco verbo*
“*utens, Σκοτισσον^h.*” — Another considerable source of difficulty is, that so many of the Tragedies and other poems, alluded to, and
quoted,

^f Ἰσθι ἐν αὐτῆς ΚΑΙ ΕΚΔΕΔΟΜΕΝΟΥΣ ΚΑΙ ΜΗ ΕΚΔΕΔΟΜΕΝΟΥΣ· ξυνετοὶ γὰρ εἰσι μόνους τῆς ἡμῶν ἀκροασίαν.—See Aul. Gell. XX. 5. where the two letters, of Alexander and Aristotle, are preserved.

^g Πολλὰ τε συνεπιφθιμεν, [sc. το εἶδος των Αριστοτελες συγγραμμάτων,] και ἀτακτως περρασμενον, ε̄ δια την φύσιν τε γραφαιεν, ἀλλ̄ ἔκΟΥΣΙΩΣ τῆτο πεποιηκεν. *Ammon. ad Categ. Aristot.* See also *Fabric. Bib. Græc. vol. iv. p. 166.*
—ἀσαφειῶν ἐπιτηδεύων.

^h Quintil. VIII. 2.

quoted, throughout the treatise, are lost.—But the chief of these sources, undoubtedly, is the mutilated and corrupt condition of the text. The work is but a fragment:—Πιδακ[⊙] ἐξ ἰερῆς ὀλιγη λιβας!—I wish I could add, Ἀλλ' ἦτις καθαρη τε και ἀχρααντ[⊙] ἀνερπει: but even of this fragment it may be doubted, whether it has been most injured by mutilation, or by repair. The history given by Strabo, of the fate of Aristotle's works after his death, is so curious, and so effectually removes all wonder at the mangled state in which we find them, that I shall here, for the sake of the English reader, insert a translation of it.

“ The Socratic philosophers, Erastus and
 “ Coriscus, were natives of Scepsis¹; as was
 “ also Neleus, (the son of Coriscus,) who was
 “ a scholar of Aristotle and Theophrastus, and
 “ to whom the latter bequeathed his library, in
 “ which was included that of Aristotle. For
 “ Aristotle, who, as far as we know, was the
 “ first collector of books, and the first who
 “ taught the kings of Egypt to form and arrange
 “ a library; left his own collection of books,
 “ (as he also did his school,) to Theophrastus;
 “ and from Theophrastus it came to Neleus.
 “ Neleus removed it to Scepsis, and left it to
 “ his descendants; who, being illiterate persons,
 “ threw the books together as lumber, and
 “ locked

¹ A city of Mysia.

“ locked them up: but afterwards, when they
 “ heard, that the Attalic monarchs, their sove-
 “ reigns, were taking great pains to collect books
 “ for the Pergamenian library, they concealed
 “ them in a cave under ground; whence, after
 “ having been long *damaged by damp and worms*^k,
 “ the books both of Aristotle and Theophrastus
 “ were, at length, sold by some of the family, at
 “ a great price, to Apellicon the Teian. This
 “ man was rather a *lover of books*, than a *lover*
 “ *of wisdom*, or a Philosopher^l; and being
 “ therefore anxious to restore, at any rate, those
 “ parts of the manuscripts that had been des-
 “ troyed or damaged, he had them fairly copied;
 “ and, *the vacuities in the writing being unskil-*
 “ *fully supplied, they were thus published, full*
 “ *of blunders*. The old Peripatetics, who suc-
 “ ceeded Theophrastus, possessing none of these
 “ writings, except a very few, and those chiefly
 “ of the *exoteric* kind, were not qualified to
 “ philosophize accurately, but contented them-
 “ selves with treating, in a shewy and superficial
 “ manner, such particular questions as were pro-
 “ posed. The later Peripatetics, however, who
 “ lived after the publication of those books, were
 “ enabled to teach the Aristotelic doctrines with
 “ more exactness; yet even they, from the mul-
 “ titude

^k Ὑπο νοτίας καὶ σήτων κακωθέντα—.

^l Φιλοβιβλῶ μαλλον ἢ φιλοσοφῶ.—A very modern sort
of character.

“ titude of errors in their copies, were frequently
 “ obliged to have recourse to explanations merely
 “ conjectural. And *these errors were much*
 “ *increased at Rome.* For immediately on the
 “ death of Apellicon, Sylla, when he took
 “ Athens, possessed himself of his library, and
 “ carried it to Rome; where the books fell into
 “ the hands of Tyrannio the Grammarian, a
 “ great admirer of Aristotle, who procured them
 “ from the librarian; and afterwards into those
 “ of certain booksellers, who employed careless
 “ and ignorant transcribers, and neglected to
 “ collate the copies with the originals; which is
 “ also the case with many other books trans-
 “ cribed for sale, both at Rome and Alexan-
 “ dria^m.”

In the division of the translation into Parts and Sections, there was no authority to restrain me from following my own ideas, and preferring that method which appeared most conducive to clearness.—By the marginal titles the convenience of the reader is consulted: he has the work, and its index, under his eye at the same time.—The order of the chapters I have not attempted to disturb. But if, on the one hand, I cannot admit the unnecessary and licentious transpositions of Heinsius, neither can I, on the other,

^m Strabo, lib. xiii. p. 608, D. ed. Casaub.—See also Plutarch's life of Sylla, p. 856, ed. H. St. and Bayle, art. TYRANNION.

other, assent to those commentators, who, like Dacier, defend, on all occasions, the common arrangement as authentic. If they are right, we must suppose one of the most strict and methodical of philosophers to have been sometimes almost as careless as old Montagne; who, as he tells us pleasantly, “*n’avoit point d’autre sergent de bande à ranger ses pieces que la fortune.*”

Every translation should be accompanied with such explanations as are necessary to render it intelligible to those readers who are supposed, chiefly, to have recourse to translation; those, who are totally unacquainted with the language of the original. This is the object of the short notes under the version; in which, however, I have sometimes referred to the larger notes, when they were such as would answer the same purpose.

These last-mentioned Notes, which follow the Translation, and the two Dissertations prefixed to it, (which indeed are but longer notes thrown into that form,) I wish to be considered as the principal part of my design. They form a full, and nearly a continued, commentary. My purpose was, to discuss all the difficulties of the *original*, of whatever kind: to remove, or at least, to diminish them, where I could; where I could not, to state them fairly, and to confess them—the easiest part, certainly, of a commentator’s duty,

duty, though not, perhaps, that, which is most commonly discharged.

As a great part of these difficulties arise from the obscurity or corruption of the Greek text, a great part of my comment is, of course, taken up by philological and verbal criticism. But though my plan obliged me to submit to an employment which wit has disgraced by the name of "word-catching," I hope it will not be found that I altogether "*live* on syllablesⁿ." It is, indeed, rather hard upon a commentator, that he should be expected to "catch" the meaning of his author, and, at the same time, reproached for endeavouring to catch the words in which that meaning is contained. But, in executing this part of my task, I must confess myself to have, indeed, an insatiable appetite for obscurity, if I have discovered any *desire* of finding the text more corrupt and mutilated than it is. Where I have indulged conjecture, I hope I have always remembered that it *is* conjecture, and have neither insulted the reader, nor disgraced myself, by the disgusting, though privileged, language of emendatory criticism on antient authors. A *Latin* commentator, indeed, may *lay any wager*, that his author wrote this, or that; may assert his emendation to be *clearer than light itself*, and say to his reader, *if you are not a blockhead, you*
will

ⁿ "Each word-catcher, that lives on syllables."—
Pope's Ep, to Arbuthnot.

will be of my opinion°, &c.—“*Nobis non licet esse tam disertis.*”

They, who think *any* interpretation better than none, may perhaps wish, that I had not employed so considerable a portion of my notes in merely stating difficulties which had not been fully seen or fairly acknowledged, without attempting to remove them; in combating interpretations hitherto acquiesced in as satisfactory, and shewing, that many passages, supposed to be sufficiently understood, are yet to be explained. This is certainly not that part of a commentator's duty, which is most pleasant, either to his readers, or himself; but it is surely a necessary and indispensable part of it, and I have endeavoured to discharge it faithfully. I hope I have no where either made a difficulty to shew my sagacity, or dissembled one to conceal the want of it.

We live in a delicate and fastidious age, in which learning, even in books, is hardly released from the necessity of observing, in some degree, what Fontenelle calls “*the exterior decencies of ignorance*”^p. But, if pedantry be an *unnecessary, unseasonable*, and therefore ostentatious, display of learning, I should hope, that the nature of my work would sufficiently secure me against
that

° “*Quovis pignore contenderim.*”—“*Luce meridianâ clarius.*”—“*Tu, si sapis, mecum repone.*”—&c. &c.

^p “*Les bienséances extérieures de l'ignorance.*”

that charge. It will scarce be thought strange, that notes, intended to explain a Greek author, and supposed, of course, to be addressed to Greek scholars, should abound with Greek quotations. One of my chief objects was, to illustrate Aristotle, wherever I could, from himself, and from Plato, to whose opinions and writings he continually alludes. Another was, to relieve the dryness of so much philological discussion by passages, which, at the same time that they throw light upon the author, might also be expected to afford some pleasure to the reader, either as beautiful, or as curious. With the same view, I have now and then ventured to quit, for a moment, my direct path; to transgress Seneca's rule, "*Quò ducit materia sequendum est, non quò incitat,*" and to avail myself of some of those many openings, which Aristotle affords, into collateral, though not irrelative inquiries.

The time is come, when we no longer read the antients with our judgments shackled by determined admiration; when even from the editor and the commentator, it is no longer required as an indispensable duty, that he should see nothing in his author but perfection. No apology therefore, I trust, will be required from me, for speaking freely of the defects of this work of Aristotle, even where those defects appear to be his own.

It is necessary to mention, that many of my

notes were written, and of more the materials were prepared, before I consulted, or indeed had it in my power to consult, some of the earliest and best commentators, whose works are too scarce to be procured at the moment they are wanted. In perusing them I might often have adopted the exclamation of the old Grammarian ^q, “*Pereant, qui ante nos nostra dixerunt!*” But “every thing,” says Epictetus, “has two handles;” and it required but little philosophy in this case, to be more pleased with the support which my opinions received from such coincidence, than mortified by the mere circumstance of prior occupation: a circumstance, which, after all, could not deprive me of the property of my own thoughts, though, as Dr. Johnson has observed on a similar occasion ^r, I certainly can *prove* that property only to myself. — This coincidence, wherever I found it, I have scrupulously pointed out.

How much subsequent commentators, and Dacier in particular, have been obliged to the labours of those learned, acute, and indefatigable Italians, will perhaps sufficiently appear from the use I have made of them, and the frequent extracts, which the scarceness of their books has induced me to give from them in my notes.

This

^q Donatus.

^r Pref. to Shakspeare.

This I must be allowed to say, that, in my opinion, great injustice is done to their merits by those editors, who not only neglect to avail themselves of their assistance, but affect also to speak of them with contempt. The truth is, that to consult them is a work of considerable labour, and requires no small degree of patience and resolution. The trouble we are unwilling to take, we easily persuade ourselves to think not worth taking; and plausible reasons are readily given, and as readily admitted, for neglecting, what those, to whom we make our apology, are, in general, as little disposed to take the pains of examining as ourselves. And thus, “*Difficultas laborque discendi DISERTAM NEGLIGENTIAM REDDIT*.”

In what I have here said, I allude, more particularly, to the commentaries of Castelvetro and Beni'. Their prolixity, their scholastic and trifling

* Cic. de Divin. I. 47.

† *Poetica d' Aristotele vulgarizzata e sposta per Lodovico Castelvetro, &c. Basil. 1576.*

Pauli Benii, Eugubini, &c. in Aristotelis Poeticam Commentarii, &c. Venet. 1624.

Castelvetro's criticism is well characterized, and its effect upon his reader well described, by *Gravina*: “E perchè il Castelvetro, quanto è acuto e diligente, ed amator del vero, tanto è difficile ed affannoso per quelle scolastiche reti, che agli altri ed a se stessi, allora,

trifling subtilty, their useless tediousness of logical analysis, their microscopic detection of difficulties invisible to the naked eye of common sense, and their waste of confutation upon objections made only by themselves, and made on purpose to be confuted—all this, it must be owned, is disgusting and repulsive. It may sufficiently release a commentator from the duty of reading their works throughout, but not from that of examining and consulting them: for in both these writers, but more especially in *Beni*, there are many remarks equally acute and solid; many difficulties well seen, clearly stated, and, sometimes, successfully removed; many things usefully illustrated, and judiciously explained; and if their freedom of censure is now and then disgraced by a little disposition to cavil, this becomes almost a virtue, when compared with the servile and implicit admiration of Dacier, who, as a fine writer has observed, “avoit fait vœu d’être de l’avis d’Aristote, soit qu’il l’entendit ou qu’il ne l’entendit pas^u.”

Of

“allora, i maggiori ingegni tendeano; perciò, per dispetto spesso e per rabbia vien da’ lettori abbandonato, ed è da loro condannato, prima che intendano la sua ragione; la quale si rincrescono tirar fuori da quei labirinti delle sue sottili e moleste distinzioni.” *Della Tragedia*, p. 75.

^u Marmontel, *Poétique Française*, Pref. p. 6.

Of the translations and commentaries written in the Italian language there is one, which deserves particular notice, though, by what hard fate I know not, it seems scarce to have been noticed at all: I mean that of *Piccolomini* †. His version, though sometimes rather paraphractical, is singularly exact; and, on the whole, more faithful to the sense, or at least to what I conceive to be the sense, of Aristotle, than any other that I have seen. In his commentary, he has nothing of the Quixotism of Castelvetro and Beni. He does not sally forth so eagerly to the relief of *distressed readers*, as to create the distress for the sake of shewing his prowess in surmounting it. Some commentators appear to be really disappointed, when they find any thing which they cannot deny to be intelligible. Piccolomini fairly endeavoured to understand his author; and, which is no small praise, seems always to have understood himself. His annotations, though often prolix and diffused, are generally sensible, and always clear. They will sometimes tire the reader, but seldom, I think, perplex him.

With

† *Annotationi di M. Alessandro Piccolomini, nel libro della Poetica d'Aristotele; con la traduzione del medesimo libro in lingua volgare. In Vinegia. 1575.*—Piccolomini was archbishop of Patras. See Bayle. He also wrote *Copiosissima Parafrase nel Retorica d'Aristotele. Venet. 1565.* A clear, exact, and useful work, though prolix, and an unpleasant mixture of translation and comment.

With respect to the original work itself, it would be superfluous to enter, here, into any discussion of its merits and its defects. My ideas of both will sufficiently appear in the course of my notes. I must however remark one point of view, in which the criticism of Aristotle has always particularly struck me, though it seems to have been little noticed: And that is, that his philosophy, austere and cold as it appears, has not encroached upon his taste. He has not indeed *expressed* that taste by mixing the language of admiration with that of philosophy in his investigation of principles, but he has *discovered* it in those principles themselves; which, in many respects at least, are truly *poetical* principles, and such as afford no countenance to that sort of criticism, which requires the Poet to be “of *reason* all compact.” Aristotle, on the contrary, everywhere reminds him, that it is his business to represent, not what *is*, but what *should* be; to look beyond actual and common nature, to the ideal model of perfection in his own mind. He sees fully, what the *rationalists* among modern critics have not always seen, the power of popular *opinion* and *belief* upon poetical credibility^x—that “a legend, a tale, a tradition, a rumour, a superstition—in short, any thing, is enough to be the
“ basis

^x See the translation, Part IV. Sect. I. and the note there: Sect. 3, and 6.

“basis of the poet’s air-formed *visions*.” He never loses sight of the *end* of Poetry, which, in conformity to common sense, he held to be *pleasure*^z. He is ready to excuse, not only impossibilities, but even absurdities, where that *end* appears to be better answered with them, than it would have been without them^a. In a word, he asserts the privileges of Poetry, and gives her free range to employ her *whole* power, and to do all she *can* do—that is, to impose upon the imagination, by whatever means, as far as imagination, for the sake of its own pleasure, will consent to be imposed upon. Poetry can do no more than this, and, from its very nature and end, ought not to be required to do less. If it is our interest to be cheated, it is her duty to cheat us^b. The critic, who suffers his philosophy to reason away his pleasure, is not much wiser than the child, who cuts open his drum, to see what it is within that caused the sound.

The

^y Letters on Chivalry and Romance, p. 300.

^z This I have endeavoured to prove in NOTE 277.

^a Part IV. Sect. 2. and p. 184—6.

^b I allude to the ingenious saying of Gorgias, who called Tragedy, “*an imposition, where they who cheat us are honester than they who do not cheat us, and they who are cheated, wiser than they who are not cheated.*”—Την τραγωδιαν εἶπεν ἀπατην, ἣν ὁ ἀπατησας δικαιοτερος ἢ τὰ μὴ ἀπατησάντων, καὶ ὁ ἀπατηθεὶς σοφωτερος ἢ τὰ μὴ ἀπατηθέντων. *Plut. de aud. Poet. p. 26. ed. H. S.*

The English reader of Aristotle will, I hope, do him (and, I may add, his translator,) so much justice, as to recollect, when the improvements of modern criticism occur to him, that he is reading a book, which was written above two thousand years ago, and which, for the reasons already given, can be considered as little more than the fragment of a fragment. What *would* have been the present state of poetical criticism, had Aristotle never written, it is impossible to say: two facts, however, are certain; that he was the first who carried philosophical investigation into these regions of imagination and fiction, and that the ablest of his successors have not disdained to pursue the path which he had opened to them, and even, in many instances, to tread in his very footsteps. It may therefore, *possibly*, be true, that modern critics are, in some measure, indebted to Aristotle himself for their very pretensions to despise him. At least, the more we admire the skill of those, who have raised and finished the structure, the more reason we have to respect the Architect, who not only gave the plan, but, with it, many specimens of masterly execution.

With respect to my own work, I have already said all that I thought it necessary to say, by way of explaining its design, and of apologizing for such particulars in the execution of it, as might appear most liable to exception. To suppose it free from imperfection and error, would be not
only

only to forget the nature of the work, but to forget myself. I commit it with the less anxiety to the candour of the public, as I am confident, (and it is the only confidence I allow myself to feel,) that the time and the labour I have bestowed upon it will, at least, acquit me of that disrespectful indifference to the public judgment, which haste and negligence imply. It is now six years since the translation was finished; and both that, and the dissertations and notes, have received every advantage of revision and correction, which either my own care, or friendly criticism, could give them. And, upon this occasion, I cannot refuse myself the gratification of publicly acknowledging how much I owe to the accurate judgment and just taste of one person^c, in particular, in whom I found precisely that friendly censor, so happily and so comprehensively characterized by the Poet as

“ Eager to praise, yet resolute to blame,

“ Kind to his verse, but kinder to his fame^d :”

—and of whom, indeed, I may say, without any fear of indulging too far the partiality of friendship, that he never shrinks from any task, whether of private kindness, or more general benevolence, that calls for his assistance, and stands in need of his abilities.

^c The Rev. Dr. Forster, of Colchester.

^d Hayley's Epistle on the death of Mr. Thornton:

I TAKE the only opportunity now left me to mention a book, which was very lately sent to me by a friend, and which I have read with great pleasure;—*Dramaturgie, ou Observations critiques sur plusieurs pieces de Théâtre, tant anciennes que modernes*: [Paris 1785]—a translation from the German of the late Mr. Lessing. The notice taken of the original work in Mr. Winstanley's edition of Aristotle had, indeed, long ago excited my curiosity; but I am unacquainted with the German language, and my inquiries afforded me no reason to conclude that the work had been translated. It contains many excellent and uncommon things. Mr. Lessing appears to me to have possessed, in no ordinary degree, that combination of taste and philosophy—of strength of feeling and strength of thought—upon which good and *original* criticism depends. He had, it seems, particularly applied himself to the study of Aristotle's treatise on Poetry; as indeed sufficiently appears from several masterly discussions of difficult and contested passages in that work. I cannot but regret, that he did not write a regular commentary on the whole. From the specimens he has given, I have no doubt, that it would have been, in many respects, far superior
to

to any other work of the kind ; though, at the same time, those specimens afford us reason to conclude, that we should have found in it some instances of refinement, upon Aristotle, at least, if not upon the truth ; and that, like many other ingenious men, he would, now and then, have transferred his own ingenuity to his author. Something of this refinement, I think, there is in his explanation of Aristotle's definition of Tragedy, and of the purgation of the passions, *tome 2. p. 6—35.* After considering, very attentively, that, and some other explanations, in which he differs from me, I have not yet found reason to alter my opinion. But, had I seen this ingenious work in time, I should certainly have paid every attention due to the opinions of such a writer, by availing myself of his support, where we agree, and by giving my reasons, where we differ.

TWO
DISSERTATIONS.

I.

ON POETRY CONSIDERED AS AN
IMITATIVE ART.

II.

ON THE DIFFERENT SENSES OF THE
WORD, IMITATIVE,
AS APPLIED TO MUSIC BY THE ANTIENTS,
AND BY THE MODERNS.

DISSERTATION I.

ON POETRY CONSIDERED AS AN IMITATIVE ART.

THE word *Imitation*, like many others, is used, sometimes in a strict and proper sense, and sometimes in a sense more or less extended and improper. Its application to poetry is chiefly of the latter kind. Its precise meaning, therefore, when applied to poetry *in general*, is by no means obvious. No one who has seen a picture is at any loss to understand how painting is imitation. But no man, I believe, ever heard or read, for the first time, that poetry is imitation, without being conscious in some degree, of that "confusion of thought" which an ingenious writer complains of having felt whenever he has attempted to explain the imitative nature of Music^a. It is easy to see whence this confusion arises, if we consider the process of the mind when words thus extended from their *proper* significations are presented to it. We are told that "Poetry is an imitative art."

In

^a Dr. Beattie, *Essay on Poetry*, &c. ch. vi. § 1.

In order to conceive how it is so, we naturally compare it with painting, sculpture, and such arts as are strictly and clearly imitative. But, in this comparison, the *difference* is so much more obvious and striking than the *resemblance*—we see so much more readily in what respects poetry is *not* properly imitation, than in what respects it *is*;—that the mind, at last, is left in that sort of perplexity which must always arise from words thus loosely and analogically applied, when the analogy is not sufficiently clear and obvious; that is, when, of that mixture of circumstances, *like* and *unlike*, which constitutes analogy, the latter are the most apparent.

In order to understand the following Treatise on Poetry, in which *imitation* is considered as the very essence of the art^b, it seems necessary to satisfy ourselves, if possible, with respect to two points; I. In what senses the word *Imitation* is, or *may* be, applied to Poetry. II. In what senses it was so applied by ARISTOTLE.

I.

THE only circumstance, I think, common to *everything* we denominate *imitation*, whether properly or improperly, is *resemblance*, of some sort or other.

In every imitation, strictly and properly so called, two conditions seem essential:—the resemblance

^b See the *Second part* of this Dissertation.

blance must be immediate; i. e. between *the imitation, or imitative work, itself*, and the object imitated;—and, it must also be *obvious*. Thus, in sculpture, figure is represented by similar figure; in painting, colour and figure, by similar colour and figure; in personal imitation, or mimicry, voice and gesture, by similar voice and gesture. In all these instances, the resemblance is *obvious*; we recognize the object imitated: and it is, also, *immediate*; it lies in the *imitative work, or energy, itself*; or, in other words, in the very materials, or *sensible media*^c, by which the imitation is conveyed. All *these* copies, therefore, are called, strictly and intelligibly, imitations.

1. The materials of poetic imitation are *words*. These may be considered in two views; as sounds *merely*, and as sounds *significant*, or arbitrary and conventional *signs* of ideas. It is evidently, in the *first* view only, that words can bear any real resemblance to the *things expressed*; and, accordingly, that kind of imitation which consists in the resemblance of words considered as mere SOUND, to the *sounds and motions* of the objects imitated^d, has usually been assigned as the only instance in which the term *imitative* is, in its strict and proper sense, applicable to Poetry^e.

But

^c See Mr. Harris's Treatise on Music, &c. ch. i.

^d Mr. Harris's Treatise, &c. ch. iii.

^e Mr. Harris.—Lord Kaims, Elements of Criticism, vol. ii. p. 1.

But setting aside all that is the effect of fancy and of accommodated pronunciation in the reader, to which, I fear, many passages, repeatedly quoted and admired as the happiest coincidences of sound and sense, may be reduced^f; setting this aside, even in such words, and such arrangements of words, as are actually, in some degree, analogous in sound or motion to the thing signified or described, the resemblance is so faint and distant, and of so general and vague a nature, that it would never, *of itself*, lead us to recognize the object imitated. We discover not the *likeness* till we know the *meaning*. The natural relation of the word to the thing signified, is pointed out only by its arbitrary or conventional relation^g.—I do
not

^f The reader may see this sufficiently proved by Dr Johnson in his *Lives of the Poets*, vol. iv. p. 183. *8vo*, and in the *Rambler*, N^o 92. “In such resemblances,” as he well observes, “the mind often governs the ear, and the sounds are estimated by their meaning.” See also Lord Kaims, *El. of Crit.* vol. ii. p. 84, 85.

^g See Harris on Music, &c. ch. iii. § 1, 2. This verse of Virgil,

Stridenti miserum stipulâ disperdere carmen—

is commonly cited as an example of this sort of imitation. I question, however, whether this line would have been remarked by any one as particularly harsh, if a harsh sound had not been described in it. At least, many verses full as harshly constructed might, I believe, be
4 produced,

not here mean to deny that such resemblances, however slight and delicate where they really *are*, and however liable to be discovered by fancy where they are *not*, are yet a source of real beauties,

produced, in which no such imitation can be supposed. But, even admitting that such imitation was here intended, it seems to me almost ridiculous to talk of the “*natural relation* between the sound of this verse, and *that of a vile hautboy*.” [Harris, in the chapter above referred to.] All that can be said is, that the sounds are, both of them, harsh sounds; but, certainly no one species of harsh sound can well be more unlike another, than the sound of a rough verse is to the tone of a bad hautboy, or, indeed, of any other musical instrument.—That, in the clearest and most acknowledged instances of such imitative vocal sound, the resemblance is, or can possibly be, so exact as to lead a person unacquainted with the language, *by the sound alone*, to the *signification*, no man in his senses would assert. Yet Dr. Beattie, in a note, p. 304, of his *Essay on Poetry, &c.* by a mistake for which I am at a loss to account, has ascribed so extravagant a notion to Rousseau. “There is in Tasso’s *Gierusalemme Liberata*, a famous stanza, of which Rousseau says, that a good ear and *sincere heart* are alone able to judge of it;” meaning, as appears from what follows, of its *sense*; for he adds, “The imitative harmony and the poetry are indeed admirable; but I doubt whether a person who understands neither Italian nor Latin, could even guess at the meaning from the sound.” There can be no room for *doubt* in this matter;—he certainly could not: nor does Rousseau appear to have even hinted the possibility of such a thing. The passage is in his admirable Letter

beauties, of beauties *actually felt* by the reader, when they arise, or appear to arise, spontaneously from the poet's feeling, and their effect is not counteracted by the obviousness of cool intention, and deliberate artifice^h. Nor do I mean to object to

Sur la Musique Française; where, in order to obviate the prejudices of those who regard the Italian language as wholly soft and effeminate, he produces two stanzas of Tasso, the one as an example of a sweet and tender, the other of a forcible and nervous, combination of sounds: and he adds, that to judge of *this*, i. e. of the *sound* only, not the *sense*, of the stanzas, and also of the impossibility of rendering adequately the sweetness of the one, or the force of the other, in the French language, “it is not necessary to understand Italian—it is sufficient *that we have an ear, and are impartial.*”—“*Que ceux qui pensent que l’Italien n’est que le langage de la douceur et de la tendresse, prennent la peine de comparer entre elles ces deux strophes du Tasse:—et s’ils desesperent de rendre en François la douce harmonie de l’une, qu’ils essayent d’exprimer la rauque dureté de l’autre: il n’est pas besoin pour juger de ceci d’entendre la langue, il ne faut qu’ avoir des oreilles & de la bonne foi.*”

^h I am persuaded that many very beautiful and striking passages of this kind in the best poets were solely *φύσεως αὐτοματιζήσεως ἔργα*, not *τέχνης μιμησασθαι τὰ γινόμενα πειρωμένης*, as it is well expressed by *Dion. Hal. Περὶ συνθεσεως*, § 20. — But the *Critic* is always too ready to transfer his own reflection to the *Poet*; and to consider as the *effects* of art, all those spontaneous strokes of genius which become the *causes* of art by his calm observation and discussion.

to this application of the word *imitative*. My purpose is merely to shew, that when we call this kind of resemblance, imitation, we do not use the word in its *strict* sense—that, in which it is applied

discussion. Scarce any poet has, I think, so many beauties of this kind, fairly produced by strength of imagination, and delicacy of ear, as Virgil. Yet there are some verses frequently cited as fine examples in this way, which appear to me too visibly artificial to be pleasing: such as —

—Quadrupedante putrem sonitu quatit ungula campum.

I am tempted to add to this note a passage from the first dissertation prefixed to the *Æneid* by that excellent editor, C. G. Heyne;—a man who has honourably distinguished himself from the herd of commentators, by such a degree of taste and philosophy as we do not often find united with laborious and accurate erudition. Speaking of the charms of Virgil's versification, he says, “*Illud unum*
“ *monebimus, in errorem inducere juvenilem animum*
“ *videri eos qui nimii in eo sunt, ut ad rerum sonos et*
“ *naturas accommodatos et formatos velint esse versus.*
“ *Equidem non diffiteor sensum animi me refragantem*
“ *habere, quotiescunque persuadere mihi volo, magnum*
“ *aliquem poetam æstu tantarum rerum abreptum et*
“ *magnorum phantasmatum vi inflammatum, in sono*
“ *cursus equestris vel tubæ vel aliarum rerum reddendo*
“ *laborare; attenuat ea res et deprimit ingenium poetæ*
“ *et artis dignitatem. Sunt tamen, ais, tales versus in*
“ *optimo quoque poetâ. Recte; sunt utique multi;*
“ *etsi plures alios ad hoc lusus genus accommodare solet*
“ *eorum ingenium qui talibus rebus indulgent. Sed mihi*
“ ad

applied to a picture, or a statue. Of the two conditions above mentioned, it wants that which must be regarded as most essential. The resemblance is, indeed, real, *as far as it goes*, and immediate; but, necessarily, from its *generality*, so imperfect, that even when pointed out by the *sense*, it is by no means always *obvious*, and without that, cannot possibly lead to any thing like a clear and certain recognition of the particular object imitated¹. I must observe farther, that this kind of imitation,

“ adpoetices indolem propius esse videtur statuere, *ipsam*
 “ *orationis naturam* ita esse comparatam, ut multarum
 “ rerum sonos exprimat; inflammatum autem phantas-
 “ matum specie objectâ animum, cum rerum species sibi
 “ obversantes ut *oratione vivide exprimat laborat, necessario*
 “ *in ista vocabula incidere, vel orationis proprietate ducente.*
 “ Ita graves et celeres, lenes ac duros sonos, *vel non id*
 “ *agens et curans*, ad rerum naturam accommodabit
 “ et orator quisque bonus, et multo magis poeta.”
 [Heyne’s Virgil, vol. ii. p. 39.]

¹ The causes of this imperfection are accurately pointed out by Mr. Harris; 1. The “*natural* sounds and motions which Poetry thus imitates, are themselves but *loose* and *indefinite accidents* of those subjects to which they belong, and consequently do but *loosely* and *indefinitely* characterise them. 2. *Poetic* sounds and motions do but *faintly* resemble those of *nature*, which are *themselves* confessed to be so *imperfect* and *vague*.” [Treatise on Music, &c. ch. iii. § 2. See also

imitation, even supposing it much more perfect, is, by no means, that which would be likely first to occur to any one, in an enquiry concerning the nature of the imitation attributed to Poetry, were it not, that the circumstance of its real and *immediate* resemblance, has occasioned its being considered, I think not justly, as the strictest sense of the term so applied.

For the most *usual*, and the most *important* senses, and even, as will perhaps appear, for the *strictest* sense, in which Poetry has been, or may be,

also *ch. ii. § 3.*] The following is a famous imitative line of Boileau :

S'en va frapper le mur, & revient en roulant.

If this line were read to any one ignorant of the language, he would be so far from guessing *what* was imitated, that it would not, I believe, occur to him that *anything* was imitated at all; unless, indeed, the idea were forced upon his mind by the pronuntiation of the reader. Now, suppose him to understand French:—as the circumstance of *rolling* is mentioned in the line, he might possibly notice the effect of the letter R, and think the poet intended to express the noise of *something* that rolled. And this is all the *real* resemblance that can be discovered in this verse: a resemblance, and that too, but distant and imperfect, in the sound of a letter to the sound of *rolling* in general. For anything beyond this, we must trust to our imagination, assisted by the commentator, who assures us, that the poet “ a cherché à
“ imiter par le son des mots, le bruit que fait UNE
“ ASSIETTE en roulant.” *Sat. iii. v. 216.*

be, understood to imitate, we must have recourse to language considered in its most important point of view, as composed, not of sounds merely, but of sounds *significant*.

2. The most general and extensive of these senses, is that in which it is applied to DESCRIPTION, comprehending, not only that poetic landscape-painting which is *peculiarly* called descriptive Poetry, but all such circumstantial and distinct representation as conveys to the mind a strong and clear idea of its object, whether *sensible* or *mental*^k. Poetry, in this view, is naturally

^k Nothing is more common than this application of the word to description; though the-writers who so apply it have not always explained the ground of the application, or pointed out those precise properties of description which entitle it to be considered as imitation. Mr. Addison makes use of *description* as a general term, comprehending all poetic imitation, or imitation by language, as opposed to that of painting, &c. See *Spectator* N^o 416. I. C. Scaliger, though he extended *imitation* to speech in general, [see Part II. Note¹.] did not overlook the circumstances which render description peculiarly imitative. He says, with his usual spirit, speaking of poetic or verbal imitation,—“ At *imitatio* non uno modo; quando ne *res* quidem. Alia *namque* est *simplex designatio*, ut, *Æneas pugnât*: alia *modos addit et circumstantias*; verbi gratiâ—*armatus, in equo, iratus*. Jam hîc est *pugnantis etiam faciès*, non *solum actio*. Ita *adjunctæ circumstantiæ, loci, affectûs, occasionis,*

naturally considered as more or less *imitative*, in proportion as it is capable of raising an ideal *image* or *picture*, more or less resembling the reality of things. The more distinct and vivid the ideas are of which this picture is composed, and the more closely they correspond to the actual *impressions* received from nature, the stronger will be the resemblance, and the more perfect the imitation.

Hence it is evident that, of all description, that of *visible* objects will be the *most* imitative, the ideas of such objects being of all others, the most distinct and vivid. That *such* description, therefore, should have been called imitation, can be no wonder; and, indeed, of all the extended or analogical applications of the word, this is, perhaps, the most obvious and natural¹. There needs no other proof of this than the very language in which we are naturally led to express our admiration of this kind of poetry, and which

we

“*occasionis, &c. pleniorē adhuc atque torosiorē efficiunt IMITATIONEM.*” [*Poet. lib. vii. cap. 2.*] We must not, however, confound *imitative description* with such description as is merely an *enumeration of parts*. See *note*^m, Second part of this Dissertation.

¹ Τα δὲ ΟΥΕΙ γινωριμα, δια ποιητικῆς ἐμπνευιας ἐμφανεται ΜΙΜΗΤΙΚΩΤΕΡΟΝ· ὁ.σν, κυματων ὄψεις, και τοποθεσιαι, και μαχαι, και περιγασεις παύων ὡσε συνδιατθεσθαι τας ψυχας τοις εἶδεσι των ἀπαγγελλομενων, ΩΣ ΩΡΩΜΕΝΟΙΣ. *Poet. Harmon. 3. 3.*

we perpetually borrow from the arts of strict imitation. We say the poet has *painted* his object; we talk of his *imagery*, of the lively *colours* of his description, and the masterly touches of his *pencil*^m.

The

^m It cannot be necessary to produce examples of this. They are to be found in almost every page of every writer on the subject of poetry. The reader may see Dr. Hurd's Discourse on Poetical Imitation, p. 10, &c. —Dr. Beattie's Essay on Poetry and Music, p. 97, (Ed. 8vo.) and the note.—Dr. Warton on Pope, vol. i. p. 44, 45; vol. ii. 223, 227.—Lord Kaims, Elem. of Criticism, vol. ii. p. 326.

Nor is this manner of speaking peculiar to modern writers. *φέρει ἐν*, says Ælian, introducing his *description* of the Vale of Tempe: *καὶ τὰ καλεῖμενα Τεμπή, τὰ Θετταλικά, ΔΙΑΓΡΑΨΩΜΕΝ τῷ λόγῳ, καὶ ΔΙΑΠΛΑΣΩΜΕΝ*. And he adds, as in justification of these expressions, *ἀμολογῆται γὰρ καὶ ὁ λόγος, ἔαν ἔχη δύναμιν φραστικὴν, μὴδὲν ἀσθενέστερον ὅσα βελεται ΔΕΙΚΝΥΝΑΙ τῶν ἀνδρῶν τῶν κατὰ χειρουργίαν δειῶν*. *Hist. Var. lib. iii. cap. 1*. Hence, also, the saying of Simonides, so often repeated, that “a picture is a silent poem, and a poem a speaking picture.” Lucian, in that agreeable delineation of a beautiful and accomplished woman, his ΕΙΚΟΝΕΣ, ranks the descriptive poet with the painter and the sculptor: *ταῦτα μὲν ἐν ΠΛΑΣΤῶΝ καὶ ΓΡΑΦΕῶΝ καὶ ΠΟΙΗΤῶΝ παιδῆς ἐργαίζονται*. Homer, he denominates, *τον ἀρίστον ΤῶΝ ΓΡΑΦΕῶΝ*, “the best of PAINTERS;” and calls upon him, even in preference to Polygnotus, Apelles, and the most eminent artists, to paint the charms

The objects of our other senses fall less within the power of description, in proportion as the ideas of those objects are more simple, more fleeting, and less distinct, than those of sight. The description of such objects is, therefore, called with less propriety *imitation*ⁿ.

Next to visible objects, *sounds* seem the most capable of descriptive imitation. Such description is, indeed, generally aided by real, though imperfect, resemblance of verbal sound; more, or less, according to the nature of the language, and the delicacy of the poet's ear. The following lines of Virgil are, I think, an instance of this.

Lamentis gemituque et fœminco ululatu
Tecta fremunt, resonat magnis plangoribus æther.
Æn. iv. 663.

But we are not, now, considering this immediate imitation of sound by sound, but such only as is merely *descriptive*, and operates, like the description of visible objects, only by the *meaning* of the words. Now if we are allowed to call description of visible objects, imitation, when it
is

charms of his Panthea. See also the treatise ΠΕΡΙ ΤΗΣ ΟΜΗΡΟΥ ποιησεως, towards the end. (ΕΙ ΔΕ ΚΑΙ ΖΩΓΡΑΦΙΑΣ ΔΙΔΑΣΚΑΛΟΝ ΟΜΗΡΟΝ ΦΑΙΝΕΙ ΤΙΣ—κ. τ. αλλ.—)

ⁿ One obvious reason of this is, the want of that natural association just remarked. with *painting*, (the most striking of the *strictly imitative* arts,) which is peculiar to the description of *visible* objects.

is such that *we seem to see* the object^o, I know of no reason why we may not also consider sounds as imitated^p, when they are so described that we *seem to hear* them. It would not be difficult to produce from the best poets, and even from prose-writers of a strong and poetical imagination, many instances of sound so imitated. Those readers who are both poetical and musical will, I believe, excuse my dwelling a moment upon a subject which has not, as far as I know, been much considered.

Of our own poets I do not recollect any who have presented *musical* ideas with such feeling, force, and reality of description, as Milton, and Mr. Mason. When Milton speaks of

- - - Notes with many a winding bout
Of linked sweetness long drawn out.

L'Allegro.

And of—"a soft and solemn-breathing sound,"
that

Rose like a steam of rich distill'd perfumes,
And stole upon the air.

Comus.

Who,

^o ΟΡΩΜΕΝΟΙΣ μαλλον ἢ ἀκρομενοις εἶοικε τα [Ὅμηρος]
ποιηματα. *Treatise de Hom. Poes. loco cit^o.*

^p Lucian, in his *Imagines*, just now cited, has very happily described a fine female voice; and he calls the description, somewhat boldly, καλλιφωνας και ᾠδης ΕΙΚΩΝ, *Tom. ii. p. 13. Ed. Bened. Πας δε ὁ τον⊕ τε φθεγματ⊕.*

—κ. τ. αλ.—

Who, that has a truly musical ear, will refuse to consider such description as, in some sort, imitative⁹?

In the same spirit both of Poetry and of Music are these beautiful lines in *CARACTACUS*, addressed by the Chorus to the Bards:

- - - Wond'rous men!

Ye, whose skill'd fingers know how best to lead,
Through all the maze of sound, the wayward step
Of Harmony, recalling oft, and oft
Permitting her unbridled course to rush
Through dissonance to concord, sweetest then
Ev'n when expected harshest. - - -

It seems scarce possible to convey with greater clearness to the ear of imagination the effect of an artful and well-conducted harmony; of that free and varied range of modulation, in which the ear is ever wandering, yet never lost, and of that masterly and bold intertexture of discord, which leads the sense to pleasure, through paths that lie close upon the very verge of pain.

The general and confused effect of complex and aggregated sound may be said to be *described*, when the most striking and characteristic of the single sounds of which it is compounded are selected and enumerated; just as *single* sounds are described (and they can be described

no

⁹ See also *Il Penseroso*, 161—166.

no otherwise) by the selection of their principal *qualities*, or *modifications*.—I cannot produce a finer example of this than the following admirable passage of Dante, in which, with a force of representation peculiar to himself in such subjects, he describes the mingled terrors of those distant sounds that struck his ear as he entered the gates of his imaginary *Inferno*;—“ si mise dentro alle “ segrete cose.”—

Quivi sospiri, pianti, ed alti guai
Risonavan per l'aer senza stelle ;

— — — — —
Diverse lingue, orribili favelle,
Parole di dolore, accenti d'ira,
Voci alte fioche, e suon di man con elle.

Inferno, Canto iii.

The reader may be glad to relieve his imagination from the terrible ENAPTEIA of this description, by turning his ear to a far different combination of sounds;—to the charming description of “ the melodies of morn,” in the *Minstrel*’, or of the *melodies of evening* in the *Deserted Village* :

Sweet was the sound, when oft at evening’s close,
Up yonder hill the village murmur rose.
There as I past with careless steps and slow,
The mingling notes came soften’d from below;

The

The swain responsive as the milk-maid sung,
The sober herd that low'd to meet their young;
The noisy geese that gabbled o'er the pool,
The playful children just let loose from school;
The watch-dog's voice that bay'd the whisp'ring
wind, [miod.
And the loud laugh that spoke the vacant
These all in soft confusion sought the shade,
And fill'd each pause the nightingale had made^s.

But

^s The following Stanza of Spenser has been much admired :

The joyous birdes, shrouded in cheareful shade,
Their notes unto the voice attempred sweet,
Th' angelical soft trembling voices made
To th' instruments divine, response meet ;
The silver-sounding instruments did meet
With the base murmur of the water's fall ;
The water's fall with difference discreet
Now soft, now loud, unto the wind did call ;
The gentle warbling wind low answered to all.

Fairy Queen, Book ii. Canto 12, Stanza 71.

Dr. Warton says of these lines, that they "are of themselves a complete concert of the most delicious music." It is unwillingly that I differ from a person of so much taste. I cannot consider as *Music*, much less as "delicious music," a mixture of incompatible sounds, if I may so call them—of sounds *musical* with sounds *unmusical*. The singing of birds cannot possibly be "attempred" to the notes of a human voice. The

But *single sounds* may also be so described or characterized as to produce a secondary perception, of sufficient clearness to deserve the name of imitation. It is thus that we hear the “far-off Curfeu” of Milton;

Over some wide-water'd shore
Swinging slow with sullen roar^t.

And

mixture is, and must be, disagreeable. To a person listening to a concert of voices and instruments, the interruption of *singing-birds*, *wind*, and *waterfalls*, would be little better than the torment of Hogarth's enraged musician.—Farther—the description itself is, like too many of Spenser's, coldly elaborate, and indiscriminately minute. Of the expressions, some are feeble and without effect—as, “*joyous birds*;” some evidently improper—as, “*trembling voices*,” and “*cheareful shade* ;” for there cannot be a greater fault in a voice than to be tremulous; and *cheareful* is surely an unhappy epithet applied to shade; some cold and laboured, and such as betray too plainly the *necessities of rhyme*; such is,

“The water's fall with *difference discreet*.”

^t The reader who conceives the word “*swinging*,” to be merely descriptive of *motion*, will be far, I think, from feeling the whole force of this passage. They who are accustomed to attend to sounds, will, I believe, agree with me, that the sound, in this case, is affected by the motion, and that the swing of a bell is actually *heard in its tone*, which is different from what it would be if the *same* bell were struck with the *same force*, but *at rest*. The experiment may be easily made with a small hand-bell.

And Mr. Mason's "Bell of Death," that

- - - pauses now; and now with *rising knell*
Flings to the hollow gale its sullen sound.

Elegy iii.

I do not know a happier descriptive line in Homer than the following, in his simile of the nightingale:

Ἦτε θαμα τρωπωσα χεει πολυηχεα φωνην^u.

That which is peculiar in the singing of this bird, the variety, richness, flexibility, and liquid volubility of its notes, cannot well be more strongly characterized, more *audibly* presented to the mind, than by the *πολυηχεα*, the *χεει*, and, above all, the *θαμα τρωπωσα*, of this short description^w. But, to return—

I men-

^u Odyssey, T. 521. I am surprised at Ernestus's interpretation of *τρωπωσα*; i. e. "de lusciniâ inter canendum SE *versante*;" [*Index* to his Homer] by which the greatest beauty of the description would be lost; and lost without necessity: for the natural construction is that which *Hesychius* gives: *τρωπωσα*—*τρεπωσα* ΤΗΝ ΦΩΝΗΝ.

^w Not a single beauty of this line is preserved in Mr. Pope's translation. The *χεει*, "pours her voice," is *entirely* dropt; and the strong and rich expression, in *θαμα τρωπωσα*, and *πολυηχεα*, is diluted into "varied strains." [Book xix. 607.] For the *particular* ideas of a *variety of quick turns* and *inflexions* [*θαμα τρωπωσα*] and a *variety of tones*, [*πολυηχεα*] the translator has substituted

I mentioned also, description of *mental* objects; of the emotions, passions, and other internal movements and operations of the mind. Such objects may be described, either *immediately*, as they affect the mind, or through their *external* and *sensible effects*. Let us take the passion of Dido for an instance :

At regina gravi jamdudum saucia curâ
Vulnus alit venis, et cœco carpitur igni, &c.

Æneid iv. 1.

This is *immediate* description.—But when Dido

Incipit effari, mediâque in voce resistit;
Nunc eadem, labente die, convivia quærit,
Iliacosque iterum, demens, audire labores
Exposcit, pendetque iterum narrantis ab ore.
Post, ubi digressi, lumenque obscura vicissim
Luna premit, suadentque cadentia sidera somnos,
Sola domo mœret vacuâ, stratisque relictis
Incubat. - - -

—here, the passion is described, and most exquisitely, by its *sensible effects*. This, indeed, *may* be considered as falling under the former kind of
descriptive

the *general*, and therefore weak idea, of *variety* in the abstract—of a song or “strains” simply *varied*. The reader may see this subject—the importance of *particular* and *determinate* ideas to the force and beauty of description—admirably illustrated in the *Discourse on Poetical Imitation*. [Hurd’s *Horace*, vol. iii. p. 15—19.]

descriptive imitation—that of *sensible* objects. There is this difference, however, between the description of a sensible object, and the description of a mental—of any passion for example—*through* that of a sensible object, that, in the former, the description is considered as terminating in the clear and distinct representation of the sensible object, the landscape, the attitude, the sound, &c. : whereas in the other, the sensible exhibition is only, or chiefly, the *means* of effecting that which is the principal end of such description—the emotion, of whatever kind, that arises from a strong conception of the passion itself. The image carries us on forcibly to the feeling of its internal cause. When this *first* effect is once produced, we may, indeed, return from it to the calmer pleasure, of contemplating the imagery itself with a painter's eye.)

It is undoubtedly, *this* description of passions and emotions, by their *sensible* effects, that principally deserves the name of *imitative*; and it is a great and fertile source of some of the highest and most touching beauties of poetry^y. With respect to *immediate* descriptions of this kind, they are from their very nature, far more weak and indistinct, and do not, perhaps, often possess that degree of forcible representation that amounts
to

^y See the Discourse on Poetical Imitation, of Dr. Hurd, p. 39, &c.

to what we call *imitative* description.—But here some distinctions seem necessary. In a strict and philosophical view, a *single* passion or emotion does not admit of description at all. Considered in itself, it is a simple internal feeling, and, as such, can no more be *described*, than a simple idea can be *defined*. It can be described no otherwise than in its *effects*, of *some* kind or other. But the effects of a passion are of two kinds, *internal* and *external*. Now, popularly speaking, by *the passion* of love, for example, we mean the whole operation of that passion upon the *mind*—we include all its internal workings; and when it is described in these internal and invisible effects only, we consider it as *immediately* described; these internal effects being included in our general idea of the passion. *Mental objects*, then, admit of immediate description, only when they are, more or less, complex; and such description may be considered as more or less *imitative*, in proportion as its impression on the mind approaches more or less closely to the real impression of the passion or emotion itself.—Thus, in the passage above referred to as an instance of such immediate description, the mental object described is a complex object—the passion of love, including some of its internal effects; that is, some *other* passions or feelings which it excites, or with which it is accompanied :

At

At regina gravi jandudum saucia curâ
Vulnus alit venis, et cæco carpitur igni.
Multa viri virtus animo, multusque recursat
Gentis honos : hærent infixi pectore vultus,
Verbaque : nec placidam membris dat cura
quietem. *Æn. iv. initio.*

Reduce this passage to the mere mention of the passion *itself*—the simple feeling or emotion of *love*, in the precise and strict acceptation of the word, abstractedly from its concomitant effects, it will not even be *description*, much less *imitative* description. It will be mere attribution, or predication. It will say only—“Dido was in love.”

Thus, again, a complication of *different passions* admits of forcible and *imitative* description :

- - - æstuat ingens
Imo in corde pudor, mixtoque insania luctu,
Et furiis agitatus amor, et conscia virtus.
Æn. xii. 666.

Here, the mental object described is not any single passion, but the complex passion, if I may call it so, that results from the mixture and fermentation of all the passions *attributed* to Turnus.

To give one example more:—The mind of a reader can hardly, I think, be flung into an imaginary situation more closely resembling the real situation

situation of a mind distressed by the *complicated* movements of irresolute, fluctuating and anxious deliberation, than it is by these lines of Virgil :

- - - magno curarum fluctuat æstu ;
Atque animum nunc huc celerem, nunc dividit illuc,
In partesque rapit varias, perque omnia versat.

Æn. viii. 19.

It may be necessary, also, for clearness, to observe, that description, as applied to mental objects, is sometimes used in a more loose and improper sense, and the Poet is said to *describe*, in general, all the passions or manners which he, in any way, exhibits ; whether, in the proper sense of the word, *described*, or merely *expressed* ; as, for example, in the lines quoted from the opening of the fourth book of the *Æneid*, the passion of Dido is *described* by the *Poet*. In these——

Quis novus hic nostris successit sedibus hospes ?
Quem sese ore ferens !—quam forti pectore et
armis !——

—it is *expressed* by herself. But is not this, it may be asked, still *imitation* ? It is ; but not *descriptive* imitation. As *expressive of passion*, it is no farther imitative, than as the passion expressed is imaginary, and makes a part of the Poet's *fiction* : otherwise, we must apply the word *imitative*, as nobody ever thought of applying it, to *all* cases in which we are made, by sympathy,

to feel strongly the passion of another expressed by words. The passage is, indeed, also *imitative* in another view—as *dramatic*. But for an explanation of both these heads of imitation, I must refer to what follows.—I shall only add, for fear of mistake, that there is also, in the second of those lines, *descriptive imitation*; but descriptive of *Æneas* only; not of Dido's *passion*, though it strongly *indicates* that passion.—All I mean to assert is, that those lines are not *descriptive imitation of a mental object*.

So much, then, for the subject of *descriptive imitation*, which has, perhaps, detained us too long upon a single point of our general inquiry.

3. The word *imitation* is also, in a more particular, but well-known, sense, applied to Poetry when considered as *FICTION*—to stories, actions, incidents, and characters, as far as they are *feigned* or *invented* by the Poet *in imitation*, as we find it commonly, and obviously enough, expressed, of nature, of real life, of truth, in *general*, as opposed to that individual reality of things which is the province of the historian^x. Of this imitation the epic and dramatic poems are the principal examples.

That this sense of the term, as applied to fiction, is entirely distinct from that in which it is applied to description, will evidently appear from the

^x Μυθῶν.—λογῶν ↓ευδης EIKONIZΩΝ ΤΗΝ ΑΛΗΘΕΙΑΝ.—Suidas, & Hesychius, voce Μυθῶν.

the following considerations.—In descriptive imitation, the resemblance is between the ideas raised, and the actual *impressions*, whether external or internal, received from the things themselves. In fictive imitation, the resemblance is, strictly speaking, between the ideas raised, and other ideas; the ideas raised—the ideas of the *Poem*—being no other than copies, resemblances, or, more philosophically, new, though similar, combinations of that general stock of ideas, collected from experience, observation, and reading, and repositied in the Poet's mind.—In description, *imitation* is opposed to actual *impression*, external or internal: in fiction, it is opposed to *fact*.—In their *effects*, some degree of illusion is implied; but the illusion is not of the same kind in both. Descriptive imitation may be said to produce *illusivè perception*,—fictive, *illusivè belief*.

Farther—descriptive imitation may subsist without fictive, and fictive, without descriptive. The first of these assertions is too obvious to stand in need of proof. The other may require some explanation. It seems evident that fiction may even subsist in mere *narration*, without any degree of *description*, properly so called; much more, without *such* description as I have called *imitative*; that is, without any greater degree of resemblance to the things expressed, than that which is implied in *all* ideas, and produced by *all* language, considered merely as *intelligible*.

Let

Let a story be invented, and related in the plainest manner possible; in short and general expressions, amounting, in the incidents, to mere assertion, and in the account of passions and characters, as far as possible, to mere attribution: this, as fiction, is still *imitation*,—an invented resemblance of real life, or, if you please, of history^z,—though without a single *imitative description*, a single *picture*, a single instance of strong and visible colouring, throughout the whole^a. I mean, by this, only to shew the distinct and independent senses in which *imitation* is applied to description and to fiction, by shewing how each species of imitation *may* subsist without the other: but, that fictive imitation, though it does not, in any degree, depend on descriptive for its existence, does, in a very great degree, depend on it for its beauty, is too obvious to be called in question^b.

The

^z “*Historiæ imitatio ad placitum.*” Bacon, *De augm. Scient.* lib. ii. c. 13.

^a The *Æneid*, in this view, is equally *imitation* in every part where it is not, or is not *supposed* to be, historically true; even in the simplest and barest narration. In point of fiction, “*tres littore cervos prospicit errantes,*” is as much imitation, though not as *poetical*, as the fine description of the storm in the same book, or of Dido’s conflicting passions, in the fourth.

^b Yet even here a distinction obviously suggests itself. A work of fiction may be considered in two views;

The two senses last mentioned of the word *imitative*, as applied to description, and to fiction, are manifestly extended, or improper senses, as well as that first mentioned, in which it is applied to language considered as mere sound. In *all* these imitations, *one* of the essential conditions of whatever is *strictly* so denominated is wanting;—
in

views; in the whole, or in its parts: in the general story, the *Motif*, fable, series of *events*, &c. or, in the detail and circumstances of the story, the account of such places, persons, and things, as the fable necessarily involves. Now, in the first view, nothing farther seems requisite to make the fictive imitation *good*, than that the events be, in *themselves*, important, interesting, and affecting, and so *connected* as to appear credible, probable, and natural to the reader, and, by that means, to produce the illusion, and give the pleasure, that is expected:—and this purpose may be answered by mere *narration*. But in the detail this is not the case. When the Poet proceeds to fill up and distend the outline of his general plan by the exhibition of places, characters, or passions, these also, as well as the *events*, must appear probable and natural: but, being more *complex* objects, they can no otherwise be made to appear so than by some degree of *description*, and that description will not be *good* description, that is, will not give the pleasure expected from a work of imagination, unless it be *imitative*—such as makes us see the *place*, feel the *passion*, enter thoroughly into the *character* described. Here, the *fictive* imitation itself, cannot produce its proper *effect*, and therefore cannot be considered as *good*, without the assistance of *descriptive*.

in sonorous imitation, the resemblance is *immediate*, but not *obvious*; in the others, it is *obvious*, but not *immediate*; that is, it lies, not in the *words* themselves, but in the *ideas* which they raise as *signs*^c: yet as the circumstance of *obvious* resemblance, which may be regarded as the most striking and distinctive property of Imitation, is here found, this extension of the word seems to have more propriety than that in which it is applied to those faint and evanescent resemblances which have, not without reason, been called the echo of sound to sense^d.

4. There seems to be but *one* view in which Poetry can be considered as *Imitation*, in the strict and proper sense of the word. If we look for both *immediate* and *obvious* resemblance, we shall find it only in DRAMATIC—OR TO USE A MORE GENERAL TERM—PERSONATIVE Poetry; that is, all Poetry in which, whether essentially or occasionally, the Poet personates; for here, *speech* is imitated by *speech*^e. The difference between
this,

^c See above, p. 5.

^d Pope's *Essay on Crit.* 365.—Indeed, what Ovid says of the nymph *Echo* [*Met.* iii. 358.] may be applied to this echo of imitative words and construction:—*Nec prior ipsa loqui didicit.* The *sense* of the words must *speak first*.

• The drama, indeed, is said also to imitate *action* by *action*; but this is only in actual representation, where the players are the immediate imitators. In the poem
itself

this, and mere narration or description, is obvious. When, in common discourse, we *relate*, or *describe*, in our own persons, we *imitate* in no other sense than as we raise *ideas* which resemble the things related or described. But when we speak *as another person*, we become mimics, and not only the ideas we convey, but the words, the discourse itself, in which we convey them, are imitations; they resemble, or are supposed to resemble, those of the person we represent. Now this is the case not only with the Tragic and Comic Poet, but also with the Epic Poet, and even the Historian, when either of these quits his own character, and *writes* a speech in the character of another person. He is then an imitator, in as strict a sense as the personal mimic.—In *dramatic*, and all *personative* Poetry, then, both the conditions of what is *properly* denominated Imitation, are fulfilled.

And now, the question—“in what senses the word *Imitation* is, or may be applied to Poetry,”—seems to have received its answer. It appears, I think, that the term ought not to be extended beyond the *four* different applications which have been mentioned; and that Poetry can be justly considered as *imitative*, only by *sound*, by *description*, by *fiction*, or by *personation*. Whenever the

itself nothing but *words* can be immediately copied. Gravina says well, Non è *imitazione poetica* quella, che non è fatta dalle parole.—[*Della Trag. sect. 13.*]

the Poet speaks in his own person, and, at the same time, does not either feign, or make “the sound an echo to the sense,” or stay to impress his ideas upon the fancy with some degree of that force and distinctness which we call description, he cannot, in any sense that I am aware of, be said to *imitate*; unless we extend imitation to *all* speech—to every mode of expressing our thoughts by words—merely because all words are signs of ideas, and those ideas images of *things*^f.

It is scarce necessary to observe, that these different species of imitation often run into, and are mixed with, each other. They are, indeed, more properly speaking, only so many distinct, abstracted *views*, in which Poetry may be considered as imitating. It is seldom that any of them are to be found separately; and in some of them, others are necessarily implied. Thus, dramatic imitation implies fiction, and sonorous imitation, description; though conversely, it is plainly otherwise. Descriptive imitation is, manifestly, that which is most independent on all the others. The passages in which they are all united are frequent; and those in which all are excluded, are, in the best Poetry, very rare: for the Poet of genius rarely forgets his proper *language*;

^f See *Hermes*, Book iii. ch. 3, p. 329, &c. And Part II. of this *Diss.* note ^l.

guage; and that can scarcely be retained, at least while he *relates*, without more or less of colouring, of imagery, of that *descriptive* force which makes us see and hear. A total suspension of all his functions as an imitator is hardly to be found, but in the simple proposal of his subject^g, in his invocation^h, the expression of his own sentimentsⁱ, or, in those calm beginnings of narration where, now and then, the Poet stoops to *fact*, and becomes, for a moment, little more than a metrical historian^k.

The full illustration of all this by examples, would draw out to greater length a discussion, which the reader, I fear, has already thought too long. If he will open the *Æneid*, or any other epic poem, and apply these remarks, he may, perhaps, find it amusing to trace the different kinds of imitation as they successively occur, in their various combinations and degrees; and to observe the Poet varying, from page to page, and sometimes

^g Arma virumque cano, Trojæ qui primus ab oris
 Italiam, fato profugus, Lavinaque venit
 Litora. *Æneid*, i.

^h Musa, mihi causas memora, &c. *Ibid.*

ⁱ Tantæne animis cælestibus iræ ?

— — — — —
 Tantæ molis erat Romanam condere gentem. *Ibid.*

^k Urbs antiqua fuit, (Tyrii tenuêre coloni,)
 Carthago, Italiam contra, Tiberinaque longe
 Ostia, &c. *Ibid.*

sometimes even from line to line, the *quantity*, if I may so speak, of his imitation; sometimes shifting, and sometimes, though rarely and for a moment, throwing off altogether, his imitative form.

It has been often said that ALL *Poetry is Imitation*¹. But from the preceding inquiry it appears, that, if we take *Poetry* in its common acceptance, for all *metrical composition*, the assertion is not true; not, at least, in any sense of the term *Imitation* but such as will make it equally true of all *Speech*^m. If, on the other hand, we depart from that common acceptance of the word *Poetry*, the assertion that "all Poetry is Imitation," seems only an improper and confused way of saying, that no composition that is not imitative *ought to be called Poetry*. To examine the truth of this, would be to engage in a fresh discussion totally distinct from the object of this dissertation. We have not, now, been considering *what Poetry is*, or how it should be *defined*;

¹ This expression is nowhere, that I know of, used by Aristotle. In the beginning of his treatise he asserts only that the *Epic, Tragic, Comic, and Dithyrambic Poems* are imitations. Le Bossu, not content with saying that "every sort of Poem in general is an Imitation," goes so far as even to alter the text of Aristotle in his marginal quotation. He makes him say, ΠΟΙΗΣΕΙΣ πασαι τυγχανειν εσαι μιμησεις το συνολον.

^m See p. 33, note f.

defined; but only, in what sense it is an *Imitative Art*: or, rather, we have been examining the nature and extent of VERBAL IMITATION in generalⁿ.

II.

THE preceding *general* inquiry, “in what senses the word *Imitation* is, or may be, applied to Poetry,” brings us with some advantage to the other question proposed, of more immediate concern to the reader of this treatise of Aristotle,—“in what senses it was so applied by HIM.”

1. It is clearly so applied by him in the sense which, from him, has, I think, most generally been adopted by modern writers—that of FICTION, as above explained^a, whether conveyed in the dramatic or personative form, or by mere narration in the person of the Poet himself^b. This appears from the whole sixth section of Part II. [of the original, ch. ix.] but especially from the last

ⁿ Imitation, in every sense of the word that has been mentioned, is manifestly independent on *metre*, though being more eminently adapted to the nature and end of metrical composition, it has thence been peculiarly denominated *Poetic* imitation, and attributed to the *Poetic Art*.

^a P. 27.

^b μιμεισθαι ἐστιν—ὡς ΤΟΝ ΑΥΤΟΝ και ΜΗ ΜΕΤΑ-ΒΑΛΛΟΝΤΑ. cap. 3. “The Poet may *imitate*, &c.—or, in his own person throughout, without change.” Part I. Sect. 4.

last paragraph, where he expressly says, that what constitutes the Poet an *imitator*, is the *invention of a Fable*: *ποιητην μαλλον ΤΩΝ ΜΥΘΩΝ είναι δε ΠΟΙΗΤΗΝ* ———— *ὅση ποιητης ΚΑΤΑ ΜΙΜΗΣΙΝ ἐσι· μιμεται δε ΤΑΣ ΠΡΑΞΕΙΣ* ^c. He repeatedly calls the fable, or *Μυθῶς*, “*an imitation of an action* ;” but this it can be in no other sense than as it is feigned, either entirely, or in part. A history, as far, at least, as it is strictly history, is not an *imitation* of an action.

2. It seems equally clear, that he considered *DRAMATIC Poetry* as *peculiarly imitative*, above every other species. Hence his *first rule* concerning the epic or narrative imitation, that its fable “*should be dramatically constructed, like that of tragedy* ^d :” — *τας μυθους, καθαπερ ἐν ταις τραγωδiais, ΔΡΑΜΑΤΙΚΟΥΣ* :—his praise of Homer for “*the dramatic spirit of his imitations* :” — *ὅτι και ΜΙΜΗΣΕΙΣ ΔΡΑΜΑΤΙΚΑΣ ἐποίησε* ^e : and above all, the remarkable expression he uses, where, having laid it down as a precept that the epic Poet “*should speak as little as possible in his own person*,” (*ΑΥΤΟΝ δε τον ποιητην ἐλαχιστα λεγειν*) he gives this reason—*ΟΥ γαρ ἐσι κατα ταυτα ΜΙΜΗΤΗΣ* : “*for he is not then the IMITATOR* ^f.”

But,

^c See Mr. Harris, *Philol. Inq.* p. 139.

^d Part III. Sect. 1. Of the orig. ch. xxiii.

^e Part I. Sect. 6. Orig. cap. iv.

^f Part III. Sect. 3. Orig. cap. xxiv.

But, he had before expressly allowed the Poet to be an imitator even while he retains his own person^g. I see no other way of removing this apparent inconsistency, than by supposing him to speak comparatively, and to mean no more, than that the Poet is not then *truly* and *strictly* an imitator^h; or, in other words, that *imitation* is applicable in its *strict* and *proper* sense, only to *personative* poetry, as above explained; to that Poetry in which speech is represented by speech, and the resemblance, as in painting and sculpture, is immediate. I am not conscious that I am here forcing upon Aristotle a meaning that may not

^g See above, note^b.

^h So Victorius: “amittit *pené* eo tempore nomen Poetæ.” Castelvetro’s solution of this difficulty is the same; and I find his ideas of this matter so coincident with my own, that I am induced to transcribe his words: In his comment upon the passage, he says, speaking of the dramatic part of epic poetry, “Si domanda qui *“ solo rassomigliativo, (i. e. imitative) non perché ancora “ quando il Poeta narra senza introducimento di persone “ à favellare, non rassomigli, ma perché le parole diritte “ poste in luogo di parole diritte, figurano, rappresentano, “ e rassomigliano MEGLIO le parole, che le parole poste in “ luogo di cose non figurano, non rappresentano, non “ rassomigliano le cose; in guisa che, in certo modo si puo “ dire che il rappresentare parole con parole sia rasso- “ migliare; e il rappresentare cose con parole non sia “ rassomigliare, paragonando l’un rassomigliare con l’altro, “ & non semplicemente.”* p. 554.

not be his. I seem to be only drawing a clear inference from a clear fact. It cannot be denied, that, in the passages alleged, he plainly speaks of personative Poetry as that which *peculiarly* deserves the name of imitation. The inference seems obvious—that he speaks of it as *peculiarly* imitative, in the only sense in which it is so, as being the only species of Poetry that is *strictly* imitative.

I do not find in Aristotle any express application of the term, except these two. Of the other two senses in which Poetry may be, and by modern writers has been, considered as imitation—*resemblance of sound*, and *description*—he says nothing.

With respect, indeed, to the former of these, *sonorous* imitation, it cannot appear in any degree surprising that he should pass it over in total silence. I have already observed, that even in a *general* inquiry concerning the nature of the imitation attributed to Poetry, it is by no means that sense of the word which would be likely first to occur; and it would, perhaps, never have occurred at all, if, in such inquiries, we were not naturally led to compare Poetry with Painting, and other arts *strictly* imitative¹, and as naturally led by that comparison to admit *sonorous* imitation as one species, from its agreement with those
strictly

¹ See above, p. 4.

strictly imitative arts in the circumstance of *immediate* resemblance. But no such general inquiry was the object of Aristotle's work, which is not a treatise *on Poetic Imitation*, but *on Poetry*. His subject, therefore, led him to consider, not *all that might* without impropriety be denominated *imitation* in Poetry, but *that imitation* only which he regarded as essential to the art; as the source of its greatest beauties, and the foundation of its most important rules. With respect, then, to that casual and subordinate kind of imitation which is produced merely by the *sound* of words, it was not likely even that the idea of it should occur to him. Indeed, it is to be considered as a property of language in general, rather than of Poetry; and of *speech*—of actual pronunciation—rather than of language^k. Besides that the beauties arising from this source are of too delicate and fugitive a nature to be held by rule. They *must* be left to the ear of the reader for their effect, and *ought* to be left to that of the Poet for their production.

But neither does Aristotle appear to have included *description* in his notion of Poetic imitation; which, as far as he has explained it, seems to have been simply that of the imitation of human actions, manners, passions, events, &c. in *feigned story*; and that, *principally*, when conveyed

^k See above, p. 5.

veyed in a dramatic form. Of description, indeed, important as it is to the beauty of Poetry in general, and to that of fiction itself, more particularly in the *epic* form, he has not said one word throughout his treatise: so far was he from extending Poetic imitation, as some have done, to that general sense which comprehends all speech¹.

But here, to avoid confusion, the sense in which I have used the term *description* must be kept in view. When it is said that Aristotle “did not include description in his notion of “imitation,” it is not meant, that he did not consider the descriptive parts of narrative Poetry as *in any respect* imitative. The subject of a description may be either real, or feigned. Almost all the descriptions of the higher Poetry, the
Poetry

¹ Thus I. C. Scaliger, *Poet. lib. vii. cap. 2.* “Denique *imitationem* esse in OMNI SERMONE, *quia verba sunt imagines rerum.*” He is followed by Is. Casaubon; *De Rom. Satirá, cap. v. p. 340.* Both these acute critics dispute warmly against Aristotle’s principle, that the essence of Poetry is imitation. And they are, undoubtedly, so far in the right, that *if*, as they contend, the only proper sense of *Poetry* is that in which it is opposed to *prose* (“*omnem metro astrictam orationem et posse et debere Poema dici.*” *Cas. ubi sup.*) then, there can be no other imitation common to *all Poetry*, than that which is common to *all speech*. See above, p. 32, 33.

Poetry of invention, are of the latter kind. These Aristotle, unquestionably, considered as imitation; but it was *as fiction*, not *as description*; —as falsehood resembling truth, or nature, in general, not as verbal expression resembling, by its force and clearness, the visible representations of painting, or the perception of the thing itself. Had he considered description in *this* sense as imitation, he must necessarily have admitted imitation without fiction^m. But this seems clearly
contrary

^m It is obvious, that, if the *imitation* attributed to description consists in the clear and distinct image of the object described, every description conveying such an image to the mind must be equally considered as imitative, whether that object be real, or imaginary; that is, whether the imitation be of individual, or general nature; just as in painting, a portrait, or a landscape from nature, is as much imitation, as an historical figure, or an ideal scene of Claude Lorrain, though certainly of an inferior kind. Indeed, that which presents a real, sensible, and precise object of comparison, may even be said to be more obviously and properly *imitation*, than that which refers us, for its original, to a vague and general idea.— It may be objected, that this will extend *imitation* to *all* exact description; and it may be asked, whether every such description of a building, or of a machine, for instance, is to be called an imitation? I answer, that descriptions may be *too* exact to be imitative; too detailed and minute to present *the whole* strongly, as a picture. Technical descriptions are such. They may be said to
4 describe

contrary to the whole tenor of his treatise. The beauty, indeed, of such description was well known to the ancients, and frequent examples of it are to be found in their best writers—their orators and historians, as well as Poets; and, particularly,

describe *every part* without describing the *whole*. To give a complete idea of all the *parts*, for the mere purpose of information, and to give a strong and vivid *general* idea in order to please the imagination, are very different things. It is by *selection*, not by *enumeration*, that the latter purpose is to be effected. [See Dr. Beattie's *Essay on Poetry and Music*, Part I. ch. v. sect. 4.]—I believe it will be found, on examination, that every description, whatever be its purpose, or its subject, which does actually convey such a lively and distinct idea of the *whole* of any object, affords *some* degree of pleasure to the imagination, and is, so far, imitative; but whether it affords *such* a degree of that pleasure, or whether it be such in *other* respects, as to amount, on the whole, to what may properly be called *Poetical* imitation, is another question. I must again remind the reader, that the object of this Dissertation is to inquire *in what senses* the word *imitation* is applied to *language* in general—not to examine all the requisites of *such* imitation as deserves the name of **POETRY**. Though it has been said that all Poetry is imitation, it has never, I think, been said that all imitation is Poetry—See above, p. 28 & 29, and note ^a.

What I said above, of the difference between the description of *all the parts* or *circumstances*, and the description

particularly, in HOMER*. But there is one particular kind of description that may be said to be, in a great measure at least, peculiar to modern times; I mean that which answers to *landscape* in painting, and of which the subject is, prospects, views, rural scenery, &c. considered merely as

description of the *whole* by the selection of *those parts* or *circumstances* which are most striking, and characteristic of the thing described, may be illustrated by a single description of a *machine*, in Virgil: I mean the description of a *plough*, in his Georgics.

Continuo in sylvis magnâ vi flexa domatur
 In burim, & CURVI formam accipit ulmus ARATRI.
 Huic ab stirpe pedes temo protentus in octo,
 Binæ aures, duplici aptantur dentalia dorso.
 Cæditur & tilia ante jugo levis, altaque fagus,
 Stivaque, quæ currus à tergo torqueat imos, &c.

I believe every reader will agree with me that the second line of this description conveys, alone, a clearer *picture* of a plough to the imagination, than all that follows; which indeed differs little, if we except the *metre*, from a mere technical description in a dictionary of arts.

* Indeed, the very existence of an appropriated term, *ἐναργεια*, to denote the *clearness* and *visibility* of description, would alone furnish a sufficient proof of this, though every work in which it was exemplified had been lost.

as pictures—as beautiful objects to the eye †. As the truth of this observation may not be readily

† Descriptions of rural objects in the antient writers, are almost always, what may be called *sensual* descriptions. They describe them not as *beautiful*, but as *pleasant*;—as pleasures, not of the *imagination*, but of the *external senses*. Of this kind is the description of a Sicilian scene in the 7th Pastoral of Theocritus, from ver. 131 to 146.—Refreshing shades, cool fountains, the singing of birds, sweet smells, boughs laden with fruit, the hum of bees, &c.—all this is charming, but it is not a *landscape*. [See Dr. Warton's *Essay on Pope*, vol. i. p. 4.] Nor does Virgil paint a landscape, though his reader may paint one for himself, when he exclaims,

- - - O qui me *gelidis* in vallibus Hæmi
Sistat, & ingenti ramorum *protegat umbrá*.

Of the same kind is the famous description, in the *Phædrus* of Plato, of that spot on the banks of the Ilissus to which Socrates and Phædrus retire to read and converse together in the heat of a summer's day. The broad shade of a plane-tree, refreshing breezes, a spring, *μαλα ψυχρὴ ἕδρα* ⊕, to cool their feet, and, what is best of all, says Socrates,—(παντων κομφοτατον) a bed of grass in which they could recline at their ease—these are the materials of the description: not a single allusion to the pleasure of the eye.—We learn from a passage that follows this description, that the country had no charms for Socrates. His apology is curious. He could “learn nothing from fields and trees.” Συγγινωσκε δὴ μοι, ὦ ἄριστε, he says to Phædrus, who had rallied him on that subject, φιλομαθῆς γὰρ εἰμι. τα μὲν ἐν χωρίῳ καὶ τα δένδρα ἕδεν με θελεῖ διδασκεῖν, οἱ δ' ἐν τῷ ἄσει ἄνθρωποι. *Phædrus*, p. 230. Ed. Serrani.

readily admitted, and as the subject is curious, and has not, that I know of, been discussed, the reader will, perhaps, pardon me, if I suffer it to detain us from our direct path, in a digression of some length.

I do not mean to deny that there are some beautiful, though slight, touches of local description to be found in the antient Poets. But it must be confessed, I think, that they scattered these beauties with a sparing hand, in comparison with that rich profusion of picturesque ideas which every reader of Poetry recollects in Shakespeare, Milton, Spenser, Thomson, and almost all the modern Poets of any name. Nor can I say that I am able to point out anything of this sort in the most descriptive of the *Greek* Poets—in Theocritus, or even in Homer—that fairly amounts to such picturesque *landscape-description* (if I may call it so), as I mean, and as we find so frequently in the Poets just mentioned. In Mr. Pope's *Poetical Index* to his Homer, we are referred, indeed, to descriptions of "*prospects*," and "*landscapes of a fine country*;" but, if we turn to the original, we shall seldom, or never, find these landscapes. They are of Mr. Pope's painting; sometimes suggested by a single epithet, as his

- - - grassy Pteleon deck'd with chearful greens,
The bow'rs of Ceres and the sylvan scenes.

Iliad. ii. 850.

One

In the Index to the *Odyssey*, we find, among other descriptions, one, of “*the landscape about Ithaca.*” This has a promising appearance. Mr. Pope indeed has done his utmost to *make* a landscape of this description; yet, even his translation, though certainly beautiful, and even *picturesque*, will hardly, I believe, be thought to come up to what a modern reader would expect from —“*the landscape about Ithaca.*” Still less is this title applicable to the original^p. All that can be said of it without exaggeration is, that it is a very pleasing scene, though described, as many things in Homer are described, with that simplicity which leaves a great deal, and *may* suggest a great deal, to the fancy of the reader. Though it does not answer to the idea given of it in Pope’s index, or in the *note* upon the place^q, yet it must be allowed to furnish, at least, some good *materials* for a landscape; such as, a grove^r, water falling from a rock, and a rustic altar. If the description itself is too simple, short, and *general*, to be, properly speaking, *picturesque description*, yet it is

^p Od. P. 204—211.

^q “It is observable that Homer gives us *an exact draught of the country*; he sets before us, *as in a picture*, “*the city,*” &c. Od. Book xvii. note on v. 224.

^r Homer’s grove is *circular*; ἄλωϙ Παντοσε Κυκλω-TEPEΣ. ver. 209. A circumstance rather unpicturesque. Mr. Pope knew what to suppress, as well as what to add. He softens this into a “*surrounding grove.*”

is such as wants nothing, to become so, but a little more colouring of expression, a little more distinctness and *speciality* of touch. This, and more than this, Mr. Pope has given it; and that *his* description is, at least, highly *picturesque*, will scarce be disputed. Homer gives us simply—“an altar to the nymphs^{*}.” Pope covers it with *moss*, and *embowers it deep in shades*; and in his concluding line, he goes beyond the description of the *place*, to the description of the “*religio loci*”—of the *effect* of the place upon the minds of those who approached it.

Beneath, *sequester'd* to the nymphs is seen
A *mossy* altar, *deep-embower'd* in green;
Where constant vows by travellers are paid,
And *holy horrors* solemnize the shade.

v. 242.

—The additions of Mr. Pope's pencil are distinguished, in the above quotations, by *Italics*[†].

But,

* — βωμῶν—νυμφῶν. v. 210.

† Many such additions and improvements the reader will also find in his translation of Homer's description of the shield, in the 18th book. To give one remarkable specimen:—The *eleventh* compartment of the shield, he tells us in his *Observations on the Shield* at the end of that book, is, “an *entire landscape* without human figures, an image of nature solitary and undisturbed,” &c. Let us first view this landscape in the original. Il. Σ. 587.

But, to *prove* the inferiority of the antients in this species of description, by an accurate and comparative examination of all those passages which are commonly produced as examples of it, would be a task of considerable length, though, I think, of no great difficulty. The few instances here given from Homer are intended rather as illustrations of the difference I meant to point out,

Εν δὲ νομον ποιησε περικλυτῷ Ἀμφιγυγῆις,
 Ἐν καλῇ βῆσση, μέγαν οἶων ἀργενναῶν,
 Σταθμῶς τε, κλισίας τε, κατηρεφείας ἰδε σῆκας.

What I said of the simplicity and *generality* of the description last mentioned, in the *Odyssey*, is exactly applicable to this. Even in his *prose*-translation of these lines, [Obs. p. 123.] Mr. Pope could not perfectly command his fancy. “The divine artist then engraved a large flock of white sheep, *feeding along a beautiful valley. Innumerable folds, cottages, and enclosed shelters, were SCATTERED through the PROSPECT.*” The expressions I have distinguished are Mr. Pope’s; their effect on the *visibility* and *distinctness* of the picture, I need not point out. The last addition—“*scattered through the prospect,*” is particularly picturesque.—Now, let us turn to his *poetic* version, and there, indeed, we shall find that finished landscape of which Homer furnished only the simple sketch:

Next this, *the eye* the art of Vulcan *leads*
 Deep through fair forests, and a length of meads;
 And stalls, and folds, and scatter’d cots between,
 And fleecy flocks that whiten all the scene.

out, than as proofs of the *general* fact, which I leave to the recollection and the judgment of the reader. To me, I confess, nothing appears more evident.

And may we not account for this defect in antient Poetry, from a similar defect in the sister art of PAINTING?—For it appears, I think, from all that has been transmitted to us of the history of that art among the antients, that *landscape-painting* either did not exist, or, at least, was very little cultivated or regarded among the Greeks^a. In Pliny's account of Grecian artists we find no landscape-painter mentioned; nor anything like a landscape described in his catalogue
of

^a The Abbé Winckelmann, eminent for the accuracy of his researches into every thing relative to the subject of antient arts, gives it as his opinion, that the paintings discovered in the ruins of Herculanium, (*four* only excepted,) are not older than the times of the Emperors; and he assigns this reason, among others, that most of them are only *landscapes*:—"Paysages, ports, maisons de campagne, chasses, pêches, vues, & que le premier qui travailla dans ce genre fut un certain Ludio qui vivoit du tems d'Auguste." He adds,—"*Les anciens Grecs ne s'amusoient pas à peindre des objets inanimés, uniquement propres à rejouir agréablement la vue sans occuper l'esprit.*" [*Hist. de l'Art chez les Anciens, tome ii. p. 104.*] The remark seems just. *Men and manners, were the only objects which the Greeks seem to have thought worth regarding, either in painting, or poetry.*

of their principal works. The first, and the only landscapes he mentions, are those said to be painted *in fresco* by one *Ludius* in the time of Augustus; “qui primus instituit amœnissimam parietum picturam;—villas, & porticus, ac topiaria opera—*lucos, nemora, colles,—amnes, littora*—varias ibi obambulantium species, aut navigantium, *terræque villas adeuntium asellis aut vehiculis,*” &c.—He likewise painted seaports;—“idemque——maritimas urbes pingere instituit, blandissimo aspectu.” He seems to have been the Claude Lorrain of ancient painting. But, that *landscape* was not, even in Pliny’s time, a common and established branch of painting, may perhaps be presumed from the single circumstance of its not having acquired a name. In the passage just quoted, Pliny calls it only, periphrastically, “an agreeable kind of painting, or subject,” “amœnissimam picturam.” He is not sparing of technical terms upon other occasions; as, *rhyparographus, anthropographus, catagrapha, monocromata,* &c.

With

▼ Plin. Hist. Nat. xxxv. 10.

▪ It is remarkable also, that the younger Pliny, where he describes the view from one of his villas, and compares it to a painted landscape, expresses himself, probably for want of an appropriated term, (such as *paysage*, &c.) by a periphrasis;—“*formam aliquam ad eximiam pulchritudinem pictam;*”—i. e. “a beautiful ideal landscape.” Plin. Ep. lib. v. ep. 6.

With respect to the *Greeks*, at least, this may be allowed to afford somewhat more than a presumption of the fact.

The Greek Poets, then, did not *describe* the scenery of nature in a picturesque manner, because they were not accustomed to *see* it with a painter's eye. Undoubtedly they were not blind to all the beauties of such scenes; but those beauties were not heightened to them, as they are to us, by comparison with painting—with those models of *improved* and *selected* nature, which it is the business of the landscape-painter to exhibit. They had no THOMSONS, because they had no CLAUDES. Indeed, the influence of painting, in this respect, not only on Poetry, but on the *general taste* for the visible beauties of rural nature, seems obvious and indisputable †. Shew the most beautiful prospect to a peasant, who never saw a landscape, or read a description: I do not say that he will absolutely feel *no* pleasure from it; but I will venture to say, that the
pleasure

† I do not know that there is, either in the Greek or Roman language, any single term appropriated to express exactly what *we* mean by a *prospect*. Pliny, in the epistle referred to in note ^x, and in the 17th of 2d book, has frequent occasion for such a term, but is obliged to have recourse to circumlocution—*regionis forma—regionis situm—facies—facies locorum*. “Tot *facies locorum* totidem fenestris & distinguit & miscet.” [ii. 17.] *Ang.*—“so many *prospects*.”

pleasure he will feel is very different in *kind*, and very inferior in *degree*, compared with that which is felt by a person of a cultivated imagination, accustomed to the representation of such objects, either in painting, or in picturesque Poetry. Such beauty does imitation reflect back upon the object imitated^y.—What may serve to confirm the truth of these remarks, is, that from the time of Augustus, when, according to Pliny, landscape-painting was first cultivated, descriptions of prospects, picturesque imagery, and allusions to that kind of painting, seem to have become more common. I do not pretend, however, to have accurately examined this matter. I shall only remind the reader of the acknowledged superiority of Virgil in touches of this kind; of Pliny's description of the view from his villa, mentioned above; and of Ælian's description of the Vale of Tempe, and his allusion to painting in the introduction to it^z.

To return to *description in general*;—this, as I observed above, Aristotle was so far from including

^y “Elegant imitation has strange powers of interesting us in certain views of nature. These we consider but transiently, till the Poet, or *Painter*, awake our attention, and send us back to life with a new curiosity, which we owe entirely to the copies which they lay before us.” Preface to Wood's Essay on Homer, p. 13.

^z See above, Part I. note^m, p. 14.

cluding in his notion of *imitation*, that he is even totally silent concerning it; unless he may be thought slightly to allude to it in one passage, where he recommends it to the Poet to reserve his highest colouring of language for the *inactive*, that is, the merely narrative, or *descriptive*, parts of his poem^a. Several obvious circumstances help to account for this silence. Intent on the higher precepts, and on what he regarded as the more essential beauties of the art—the internal construction and contrivance of the fable, the artful dependence and close connection of the incidents, the union of the wonderful and the probable, the natural delineation of character and passion, and whatever tended most effectually to arrest the attention, and secure the emotion, of the spectator or the reader—intent on these, he seems to have thought the beauties of language and expression a matter of inferior consideration, scarce worthy of his attention. The chapters on *diction* seem to afford some proof of this. The manner in which he has treated that subject, will be found, if I mistake not, to bear strong marks of this comparative negligence, and to be, in several respects, not such as the reader, from the former parts of the work, would naturally expect^b.

To

^a Ἐν τοῖς ΑΡΓΟῖΣ ΜΕΡΕΣΙ, ΚΑΙ ΜΗΤΕ ἠΘΙΚΟΙΣ, ΜΗΤΕ ΔΙΑΝΟΥΤΙΚΟΙΣ.
Cap. xxiv. Translation, Part III. Sect. 6. See the NOTE.

^b See the NOTES on that part.

To this it should be added, that Aristotle's principal object was, evidently, Tragedy. Now in Tragedy, where the Poet himself appears not,—where all is action, emotion, imitation—where the succession of incidents is close and rapid, and rarely admits those ἀργα μέρη, those “idle or inactive parts,” of which the philosopher speaks—there is, of course, but little occasion, and little room, for description. It is in the open and extended plan, the varied and digressive narration, of the Epic form, that the descriptive powers of the Poet have full range to display themselves within their proper province.

I have attempted, in the preceding discussion, to make my way through a subject, which I have never seen treated in a manner perfectly clear and satisfactory by others, and which I am therefore far from confident that I have treated clearly myself. I can only hope that I have, at least, left it less embarrassed than I found it^c. I shall venture,

^c Some writers, by *imitation* understand *fiction* only: others explain it only by the general term *description*; and others, again, give it a greater extent, and seem to consider language as *imitating* whatever it can *express*. [See above, note¹, and Harris on *Music*, &c. ch. i.] Some speak of it as the imitation of *nature*, in general; others seem to confine it to the imitation of *la belle nature*.—By some writers, the proposition, that “ALL

venture, with the same view, to terminate this inquiry by a few remarks on the *origin* of this doctrine of poetic *imitation*.

Its history may be sketched in few words.— We find it first in PLATO; alluded to in many parts of his works, but no where so clearly and particularly developed, as in the *third* and *tenth* books of his Republic. ARISTOTLE followed; applying, and pursuing to its consequences, with the enlarged view of a philosopher and a critic, the principle which his master had considered with the severity of a moral censor, and had described, as we describe an impostor or a robber, only, that being known, it might be avoided^d.

From these sources, but principally from the treatise of Aristotle, this doctrine was derived, through the later antiënt, to the latest modern writers. In general, however, it must be confessed, that the way in which the subject has been explained is not such as is calculated to give
perfect

POETRY is imitation," is considered as too plain a point to need any explanation; while others are unable to see why *any* Poetry, except the *dramatic only*, should be so denominated. [See Wood's Essay on Homer, p. 240, *octavo*, and the note.]

^d The chief objections of Plato to *imitative* Poetry, particularly Tragedy, may be seen in the 10th book of his Republic, from *πραττοντας, φαμεν, ανθρωπως*—p. 603, C. to *ξυμφημι*, p. 608, B. *Ed. Serrani*.

perfect satisfaction to those fastidious understandings that are not to be contented with anything less than distinct ideas; that, like the sundial in the fable, allow of no medium between knowing clearly, and knowing nothing.

Si je ne vois bien clair, je dis—Je n'en sçais rien*.

It is one question, in what senses, and from what original ideas, Poetry was *first* called imitation by Plato and Aristotle; and another, what senses may have suggested themselves to modern writers, who finding Poetry denominated an imitative art, instead of carefully investigating the original meaning of the expression, have had recourse, for its explication, to their own ideas, and have, accordingly, extended it to every sense which the widest and most distant analogy would bear.

With respect to the *origin* of the appellation—the very idea that Poetry is *imitation*, may, I think, evidently be traced to the THEATRE as to its natural source; and it may, perhaps, very reasonably be questioned, whether, if the drama had never been invented, Poetry would ever have been placed in the class of *Imitative Arts*.

That ARISTOTLE drew his ideas of Poetic imitation chiefly from the drama, is evident from what has been already said. His preference, indeed,

* *La Montre et le Quadrant*, in the ingenious and philosophical fables of La Motte. Livre iii. fab. 2.

indeed, of dramatic Poetry, is not only openly declared in his concluding chapter, but strongly marked throughout, and by the very plan and texture of his work. The Epic—that “greatest work,” as Dryden extravagantly calls it, “which *the soul of man* is capable to perform^f,” is slightly touched and soon dismissed. Our eye is still kept on Tragedy. The form and features of the Epic Muse are rather described by comparison with those of her sister, than delineated as they are in themselves; and though that preference which is the result of the comparison seems justly given on the whole, yet it must, perhaps, be confessed, that the comparison is not *completely* stated, and that the advantages and privileges of the Epic are touched with some reserve^g. It is, indeed, no wonder, that he, who held imitation to be the essence of Poetry, should prefer

^f *Pref.* to his *Æneid*.

^g For example:—in Part III. sect. 2. [*Orig. ch. xxiv.*] he had allowed the greater *extent* of the Epic Poem to give it an advantage over Tragedy in point of *variety* and *magnificence*. But, in the comparison between them in his last chapter, this important advantage is entirely passed over, and only the *disadvantages* of the epic extent of plan are mentioned; its *variety*, the want of which he had before allowed to be a great defect, and even a frequent cause of ill success, in tragedy, is here stated only as a fault—as want of *unity*. [See Part V. sect. 3. *Orig. cap. xxvi.*]

prefer that species which, being more strictly imitative, was, in his view, more strictly *Poetry*, than any other.

With respect to PLATO the case is still plainer. In the *third* book of his Republic, where he treats the subject most fully, and is most clear and explicit, he is so far from considering “*all Poetry*” as imitation, that he expressly distinguishes *imitative Poetry* from “*Poetry without imitation*”^h. Nor does he leave us in any uncertainty about his meaning. His *imitative Poetry* is no other than that which I have called *personative*, and which the reader will find clearly and precisely described in the passage referred toⁱ. Imitation, then, he confines to the drama, and the dramatic part of the epic poem; and that, which with Aristotle is the *principal*, with Plato is the *only*, sense of *imitation* applied to Poetry. In short, that Plato drew his idea of the ΜΙΜΗΣΙΣ of Poetry from the theatre itself, and from the personal imitations of *represented* tragedy, is evident from the manner in which he explains the term, and from the general cast and language of all his illustrations and allusions.—“When the “Poet,” he says, “quitting his narration, makes “any speech in the character of *another person*, “does he not then assimilate, as much as possible,

^h Rep. 3. ed. Ser. p. 393. ἀνευ μιμησεως ποιησις. and lib. x. p. 605. ὁ μιμητικὸς ποιητής.

ⁱ Rep. 3, from D. p. 392, to D. p. 394. ed. Ser.

“ sible, his language to that of the person intro-
 “ duced as speaking?—Certainly.—But to assi-
 “ milate one’s self to another person, *either in*
 “ VOICE *or* GESTURE—is not this to IMITATE
 “ that person^k?” And in many other passages
 we find the same allusion to the imitations, by
voice and *action*, of the actor and the rhapsodist;
 and even to ludicrous mimicry of the lowest
 kind^l.

All

^k Ἀλλ’ ὅταν γε τινα λεγῆ ῥῆσιν ὡς τις ἄλλῳ ὄν, ἀρ’ οὐ τότε ὁμοίον αὐτὸν φησομεν ὀτιμαλιστα τὴν αὐτῆ λέξιν ἑκάστῳ ὄν ἂν προεἰπη ὡς ἔρβντα;—Φητομεν’ τι γὰρ ἔ;—Ὅυκν το γε ὁμοίον ἑαυτὸν ἄλλῳ, ἢ κατὰ ΦΩΝΗΝ, ἢ κατὰ ΣΧΗΜΑ, μιμεισθαι ἔστιν ἐκεῖνον ᾧ ἂν τις ὁμοιοι; *Rep.* 3, p. 393. *ed. Serran.*

^l *Ibid.* p. 395—κατὰ ΣΩΜΑ καὶ ΦΩΝΑΣ.—p. 397, λέξις δια μιμησεως ΦΩΝΑΙΣ τε καὶ ΣΧΗΜΑΣΙ. The reader may also see p. 396 and 397; in both which places he alludes even to the lowest and most ridiculous kind of mimicry. The passages are so curious and amusing, that the reader will pardon me if I suffer them, *in a note*, to lead me into a short digression. He speaks in them of *imitating*, or, as we call it, *taking off*, “ the neighing
 “ of horses, and the bellowing of bulls—the sound of
 “ thunder, the roaring of the sea and the winds—the
 “ tones of the trumpet, the flute, and all sorts of instru-
 “ ments—the barking of dogs, the bleating of sheep,
 “ and the singing of birds—the *rattle of a shower of*
 “ *hail*, and the *rumbling of wheels*.”—The sublime Plato was not always sublime.—The expressions here are too strong to be understood merely of the imitations of poetical *description*; they are applicable only to *vocal* mimicry.

All this will scarce appear strange or surprising, if we recollect the close connection which then subsisted between *poetical* and *personal* imitation. It was by no means with the antients as it is with us. Before the multiplication of copies was facilitated

mimicry. Were there any doubt of this, it might be sufficiently removed by other passages of antient authors in which similar feats are recorded. Plutarch, [*De aud. Poet.* ed. H. Steph. p. 31.] commenting upon Aristotle's distinction, Part I. § 5, between the pleasure we receive from the imitation, and that which we receive from the real object, observes, that—" though the grunting of a hog, the rattle of wheels, the whistling of the wind, and the roaring of the sea, for instance, are sounds, in themselves offensive and disagreeable, yet when we hear them well and naturally imitated, they give us pleasure." And he records the names of two eminent performers in this way, *Parmeno*, and *Theodorus*; the first of whom possessed the grunt of the hog, and the other the rattle of the wheel, in high perfection.—This *Theodorus* was, probably, a different person from the tragic actor of the same name, whose vocal talents of a higher kind are mentioned by Aristotle in his *Rhetoric*, (*lib. iii. cap. 1.*) and who was eminent for the power of accommodating the tone of his voice to the various characters he represented. "The voice," says the philosopher, "of *Theodorus* appears always to be that of the very person supposed to speak: not so the voices of other actors." In order fully to understand which praise, it is necessary to recollect, that this vocal flexibility in an actor had far greater room to display itself among

facilitated by the invention of printing, *reading* was uncommon. It was not even till long after, that it became, in any degree, the general practice, as it is now. Yet Poetry, we know, among the Greeks, was the common food even of the vulgar.

But

the antients, than it has with us, on account of the exclusion of women from their stage. Hence one of the objections of Plato to the admission of dramatic Poetry into his Republic : ἡ δὲ ἐπιτρεψόμεν ὧν φάμεν κινεσθαι, καὶ δεῖν αὐτοῖς ἀνδρας ἀγαθῶς γενεσθαι, ΓΥΝΑΙΚΑ ΜΙΜΕΙΣΘΑΙ, ἈΝΔΡΑΣ ΟΝΤΑΣ. κ. τ. αλ. [*Rep.* 3. p. 395, D.]— a passage which may also serve to confirm what has been asserted, that Plato, in speaking of Poetry as imitation, constantly kept his eye on the personal imitation of the actor or the rhapsodist.—To return to the art of vocal mimicry :—the passages above produced shew it to have been of very respectable antiquity. But there are two other passages that make it still more venerable; one in the hymn to Apollo attributed to Homer, *v.* 162, 3, 4,—where the musical *imitations* of the Delian virgins are described ; (see Dr. Burney's *Hist. of Music*, vol. i. p. 372.) and another very curious passage in the *Odyssey*, Δ. 279, by which it appears, that the art was practised even in the Trojan times, and that the beautiful HELEN herself, among her other charms, possessed the talent of vocal mimicry in a degree that would, in modern times, have qualified her to make no inconsiderable figure at Bartholomew-fair. She is described as walking round the wooden horse, after its admission within the walls of Troy, calling, by name, upon each of the Grecian chiefs, and “*imitating the voices of their wives.*”—Παντῶν Ἀργείων
φωνῶν

But they *heard* it only. The philosopher, the critic, and the few who collected books when they could be obtained only by the labour or expence of transcription, might, indeed, take a tragedy or an epic poem into their closets; but, to the generality, all was action, representation, and

φωνην ἰσχυρὰ ἀλοχίσει. And so well did she *take them off*, that their husbands were on the point of betraying themselves by answering, or coming out. Anticlus, in particular, would have spoken, if Ulysses had not, by main force, *stopped his mouth with his hand*, till Minerva came to their relief, and took Helen away.

- - - ἀλλ' Ὀδυσσεύς ΕΠΙ ΜΑΣΤΑΚΑ ΧΕΡΣΙ ΠΙΕΖΕ
ΝΩΛΕΜΕΩΣ ΚΡΑΤΕΡΗΣΙ, *σάωσε δὲ πάντας Ἀχαιοὺς!*—
Od. Δ. 287, 8.

A line *added* in Pope's translation of this passage, affords a curious example of misapplied ornament:—

Firm to his lips his forceful hands apply'd,
Till *on his tongue the flutt'ring murmurs dy'd.*

B. iv. v. 391.

— one instance out of many that might be quoted, of the ridiculous effect produced, (especially in the *Odyssey*,) by continual efforts to elevate what neither *should* nor *can* be elevated. In the version of the 16th book, (a version *approved* at least by Mr. Pope) we have this line:

They reach'd the *dome*; the *dome with marble shin'd.*

v. 41.

— who would suspect this to be a description of the rude building which Eumæus, “*αὐτῷ δειμαθ' ἕσσειν?*” [Lib. xiv. 8.] All that is to be found of this *marble dome* in Homer is a “*stone threshold.*”—*ὑπερβη λαϊνον ἔδον!* v. 41.

and recital. The tragic, and even the epic poet, were, in a manner, lost in the actor and the rhapsodist^m. A tragedy not intended for the stage, would have appeared to the antients as great an absurdity as an ode not written for music. With *them*, there could be no difficulty in conceiving Poetry to be an *Imitative Art*, when it was scarce known to them but through the visible medium of arts, strictly and literally, mimetic.

^m The rhapsodist was defined to be, *the actor of an epic Poem*. Ραψῳδοί—ὑποκρίται ἐπῶν. *Hesych.*—Ραψῳδοί—ὅι τα Ομηρὰ ἐπη ἐν ΤΟΙΣ ΘΕΑΤΡΟΙΣ ἀπαγγελλοντες.—*Suidas*. “Homer’s Poems,” says the ingenious and entertaining author of the *Enquiry into the Life and Writings of Homer*, “were made to be *recited*, or sung to a *company*; and “not read in private, or perused in a book, which few “were then capable of doing: and I will venture to “affirm, that whoever reads not *Homer* in *this view*, “loses a great part of the delight he might receive from “the Poet.”—*Blackwell’s Enquiry*, &c. p. 122.

DISSERTATION II.

ON THE DIFFERENT SENSES OF THE
WORD, IMITATIVE,
AS APPLIED TO MUSIC BY THE ANTIENTS,
AND BY THE MODERNS.

THE whole power of Music may be reduced, I think, to *three* distinct effects;—upon the *ear*, the *passions*, and the *imagination*: in other words, it may be considered as simply delighting the *sense*, as raising *emotions*, or, as raising *ideas*. The two last of these effects constitute the whole of what is called the *moral**, or *expressive*, power of Music; and in these only we are to look for anything that can be called *imitation*. Music can be said to imitate, no farther than as it *expresses* something. As far as its effect is merely physical, and confined to the ear, it gives a simple, original pleasure; it expresses nothing, it *refers* to nothing; it is no more imitative than the smell of a rose, or the flavour of a pine-apple.

Music

* *Moral*, merely as opposed to *physical*:—as affecting the *mind*; not as *Ethic*, or influencing the *manners*.

Music can raise ideas, *immediately*^a, only by the actual resemblance of its *sounds* and *motions* to the sounds and motions of the thing suggested^b. Such Music we call *imitative*, in the same sense in which we apply the word to a similar resemblance of sound and motion in poetry^c. In both cases, the resemblance, though *immediate*, is so *imperfect*, that it cannot be seen till it is, in some sort, pointed out; and even when it *is* so, is not always very evident. Poetry, indeed, has here a great advantage; it carries with it, of necessity, its own explanation: for the same word that imitates by its *sound*, points out, or hints, at least, the imitation, by its *meaning*. With Music it is
not

^a Music may raise ideas *immediately*, by mere *association*; but I pass over the effects of this principle, (important and powerful as it is, in Music, as in everything else,) as having nothing to do with *imitation*. If, to raise an idea of any object by casual association, be to *imitate*, any one thing may imitate any other.

I inserted the word, *immediately*, because Music has also a power of raising ideas, to a certain degree, through the *medium* of *emotions*, which naturally suggest correspondent ideas; that is, *such* ideas as usually raise *such* emotions. [See Harris, *on Music*, &c. ch. vi. and below, note ^a.]

^b See Harris, *ibid.* ch. ii. where this subject is treated with the author's usual accuracy and clearness.

^c See *Dissert.* I.

not so. It must call in the assistance of language, or something equivalent to language, for its interpreter^d.

Of all the powers of Music, this of raising ideas by direct resemblance is confessed to be the weakest, and the least important. It is, indeed, so far from being essential to the pleasure of the art, that unless used with great caution, judgment, and delicacy, it will destroy that pleasure, by becoming, to every competent judge, offensive, or ridiculous. It is, however, to Music of *this* kind only that Mr. Harris, and most other modern writers, allow the word *imitative* to be applied.

^d When the idea to be raised is that of a visible object, the imitation of that object by painting, machinery, or other visible representation, may answer the same end.—A visible object strongly characterized by motion, *may* be suggested by such *musical* motion as is analogous to it. Thus, a rapid elevation of sounds, bears, or at least is *conceived* to bear, some analogy to the motion of flame;—but this analogy must be pointed out—“ Il faut que l’auditeur soit averti, ou par les *paroles*, ou par le *spectacle*, ou par quelque chose d’équivalent, qu’il doit substituer l’idée du *feu* à celle du *son*.” See M. D’Alembert’s *Mélanges de Littérature*, vol. v. p. 158,—where the philosophical reader will, perhaps, be pleased with some very ingenious and uncommon observations, on the manner in which the imitative expression even of *Music without words*, may be influenced by the phraseology of the language in which the hearer *thinks*.

applied^c. The highest power of Music, and that from which “it derives its greatest efficacy,” is, undoubtedly, its power of raising *emotions*. But this is so far from being regarded by them as *imitation*, that it is expressly *opposed* to it^f.

The ideas, and the language, of the antients, on this subject, were different. When *they* speak of Music as imitation, they appear to have solely, or chiefly, in view, its power over the *affections*. By *imitation*, they mean, in short, what we commonly distinguish from imitation, and oppose to it, under the general term of *expression*^g. With respect to ARISTOTLE, in particular, this will clearly appear from a few passages which I shall produce from another of his writings; and, at the same time, the expressions made use of in these passages, will help us to *account* for a mode of speaking so different from that of modern writers on the subject.

What

^c Dr. Beattie, *On Poetry and Music*, p. 138, & *passim*.—Lord Kaims, *El. of Crit.* vol. ii. p. 1. Avison, &c.—There is but *one* branch of this imitation of *sound* by *sound*, that is really important; and *that* has been generally overlooked. I mean, the imitation of the *tones* of *speech*.—Of this, presently.

^f Harris, *On Music*, &c. p. 69, 99, 100.

^g “If we compare *imitation* with *expression*, the superiority of the latter will be evident.”—Dr. Beattie, *On Poetry and Music*, p. 139, 140, &c.—Avison, *on Mus. Expression*, Part II. § 3.

What Aristotle, in the beginning of his treatise on Poetry*, calls ΜΙΜΗΣΙΣ—IMITATION—he elsewhere, in the same application of it, to *Music*, calls ὍΜΟΙΩΜΑ—RESEMBLANCE. And he, also, clears up his meaning farther, by adding the *thing resembled or imitated*^h:—ὁμοιωμα ΤΟΙΣ ΗΘΕΣΙ—ὁμοιωματα ΤΩΝ ΗΘΩΝⁱ—“resemblance to human manners,” i. e. *dispositions*, or *tempers*; for what he means by these ἦθη, he has, likewise, clearly explained by these expressions—ὁμοιωματα ΟΡΓΗΣ και ΠΡΑΟΤΗΤΟΣ: ἐτι δ’ ΑΝΔΡΙΑΣ και ΣΩΦΡΟΣΥΝΗΣ, &c. “resemblances of the *irascible* “and the *gentle* disposition—of *fortitude* and “*temperance*, &c.”^k This resemblance, he expressly tells us, is “in the *rhythm* and the *melody* :”

* και της αὐλητικῆς ἢ ψαλμῶν, και κθαριστικῆς — μιμησεις. — See Sect. I. of the translation.

^h In the same passage he uses the word μιμημα, as synonymous with ὁμοιωμα.

ⁱ Arist. de Repub. lib. viii. cap. 5, p. 455, Ed. Duvall. Plato uses μιμηματα ΤΡΟΠΩΝ in the same sense. De leg. lib. ii. p. 655, Ed. Ser.

^k The word, ἦθη, taken in its utmost extent, includes *everything* that is *habitual* and *characteristic*; but it is often used in a limited sense, for the *habitual temper*, or *disposition*. That it is here used in that sense appears from Aristotle’s own explanation. I therefore thought it necessary to fix the sense of the word *manners*, which has the same *generality* as ἦθη, and is its usual translation, by adding the words “*dispositions or tempers*.”

melody :—ὁμοιωματα — ἐν τοῖς ΠΥΘΜΟΙΣ καὶ τοῖς ΜΕΛΕΣΙΝ, ὀργῆς καὶ πρᾶοτητ¹. In these passages, Aristotle differs only in the *mode* of expression from Mr. Harris, when *he* affirms that “there are sounds to *make us chearful or sad, martial or tender,*” &c.^m:—from Dr. Beattie, when he says, “Music may *inspire devotion, fortitude, compassion*;—may *infuse a sorrow,*” &c.ⁿ

It appears then, in the *first* place, that Music, considered as affecting, or raising *emotions*, was called imitation by the antients, *because* they perceived in it that which is essential to all imitation, and is, indeed, often spoken of as the same thing—*resemblance*^o. This resemblance, however,

¹ The same expressions occur in the *Problems*, Sect. xix. Prob. 29 and 27.

^m Chap. vi.

ⁿ *On Poet. and Mus.* p. 167.—In another place Dr. Beattie approaches very near indeed to the language of Aristotle; he says, “After all, it must be acknowledged, that there is some *relation*, at least, or *analogy*, if not *SIMILITUDE*, between certain musical *sounds*, and *mental affections*, &c.” [p. 143.]

^o “Imitations, or resemblances, of something else.” [Hutcheson’s *Inquiry into the Orig. of our Ideas of Beauty*, &c. p. 15.] “Taking *imitation* in its *proper sense*, as importing a *resemblance* between two objects.” [Lord Kaimes, *El. of Crit.* ch. xviii. § 3] Imitation, indeed, necessarily implies resemblance; but the converse is not true.

however, as *here* stated by Aristotle, cannot be *immediate*^p; for between *sounds themselves*, and *mental affections*, there can be no resemblance. The resemblance can only be a resemblance of *effect*:—the *general emotions, tempers, or feelings* produced in us by certain sounds, are *like* those that accompany actual grief, joy, anger, &c.—And this, as far, at least, as can be collected from the passage in question, appears to be all that Aristotle meant.

But, *secondly*;—the *expressions* of Music considered in itself, and *without words*, are, (within certain limits,) vague, general, and equivocal. What is usually called its power over the *passions*, is, in fact, no more than a power of raising a *general emotion, temper, or disposition*, common to several different, though *related*, passions; as pity, love—anger, courage, &c.^q The effect of *words*, is, to strengthen the expression of Music, by confining it—by giving it a precise direction, supplying it with ideas, circumstances, and an *object*, and, by this means, raising it from a calm and *general* disposition, or emotion, into something approaching, at least, to the stronger feeling of a particular and determinate *passion*. Now, among

^p See *Dissert. I. first pages*.

^q The expression of Aristotle seems therefore accurate and philosophical. It is everywhere—ὁμοιωμα ΗΘΩΝ,—not ΠΑΘΩΝ—a resemblance “to *manners, or tempers,*” not “to *passions.*”

among the antients, Music, it is well known, was scarce ever heard *without* this assistance. Poetry and Music were then far from having reached that state of mutual independence, and separate improvement, in which they have now been long established. When an ancient writer speaks of MUSIC, he is, almost always, to be understood to mean *vocal* Music—Music and Poetry united. This helps greatly to account for the application of the term *imitative*, by Aristotle, Plato, and other Greek writers, to musical *expression*, which modern writers *oppose* to musical *imitation*. That emotions *are* raised by Music, independently of words, is certain^r; and it is as certain that these emotions resemble those of actual passion, temper, &c.—But, in the vague and indeterminate assimilations of Music purely instrumental, though the effect is felt, and the emotion raised, the idea of *resemblance* is far from being necessarily suggested; much less is it likely, that such resemblance, if it did occur, having no *precise* direction, should be considered as *imitation*^s. Add *words* to this
 Music,

^r This is expressly allowed by Aristotle in the Problem which will presently be produced:—και γαρ εαν η̄ ΑΝΕΥ ΛΟΓΟῩ μελ̄^θ, ὁμως̄ ἐχεῑ ΗΘΟΣ̄.

^s I observed (*Note*^a) that Music is capable of raising *ideas*, to a certain degree, through the medium of those *emotions* which it raises *immediately*. But this is an effect so delicate and uncertain—so dependent on the fancy, the sensibility,

Music, and the case will be very different. There is now a precise object of *comparison* presented to

sensibility, the musical experience, and even the temporary disposition, of the *hearer*, that to call it *imitation*, is surely going beyond the bounds of all reasonable analogy. Music, here, is not *imitative*, but if I may hazard the expression, merely *suggestive*. But, whatever we may call it, this I will venture to say,—that in the *best* instrumental Music, expressively *performed*, the very indecision itself of the expression, leaving the hearer to the free operation of his *emotion* upon his *fancy*, and, as it were, to the free *choice* of such ideas as are, *to him*, most adapted to react upon and heighten the emotion which occasioned them, produces a pleasure, which nobody, I believe, who is able to feel it, will deny to be one of the most delicious that Music is capable of affording. But far the greater part even of those who have an ear for Music, have *only* an ear; and to *them* this pleasure is unknown.—The complaint, so common, of the separation of Poetry and Music, and of the total want of meaning and expression in *instrumental* Music, was never, I believe, the complaint of a man of true musical feeling: and it might, perhaps, be not unfairly concluded, that Aristotle, who expressly allows that “ Music, even *without words, has expression*,” [See the Problem below] was more of a musician than his master Plato, who is fond of railing at instrumental Music, and asks with Fontenelle,—“ Sonate, que me *veux* tu?—παυχαλεπον, ανευ λογυ γιγνομενον ρυθμον τε και αρμονιαν γιγνωσκειν, Ὅ, ΤΙ ΒΟΥΛΕΤΑΙ. *De Leg.* ii. p. 669. [The story of Fontenelle is well known.—“ Je n’oublierai jamais,” says Rousseau, “ la saillie du celebre Fontenelle, qui se trouvant exceedé

to the mind; the *resemblance* is pointed out; the thing *imitated* is before us. Farther, one principal use of Music in the time of Aristotle, was to accompany *dramatic* Poetry—that Poetry which is most peculiarly and strictly *imitative*^t, and where *manners* and *passions* (ἠθῆ καὶ πάθη) are peculiarly the *objects* of imitation.

It is, then, no wonder, that the Antients, accustomed to hear the expressions of Music thus constantly *specified*, determined, and referred to a precise object by the ideas of Poetry, should view them in the light of *imitations*; and that even in speaking of *Music*, properly so called, as Aristotle does, they should be led by this association to speak of it in the same terms, and to attribute to it powers, which, in its separate state, do not, in strictness, belong to it. With respect, however,

“ de ces éternelles symphonies, s'écria tout haut dans un transport d'impatience: *Sonate, que me veux tu?*” *Dict. de Mus.*—SONATE.] I would by no means be understood to deny, that there is now, and has been at all times, much unmeaning trash composed for instruments, that would justly provoke such a question. I mean only to say, what has been said for me by a superior judge and master of the art:—“ There is *some* kind, even of instrumental music, so divinely composed, and so expressively performed, that it wants no *words* to explain its meaning.”—Dr. Burney's *Hist. of Music*, vol. i. p. 85.

^t Diss. I.

however, even to the *instrumental* Music of those times, it should be remembered, that we cannot properly judge of it by our *own*, nor suppose it to have been, in that simple state of the art, what it is now, in its state of separate improvement and refinement. It seems highly probable that the Music of the antients, even in performances merely instrumental, retained much of its vocal style and character, and would therefore appear more *imitative* than our instrumental Music: and perhaps, after all, a Greek Solo on the flute, or the cithara, was not *much* more than a song without the words, embellished here and there with a little embroidery, or a few sprinklings of simple *arpeggio*, such as the fancy, and the fingers, of the player could supply.

But there is another circumstance that deserves to be considered. *Dramatic* Music is, often, *strictly imitative*. It imitates, not only the *effect* of the words, by exciting correspondent *emotions*, but also the *words* themselves *immediately*, by tones, accents, inflexions, intervals, and rhythmical movements, *similar* to those of speech. That this was peculiarly the character of the *dramatic* Music of the antients, seems highly probable, not only from what is said of it by antient authors, but from what we know of their Music *in general*; of their scales, their *genera*, their fondness for *chromatic* and *enharmonic* intervals, which approach so nearly to those sliding and unassignable inflexions,

inflexions, (if I may so speak,) that characterize the melody of *speech*.

I am, indeed, persuaded, that the analogy between the melody and rhythm of *Music*, and the melody and rhythm of *speech*^u, is a principle of greater extent and importance than is commonly imagined. Some writers have extended it so far as to resolve into it the whole power of Music over the affections. Such appears to have been the idea of Rousseau. He divides all Music into *natural* and *imitative*; including, under the latter denomination, all Music that goes beyond the mere pleasure of the sense, and raises any kind or degree of emotion; an effect which he conceives to be wholly owing to an imitation, more or less perceptible, of the accents and inflexions of the voice in animated or passionate speech^w. Professor Hutcheson was of the same opinion. In his *Inquiry concerning Beauty, &c.* he says—"There is also another charm in Music
" to various persons, which is distinct from the
" *harmony*, and is occasioned by its *raising*
" *agreeable passions*. The *human voice* is ob-
" viously

^u ——— λεγεται γαρ δη και ΛΟΓΩΔΕΣ ΤΙ ΜΕΛΟΣ, το συγκειμενον εν των προσωδιων των εν τοις ονομασι. [*Aristox. Harm. i. p. 18. Ed. Mcibom.*] To this he opposes— ΜΟΥΣΙΚΟΝ ΜΕΛΟΣ.

^w Dict. de Mus. Art. MUSIQUE—MELODIE, &c.

“ viously varied by all the stronger passions * ;
 “ now when our *ear* discerns any *resemblance*
 “ between the air of a tune, whether sung, or
 “ played upon an instrument, either in its *time*
 “ or *modulation*, or any other circumstance, to
 “ the *sound of the human voice in any passion*, we
 “ shall be touched by it in a very sensible manner,
 “ and have *melancholy, joy, gravity, thought-*
 “ *fulness*, excited in us by a sort of *sympathy* or
 “ *contagion*.”

* Thus THEOPHRASTUS, in a curious passage cited by Plutarch in his *Symposiacs*, p. 623, *Ed. Xyl.*—Μεσικης ἀρχας τρεις ειναι, ΛΥΠΗΝ, ΗΔΟΝΗΝ, ΕΝΘΟΥΣΙΑΣΜΟΝ· ὡς ἕκαστ τῶν παρατρεποντος ἐκ τῆ συνθεσ και ἐγκλινοιτ τὴν φωνην.—“ There are *three principles* of Music, *grief*, *pleasure*, and *enthusiasm*; for each of these passions *turns the voice from its usual course*, and gives it inflexions different from those of ordinary speech.”—“ Il n’y a que les *passions qui chantent*,” says Rousseau; “ l’entendement ne fait que *parler*.”—This passage of Theophrastus is introduced to resolve the question—In what sense *love* is said to *teach Music*?—“ No wonder,” says the resolver, “ if love, having in itself all these three *principles* of Music, *grief*, *pleasure*, and *enthusiasm*, should be more prone to vent itself in Music and Poetry than any other passion.”—Aristoxenus, describing the difference between the two motions of the voice, in *speaking* and in *singing*,—(the motion by *slides*, and that by *intervals*) says—διοπερ, ἐν τῷ διαλεγεσθαι φευγομεν το ἴσασαι τὴν φωνην, ἀν μη ΔΙΑ ΠΑΘΟΣ ποτε εἰς τοιαυτην κηησιν ἀναγκασθωμεν ἔλθειν.—p. 9. *Ed. Mibomii*.

“contagion.” [Sect. 6. p. 83.] This ingenious and amiable writer seems to have adopted this opinion from PLATO, to whom, indeed, in a similar passage in his System of Moral Philosophy^y, he refers, and who, in the *third* book of his Republic, speaks of a *warlike* melody, inspiring *courage*, as “*imitating the sounds and accents of the courageous man;*” and, of a *calm and sedate* melody, as *imitating the sounds of a man of such a character*^z.

With respect to ARISTOTLE—whether this was *his* opinion, or not, cannot, I think, be determined from anything he has *expressly* said upon the subject. In the passage above produced*, where so much is said of the resemblance of melody and rhythm to manners, or tempers, not a word is said from which it can be inferred, that he meant a resemblance to the tones and accents by which those manners are *expressed* in speech. On the contrary, the expressions there made use of are such as lead us naturally to conclude, that he meant no more than I have above supposed him to mean; *i. e.* that the Music produces in us, immediately,

^y Vol. i. p. 16.

^z *De Rep. lib. iii. p. 399. Ed. Scr.* The expressions are—ἡ [sc. ἁρμονία—*i. e. melody.*] ἐν τῇ πολεμικῇ πράξει ὄντων ἀνδρῶν—πρεποντως ἂν ΜΙΜΗΣΑΙΤΟ ΦΘΟΓΓΟΤΣ ΤΕ ΚΑΙ ΠΡΟΣΩΔΙΑΣ.—And again—σωφρονων, ἀνδρῶν, ΦΘΟΓΓΟΤΣ ΜΙΜΗΣΟΝΤΑΙ.

* P. 70.

immediately, feelings resembling those of real passion, &c.—For, after having asserted, that there is “a resemblance in rhythms and melodies to “the irascible and the gentle disposition,” he adds,—“This is evident from the manner in “which we find ourselves affected by the *per-* “*formance* of such Music; for we perceive a “*change produced in the soul* while we listen to “it^a.” And again—“In melody itself there are “*imitations of human manners*: this is manifest, “from the MELODIES OR MODES, which have, “evidently, their distinct nature and character; “so that, when we hear them, we *feel ourselves* “*affected* by each of them in a different man- “ner, &c.”^b—But the passage furnishes, I think,
a more

^a Δηλον δε ἐκ των ἔργων· ΜΕΤΑΒΑΛΛΟΜΕΝ ΓΑΡ ΤΗΝ ΨΥΧΗΝ ἀκρωόμενοι τοιούτων.

^b Ἐν δε τοις μελεσιν αὐτοις ἐστὶ μιμηματα των ἡθῶν· και ταῦτ' ἐστὶ φανερον· εὐδους γαρ ἡ των Ἀρμονιων διεστηκε φύσις· ὡστε ἀκροντας ΑΛΛΩΣ ΔΙΑΤΙΘΕΣΘΑΙ, και μη τον αὐτον τροπον ἔχειν προς ἐκαστην αὐτων.—κ. τ. αλ.—The Ἀρμονιαί, i. e. *melodies*, (or, more properly perhaps, *enharmonic melodies*) here spoken of, must not be confounded with what are usually called the *modes*, and described by the writers on antient music, under the denomination of *τονοί*, i. e. *itches*, or *keys*:—these were mere transpositions of the *same* scale, or system; the Ἀρμονιαί appear to have been, as the name implies, different *melodies*—scales, in which the arrangement of intervals, and the divisions of the tetrachord (or *genera*) were different. Aristides Quintilianus is the only Greek writer who has given any
account

a more decisive proof that the resemblance here meant, was not a resemblance to *speech* Aristotle asserts here, as in the *problem* of which I shall presently speak, that, of all that affects the *senses*, Music alone possesses this property of resemblance to human manners. In comparing it with painting, he observes, that *this* art can imitate, immediately, only *figures* and *colours*; which are not *resemblances* (ὁμοιωματα) of manners and passions, but only *signs* and *indications* of them (σημεια) in the human body: whereas, in Music, the resemblance to manners “*is in the melody itself*”^c. Now, whatever may be the meaning

account of these ἀρμονιαί. (p. 21. Ed. Meib.) He asserts, that it is of *these*, not of the *τονοί*, that Plato speaks in the famous passage of his *Republic*, lib. iii. where he rejects some of them, and retains others. *This*, at least, is clear, that whatever the ἀρμονιαί of Plato were, Aristotle here speaks of the same. See his *Rep.* viii. p. 459.—Their distinctive names, Lydian, Dorian, &c. were the same with those of the *τονοί*, that of *syntonolydian* excepted, which, I think, is peculiar to the ἀρμονιαί. This coincidence of names seems to have been the chief cause of the confusion we find in the *modern* writers on this subject. The distinction has been pointed out in Dr. Burney’s *Hist. of Mus.* vol. i. p. 32.—See also Rousseau’s Dict. art. SYNTONO-LYDIEN, & GENRE.

^c —ἐκ ἐστὶ ταυτὰ ὁμοιωματα των ἡθων, ἀλλὰ ΣΗΜΕΙΑ
 μαλλον, τα γινόμενα σχηματα και χρωματα, των ἡθων και

meaning of this last assertion—for it seems not quite philosophical to talk of *such* a resemblance as being *in the sounds themselves*—whatever may be its meaning, it cannot well be, that the melody resembles manners *as expressed by speech*; because this would destroy the distinction between Music and Painting: for *words* are exactly in the same case with *colours* and *figures*; they are not *resemblances* of manners, or passions, but *indications* only. We must then, I fear, be contented to take what Aristotle says as a popular and unphilosophical way of expressing a mere resemblance of *effect*.

In one of his *Musical Problems*, indeed, he advances a step farther, and inquires into the *cause* of this effect of Music upon the mind. The text of these problems is, in general, very incorrect, and often absolutely unintelligible; *this* problem, however, seems not beyond the reach of secure emendation, though it may, possibly, be beyond that of secure *explanation*. As it has not, that I know of, been noticed by any writer on the subject, and may be regarded at least as a curiosity not uninteresting to the musical and philosophical reader, I shall venture to give the
entire

ταυτα εστιν επι τς σωματ[⊙] εν τοις παθεσιν. — εν δε ΤΟΙΣ
ΜΕΛΕΣΙΝ ΑΥΤΟΙΣ εστι μιμηματα των ηθων.—κ. τ. αλ.—
p. 455. Ed. Duval.

entire problem, as I think it *should* be read, and to subjoin a translation.

ΔΙΑ ΤΙ το ἀκροσον μονον ἦθε^ϑ ἔχει των αἰσθητων, (και γαρ εἰαν ἢ ἀνευ λογε μελ^ϑ, ὁμως ἔχει ἦθε^ϑ.) ἀλλ' εἰ το χρωμα, εἶδε ἢ ὀσμη, εἶδε ὁ χυμ^ϑ, ἔχει;—ἢ, ὅτι κινήσιν ἔχει μονον; εἴχ' ἦν^d ὁ ψοφ^ϑ ἡμας κινει· τοιαυτη μεν γαρ και τοις ἄλλοις ὑπαρχει· κινει γαρ και το χρωμα την ὄψιν· ἀλλα της ἐπομενης τῷ τοικτῷ ψοφῷ αἰσθανομεθα κινήσεως· αὐτη δε ἔχει ὁμοιοτητα [τοις ἦθεσιν]^e ἐν τε τοις ῥυθμοις και ἐν τη των φθογγων ταξεί των ὄξεων και βαρεων. (εἰ ἐν τη μιξεί· ἀλλ' ἢ συμφωνια εἰκ ἔχει ἦθε^ϑ.) Ἐν δε τοις ἄλλοις αἰσθητοις τετρα εἰκ ἔσιν. αἱ δε κινήσεις αὐται πρρακτ και εισιν· αἱ δε πρραξείεις ἦθε^ϑ σημασια εἶσι. [Probl. xxvii. of Sec. 19.]

PROBLEM.

“ WHY, of all that affects the senses, the
 “ AUDIBLE only has any *expression* of the
 “ manners; (for melody, even *without words*,
 “ has this effect—) but colours, smells, and
 “ tastes,

^d The text here, in the Ed. of Duval, stands thus:— κινήσιν ἔχει μονον· εἰκ ἦν ὁ ψοφ^ϑ—of which no sense can be made. The emendation appeared to me obvious and certain.

^e I insert—τοις ἦθεσιν—as plainly required by the sense of the passage, and fully warranted by Aristotle's repeated expressions of the same kind.—See above, p 70.—I found no other corrections necessary.

“ tastes, have no such property?—Is it be-
 “ cause the audible alone affects us by *motion*?—
 “ I do not mean *that* motion by which as mere
 “ *sound* it acts upon the *ear*; for *such* motion
 “ belongs equally to the objects of our *other*
 “ senses;—thus, colour acts by motion upon the
 “ organs of sight, &c.—But I mean *another*
 “ *motion* which we perceive *subsequent* to that;
 “ and *this* motion bears a resemblance to human
 “ manners, *both* in the *rhythm*, and in the
 “ *arrangement* of *sounds* acute and grave:—not
 “ in their *mixture*; for HARMONY *has no ex-*
 “ *pression*^f. With the objects of our other
 “ senses

^f This passage is remarkable. It is exactly the
language of Rousseau—“ il n’y a AUCUN RAPPORT
 “ entre des *accords*, & les objets qu’on veut peindre, ou
 “ *les passions qu’on veut exprimer*.” [*Dict. de Mus.* art.
 IMITATION: see also the last paragraph of art. HAR-
 MONIE.] Thus, too, Lord Kaimes:—“ Harmony, pro-
 “ perly so called, though delightful when in perfection,
 “ *hath NO RELATION to sentiment*.” [*El. of Crit.* i. 128.]
 But how is this? The *same* intervals are the materials
 both of melody and of harmony. These intervals have,
 each of them, their peculiar effect and character, and it
 is by the proper choice of them in *succession*, and by that
 only, that *melody*, considered abstractedly from rhythm
 or measure, becomes *expressive*, or has any “ relation to
 sentiment.” Do these intervals, then, lose at once, as by
 magic, all their variety and striking difference of
 character, as soon as they are heard in the simultaneous
 combinations

“ senses this is not the case.—Now these
“ motions are analogous to the motion of human
“ *actions*; and those *actions* are the index of the
“ *manners*.”

In this problem, the philosopher plainly attributes the *expressive* power of musical sounds to their *succession*—to their *motion* in *measured melody*.

combinations of harmony? If this be the case, the vocal composer is at once relieved from all care of adapting the harmonies of his accompaniment to the expression of the sentiments conveyed in the words; and it must be matter of perfect indifference whether, for example, he uses the major or minor *third*—the perfect, or the false, *fifth*—the common chord, or the chord of the diminished *seventh*, &c.—With respect to Rousseau, it is not easy to see how this assertion of his can be reconciled with what he has elsewhere said. In his letter *Sur la Musique Française*, he expressly allows that every interval, consonant or dissonant, “ a son caractere particulier, c’est à dire, une maniere d’ *affecter l’ame* qui lui est propre.”—And upon this depend entirely all the admirable observations he has there made, concerning the ill effects which a crowded harmony, and the “ *remplissage*” of chords, have upon musical expression.—In another article [ACCORD] of his dictionary, this inconsistency is still more striking. One would not think it possible for the same writer, who in *one* place talks of intervals, “ propres, par leur dureté, à *exprimer l’emportement, la colere, et LES PASSIONS aigues*”—and, of—“ une *harmonie plaintive* qui ATTENDRIT LE CŒUR”—to assert in another part of the same

melody. He also distinguishes the *rhythmical*, from the *melodious*, succession; for he says expressly, that this motion is “both in the “*rhythm* (or *measure*,) and in the *order* or “*arrangement of sounds acute and grave*.”—But whence the effect of these motions? He answers, from their analogy to the motions of human *actions*;

work, that “il n’y a AUCUN RAPPORT entre des “*accords*, et LES PASSIONS qu’on veut *exprimer*.”

Had these writers contented themselves with saying, that harmony has much *less relation* to sentiment than melody, they would not have gone beyond the truth. And the reason of this difference in the effect of the *same intervals*, in melody, and in harmony, seems, plainly, this—that in melody, these intervals being formed by *successive sounds*, have, of course, a much closer, and more obvious *relation* to the tones and inflexions by which sentiments are expressed in *speech*, than they can have in harmony, where they are formed by sounds *heard together*.

As to the assertion of Aristotle, it seems only to furnish an additional proof that the ancients did not practise anything like our counterpoint, or *continued harmony in different parts*. Where the utmost use of harmony seems to have been confined to unisons, octaves, fourths, and fifths—where at least no discords, (the most expressive materials of modern harmony,) were allowed—we cannot wonder that the “*mixture*” of sounds in consonance should be thought to have *no relation to sentiment*, and that all the power of Music over the passions, should be confined to melodious and rhythmical *succession*.

actions^g, by which the manners and tempers of men are expressed in common life. With respect to the analogy of *rhythmic* movement to the various motions of men in action, this, indeed, is sufficiently obvious. But Aristotle goes farther, and supposes that there is also such analogy in the motion of melody considered *merely* as a succession of different *tones*, without any regard to *time*;—εν ΤΕ των φθογγων ταξει, των ΟΞΕΩΝ και ΒΑΡΕΩΝ. He plainly asserts, that this succession of *tones*, also, is analogous to the motion of human *actions*. Now it seems impossible to assign any human action to which a succession of *sounds* and *intervals*, merely as such, has, or *can* have, any relation or similitude, except the *action* (if the expression is allowable,) of *speaking*, which is such a succession. *If* this be Aristotle's meaning—and I confess myself unable to discover any other—I do not see how we can avoid concluding, that he agreed *so* far with Plato, as to attribute *part*, at least, of the effect of Music upon the affections to the analogy between melody and speech.

This

^g The original is short, and rather obscure. It says, *literally*, “these motions are *practical motions* :” πρακτικαι εισιν. But that I have given Aristotle's true meaning in my translation, is evident from a clearer expression in *Prob.* xxix. which is a shorter solution of the same question. His expression there is—κινήσεις εισιν [sc. οι ρυθμοι και τα μελη] ΩΣΠΕΡ ΚΑΙ ΑΙ ΠΡΑΞΕΙΣ.—
“Rhythm and melody are *motions*, as *actions* also are.”

This analogy is, indeed, a curious subject, and deserves, perhaps, a more thorough examination and development than it has yet received^b. But I shall not trust myself farther with a speculation so likely to draw me wide from the proper business of this dissertation, than just to observe, that the writers above-mentioned, who resolve *all* the pathetic expression of Music into this principle, though they assert more than it seems possible to prove, are yet much *nearer* to the truth than those, who altogether overlook, or reject, that principleⁱ; a principle, of which, instances

^b Much light has been flung upon this subject, as far as relates to speech, by Mr. Steele, in his curious and ingenious essay *On the Melody and Measure of Speech*. But the object of *his* enquiry was *Speech*, not *Music*. His purpose in tracing the resemblance between them, was only to shew that speech is capable of *notation*; not to examine how far the effect of *Music* on the passions depends on that resemblance.—His *notation* is extremely ingenious; but with respect to his project of accompanying the declamation of Tragedy by a drone bass, I must confess that, for my own part, I cannot reflect without some comfort upon the improbability that it will ever be attempted.

ⁱ After allowing that “different passions and sentiments do indeed *give different tones and accents* to the human voice,” Dr. Beattie asks—“but can the tones of the most pathetic melody be said to bear a resemblance to the voice of a man or woman speaking from
“ the

stances so frequent and so palpable are to be traced in the works of the best masters of vocal composition—in those of PURCELL, for example, of HANDEL, and above all, of PERGOLESI—that I have often wondered it should have been neglected

“ the impulse of passion?” I can only answer, that to my ear, such a resemblance, in the “ *most pathetic melody,*” is, *often*, even striking : and I have no doubt that in *many* passages we are affected from a more delicate and latent degree of that resemblance, sufficient to be *felt*, in its effect, though not to be *perceived*.—Dr. Beattie also asks —“ if there are not melancholy airs in the *sharp key*, “ and chearful ones in the *flat* ? ”—Undoubtedly, the peculiar and opposite characters of these keys, may be variously *modified* and *tempered* by the movement, the accent, and the *manner of performance*, in general : but they can never be *destroyed* ; much less can they be changed, as Dr. Beattie supposes, to their very *opposites*. A *chearful* air in a *flat* key, I confess, I never heard. If Dr. Beattie thinks the jig in the fifth solo of Corelli *chearful*, because the *movement* is *allegro*, I would beg of him to try an experiment : let him only play the first bar of that jig, (with the bass,) upon a harpsichord, &c. in *G major* : and when he has attended to the effect of that, let him return to the *minor* key, and hear the difference.—As to “ *melancholy* airs in a *sharp* key,” the word *melancholy* is, I think, used with considerable latitude, and comprehends different *shades*. In the *lightest* of these shades, it may perhaps be applied to some airs in a major key : that key may, by slowness of movement, softness and smoothness of tone, &c. become solemn, tender, touching,

neglected by so exact a writer as Mr. Harris, though it lay directly in his way, and, in one place, he actually touched it as he passed^k. He seems, here, to have deserted those antients whom, in general, he most delighted to follow.

But

touching, &c.—but I cannot say I recollect any air in that key which makes an impression that can *properly* be called *melancholy*. But we must be careful in this matter to allow for the magic of *association*, which no one better understands, or has described with more feeling and fancy, than Dr. Beattie himself. [See p. 173, &c.]—With respect to “a transition from the one key to the other” [from major to minor, &c.] “in the *same air, without any sensible change* in the expression,” I must also confess that it is, to me, totally unknown.—One word more:—Dr. Beattie is “at a loss to conceive how it should happen, that a musician overwhelmed with sorrow, for example, should put together a series of notes, whose expression is contrary to that of another series which he had put together when elevated with joy.” [p. 180.]—But is not Dr. Beattie equally at a loss to conceive how it should happen that any man overwhelmed with *sorrow*, should put together, in *speaking*, (as he certainly does) a series of *tones*, whose expression is contrary to that of *another* series which he had put together when elevated with *joy*?—The two *facts* are equally certain, and, even at the first view, so nearly allied, that whoever can account for the one, need not, I am persuaded, be at the trouble of trying to account separately for the other.

^k Ch. ii. § 2.—particularly note ¹.

But to return to *Aristotle*, and his treatise on Poetry:—the reader will observe that he does not there assert in general terms, that “*Music is an Imitative Art*,” but only, that the Music “*of the flute and the lyre*” is imitative; and even that, not always, but “*for the most part*”¹. I just mention this, because I have observed in many of the commentators, as well as in other writers, a disposition to extend and generalize his assertions, by which they have sometimes involved the subject and themselves in unnecessary difficulties.

With respect to *modern* writers, at least, there seems to be a manifest impropriety in denominating Music an *Imitative Art*, while they confine the application of the term *Imitative* to what they confess to be the slightest and least important of all its powers. In this view, consistence and propriety are, certainly, on the side of Dr. Beattie, when he would “strike Music off the list of *Imitative Arts*”^m. But perhaps even a farther reform may justly be considered as wanting, in our language upon this subject. With whatever propriety, and however naturally and obviously, the arts both of *Music*, and of *POETRY*, may be, separately, and occasionally, regarded and spoken of as *imitative*, yet, when we arrange
and

¹ — της αὐλητικῆς Ἡ ΠΛΕΙΣΤΗ καὶ κιθαρῳδικῆς.

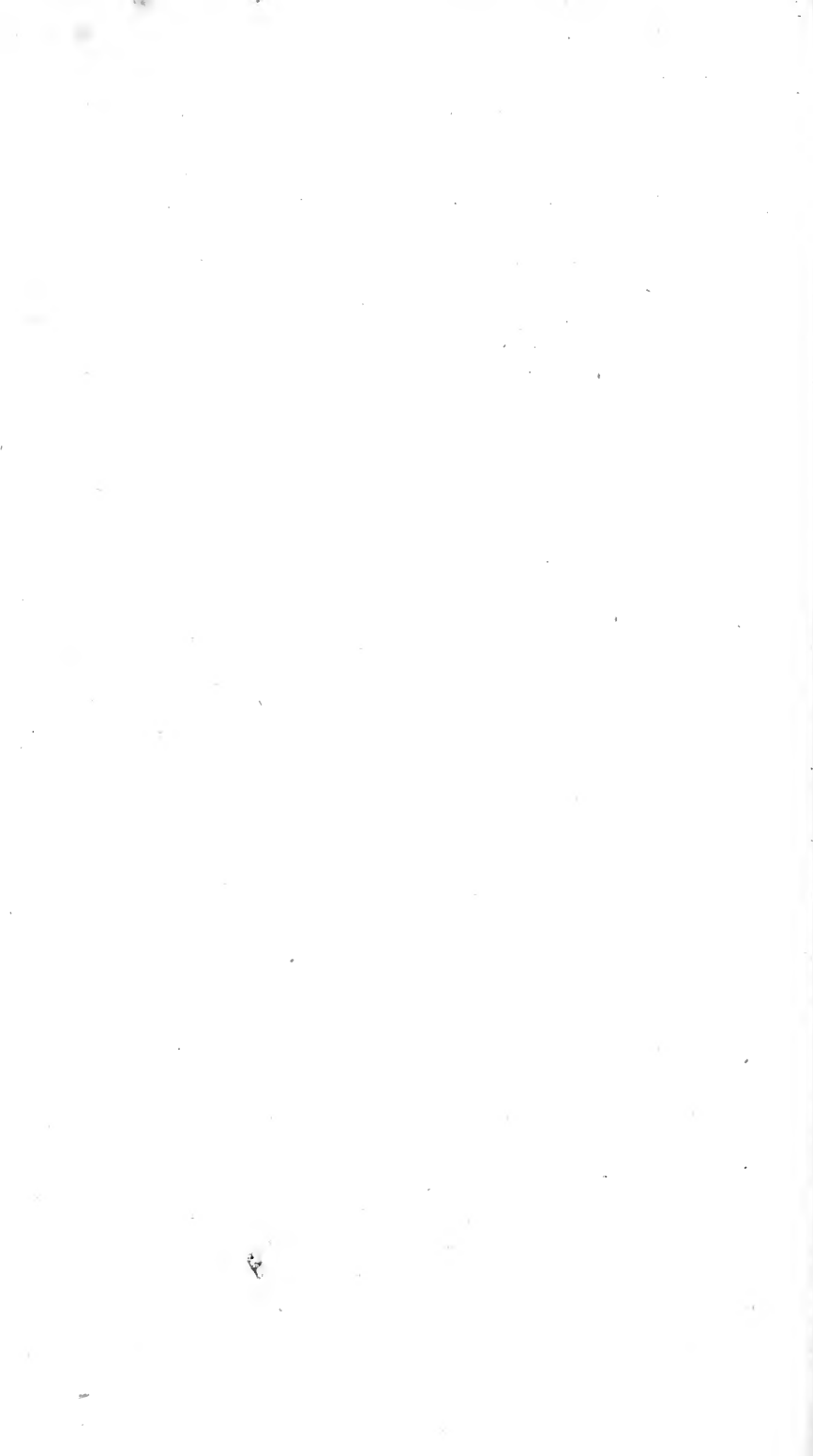
^m Page 129.

and *class* the arts, it seems desirable that a *clearer* language were adopted. The notion, that Painting, Poetry and Musicⁿ are all *Arts of Imitation*, certainly tends to produce, and has produced, much confusion. That they all, in *some* sense of the word, *or other*, imitate, cannot be denied; but the senses of the word when applied to Poetry, or Music, are so different both from each other, and from that in which it is applied to Painting, Sculpture, and the arts of design in general—the only arts that are *obviously* and *essentially* imitative—that when

we

ⁿ What shall we say to those who add ARCHITECTURE to the list of *Imitative Arts*?—One would not expect to find so absurd a notion adopted by so clear and philosophical a writer as M. d'Alembert. Yet in his *Discours Prel. de l'Encyclop.* he not only makes Architecture an imitative art, but even classes it with *painting* and *sculpture*. He allows, indeed, that the imitation “*de la belle nature, y est moins frappante & plus resserrée que dans les deux autres arts:*”—but how is it any imitation at all?—only because it imitates “*par l'assemblage et l'union des differens corps qu'elle emploie*”—what?—“*l'arrangement symmetrique que la nature observe plus ou moins sensiblement dans chaque individu, &c.*” [*Mel. de lit.* i. 63.] I can only say, that, upon this principle, the joiner, the smith, and the mechanic of almost every kind, have a fair claim to be elevated to the rank of *Imitative Artists*: for if a *regular building* be an imitation of “*la belle nature,*” so is a chair, a table, or a pair of fire-tongs.

we include them all, without distinction, under the same general denomination of *Imitative Arts*, we seem to defeat the only useful purpose of all classing and arrangement; and, instead of producing order and method in our ideas, produce only embarrassment and confusion. [See DISS. I. p. 3, 4.]



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O N

P O E T R Y.

C O N T E N T S.

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P A R T I.

GENERAL AND COMPARATIVE VIEW OF
POETRY AND ITS PRINCIPAL SPECIES.

I N T R O D U C T I O N.

MY design is to treat of POETRY in general, DESIGN. and of its several species—to inquire, what is the proper *effect* of each—what construction of a *fable*, or *plan*, is essential to a good Poem—of *what*, and *how many*, *parts*, each species consists; with whatever else belongs to the same subject: which I shall consider in the order that most naturally presents itself.

I.

Epic Poetry, Tragedy, Comedy, Dithyrambics, Poetry a species of IMITATION. as also, for the most part, the Music of the flute, and of the lyre—all these are, in the most general view of them, IMITATIONS¹; differing, however, from each other in *three* respects, according to the different *means*, the different *objects*, or the different *manner*, of their imitation.

¹ The application of this term to *Poetry*, in general, is considered in Dissertation I.—to *Music*, in Diss. II.—to *Dithyrambic Poetry*, in NOTE I.

II.

Different
MEANS
of
Imitation.

For, as men, some through art, and some through habit, imitate various objects, by means of *colour* and *figure*, and others, again, by *voice*²; so, with respect to the arts above-mentioned, *rhythm*, *words*, and *melody*, are the different *means* by which, either single, or variously combined, they all produce their imitation.

For example: in the imitations of the flute, and the lyre, and of any other instruments capable of producing a similar effect—as the *syrinx*, or pipe—*melody* and *rhythm* only are employed. In those of Dance, *rhythm* alone, without melody; for there are dancers who, by rhythm applied to gesture³, express manners, passions, and actions.

The ΕΡΟΠΟΕΙΑ imitates by *words alone*, or by *verse*⁴; and that verse may either be composed of various metres, or confined, according to the practice

² Vocal *mimicry*; imitation by *tone* of voice merely: See Diss. I. towards the end, *Note*¹.—And NOTE 2, on this passage.

³ The expression *seems* inaccurate; for it is by their *gestures* that they *express*, or *imitate*;—not by the *rhythm*, or *measured motion*, of those gestures.—See NOTE 4, where I have endeavoured to account for Aristotle's expressing himself thus.

⁴ i. e. by *words* only, without *melody* and *rhythm*; or, at most, with no *other rhythm* than is implied in the idea of *metre*:—without *rhythm* in its *musical* acceptation of *time*. See NOTE 5.

practice hitherto established, to a single species. For we should, otherwise, have no *general* name which would comprehend the Mimes of SOPHRON and XENARCHUS, and the *Socratic* dialogues; or Poems in Iambic, Elegiac, or other metres, in which the *Epic* species of imitation may be conveyed. Custom, indeed, connecting the *poetry* or *making* with the *metre*, has denominated some *Elegiac Poets*, i. e. *makers*⁵ of *elegiac verse*; others, *Epic Poets*; i. e. *makers* of *hexameter verse*; thus distinguishing Poets, not according to the nature of their *imitation*, but according to that of their *metre* only. For even they, who compose treatises of medicine, or natural philosophy, in *verse*, are denominated *Poets*: yet HOMER and EMPEDOCLES have nothing in common, except their *metre*; the former, therefore,

justly

⁵ It may be necessary to observe, that the Greek word, (ποιητής—*poiétes*) whence *poeta*, and *poet*, is, literally, *maker*; and maker, it is well known, was once the current term for *poet* in our language; and to write verses, was, to *make*. Sir Philip Sidney, speaking of the Greek word, says—"wherein, I know not whether by luck or wisdom, we Englishmen have *met* with the *Greeks*, in calling him *Maker*." *Defense of Poesy*.

So Spenser;

The god of shepherds, *Tityrus*, is dead,

Who taught me, homely, as I can, to MAKE.

Shep. Cal. JUNE.

justly merits the name of *Poet*; while the other should rather be called a *Physiologist* than a *Poet*.

So, also, though any one should chuse to convey his imitation in every kind of metre, promiscuously, as CHÆREMÓN has done in his *Centaur*, which is a medley of all sorts of verse, it would not immediately follow, that, on *that* account merely, he was entitled to the name of *Poet*.—But of this, enough.—

There are, again, other species of Poetry which make use of *all* the *means* of imitation, *rhythm*, *melody*, and *verse*. Such are, the *Dithyrambic*, that of *Nomes*, *Tragedy*, and *Comedy*: with this difference, however, that in some of these⁶, they are employed *all together*, in others, *separately*. And such are the differences of these arts with respect to the *means* by which they imitate.

III.

Different
OBJECTS
of
Imitation.

But, as the *objects* of imitation are the actions of *men*, and these men must of necessity be either good

⁶ In *Dithyrambic*, or *Bacchic* hymns, and in the *Nomes*, which were also a species of hymns, to Apollo, and other deities, *all* the means of imitation were employed *together*, and *throughout*: in *Tragedy* and *Comedy*, *separately*; some of them in one part of the drama, and some in another. (See Part II. *Sect.* I.) In the *choral* part, however, at least, if no where else, *all*, melody, rhythm and words, must probably have been used *at once*, as in the hymns.

good or bad, (for on this does *character* principally depend; the *manners* being, in *all* men, most strongly marked by virtue and vice,) it follows, that we can only represent men, either as *better* than they actually are, or *worse*, or exactly *as* they are: just as, in *Painting*, the pictures of *Polygnotus* were above the common level of nature; those of *Pauson*, below it; those of *Dionysius*, faithful *likenesses*.

Now it is evident that each of the imitations above-mentioned will admit of these differences, and become a different kind of imitation, as it imitates *objects* that differ in this respect. This may be the case with *Dancing*; with the *Music* of the flute, and of the lyre; and, also, with the *Poetry* which employs *words*, or *verse* only, without *mélody*, or *rhythm*: thus, *Homer* has drawn men *superior* to what they are⁷; *Cleophon*, as they are; *Hegemon* the Thasian, the inventor of parodies,

⁷ Superior, that is, in courage, strength, wisdom, prudence, &c.—in *any* laudable, useful, or admirable quality, whether such as we denominate *moral*, or not. If superiority of *moral* character only were meant, the assertion would be false.—It is necessary to remember here, the *wide* sense in which the ancients used the terms *virtue*, *vice*—*good*, *bad*, &c. See NOTE 19.—The difference between *moral*, and *poetical*, perfection of character, is well explained by Dr. Beattie, *Essay on Poetry*, &c. Part I. ch. 4.—The heroes of *Homer*, as he well observes, are “*finer animals*” than we are; (p. 69.) not *better men*.

parodies, and *Nicochares*, the author of the *Deliad*, worse than they are.

So, again, with respect to *Dithyrambics*, and *Nomes*: in these, too, the imitation may be as different as that of the Persians, by *Timotheus*, and the Cyclops, by *Philo.venus*.

Tragedy, also, and *Comedy*, are distinguished in the same manner; the aim of *Comedy* being, to exhibit men worse than we find them, that of *Tragedy*, better.

IV.

DIFFERENCE
MANNER
of
Imitation.

There remains the *third* difference—that of the *manner* in which each of these objects may be imitated. For the Poet, imitating the *same object*, and by the *same means*, may do it either in NARRATION—and that, again, either personating other characters, as HOMER does, or, in his own person throughout, without change:—or, he may imitate by representing all his characters as real, and employed in the very ACTION itself.

These, then, are the three differences by which, as I said in the beginning, all imitation is distinguished; those of the *means*, the *object*, and the *manner*: so that *Sophocles* is, in one respect, an imitator of the same kind with *Homer*, as elevated characters are the *objects* of both; in another respect, of the same kind with *Aristophanes*, as both imitate in the *way* of action; whence, according to some, the application of the term

Drama

Drama [i. e. *action*] to such Poems. Upon this it is that the *Dorians* ground their claim to the invention both of Tragedy and Comedy. For Comedy is claimed by the Megarians⁸; both by those of Greece, who contend that it took its rise in their popular government; and by those of Sicily, among whom the poet *Epicharmus* flourished long before *Chionides* and *Magnes*: and Tragedy, also, is claimed by some of the Dorians of Peloponnesus.—In support of these claims they argue from the *words* themselves. They allege, that the Doric word for a *village* is COME, the Attic, DEMOS; and that *Comedians* were so called, not from COMAZEIN—to *revel*—but from their strolling about the COMAI, or *villages*⁹, before they were tolerated in the city. They say, farther, that, *to do*, or *act*, they express by the word DRAN; the Athenians by PRATTEIN.

DRAMA.
Digression
concerning
the different
national
claims to its
invention.

And thus much as to the *differences* of imitation—how *many*, and *what*, they are.

V.

POETRY, in general, seems to have derived its origin from two *causes*, each of them *natural*.

ORIGIN
of
Poetry.

1. TO IMITATE is instinctive in man from his infancy. By this he is distinguished from other animals, that he is, of all, the most imitative, and
through

⁸ Who were all of *Doric* origin.

⁹ A derivation very honourable to itinerant players.

through this instinct receives his earliest education*. All men, likewise, naturally receive pleasure from imitation. This is evident from what we experience in viewing the works of imitative art; for in them, we contemplate with pleasure, and with the *more* pleasure, the more exactly they are imitated, such objects as, if real, we could not see without pain; as, the figures of the meanest and most disgusting animals, dead bodies, and the like. And the reason of this is, that to *learn*, is a natural pleasure, not confined to philosophers, but common to all men; with this difference only, that the multitude partake of it in a more transient and compendious manner. Hence the pleasure they receive from a picture: in viewing it they *learn*¹, they *infer*, they *discover*, what every object is: that *this*, for instance, is such a particular man, &c. For if we suppose the object represented to be something which the spectator had never seen, his pleasure, in that case, will not arise from the *imitation*, but from the workmanship, the colours, or some such cause.

Imitation, then, being thus natural to us, and, 2ndly, MELODY and RHYTHM† being also natural, (for

* See Dr. Beattie's Essay on Poetry, &c. Part I. ch. 6.

¹ This is explained in NOTE 22.

† " RHYTHM differs from METRE, in as much as
" RHYTHM is *proportion, applied to any motion whatever*;

(for as to *metre*, it is plainly a *species* of rhythm,) those persons, in whom, originally, these propensities were the strongest, were naturally led to rude and extemporaneous attempts, which, gradually improved, gave birth to POETRY.

VI.

But this Poetry, following the different *characters* of its authors, naturally divided itself into *two* different *kinds*. They who were of a grave and lofty spirit, chose, for their imitation, the actions and the adventures of *elevated* characters: while Poets of a *lighter* turn, represented those of the *vicious* and *contemptible*. And these composed, originally, *Satires*; as the former did *Hymns* and *Encomia*.

Its division
into two
KINDS—
the
SERIOUS
and the
LUDICROUS.

Of the *lighter* kind, we have no Poem anterior to the time of HOMER, though many such, in all probability, there were; but, *from* his time, we have;

“ METRE is *proportion*, applied to the motion of WORDS
“ SPOKEN. Thus, in the drumming of a march, or
“ the dancing of a hornpipe, there is *rhythm*, though *no*
“ *metre*; in *Dryden’s* celebrated Ode there is METRE as
“ well as RHYTHM, because the Poet with the *rhythm* has
“ associated certain *words*. And hence it follows, that,
“ though ALL METRE IS RHYTHM, yet ALL RHYTHM
“ IS NOT METRE.” Harris’s *Philol. Inquiries*, p. 67.—
where it is also observed, very truly, that “ no English
“ word expresses *rhythmus* better than the word, *time*.”
P. 69. note.

have ; as, his *Margites*, and others of the same species, in which the Iambic was introduced as the most proper measure ; and hence, indeed, the name of *Iambic*, because it was the measure in which they used to IAMBIZE, [i. e. to *satirize*,] each other.

And thus these old Poets were divided into two classes—those who used the *heroic*³, and those who used the *iambic*, verse.

And as, in the *serious* kind, HOMER alone may be said to deserve the name of Poet, not only on account of his other excellences, but also of the *dramatic*⁴ spirit of his imitations ; so was he likewise the first who suggested the idea of *Comedy*, by substituting *ridicule* for *invective*, and giving that ridicule a dramatic cast : for his MARGITES bears the same analogy to *Comedy*, as his ILIAD and ODYSSEY to *Tragedy*.—But when *Tragedy* and *Comedy*, had once made their appearance, succeeding Poets, according to the turn of their genius, attached themselves to the one, or the other, of these new species : the lighter sort, instead of *Iambic*, became *Comic* Poets ; the graver, *Tragic*, instead of *Heroic* : and that, on account of the superior dignity and higher estimation of these latter *forms* of Poetry.

Whether

³ i. e. hexameters, composed of dactyls and spondees, which were called *heroic* feet.

⁴ See Part III. Sect. 3.

Whether Tragedy has now, with respect to its constituent parts⁵, received the utmost improvement of which it is capable, considered both in *itself*, and relatively to the *theatre*, is a question that belongs not to this place.

VII.

Both Tragedy, then, and Comedy, having originated in a rude and unpremeditated manner—the first from the *Dithyrambic* hymns, the other from those *Phallic* songs⁶, which, in many cities, remain still in use—each advanced gradually towards perfection, by such successive improvements as were most obvious.

TRAGEDY, after various changes, reposed at length in the completion of its proper form. ÆSCHYLUS first added a second actor⁷; he also abridged

PROGRESS
of
TRAGEDY.

⁵ i. e. the fable, the manners, the sentiments, &c.—
See Part II. Sect. 2.

⁶ Of the *licentious* and *obscene* RELIGIOUS CEREMONY here alluded to, the reader, who has any curiosity about it, may find some account in Potter's *Antiquities of Greece*, vol. i. p. 383.

⁷ The first who introduced a single actor, or speaker, between those choral songs which originally, we are told, formed the whole of *Tragedy*, i. e. according to the most usual derivation of the word, *the goat-singing*, was THESPIUS, whom Aristotle passes over in silence. The story so often told, of him and his theatrical *waggon*, it cannot

abridged the CHORUS, and made the dialogue the principal part of Tragedy. SOPHOCLES increased the number of actors to three, and added the decoration of painted scenery. It was also late before Tragedy threw aside the short and simple *fable*, and ludicrous *language*, of its satyric original, and attained its proper magnitude and *dignity*. The *Iambic* measure was then first adopted: for, originally, the *Trochaic* tetrameter was made use of, as better suited to the satyric⁸ and

cannot be necessary to repeat.—By introducing a *second* actor, Æschylus, in fact, introduced the *dialogue*; though it seems probable that the *single* speaker of Thespis told his tale, in part, at least, *dramatically*. See Brumoy's *Disc. sur l'Orig. de la Trag. Sect. iii.*—*Theatre des Grecs, Tome i.*

⁸ *Satyric*, from the share which those fantastic beings called *Satyrs*, the companions and *play-fellows* of *Bacchus*, had in the earliest Tragedy, of which they formed the chorus. *Joking*, and *dancing*, were essential attributes of these rustic semi-deities. Hence, the "*ludicrous language*," and the "*dancing genius*" of the old Tragedy, to which the TROCHAIC or *running* metre here spoken of was peculiarly adapted; being no other than this:

“ Jolly mortals, fill your glasses, noble deeds are done
by wine.”

The reader will not confound *satyric* with *satiric*; nor the Greek *satyric* drama, with the *satire* of Roman origin. See Harris's *Phil. Arrang.* p. 460. *note*. Or, Dacier's Preface to Horace's *Satires*. The two words are of different derivations.

and saltatorial genius of the Poem at that time; but when the dialogue was formed, nature itself pointed out the proper metre. For the *iambic* is, of all metres, the most colloquial; as appears evidently from this fact, that our common conversation frequently falls into *iambic* verse; seldom into *hexameter*, and only when we depart from the usual *melody* of speech.—*Episodes* were, also, multiplied, and every other part of the drama successively improved and polished.

But of this enough: to enter into a minute detail would, perhaps, be a task of some length.

VIII.

COMEDY, as was said before, is an imitation of *bad characters*; bad, not with respect to every sort of vice, but to the *ridiculous* only, as being a *species* of turpitude or deformity; since it may be defined to be—a *fault* or *deformity* of such a sort as is neither *painful* nor *destructive*. A ridiculous face, for example, is something ugly and distorted, but not so as to cause *pain*.

OBJECT
and
PROGRESS
of
COMEDY.

The successive improvements of Tragedy, and the respective authors of them, have not escaped our knowledge; but those of Comedy, from the little attention that was paid to it in its origin, remain in obscurity. For it was not till late, that

Comedy was authorized by the magistrate, and carried on at the public expence: it was, at first, a private and voluntary exhibition. From the time, indeed, when it began to acquire some degree of form, its *Poets* have been recorded; but who first introduced masks, or prologues, or augmented the number of actors—these, and other particulars of the same kind, are unknown.

Epicharmus and *Phormis* were the first who *invented* comic fables. This improvement, therefore, is of Sicilian origin. But, of *Athenian* Poets, *Crates* was the first who abandoned the *Iambic*⁹ form of comedy, and made use of *invented* and *general* stories, or fables.

IX.

EPIC
and
TRAGIC
Species
COMPARED.

Epic Poetry agrees so far with *Tragic*, as it is an imitation of *great characters* and *actions*, by *means of words*: but in this it differs, that it makes use of only one kind of metre throughout; and that it is *narrative*. It also differs in *length*: for *Tragedy* endeavours, as far as possible, to confine its action within the limits of a single revolution of the sun, or nearly so; but the time
of

⁹ *Iambic*, i. e. *satirical*, and *personally* so, like the old *Iambi*, *invectives*, or lampoons, of which Aristotle speaks above, *Sect. 6.* and from which the *Iambic metre*, which is not here alluded to, took its name.

of *Epic* action is indefinite. This, however, at first, was equally the case with Tragedy itself.

Of their constituent *parts*, some are common to both, some peculiar to Tragedy. He, therefore, who is a judge of the beauties and defects of Tragedy, is, of course, equally a judge with respect to those of Epic Poetry: for all the parts of the Epic poem are to be found in Tragedy; *not* all those of Tragedy, in the Epic poem.

P A R T II.
O F T R A G E D Y.

I.

DEFINI-
TION of
Tragedy.

OF the species of Poetry which imitates in *hexameters*, and of *Comedy*, we shall speak hereafter. Let us now consider TRAGEDY; collecting, first, from what has been already said, its true and essential definition.

Tragedy, then, is an imitation of some *action* that is *important, entire*, and of a proper *magnitude*—by *language*, embellished and rendered *pleasurable*, but by different *means* in different parts—in the *way*, not of *narration*, but of *action*—effecting through *pity* and *terror*, the *correction* and *refinement* of such passions.

By *pleasurable language*, I mean a language that has the embellishments of rhythm, melody, and metre. And I add, *by different means in different parts*, because in some parts metre alone is employed, in others, melody.

II.

Deduction
of its CON-
STITUENT
PARTS.

Now as Tragedy imitates by *acting*, the DECORATION*, in the first place, must necessarily

* *Decoration*—literally, the decoration of the *spectacle*, or *sight*. In other places it is called the *spectacle*,

sarily be *one* of its parts: then the MELOPŒIA, (or MUSIC¹,) and the DICTION; for these last include the *means* of tragic imitation. By *diction*, I mean the metrical composition †. The meaning of *Melopœia* is obvious to every one.

Again—Tragedy being an imitation of an action, and the persons employed in that action being necessarily characterized by their *manners* and their *sentiments*, since it is from *these* that actions themselves derive their character, it follows, that there must also be, MANNERS, and SENTIMENTS, as the two *causes* of actions, and, consequently, of the happiness, or unhappiness, of all men. The *imitation of the action* is the FABLE: for by *fable* I now mean the *contexture of incidents*, or the *plot*. By *manners*, I mean, whatever

or *sight* only—ἰδέσθαι. It comprehends *scenery*, *dresses*—the whole visible apparatus of the theatre. I do not know any single English word, that answers fully to the Greek word.

¹ *Melopœia*—literally, the *making*, or the *composition*, of the *Music*; as we use *Epopœia*, or according to the French termination, which we have naturalized, *Epopœe*, to signify epic *poetry*, or *epic-making*, in general.—I might have rendered it, at once, the MUSIC; but that it would have appeared ridiculous to observe, of a word so familiar to us, even that “*its meaning is obvious*.”

† Not the *versification*, but merely the metrical *expression*—the *language* of the verse. This is plain from the clearer definition, p. 121.

whatever marks the *characters* of the persons. By *sentiments*, whatever they say, whether *proving* any thing, or delivering a *general sentiment*, &c.*

Hence, all Tragedy must necessarily contain *six* parts, which, together, constitute its peculiar character, or *quality*: FABLE, MANNERS, DICATION, SENTIMENTS, DECORATION, and MUSIC. Of these parts, two relate to the *means*, one to the *manner*, and three to the *object*, of imitation². And these are all. These *specific parts*³, if we may so call them, have been employed by most Poets, and are all to be found in [almost] every Tragedy.

III.

COMPARATIVE IMPORTANCE of the PARTS.

But of all these parts the most important is the *combination* of *incidents*, or, the FABLE. Because Tragedy is an imitation, not of *men*, but of *actions*⁴—of life, of happiness and unhappiness:

* For a fuller account of *this* part of Tragedy, see Sect. 22.

² *Music*, and *diction*, to the *means*, which are *words*, *melody*, and *rhythm*: *decoration*, to the *manner* of imitating—i. e. by *representation* and *action*: *fable*, *manners*, and *sentiments*, to the *objects* of imitation—i. e. *men*, and their actions, characters, &c.

³ i. e. such as are essential to Tragedy, and, together, constitute its *species*.

⁴ See the Diss. *On the Provinces of the Drama*, ch. i. [Dr. Hurd's Hor. vol. ii.]

happiness: for happiness consists in action, and the supreme good itself, the very *end* of life, is *action* of a certain kind⁵—not *quality*. Now the *manners* of men constitute only their *quality* or *characters*; but it is by their *actions* that they are *happy*, or the contrary. Tragedy, therefore, does not imitate action, *for the sake* of imitating manners, but in the imitation of action, that of manners is of course involved. So that the *action* and the *fable* are the *end* of Tragedy; and in every thing the *end* is of principal importance.

Again—Tragedy cannot subsist without *action*; without *manners* it may: the Tragedies of most modern Poets have this defect; a defect common, indeed, among Poets in general. As among Painters also, this is the case with ZEUXIS, compared with POLYGNOTUS: the latter excels in the expression of the *manners*; there is no such expression in the pictures of ZEUXIS.

Farther—suppose any one to string together a number of speeches in which the manners are strongly marked, the language and the sentiments well turned; this will not be sufficient to produce the proper effect of Tragedy: that end will much rather

⁵ i. e. *virtuous* action.—The doctrine of Aristotle was, that the *greatest happiness*, the *summum bonum* or *end* of life, consisted in *virtuous energies* and *actions*; not in virtue, considered merely as an *internal* habit, disposition, or *quality*, of mind.

rather be answered by a piece, defective in each of those particulars, but furnished with a proper fable and contexture of incidents. Just as in painting, the most brilliant colours, spread at random and without design, will give far less pleasure than the simplest outline of a *figure*.

Add to this, that those parts of Tragedy, by means of which it becomes most interesting and affecting, are parts of the *fable*; I mean, *revolutions*, and *discoveries*⁶.

As a farther proof, adventurers in Tragic writing are sooner able to arrive at excellence in the language, and the manners, than in the construction of a plot; as appears from almost all our earlier Poets.

The fable, then, is the principal part, the *soul*, as it were, of Tragedy; and the MANNERS are next in rank: Tragedy being an imitation of an *action*, and *through that*, principally, of the *agents*.

In the *third* place stand the SENTIMENTS. To this part it belongs, to *say* such things as are *true* and *proper*; which, in the dialogue, depends on the *Political*⁷ and *Rhetorical* arts: for, the
antients

⁶ These are explained afterwards, *Sect. 9*.

⁷ The reader, here, must not think of our modern *politics*.—The *political*, or *civil art*, or *science*, was, in
Aristotle's

antients made their characters speak in the style of political and popular eloquence; but now, the rhetorical manner prevails.

The *manners* are, whatever manifests the *disposition* of the speaker. There are speeches, therefore, which are without manners, or character; as not containing any thing by which the *propensities* or *aversions* of the person who delivers them can be known. The *sentiments* comprehend *whatever is said*; whether *proving* any thing, affirmatively, or negatively, or expressing some *general reflection*, &c.

Fourth, in order, is the **DICTION**; that is, as I have already said, the *expression* of the sentiments *by words*; the power and effect of which is the same, whether in verse or prose.

Of the remaining two parts, the **MUSIC** stands next; of all the pleasurable accompaniments and embellishments of Tragedy, the most delightful.

The **DECORATION** has, also, a great effect, but, of all the parts, is most foreign to the art. For the power of Tragedy is felt without representation, and actors; and the beauty
of

Aristotle's view, of wide extent, and high importance. It comprehended *ethics* and *eloquence*, or the art of public speaking; every thing, in short, that concerned the well-being of a *state*.—See **NOTE 57**.

of the decorations depends more on the art of the mechanic, than on that of the Poet⁸.

IV.

Of the
FABLE—
[to
Sect. 15.]

These things being thus adjusted, let us go on to examine in what manner the FABLE should be constructed; since this is the first, and most important part of Tragedy.

Now we have defined Tragedy to be an imitation of an action that is complete and *entire*; and that has also a certain *magnitude*; for a thing may be *entire*, and a *whole*, and yet not be of any *magnitude*⁹.

It should
be a
PERFECT
WHOLE—

1. By *entire*, I mean that which has a *beginning*, a *middle*, and an *end*. A *beginning*, is that which does not, necessarily, suppose any thing before it, but which requires something to follow it. An *end*, on the contrary, is that which supposes something to precede it, either necessarily, or probably; but which nothing is required to follow. A *middle*, is that which both supposes something to precede, and requires something to follow. The Poet, therefore, who would construct

⁸ The reader will find a useful comment on this, and the two preceding sections, in the *Philolog. Inquiries*, Part II. ch. vi. viii. ix. xi.

⁹ i. e.—not be *large*.—*Magnitude* is here used in its proper and relative sense, of *greatness*; and with reference to some standard.

struct his fable properly, is not at liberty to begin, or end, where he pleases, but must conform to these definitions.

2. Again: whatever is beautiful, whether it be an animal, or any other thing composed of different parts, must not only have those parts arranged in a certain manner, but must also be of a certain *magnitude*; for beauty consists in *magnitude* and *order*. Hence it is that no very minute animal can be beautiful; the eye comprehends the whole too instantaneously to distinguish and compare the parts:—neither, on the contrary, can one of a prodigious size be beautiful; because, as all its parts cannot be seen at once, the *whole*, the *unity*¹ of object, is lost to the spectator; as it would be, for example, if he were surveying an animal of many miles in length. As, therefore, in animals, and other objects, a certain *magnitude* is requisite, but that magnitude must be such as to present a whole *easily comprehended by the eye*; so, in the fable, a certain *length* is requisite, but that length must be such

—and of
a certain
MAGNI-
TITUDE.

¹ The unity here spoken of, it must be remembered, is not *absolute* and *simple*, but *relative* and *compound*, unity; a unity consisting of different *parts*, the relation of which to each other, and to the whole, is easily perceived at one view. On this depends the perception of beauty in *form*.—In objects too extended, you may be said to have *parts*, but no *whole*: in very minute objects a *whole*, but no *parts*.

such as to present a whole *easily comprehended by the memory.*

With respect to the *measure* of this length—if referred to actual representation in the dramatic contests, it is a matter foreign to the art itself: for if a hundred Tragedies were to be exhibited in concurrence, the length of each performance must be regulated by the hour-glass; a practice of which, it is said, there have formerly been instances. But, if we determine this measure by the nature of the thing itself, the more extensive the fable, consistently with the clear and easy comprehension of the whole, the more beautiful will it be, with respect to *magnitude*. In general, we may say, that an action is sufficiently extended, when it is long enough to admit of a change of fortune, from happy to unhappy, or the reverse, brought about by a succession, necessary or probable, of *well-connected* incidents.

V.

UNITY
of
the Fable.

A *fable* is not *one*, as some conceive it to be, merely because the *hero* of it is *one*. For numberless events happen to one man, many of which are such as cannot be connected into *one event*: and so, likewise, there are many actions of one man which cannot be connected into any *one action*. Hence appears the mistake of all those Poets who have composed HERCULEIDS, THESEIDS, and

and other Poems of that kind. They conclude that because *Hercules* was one, so also must be the fable of which he is the subject. But HOMER, among his many other excellences, seems also to have been perfectly aware of this mistake, either from art or genius. For when he composed his ODYSSEY, he did not introduce all the events of his hero's life,—such, for instance, as the wound he received upon Parnassus²—his feigned madness³ when the Grecian army was assembling, &c.—events, not connected, either by necessary or probable *consequence*, with each other; but he comprehended those only which have relation to *one action*; for such we call that of the *Odyssey*.—And in the same manner he composed his *Iliad*⁴.

As,

² This incident is, however, related, and at considerable length, in the xixth book of the *Odyssey*, (v. 563 of Pope's translation) but digressively, and incidentally; it made no essential part of his *general plan*.—See Sect. 17.

³ A ridiculous story.—“ To avoid going to the Trojan war, Ulysses pretended to be mad; and, to prove his insanity, went to plough with an *ox* and a *horse*; but Palamedes, in order to detect him, laid his infant son, Telemachus, in the way of the plough; upon which Ulysses immediately stopped, and thereby proved himself to be in his right senses.”—(*Hyginus*, &c.)

⁴ Or, according to a different, and perhaps preferable, reading, thus:—“ but he planned his *Odyssey*, as he also did his *Iliad*, upon an action that is *one* in the sense here explained.”—See the NOTE.

As, therefore, in other mimetic arts, *one* imitation⁵ is an imitation of *one thing*, so here, the fable, being an imitation of an action, should be an imitation of an action that is *one*, and *entire*; the parts of it being so connected, that if any one of them be either transposed or taken away, the *whole* will be destroyed, or changed: for whatever may be *either* retained, or omitted, without making any sensible difference, is not, properly, a *part*⁶.

VI. It

⁵ i. e. *one imitative work*. Thus *one* picture represents, or *should* represent, but *one* thing;—a single *object*, or a single *action*, &c. So, every Poem, (the *Orlando Furioso* as much as the *Iliad*,) is *one imitation*—*one imitative work*, and should imitate *one* action, in Aristotle's sense of *unity*, like the Poems of Homer; not a number of actions unconnected with each other, or connected merely by their common *relation* to *one* person, as in the *Theseids*, &c. or to *one time*, as in the Poem of Ariosto; or, by their *resemblance* merely, as in the *Metamorphoses* of *Ovid*.

⁶ “ The *painter* will not enquire what things may be
 “ admitted without much censure. He will not think
 “ it enough to shew that they *may* be there, he will shew
 “ that they *must* be there; that their *absence* would
 “ render his picture *maimed* and *defective*.——“ They
 “ should make a *part* of that *whole* which would be im-
 “ perfect without them.”

Sir J. Reynolds, *Disc. on Painting*, p. 106.

VI.

It appears, farther, from what has been said, that it is not the Poet's province to relate such things as have actually happened, but such as *might* have happened—such as are *possible*, according either to probable, or necessary, consequence.

Different
Provinces
of the
POET
and the
HISTORIAN.

For it is not by writing in *verse*, or *prose*, that the Historian and the Poet are distinguished: the work of *Herodotus* might be versified; but it would still be a species of history, no less with metre, than without. They are distinguished by this, that the one relates what *has* been, the other what *might* be. On this account, Poetry is a more philosophical, and a more excellent thing, than History: for Poetry is chiefly conversant about *general* truth; History, about *particular*. In what manner, for example, any person of a certain character would speak, or act, probably, or necessarily—this is *general*; and this is the object of Poetry, even while it makes use of particular *names*. But, what *Alcibiades* did, or what happened to him—this is *particular* truth.

With respect to Comedy, this is now become obvious; for here, the Poet, when he has formed his plot of *probable* incidents, gives to his characters whatever names he pleases; and is not, like the Iambic Poets, particular, and personal.

Tragedy,

Tragedy, indeed, retains the use of real names; and the reason is, that, what we are disposed to believe, we must think *possible*: now what has never actually happened, we are not apt to regard as possible; but what *has* been is unquestionably so, or it could not have been at all⁷. There are, however, some Tragedies in which one or two of the names are historical, and the rest feigned: there are even some, in which none of the names are historical; such is AGATHO'S Tragedy called *The Flower*; for in that, all is invention, both incidents, and names; and yet it pleases. It is by no means, therefore, essential, that a Poet should confine himself to the known and established subjects of Tragedy. Such a restraint would, indeed, be ridiculous; since even those subjects that are known, are known, comparatively, but to few, and yet are interesting to all.

From all this it is manifest; that a Poet should be a Poet, or *maker*, of *fables*, rather than of *verses*; since it is *imitation* that constitutes the Poet, and of this imitation *actions* are the object: nor is he the less a Poet, though the incidents of his fable should chance to be such as
 have

⁷ "or it could not, &c."—The philosopher might safely have trusted to any reader to find this *proof* of the *possibility* of what *has* actually happened.—A modern writer would certainly have omitted this; and I wish Aristotle had. But it is my business to say whatever he has said.

have actually happened; for nothing hinders, but that some *true* events may possess that *probability*⁸, the invention of which entitles him to the name of *Poet*.

VII.

Of *simple* fables or actions, the *episodic* are the worst. I call that an episodic fable, the *episodes*⁹ of which follow each other without any *probable* or *necessary* connection; a fault into which bad Poets are betrayed by their want of skill, and good Poets by the players: for in order to accommodate their pieces to the purposes of rival performers in the dramatic contests, they spin out the action beyond their powers, and are thus, frequently,

EPISODIC
FABLES,
the worst—
and why.

⁸ It may appear to the reader to be a strange observation, that “*some true events MAY be probable.*” But he will recollect what sort of *events*, and what sort of *probability*, Aristotle here speaks of: i. e. of *extraordinary events*, such as Poetry requires, and of that more *strict* and *perfect probability*, that closer connection and *visible* dependence of circumstances, which are always required from the *Poet*, though in *such* events, not often to be found in *fact*, and real life, and therefore not expected from the *Historian*.—See the quotation from *Diderot*,
NOTE 156.

⁹ *Episodes*—*episodic* circumstances—in the *second* sense explained NOTE 37: by no means in the modern and *epic* sense, of a *digression, incidental narrative, &c.*

frequently, forced to break the connection and continuity of its parts.

But Tragedy is an imitation, not only of a *complete* action, but also of an action exciting *terror* and *pity*. Now that purpose is best answered by such events as are not only *unexpected*, but *unexpected consequences of each other*: for, by this means, they will have more of the *wonderful*, than if they appeared to be the effects of chance; since we find, that, among events merely casual, those are the most wonderful and striking, which *seem* to imply design: as when, for instance, the statue of *Mityls* at Argos killed the very man who had murdered *Mityls*, by falling down upon him as he was surveying it; events of this kind, not having the appearance of *accident*. It follows then, that such fables as are formed on these principles must be the best.

VIII.

Fables
SIMPLE
OR
COMPLICATED.

Fables are of two sorts, *simple* and *complicated*; for so also are the *actions* themselves of which they are imitations. An action, (having the *continuity* and *unity* prescribed,) I call *simple*, when its catastrophe is produced *without* either *revolution*, or *discovery*: *complicated*, when *with* one, or both. And these should arise from the structure of the fable itself, so as to be the natural consequences, necessary or probable, of what has preceded in the action. For there is a wide difference

difference between incidents that follow *from*, and incidents that follow only *after*, each other.

IX.

A REVOLUTION, is a change, (such as has already been mentioned¹;) into the reverse of what is expected from the circumstances of the action; and that, produced, as we have said, by *probable*, or *necessary consequence*.

PARTS OF
THE FABLE.
1.
REVOLU-
TIONS.

Thus, in the *Oedipus*², the messenger, meaning to make Oedipus happy, and to relieve him from the dread he was under with respect to his mother, by making known to him his real birth, produces an effect directly contrary to his intention. Thus, also, in the Tragedy of *Lynceus*: Lynceus is led to suffer death, Danaus follows to inflict it; but the event, resulting from the course of the incidents, is, that Danaus is killed, and Lynceus saved.

A DISCOVERY, as, indeed, the word implies, is *to change from unknown to known*, happening between those characters whose happiness, or unhappiness, forms the catastrophe of the drama, and terminating in friendship or enmity.

2.
DISCOVER-
RIES.

The

¹ Sect. 7.—“ events that are *unexpected consequences* of each other.”

² The *Oedipus Tyrannus* of Sophocles.

The best sort of Discovery is that which is accompanied by a Revolution³, as in the *Oedipus*.

There are, also, other Discoveries; for inanimate things, of any kind, may be recognized in the same manner⁴; and we may discover whether such a particular thing was, or was not, *done* by such a person:—but the Discovery most appropriated to the *fable*, and the *action*, is that above defined; because such Discoveries, and Revolutions, must excite either *pity* or *terror*; and Tragedy we have defined to be an imitation of *pitiable* and *terrible* actions: and because, also, by them the event, *happy*, or *unhappy*, is produced.

Now Discoveries, being *relative* things, are sometimes of *one* of the persons only, the *other* being

³ Such is the *discovery* of Joseph, by his brethren, *Gen.* xlv.—the most beautiful and affecting example that can be given.

⁴ I do not understand Aristotle to be here speaking of *such* discoveries of “*inanimate things*” (rings, bracelets, &c.) as are the *means* of bringing about the *true* discovery—that of the *persons*. For, in what follows, it is implied that these “*other sorts of discovery*” produce neither *terror* nor *pity*, neither *happiness* nor *unhappiness*; which can by no means be said of such discoveries as are instrumental to the *personal* discovery, and, through that, to the catastrophe of the piece. Of these, he treats afterwards, *Sect.* 16.—Dacier, I think, has mistaken this.

being already known; and sometimes they are *reciprocal*: thus, *Iphigenia* is discovered to *Orestes* by the letter which she charges him to deliver, and *Orestes* is obliged, by other means, to make himself known to her⁵.

These then are *two* parts of the fable—*Revelation* and *Discovery*. There is a *third*, which we denominate, **DISASTERS**. The two former have been explained. *Disasters* comprehend all *painful* or *destructive* actions; the exhibition of death, bodily anguish, wounds, and every thing of that kind.

3.
DISASTERS.

X.

Those parts of Tragedy which are necessary to constitute its *quality*, have been already enumerated. Its *parts of quantity*—the *distinct* parts into which it is *divided*—are these: PROLOGUE, EPISODE, EXODE, and CHORUS; which last is also divided into the PARODE, and the STASIMON. These are common to all Tragedies. The COMMON are found in *some* only.

PARTS
into which
Tragedy
IS
DIVIDED.

The *Prologue*⁶ is all that part of a Tragedy which precedes the *Parode* of the Chorus.—

The

⁵ See Mr. Potter's *Euripides*:—*Iphigenia in Tauris*, v. 799, &c.

⁶ *Prologue*—This may be compared to our *first act*.
See NOTE 40.

The *Episode*⁷, all that part which is included between *entire Choral Odes*.—The *Exode*⁸, that part which has *no Choral Ode after it*.

Of the *Choral* part, the *Parode*⁹ is the first *speech* of the *whole Chorus*: the *Stasimon*¹, includes all those *Choral Odes* that are *without Anapæsts* and *Trochees*.

The *Commos*², is a general lamentation of the *Chorus and the Actors together*.

Such are the separate parts into which Tragedy is *divided*. Its parts of *quality* were before explained.

XI. The

⁷ *Episode*—i. e. a part introduced, inserted, &c. as all the *dialogue* was, originally, between the choral odes. See Part I. Sect. 7 *Note*⁷, p. 111.

⁸ *Exode*—i. e. the *going out*, or *exit*: the concluding *act*, as we should term it. The Greek tragedies never *finished* with a choral ode.

⁹ *Parode*—i. e. *entry* of the Chorus upon the stage: and hence the term was applied to *what they first sung*, upon their entry. See the *NOTE*.

¹ *Stasimon*—i. e. *stable*: because, as it is explained, these odes were sung by the choral troop when fixed on the stage, and at rest: whereas the *Parode* is said to have been sung, *as they came on*. Hence, the *trochaic* and *anapæstic* measures, being lively and full of motion, were adapted to the *Parode*, but not to the *Stasimon*.

² From a verb signifying to *beat* or *strike*; alluding to the gestures of violent grief.

XI.

The order of the subject leads us to consider, in the next place, what the Poet should *aim* at, and what *avoid*, in the construction of his fable; and by what means the *purpose* of Tragedy may be best effected.

Now since it is requisite to the perfection of a Tragedy that its plot should be of the *complicated*, not of the *simple* kind, and that it should imitate such actions as excite *terror* and *pity*, (this being the peculiar property of the Tragic imitation,) it follows evidently, in the first place, that the change from prosperity to adversity should not be represented as happening to a *virtuous* character³; for this raises disgust, rather than terror, or compassion. Neither should the contrary change, from adversity to prosperity, be exhibited in a *vicious* character: this, of all plans, is the most opposite to the genius of Tragedy, having no one property that it ought to have; for it is neither gratifying in a moral view, nor *affecting*, nor *terrible*. Nor, again, should the fall of a *very bad* man from prosperous to adverse fortune be represented: because, though such a subject may be pleasing from its moral tendency, it will produce neither pity nor terror. For our *pity* is
excited

What
CATASTRO-
PHE, and
what CHA-
RACTER,
best
adapted
to the
purposes
of
Tragedy.

³ i. e. *eminently* virtuous, or good: for so he expresses it at the end of this section.

excited by misfortunes *undeservedly* suffered, and our *terror*, by some *resemblance* between the sufferer and ourselves. Neither of these effects will, therefore, be produced by such an event.

There remains, then, for our choice, the character *between* these extremes; that of a person neither eminently virtuous or just, nor yet, involved in misfortune by deliberate vice, or villany; but by some error of human frailty: and this person should, also, be some one of high fame and flourishing prosperity. For example, OEDIPUS, THYESTES, or other illustrious men of such families.

XII.

Hence it appears, that, to be well constructed, a fable, contrary to the opinion of some, should be *single*⁴ rather than *double*; that the change of fortune should not be from adverse to prosperous, but the reverse; and that it should be the consequence, not of vice, but of some great frailty, in a character such as has been described, or *better* rather than *worse*.

These

CATAS-
TROPHÉ
should be
SINGLE,
and that
UNHAPPY.

⁴ What is here meant by a *single* fable, will appear presently from the account of its opposite—the *double* fable. It must not be confounded with the *simple* fable, though, in the original, both are expressed by the same word. The *simple* fable is only a fable *without revolution, or discovery*. Sect. 8.

These principles are confirmed by experience; for Poets, formerly, admitted almost any story into the number of Tragic subjects; but now, the subjects of the best Tragedies are confined to a few families—to Alcmaeon, Oedipus, Orestes, Meleager, Thyestes, Telephus, and others, the sufferers, or the authors, of some terrible calamity.

The most perfect Tragedy, then, according to the principles of the art, is of this construction. Whence appears the mistake of those critics who censure EURIPIDES for this practice in his Tragedies, many of which terminate unhappily; for this, as we have shewn, is right. And, as the strongest proof of it, we find that upon the stage, and in the dramatic contests, such Tragedies, if they succeed, have always the most Tragic effect: and EURIPIDES, though, in other respects, faulty in the conduct of his subjects, seems clearly to be the most *Tragic* of all Poets.

I place in the *second* rank, that kind of fable to which some assign the *first*; that which is of a *double* construction, like the *Odyssey*, and also ends in two opposite events, to the *good*, and to the *bad*, characters. That this passes for the best, is owing to the weakness⁵ of the spectators, to
whose

⁵ That weakness which cannot bear strong emotions, even from fictitious distress. I have known those who could not look at that admirable picture, the *Ugolino* of Sir

whose wishes the Poets accommodate their productions. This kind of pleasure, however, is not the *proper* pleasure of Tragedy, but belongs rather to Comedy; for there, if even the bitterest enemies, like *Orestes* and *Ægisthus*, are introduced, they quit the scene at last in perfect friendship, and no blood is shed on either side.

XIII.

TERROR
and
PITY
to be
excited by
the
ACTION,
not by the
DECORATION.

Terror and pity may be raised by the *decoration* — the mere *spectacle*⁶; but they may also arise from the circumstances of the *action* itself; which is far preferable, and shews a superior Poet. For the fable should be so constructed, that, without the assistance of the sight, its incidents may excite horror and commiseration in those, who *hear* them only: an effect, which every one, who hears the fable of the *Oedipus*, must experience. But, to produce this effect by means of the decoration, discovers

Sir Jos. Reynolds.—To some minds, every thing, that is not *cheerful* is *shocking*.—But, might not the preference here attributed to *weakness*, be attributed to better causes — the gratification of philanthropy, the love of justice, order, &c. ? — the same causes which, just before, induced Aristotle himself to condemn, as *shocking*, and *disgusting*, those fables which involve the virtuous in calamity.

⁶ See a very pleasant paper of Addison's on this subject, *Spectator* N^o 42. We know the effect of the skull and black hangings in the *Fair Penitent*, the scaffold in *Venice Preserved*, the tomb in *Romeo and Juliet*, &c.

discovers want of art in the Poet; who must also be supplied, by the public, with an expensive apparatus⁷.

As to those Poets, who make use of the decoration in order to produce, not the *terrible*, but the *marvellous* only, *their* purpose has nothing in common with that of Tragedy. For we are not to seek for every sort of pleasure from Tragedy, but for that only which is *proper* to the species.

Since, therefore, it is the business of the Tragic Poet to give that pleasure, which arises from pity and terror, through *imitation*, it is evident, that he ought to produce that effect by the circumstances of the *action itself*.

XIV.

Let us, then, see, of what *kind* those incidents are, which appear most terrible, or piteous.

Now, such actions must, of necessity, happen between persons who are either friends, or enemies, or indifferent to each other. If an enemy kills, or purposes to kill, an enemy, in neither case is

Of DISASTROUS INCIDENTS, and their proper management.

⁷ Among other public offices, which the wealthier citizens of Athens were, by turns, called upon to discharge, was that of the *Choragi*, who were obliged, at their own expence, to provide a *chorus*, dresses, and, perhaps, scenes, and the whole decoration of theatrical exhibitions.

is any commiseration raised in us⁸, beyond what necessarily arises from the nature of the action itself.

The case is the same, when the persons are neither friends nor enemies. But when such disasters happen between friends⁹—when, for instance, the brother kills, or is going to kill, his brother, the son his father, the mother her son, or the reverse—these, and others of a similar kind, are the proper incidents for the Poet's choice. The received Tragic subjects, therefore, he is not at liberty *essentially* to alter; *Clytæmnestra* must die by the hand of *Orestes*, and *Eriphyle* by that of *Alcæon*: but it is his province to invent other subjects, and to make a skilful use of those which he finds already established.—What I mean by a skilful use, I proceed to explain.

The atrocious action may be perpetrated knowingly and intentionally¹, as was usual with the earlier Poets; and as EURIPIDES, also, has represented *Medea* destroying her children².

It

⁸ i.e. any of that *degree* of commiseration, which is requisite to the effect of the *deepest* tragedy, such as is the subject of this section. See NOTE 102.

⁹ Aristotle uses this word here, and in other parts of his works, in a wide sense, including *relations*, &c.

¹ As in *Macbeth*, *Richard the Third*, &c.

² See Mr. Potter's translation of the Tragedy here alluded to.

It may, likewise, be perpetrated by those, who are ignorant, at the time, of the connection between them and the injured person, which they afterwards discover³; like *Oedipus*, in SOPHOCLES. There, indeed, the action itself does not make a part of the drama⁴: the *Alcmæon* of *Astydamas*, and *Telegonus* in the *Ulysses Wounded*, furnish instances *within* the Tragedy⁵.

There is yet a *third* way, where a person upon the point of perpetrating, through ignorance, some dreadful deed, is prevented by a sudden discovery⁶.

Beside these, there is no other proper way. For the action must of necessity be either *done*,
or

³ As in the *Fatal Curiosity* of Lillo.

⁴ The murder of Laius by Oedipus, his son, is supposed to have happened a considerable time before the beginning of the action.

⁵ Of these two dramas nothing more is known than the little that Aristotle here tells us. In the first, the Poet adhered so far to history, as to make Alcmæon *kill* his mother Eriphyle, but with the improvement, (according to Aristotle's idea,) of making him do it *ignorantly*. The story of *Telegonus* is, that he was a son of Ulysses by *Circe*; was sent by her in quest of his father, whom he wounded, without knowing him, in a skirmish relative to some sheep, that he attempted to carry off from the island of Ithaca. It is somewhat singular, that the wound is said to have been given with a kind of *Otabeite* spear, headed with a sharp fish-bone. See Pope's *Odyssey* XI. 167. and the note.

⁶ As in *Merope*; Aristotle's own example.

or not done, and that, either *with knowledge*, or *without*: but of all these ways*, that of being ready to execute, knowingly, and yet *not* executing, is the worst; for this is, at the same time, shocking, and yet not Tragic, because it exhibits no disastrous event. It is, therefore, never, or very rarely, made use of. The attempt of *Hæmon* to kill *Creon*, in the *Antigone*⁷, is an example.

Next to this, is the actual execution of the purpose⁸.

To execute, through ignorance, and afterwards to discover, is better: for thus, the shocking atrociousness is avoided, and, at the same time, the discovery is striking.

But the best of all these ways, is the last. Thus, in the Tragedy of *Cresphontes*, *Merope*, in the very act of putting her son to death, discovers him, and is prevented. In the *Iphigenia*⁹, the sister, in the same manner, discovers her-brother; and in the *Helle*¹, the son discovers his mother, at the instant when he was going to betray her.

On this account it is, that the subjects of Tragedy, as before remarked, are confined to a
small

* There is here much embarrassment and confusion in the original. See NOTE 105.

⁷ Of *Sophocles*. See Franklin's, or Brumoy's, translation.

⁸ The first of the three proper and admissible ways that were enumerated; that of *Macbeth*, &c.

⁹ The *Iphigenia in Tauris* of Euripides.

¹ Of this Tragedy nothing farther is known.

small number of families. For it was not to *art*, but to *fortune*², that Poets applied themselves, to find incidents of this nature. Hence the necessity of having recourse to those families, in which such calamities have happened.

Of the PLOT, or FABLE, and its requisites, enough has now been said.

XV.

With respect to the MANNERS, *four* things are to be attended to by the Poet.

Of the
MANNERS.

First, and principally, they should be *good*. Now *manners*, or *character*, belong, as we have said before, to any speech or action that manifests a certain *disposition*; and they are bad, or good, as the disposition manifested is bad, or good. This goodness of manners may be found in persons of every description³: the manners of a woman, or of a slave, may be good; though, in general,
women

² i. e. to history or tradition.—See above, *Sect. 6. p. 127.* and *Sect. 12. p. 136.*

³ This is observed, to shew the consistence of this *first* precept with the next. The manners must be drawn as good as may be, consistently with the observance of *propriety*, with respect to the *general* character of different sexes, ages, conditions, &c. It might have been objected—“You say, the character must be *good*. But suppose the Poet has to represent, for instance, a slave?—the character of slaves in general is notoriously *bad*.”—The answer is,—*any thing* may be good in its kind.

women are, perhaps, rather bad, than good, and slaves, altogether bad.

The *second* requisite of the manners, is *propriety*. There is a manly character of bravery and fierceness, which cannot, with propriety, be given to a woman.

The *third* requisite is *resemblance*; for this is a different thing from their being *good*, and *proper*, as above described⁴.

The *fourth*, is *uniformity*; for even though the model of the Poet's imitation be some person of ununiform manners, still that person must be represented as *uniformly ununiform*.

We have an example of manners *unnecessarily bad*, in the character of *Menelaus* in the Tragedy of *Orestes*⁵: of *improper* and *unbecoming* manners, in the lamentation of *Ulysses* in *Scylla*, and in the speech of *Menalippe*⁶: of *ununiform* manners,

⁴ That is, the manners may be both *good*, and *proper* or *becoming*; and yet not *like*. For example; should a Poet draw *Medea*, gentle, patient, &c. the manners would be both *good*, and *becoming*, but not *like*—not conformable to the historical or traditional character of the *individual*. The *portrait* would be defective.

⁵ The *Orestes* of Euripides.—Menelaus, throughout this play, as Mr. Potter has justly remarked, is “represented as an ungrateful, unfeeling, timid, designing poltron.”

⁶ The author had here, no doubt, given an instance of the violation of *resemblance* in the manners, though it be wanting in all the manuscripts.—Of the *Scylla*, nothing is

ners, in the *Iphigenia at Aulis*; for there, the *Iphigenia*, who supplicates for life, has no resemblance to the *Iphigenia* of the conclusion.

In the manners, as in the fable, the Poet should always aim, either at what is *necessary*, or what is *probable*; so that *such* a character shall appear to speak or act, necessarily, or probably, in *such* a manner, and *this* event, to be the necessary or probable consequence of *that*.—⁷Hence it is evident,

is known.—Some fragments remain of *Menalippe the Wise*, (for this was the title,) a Tragedy of Euripides, the subject of which is a curiosity. *Menalippe* was delivered of two children, the fruits of a stolen amour with *Neptune*. To conceal her shame, she hid them in her father's *cow-house*; where he found them, and, being less of a philosopher than his daughter, took them for a monstrous production of some of his cows, and ordered them to be burned. His daughter, in order to save them, without exposing herself, enters into a long physical argument, upon the principles of *Anaxagoras*, to cure her father of his unphilosophical prejudices about monsters, and portentous births, and to convince him, that these infants *might* be the *natural* children of his cows. Part of this very speech is preserved by *Dionysius* of *Halicarnassus*, [See the *Ox. Eurip.* vol.iii. p. 371.] and it is this *masculine* philosopher that is here understood to be censured as an *impropriety* of character.—How would a Tragedy on such a subject as this, be *now* received by an audience?

⁷ What follows, to the end of the paragraph, appears rather out of place. But see the NOTE. For *development*, see Sect. 18. p. 154.

[MACHI-
NERY.]

evident, that the *development* also of a fable should arise out of the fable itself, and not depend upon *machinery*, as in the *Medea*⁸, or in the incidents relative to the return of the Greeks, in the *Iliad*⁹. The proper application of machinery is to such circumstances, as are extraneous to the drama; such, as either happened *before* the time of the action, and could not, by human means, be known; or, are to happen *after*, and require to be foretold: for to the Gods we attribute the knowledge of all things. But nothing *improbable* should be admitted in the incidents of the fable¹; or, if it cannot be avoided, it should, at least, be confined to such as are *without* the Tragedy itself; as in the *Oedipus* of SOPHOCLES.

Since Tragedy is an imitation of *what is best*, we should follow the example of skilful portrait-painters; who, while they express the peculiar lineaments, and produce a likeness, at the same time

⁸ Of Euripides. *Medea* is carried off, at the end of the Tragedy, in a chariot drawn by flying dragons. See Mr. Potter's Transl. v. 1443, &c.

⁹ Pope's *Iliad*, II. 189, &c.—if the text here is right: but this is doubtful. See the NOTE.

¹ By *incidents of the fable*, Aristotle here plainly means, all those actions or events which are *essential parts* of the *subject* or *story*, whether previous to the action, and necessary to be known, or included in it, and actually represented *in* the drama. Compare *Part III. Sect. 6.*

time improve upon the original². And thus, too, the Poet, when he imitates the manners of *passionate* men, (or of *indolent*, or any other of a similar kind,) should draw an example approaching rather to a good, than to a hard and ferocious character: as *Achilles* is drawn, by AGATHO, and by HOMER. These things the Poet should keep in view; and, besides these, whatever relates to those *senses** which have a necessary connection with Poetry: for here, also, he may often err.—But o this enough has been said in the treatises already published.

XVI.

³ What is meant by a DISCOVERY, has already been explained. Its *kinds* are the following.

First, the most inartificial of all, and to which, from poverty of invention, the generality of Poets have

Different
KINDS
of
DISCO-
VERY.

² This seems intended to explain his *third* precept, of *resemblance* in the manners; to reconcile it with his *first*, and to shew what *sort* of likeness the nature of Tragic imitation requires.—Compare *Part I. Sect. 3.*—and *Part IV. Sect. 5.*

* i. e. To the *sight*, and the *hearing*; in other words, to actual *representation*. See the NOTE.

³ The reader, who recollects the conclusion of Sect. 14, where the author took a formal leave of the "*fable and its requisites*," and proceeded to the *second* essential part of Tragedy, the *manners*, will hardly be of Dacier's opinion, who contends, that this section is rightly placed. His reasons are perfectly unsatisfactory.

have recourse—the discovery by *visible signs*. Of these signs, some are *natural*; as, the lance with which the family of the *earth-born Thebans*⁴ were marked, or the stars which *Carcinus* has made use of in his *Thyestes*: others are *adventitious*; and of these, some are corporal, as scars; some external, as necklaces, bracelets, &c. or the little boat by which the discovery is made in the Tragedy of *Tyro*⁵. Even these, however, may be employed with more, or less skill. The discovery of *Ulysses*, for example, to his nurse, by means of his scar, is very different from his discovery, by the same means, to the herdsmen⁶. For all those discoveries, in which the sign is produced by way of *proof*, are inartificial. Those, which, like that in the *Washing of Ulysses*⁷, happen *suddenly* and *casually*, are better. *Secondly,*

⁴ The descendants of the original Thebans, who, according to the fabulous history, sprung from the earth when Cadmus sowed the Dragon's teeth, &c.—This *noble race* are said to have been distinguished by the natural mark of a lance upon their bodies.

⁵ Sophocles wrote two Tragedies of this name, neither of them preserved.—The story of Tyro leads us to suppose, that Aristotle means the little boat, trough, or, as some render it, *cradle*, in which Tyro had exposed her children, on, or near, the river: the particular manner of the discovery, it would be in vain to guess.

⁶ See Pope's *Odyssey*, XIX. v. 451, &c. and the note there, on v. 461, and XXI. 226.

⁷ The ancients distinguished the different parts of Homer's Poems by different titles accommodated to the different

Secondly—Discoveries *invented*, at pleasure, by the Poet, and, on that account, still inartificial. For example; in the *Iphigenia*, *Orestes*, after having discovered his sister, discovers himself to her. She, indeed, is discovered by the letter; but *Orestes*, by [verbal *proofs*:] and these are such, as the Poet chuses to make him produce, not such, as arise from the *circumstances* of the *fable*⁸. This kind of discovery, therefore, borders upon the fault of that first mentioned: for, some of the things from which those proofs are drawn, are even such, as might have been actually produced as *visible signs*.

Another instance, is the discovery by the sound of the shuttle in the *Tereus* of SOPHOCLES.

Thirdly—The Discovery occasioned by *memory*; as, when some recollection is excited by the view of a particular object. Thus, in the *Cyprians* of *Dicæogenes*, a discovery is produced by tears shed at the sight of a picture: and thus, in the *Tale of Alcinous*, Ulysses, listening to the bard, recollects, weeps, and is discovered⁹. *Fourthly*,

different subjects, or episodes; and, in referring to him, they made use of these, not of the division into *books*. Thus, the part of the sixth book of the *Odyssey* above referred to, was called *The Washing*. The *Tale of Alcinous* was another title, which will presently be mentioned: See the NOTE on that passage.

⁸ See Mr. Potter's translation of the *Iphigenia in Tauris*, v. 884 to 910.

⁹ Pope's *Odyssey*, VIII. 569, &c.

Fourthly—The discovery occasioned by *reasoning or inference*¹; such as that in the *Chœphoræ*: “The person, who is arrived, resembles me—no one resembles me but Orestes—it must be he!” And that of *Polyides* the Sophist, in his *Iphigenia*²; for the conclusion of Orestes was natural.—“It had been his *sister’s* lot to be sacrificed, and it was now his *own*!” That, also, in the *Tydeus* of *Theodectes*:—“He came to find his son, and he himself must perish!” And thus, the daughters of *Phineus*, in the Tragedy denominated from them³, viewing the place to which they were led, *infer* their fate:—“*there* they were to die, for there they were exposed!” There is also a compound sort of discovery, arising from
false

¹ *Occasioned* by reasoning;—i. e. by reasoning, (or rather, *inference*, or *conclusion*,) *in the person discovered*. See the NOTE.—It should be remembered, that Aristotle is not, in this chapter, *inventing* discoveries, nor enumerating all the kinds possible or practicable; but only classing and examining such, as he found in use, or could recollect, in the Tragedies and Epic Poems of his time.

² The subject appears to have been the same, as that of the *Iphigenia in Tauris* of Euripides. We are to suppose, that *Orestes* was discovered to his sister by this natural exclamation, at the moment when he was led to the altar of Diana to be sacrificed.

³ Of this, and the preceding Tragedy, we know nothing, but what we learn here: i. e. that in the one, *a father*, and in the other, the *daughters* of *Phineus*, were discovered, and, probably, saved, by those exclamations.

false inference in the audience ; as in *Ulysses the False Messengēr* : he asserts, that he shall know the bow, which he had not seen ; the audience falsely infer, that a discovery, by that means, will follow⁴.

But, of all Discoveries, the *best* is that, which arises from the *action itself*, and in which a *striking effect* is produced by *probable* incidents. Such is that in the *Oedipus* of SOPHOCLES : and that in the *Iphigenia* ; for nothing more natural than her desire of conveying the letter. Such discoveries are the best, because they alone are effected without the help of *invented proofs*, or bracelets, &c.⁵

Next to these, are the discoveries by *inference*.

XVII.

The Poet, both when he plans, and when he writes, his Tragedy, should put himself, as much as possible, in the place of a spectator ; for, by this means, *seeing* everything distinctly, as if present at the action, he will discern what is proper, and no inconsistencies will escape him. The fault objected to *Carcinus* is a proof of this.

Amphiaræus

PRACTI-
CAL
DIRECTIONS
for the
TRAGIC
POET.

⁴ The original here is all incurable corruption, and impenetrable obscurity. See the NOTE.

⁵ All this is extremely perplexing. I must refer the reader to the NOTE ;—but, certainly, with no promise of any thing like perfect satisfaction.

Amphiaraus had left the temple⁶: this, the Poet, for want of conceiving the action to pass before his eyes, overlooked; but in the representation, the audience were disgusted, and the piece condemned.

In composing, the Poet should even, as much as possible, be an *actor*: for, by natural sympathy, *they* are most persuasive and affecting; who are under the influence of actual passion. We share the agitation of those, who appear to be truly agitated—the anger of those, who appear to be truly angry.

Hence it is, that Poetry demands, either great natural quickness of parts, or an enthusiasm allied to madness. By the first of these, we mould ourselves with facility to the imitation of every form; by the other, transported out of ourselves, we *become* what we *imagine*.

When the Poet invents a subject, he should, first, draw a *general* sketch of it, and afterwards give it the detail of its Episodes, and extend it. The general argument, for instance, of the *Iphigenia*⁷, should be considered in this way:

“ A virgin,

⁶ As the subject of this Tragedy is not known, it seems impossible, from what is here said, even to guess how this was.

⁷ *In Tauris*.—The general spirit of this precept of Aristotle is well illustrated by Diderot in the *Essai sur la Poesie Dram.* at the end of his *Pere de Famille*, p. 292, &c. “ Surtout, s’imposer la loi de ne pas jeter sur le papier “ une seule idée de *detail*, que le *plan* ne soit arrêté,” &c.

“ A virgin, on the point of being sacrificed, is imperceptibly conveyed away from the altar, and transported to another country, where it was the custom to sacrifice all strangers to Diana. Of these rites she is appointed priestess. It happens, some time after, that her brother arrives there.” But *why?*—because an oracle had commanded him, for some reason exterior to the general plan. *For what purpose?*—This, also, is exterior to the plan.—“ He arrives, is seized, and, at the instant that he is going to be sacrificed, the discovery is made.”—And this may be, either in the way of *Euripides*, or like that of *Polyides*⁸, by the natural reflection of *Orestes*, that—“ it was his fate also, as it had been his sister’s, to be sacrificed;” by which exclamation he is saved.

After this, the Poet, when he has given names to his characters, should proceed to the Episodes of his action; and he must take care, that these belong *properly* to the subject; like that of the madness of *Orestes*, which occasions his being taken, and his escape by means of the ablution⁹. In dramatic Poetry the Episodes are short; but, in the Epic, they are the means of drawing out the poem to its proper length. The *general* story of the ODYSSEY, for example, lies in a small
compass :

⁸ See the preceding section.

⁹ See v. 301, &c. and v. 1248, &c. of Mr. Potter’s translation.

compass: "A certain man is supposed to be
 " absent from his own country for many years—
 " he is persecuted by *Neptune*, deprived of all
 " his companions, and left alone. At home, his
 " affairs are in disorder—the suitors of his wife
 " dissipating his wealth, and plotting the de-
 " struction of his son. Tossed by many tempests,
 " he at length arrives, and, making himself known
 " to some of his family, attacks his enemies,
 " destroys them, and remains himself in safety."
 This is the *essential*; the rest is *Episode*.

XVIII.

COMPLI-
 CATION and
 DEVELOP-
 MENT
 of the Plot.

Every Tragedy consists of two parts—the *complication*, and the *development*¹. The *complication* is often formed by incidents supposed *prior* to the action, and by a part, also, of those that are *within* the action; the rest, form the *development*. I call *complication*, all that is between the beginning of the piece, and the last part, where the change of fortune commences:—*development*, all between the beginning of that change, and the conclusion. Thus, in the *Lynceus* of *Theodectes*, the events antecedent to the action, and

¹ Literally, the *tying*, and *untying*. With the French, *Nœud*, and *Denouement*, are convenient and established terms. I hope I shall be pardoned for avoiding our awkward expressions of the *intrigue* and *unravelling* of a plot, &c. I could find no terms less exceptionable than those I have used.

and the seizure of the child, constitute the *complication*; the *development* is from the accusation of murder to the end².

XIX.

There are four *kinds* of Tragedy, deducible from so many *parts*, which have been mentioned. One kind is the COMPLICATED; where all depends on *revolution* and *discovery*: another is the DISASTROUS³, such as those on the subject of *Ajax* or *Ixion*: another, the MORAL⁴, as the *Phthioides*, and the *Peleus*: and, fourthly, the SIMPLE, such as the *Phorcides*⁵, the *Prometheus*, and all those Tragedies, the scene of which is laid in the infernal regions.

Different
KINDS
of
TRAGEDY.

It

² Of the plot of this Tragedy nothing is known. See the NOTE.

³ For these two kinds, see above, *Sect.* 8, and 9.

⁴ i. e. In which the delineation of *manners* or *character* is predominant. See the NOTE.—Our language, I think, wants a word to express *this* sense of the Greek ἠθικόν, and the Latin, *moratum*. *Mannered*, has, I believe, sometimes been used in this sense; but so seldom, as to sound awkwardly. We know nothing of the subjects here given as examples.

⁵ *Æschylus* wrote a Tragedy so named. It is difficult to imagine what he could make of these three curious personages, who were *born old women*, lived under ground, and had but one eye among them, which they used by turns; carrying it, I suppose, in a case, like a pair of spectacles.—Such is the tale! See Mr. Potter's *Æschylus*, p. 49, quarto.

It should be the Poet's aim to make himself master of all these manners ; of as many of them, at least, as possible, and those the best: especially, considering the captious criticism, to which, in these days, he is exposed. For, the public, having now seen different Poets excel in each of these different kinds, expect every *single* Poet to unite in himself, and to surpass, the peculiar excellences of them *all*.

⁶ One Tragedy may justly be considered as the same with another, or different, not according as the subjects, but, rather, according as the complication and development, are the same or different.—Many Poets, when they have *complicated* well, *develop* badly⁷. They should endeavour to deserve equal applause in both.

XX. We

⁶ What follows seems rather to belong to the preceding section. But perhaps Aristotle was led to this observation here, by what he had just dropped about the unfair and cavilling criticism of the times, which probably, (as Dacier has remarked,) denied the praise of invention to those who composed Tragedies upon old subjects, with old titles, which, we see, was the common practice of the Greek Poets.

⁷ No fault so common: see NOTE 59.—It was with the Greek Tragedians, probably, as with *Shakspeare*.—
 “ In many of his plays the latter part is evidently neglected. When he found himself near the end of his
 “ work, and in view of his reward, he shortened the
 “ labour, to snatch the profit. He therefore remits his

XX.

We must also be attentive to what has been often mentioned⁸, and not construct a *Tragedy* upon an *Epic* plan. By an *Epic* plan, I mean, a fable composed of *many fables*⁹; as if any one, for instance, should take the entire fable of the *ILIAD* for the subject of a *Tragedy*. In the *Epic Poem*, the length of the whole admits of a proper magnitude in the parts; but in the drama, the effect of such a plan is far different from what is expected. As a proof of this, those Poets, who have formed the *whole* of the destruction of Troy into a *Tragedy*, instead of confining themselves (as *Euripides*, but not *Æschylus*, has done, in the story of *Niobe*,) to a *part*, have either been condemned in the representation, or have contended without success. Even *Agatho* has failed on this account, and on this only; for, in *revolutions*, and in actions also of the *simple* kind, these Poets succeed wonderfully in what they aim at; and that is, the union of *Tragic effect* with

moral

Too great
EXTENT
of
PLAN
to be
avoided.

“ efforts where he should most vigorously exert them,
“ and his catastrophe is improbably produced, or im-
“ perfectly represented.” Johnson’s *Pref. to Shakspeare*.

⁸ See Part I. *Sect.* 9.—II. *Sect.* 7.

⁹ i. e.—of many distinct *parts*, or *Episodes*, each of them capable of furnishing a *Tragic fable*. Compare Part III. *Sect.* 1. and V. *Sect.* 3. about the want of *strict unity* in the *epic fable*.

moral tendency: as when, for example, a character of great wisdom, but without integrity, is deceived, like *Sisyphus*; or, a brave, but unjust man, conquered. Such events, as *Agatho* says, are probable, “as it is probable, in general, that many things should happen contrary to probability.”

XXI.

Of the
CHORUS.

THE CHORUS should be considered as one of the persons in the drama¹; should be a *part* of the *whole*, and a sharer in the action: not as in *Euripides*², but, as in *Sophocles*. As for other Poets—

¹ *Actoris partes chorus, officiumque virile*
Defendat: neu quid *medios intercinat actus*,
Quod non proposito conducat & hæreat aptè.

Hor. A. P. 193.

² This expression does not, I think, necessarily imply any stronger censure of *Euripides*, than that the Choral Odes of his Tragedies were, in general, more loosely connected with the subject, than those of *Sophocles*; which, on examination, would, I believe, be found true. For, that *this* is the fault here meant, not the improper “*choice of the persons who compose the Chorus*,” as the ingenious translator of *Euripides* understands, is, I think, plain from what immediately follows; the connection being this:—“*Sophocles* is, in this respect, *most* perfect; “*Euripides* *less* so; as to the *others*, *their* choral songs “are *totally foreign* to the subject of their Tragedies.” See Mr. Potter’s *Euripides*—Postscript to the *Trojan Dames*. Dr. Warton’s *Essay on the Genius, &c. of Pope*, vol. i. p. 71.

Poets—their choral songs have no more connection with their subject, than with that of any other Tragedy : and hence, they are now become detached pieces, inserted at pleasure³ : a practice first introduced by *Agatho*. Yet where is the difference, between this arbitrary insertion of an *Ode*, and the transposition of a *speech*, or even of a whole *Episode*, from one Tragedy to another?

XXII.

Of the other parts of Tragedy enough has now been said. We are next to consider the **DICTION**, and the **SENTIMENTS**.

Of the
SENTI-
MENTS.

For what concerns the *sentiments*, we refer to the principles laid down in the books on *Rhetoric*; for to *that* subject they more properly belong. The *sentiments* include *whatever is the object of speech* ;

³ It is curious to trace the gradual extinction of the Chorus. At first, it was *all* ; then, relieved by the intermixture of dialogue, but still *principal* ; then, *subordinate* to the dialogue ; then digressive, and *ill connected* with the piece ; then borrowed from *other pieces* at pleasure—and so on, to the fiddles and the act-tunes, at which Dacier is so angry. (See his *Note* p. 335.) The performers in the *orchestra* of a modern theatre, are little, I believe, aware, that they occupy the *place*, and may consider themselves as the lineal descendants, of the antient *Chorus*.—*Orchestra* (*ὄρχηστρα*) was the name of that part of the antient theatre, which was appropriated to the Chorus. [JUL. POLLUX, IV. p. 423.]

*speech*⁴; as, for instance, to prove, to confute, to move the passions—pity, terror, anger, and the like; to amplify, or to diminish. But it is evident, that, with respect to the *things themselves* also⁵, when the Poet would make them appear pitiable, or terrible, or great, or probable, he must draw from the same sources; with this difference only, that, in the *drama*, these things must appear to be such, without being *shewn* to be such⁶; whereas, in *oratory*, they must be *made* to appear so by the speaker, and *in consequence* of what he *says*: otherwise, what need of an orator, if they already appear so, in *themselves*, and not through his eloquence?

XXIII.

Of the
DICTION.
[To the end
of Part II.]

With respect to DICTION, one part of its theory is that, which treats of the *figures*⁷ of *speech*; such

⁴ See Harris's *Philolog. Inquiries*, p. 173, &c.

⁵ *Things themselves*—i. e. the *events, incidents, &c.* of the fable, as opposed to the *sentiments, or thoughts*. See the NOTE.

⁶ The circumstances which form the fable of *Lear, Othello, Oedipus, &c.* are such, as must of themselves, always appear in the highest degree atrocious, terrible, piteous, &c. whether the Poet be a *Shakspeare*, or a *Tate*. See the NOTE.

⁷ *Figures* of speech—not in the *usual* sense of that expression; as appears, indeed, from his instances. See the NOTE; and *Hermes*, I. 8. about the *modes*: particularly, NOTE (c.)

such as, *commanding, entreating, relating, men-
acing, interrogating, answering,* and the like.
But this belongs; properly, to the art of *acting*,
and to the professed masters of that kind. The
Poet's knowledge, or ignorance, of these things,
cannot any way materially affect the credit of
his art. For who will suppose there is any justice
in the cavil of *Protagoras*—that, in the words,
“The wrath, O goddess, *sing*”⁸, the *Poet*, where
he intended a *prayer*, had expressed a *command*:
for he insists, that to say, *Do this, or do it not*, is
to *command*.—This subject, therefore, we pass
over, as belonging to an art distinct from that
of Poetry.

XXIV.

TO ALL DICTION, belong the following parts: ANALYSIS
—the *letter*, the *syllable*, the *conjunction*, the OF
noun, the *verb*, the *article*, the *case*, the *dis-* DICTION,
course or *speech*. LANGUAGE
in general.

1. A *letter* is an indivisible sound; yet not *all*
such sounds are letters, but those only that are
capable of forming an *intelligible sound*. For
there are indivisible sounds of brute creatures;
but no *such* sounds are called *letters*. Letters
are of three kinds; *vowels*, *semivowels*, and *mutes*.
The *vowel*, is that, which has a distinct sound
without

⁸ In the opening of the *Iliad*.

without articulation⁹; as A, or O.—The *semi-vowel*, that which has a distinct sound *with* articulation, as S, and R. The *mute*, that which, with articulation, has yet no sound by itself; but joined with one of those letters that have some sound, becomes audible; as, G, and D. These all differ from each other, as they are produced by different configurations, and in different parts, of the mouth; as they are aspirated or smooth, long or short; as their tone is *acute*, *grave*, or *intermediate*: the detail of all which, is the business of the *metrical* treatises.

2. A *syllable*, is a sound without signification, composed of a mute and a vowel: for G R, without A, is not a syllable; with A, as G R A, it is. But these differences, also, are the subject of the *metrical* art.

3. A *con-*

* Literally, *percussion*: i.e. of the tongue against the palate, or teeth, the lips against the teeth, or against each other, and all the other modes of *consonant* articulation. See *Hermes*, III. 2. p. 322. where they are called "*contacts*." Dacier makes sad confusion here, both in his version, and his notes, by confounding the *names* of the consonants, when vowels are prefixed, or put after them, to make them *separately pronouncible*, (Te, eF, eL, &c.) with their powers *in composition*—as elements of *words*. Thus, it is strictly true, that S and R, have a *sound*, without the assistance of a vowel, merely by their mode of articulation. But D, or G, have no sound at all *by themselves*. The semivowels are l, m, n, r, s. (*Dion. Halicarn. De Struct. Orat. Sect. 14.*)

3. A *conjunction*, is a sound without signification, * * * * * of such a nature, as, out of *several* sounds, each of them significant, to form *one* significant sound¹.

4. An *article*, is a sound without signification, which marks the *beginning*, or the *end* of a sentence; or *distinguishes*², as when we say, THE word φημι—THE word περι, &c.

* * * * *

5. A *noun*, is a sound, composed of other sounds; significant, without expression of *time*; and of which no part is *by itself* significant: for even in *double* words, the parts are not taken in the sense that *separately* belongs to them. Thus, in the word *Theodorus*, *dorus* is not significant³.

6. A *verb*, is a sound composed of other sounds;—significant—with expression of *time*—and of which, as of the noun, no *part* is *by itself* significant. Thus, in the words, *man*, *white*, indication of *time* is not included: in the words, he

¹ See *Hermes*, p. 239, Note (a). Here are, in the original, *two* definitions; one intelligible, and one unintelligible. I believe I shall easily be excused for giving the reader the *intelligible* definition only. See the NOTE.

² *Hermes*, p. 216, &c.

³ The name, *Theodorus*, is derived from *Theos*, God, and *Doron*, a *gift*. Yet when the word is used, it stands for neither of these ideas, but merely for the *individual* so named.

he *walks*, he *walked*, &c. it is included; the one expressing the *present* time, the other the *past*.

7. *Cases* belong to nouns and verbs. Some cases express *relation*; as *of*, *to*⁴, and the like: others, *number*; as *man*, or *men*, &c. Others relate to *action* or *pronunciation*⁵: as those of *interrogation*, of *command*, &c. for, ἐβὰδισε; [*did he go?*] and, βὰδιζε, [*go,*] are verbal *cases* of that kind.

8. *Discourse*, or *speech*, is a sound significant, composed of other sounds, *some* of which are significant *by themselves*: for *all* discourse is not composed of verbs and nouns;—the definition of *Man*⁶,
for

⁴ These *only*, in *modern* grammar, are called *cases*: in Aristotle, *number*, whether in noun or verb, and the *tenses*, and *modes*, (or *moods*,) of verbs, are comprehended under that term; because *cases*, (πρῶσις—*casus*) are *endings*, *terminations*, *inflections*, &c. and, in the learned languages, *all* the above mentioned differences of meaning are expressed by different *terminations*. The French use *chute*, the literal translation of *casus*, in the sense of *termination*.—"La chute d'une periode," &c. And *fall* is used, in our poetical language, for a close, or *cadence*, in music.

That strain again—it had a dying FALL.

Merch. of Venice.

And so *Milton* in *Comus*, v. 251.

⁵ These *modes*, are the same which he calls *figures of speech*, Sect. 23. See the NOTE.

⁶ The definition alluded to appears to be this, literally rendered: "*A terrestrial animal with two feet.*" (ζῷον πτερόν, δίπουν.) See the NOTE.

for instance. Discourse, or speech, may subsist without a *verb*: some significant part, however, it *must* contain; significant, as the word *Cleon* is, in, "*Cleon walks.*"

A *discourse* or *speech* is *one*, in two senses; either as it *signifies one thing*, or, *several things made one by conjunction*. Thus, the *Iliad* is *one by conjunction*: the definition of *Man*, by *signifying one thing*.

XXV.

OF WORDS, some are *single*—by which I mean, composed of parts not significant; and some *double*: of which last, some have one part significant, and the other not significant; and some, both parts significant. A word may also be *triple*, *quadruple*, &c. like many of those used by the *Megalotæ*; as, *Hermocæcoxanthus*⁷. Every word is either *common*, or *foreign*, or *metaphorical*, or *ornamental*, or *invented*, or *extended*, or *contracted*, or *altered*⁸.

Different
KINDS
of
WORDS.

By COMMON words, I mean, such as are in general and established *use*.—By FOREIGN, such
as

⁷ A strange word, and how it was applied we know not. It appears to be a consolidation of three Asiatic rivers—the *Hermus*, the *Caicus*, and the *Xanthus*.

⁸ See the last paragraph of NOTE 190; an observation of importance to the right understanding of this enumeration.

as belong to a different language: so that the same word may, evidently, be both *common*, and *foreign*, though not to the same people. The word Σιγυρον, to the Cyprians is *common*, to us, *foreign*.

A METAPHORICAL⁹ word is a word transferred from its *proper* sense; either from *genus* to *species*, or from *species* to *genus*, or from *one species* to *another*, or in the way of *analogy*.

1. From *genus* to *species*: as,

Secure in yonder port my vessel STANDS¹.
For, *to be at anchor*, is one *species* of *standing* or being *fixed*².

2. From *species* to *genus*: as,

- - - - - to *Ulysses*,
A THOUSAND generous deeds we owe - - ³.
For *a thousand* is a certain *definite many*, which is here used for *many*, in *general*.

3. From

⁹ For the *general* sense, in which *metaphorical* is here used, see the beginning of NOTE 183.

¹ From *Homer*, Od. A. 185.—In Pope's translation, I. 237.

“Far from your capital my ship *resides*.”
This would not answer my purpose, because the metaphor is changed.

² How widely different is the metaphor, when we talk of a ship RIDING at anchor!

³ *Il. B.* 272.—In Pope, *II.* 333.—but the metaphor is not retained.

3. From *one species to another*⁴: as,

Χαλκῶ ἀπο ψυχὴν ΑΡΥΣΑΣ.

And,

ΤΑΜ' ἀταρεῖ χαλκῶ.

For here, the Poet uses *ταμεν*, *to cut off*, instead of *ἀρυσαι*, *to draw forth*, and *ἀρυσαι* instead of *ταμεν*: each being a *species of taking away*.

4. In the way of *analogy*—when, of four terms, the *second* bears the same relation to the *first*, as the *fourth* to the *third*; in which case, the *fourth* may be substituted for the *second*, and the *second* for the *fourth*. And, sometimes, the *proper* term is also introduced, besides its *relative* term.

Thus, a *cup* bears the same relation to *Bacchus*, as a *shield* to *Mars*. A shield, therefore, may be called *the cup of Mars*, and a cup, *the shield of Bacchus*. Again—evening being to day, what old age is to life, the evening may be called *the old age of the day*, and old age, *the evening of life*; or, as *Empedocles* has expressed it, “Life’s setting sun⁵.” It sometimes happens, that there is no *proper* analogous term, answering to the
term

⁴ This, and the next species, only, answer to what we call *metaphor*—the metaphor founded on *resemblance*. The two first species belong to the trope denominated, since Aristotle’s time, *Synecdoche*.

⁵ “Thy sun is set, thy spring is gone.”

GRAY—*Ode on Spring*.

“Yet hath my night of life some memory.”

Shakspeare, *Com. of Errors*—last scene.

term *borrowed*; which yet may be used in the same manner, as if there were. For instance: to *sow*, is the term appropriated to the action of dispersing seed upon the earth; but the dispersion of rays from the sun is expressed by no appropriated term; it is, however, with respect to the *sun's light*, what *sowing* is with respect to *seed*. Hence the Poet's expression, of the sun—

“ - - - sowing abroad

“ His heaven-created flame.”

There is, also, *another* way of using this kind of metaphor, by adding to the borrowed word a negation of some of those qualities, which belong to it in its *proper* sense: as if, instead of calling a shield *the cup of Mars*, we should call it *the wineless cup**.

AN INVENTED word, is a word never before used by any one, but coined by the Poet himself; for such, it appears, there are; as ΕΡΝΥΤΑΙ⁶ for ΚΕΡΑΤΑ, *horns*, or ΑΡΗΘΗΡ † for ΙΕΡΕΥΣ, a *priest*.

A word is EXTENDED, when for the proper vowel a longer is substituted, or a syllable is inserted.

* For the *ornamental* word, or the *ornament*, (κοσμητικόν) as Aristotle calls it, the definition of which should have come in here, see NOTE 190.

⁶ i. e. *Branches*; which we also use for the *horns* of a stag. But Aristotle means a *new word*, not a *new application* merely, of a word already in use.

† A *supplicator*: literally, a *prayer*, taken in the sense of *one who prays*; as *seer* is used for *prophet*.

serted.—A word is CONTRACTED, when some part of it is retrenched.—Thus, πολΗΘ, for πολΕΘ, and ΠηλΗιαδεω for Πηλειαδς, are extended words: contracted, such as ΚΡΙ, and ΔΩ, and ΟΥ⁷: e. g.

- - - μια γινεται ἀμφοτερων ΟΥ⁸.

AN ALTERED word, is a word, of which *part* remains in its usual state, and *part* is of the Poet's making: as in

ΔΕΞΙΤΕΡΟΝ κατα μαζον⁹,

δεξιΤΕΡΟΣ is for δεξιΟΣ.

Farther; NOUNS are divided into *masculine*, *feminine*, and *neuter*. The *masculine* are those which end in ν, ρ, σ, or in some letter compounded of σ and a *mute*; these are two, ψ and ξ.—The *feminine*, are those which end in the vowels *always long*, as η, or ω; or, in α, of the *doubtful* vowels: so that the masculine and the feminine terminations are equal in number; for as to ψ and ξ, they are the same with terminations in σ. No noun ends in a mute, or a short vowel. There are but *three* ending in ι; μελι, κομμι, πεπερι: *five* ending in υ: πωυ, ναπυ, γουυ, δορυ, άσυ.

The *neuter* terminate in these two last-mentioned vowels, and in ν and σ.

XXVI. The

⁷ Κρι, occurs Il. E. 196.—Δω, Il. A. 425.

⁸ Part of a verse of *Empedocles*, quoted by *Strabo*, p. 364. *Ed. Cas.*

⁹ Il. E. 393.

XXVI.

OF
POETIC
DICTION.

The excellence of diction consists in being *perspicuous* without being *mean*. The most perspicuous is that which is composed of *common* words; but, at the same time, it is *mean*. Such is the Poetry of *Cleophon*, and that of *Sthenelus*. That language, on the contrary, is elevated, and remote from the vulgar idiom, which employs *unusual* words: by *unusual*, I mean, *foreign*, *metaphorical*, *extended*—all, in short, that are not *common* words. Yet, should a Poet compose his diction entirely of such words, the result would be, either an *ænigma*, or a barbarous jargon: an *ænigma*, if composed of *metaphors*; a barbarous jargon, if composed of *foreign* words.—For the essence of an *ænigma* consists in *putting together things apparently inconsistent and impossible, and, at the same time, saying nothing but what is true*. Now this cannot be effected by the mere *arrangement*¹ of the words; by the *metaphorical use* of them, it may; as in this *ænigma*:

A man I once beheld, [and wondering view'd,]
Who, on another, brass with fire had GLEW'D².

With

¹ By mere arrangement or construction of words used in their *proper* senses, you may produce *nonsense*, or *ambiguity*; but not, an *inconsistent* and *impossible*, yet *clear*, meaning.

² See the NOTE. The operation of *cupping* is meant, which the Greeks performed with an instrument of *brass*.

With respect to *barbarism*, it arises from the use of *foreign* words. A judicious intermixture is, therefore, requisite.

Thus, the *foreign* word, the *metaphorical*, the *ornamental*, and the other species before mentioned, will raise the language above the vulgar idiom, and *common* words will give it perspicuity. But nothing contributes more considerably to produce clearness, without vulgarity, of diction, than *extensions*, *contractions*, and *alterations*, of words: for here, the variation from the proper form, being *unusual*, will give *elevation* to the expression; and, at the same time, what is retained of *usual* speech will give it *clearness*. It is without reason, therefore, that some critics have censured these modes of speech, and ridiculed the Poet³ for the use of them; as old *Euclid*⁴ did, objecting, that “versification would be an easy business, if it were permitted to lengthen words at pleasure:”—and then giving a burlesque example of that sort of diction: as,

* * * * *

Undoubtedly,

³ Homer.

⁴ Not the Geometrician.

⁵ I have omitted the examples—two lines of incurable corruption; the “*confusion*” of which is “*worse confounded*” by an endless variety of various readings, which, after all, are only so many different shades of nonsense. See the NOTE.

Undoubtedly, when these licences appear to be thus *purposely* used, the thing becomes ridiculous. In the employment of *all* the species of *unusual* words, moderation is necessary: for metaphors, foreign words, or any of the others, improperly used, and with a *design* to be ridiculous, would produce the same effect. But how great a difference is made by a *proper* and temperate use of such words, may be seen in *heroic* verse. Let any one only substitute *common* words in the place of the metaphorical, the foreign, and others of the same kind, and he will be convinced of the truth of what I say. For example: the same Iambic verse occurs in *Æschylus* and in *Euripides*; but, by means of a single alteration—the substitution of a *foreign*, for a *common* and *usual* word, one of these verses appears beautiful, the other ordinary. For *Æschylus*, in his *Philoctetes*⁶, says - - -

Φαγεδαινα, ἣ μὲ σαρκας ΕΣΘΙΕΙ ποδῶ.—

The cankerous wound that *eats* my flesh.—

But *Euripides*, instead of *ισθιει* [*eats*] uses ΘΟΙΝΑΤΑΙ.

The same difference will appear, if, in this verse,

Νυῦ

⁶ We have neither of the Tragedies here alluded to.

Νυν δε μ' εων ΟΛΙΓΟΣ τε και ΟΥΤΙΔΑΝΟΣ
και ΑΚΙΚΥΣ⁷,

we substitute *common* words, and say,

Νυν δε μ' εων ΜΙΚΡΟΣ τε και ΑΣΘΕΝΙΚΟΣ
και ΑΕΙΔΗΣ.

So, again, should we for the following,—

Διφρον ΑΕΙΚΕΛΙΟΝ καταθεις, ΟΛΙΓΗΝ τε
τραπωεζαν⁸—

substitute this :—

Διφρον ΜΟΧΘΗΡΟΝ καταθεις, ΜΙΚΡΑΝ τε
τραπωεζαν.

Or, change—*Ηῖνες βοοῶσιν*⁹—The cliffs *re-*
bellow—to *Ηῖνες κραζοῦσιν*—The cliffs *re-*
sound.

Ariphrades, also, endeavoured to throw ridicule upon the Tragic Poets, for making use of such expressions as no one would think of using in common speech; as, *δωματων ἀπο*, instead of *ἀπο δωματων*: and *ΣΕΘΕΝ*—and, *ἔγω δε ΝΙΝ*—and, *Αχιλλεως περι*, instead of *περι Αχιλλεως*, &c.

Now

⁷ *Odyssey IX. v. 515.* of the *original*. It is obvious that these *differences* cannot be preserved in a translation.

⁸ *Od. γ. 259.*

⁹ *Il. P. 265.*—Pope's line is,

“And distant rocks *rebellow* to the roar.”

Now it is precisely owing to their being *not* in common use, that such expressions have the effect of giving elevation to the diction. But this he did not know¹.

To employ with propriety any of these modes of speech—the double words, the foreign, &c.—is a great excellence: but the greatest of all, is to be happy in the use of *metaphor*; for it is this alone which cannot be acquired, and which, consisting in a quick discernment of *resemblances*, is a certain mark of genius².

Of

¹ Aristotle's thorough contempt of the critic, and his criticism, could not have been more strongly marked than by this short and simple expression. [—ΕΚΕΙΝΟΙ ΔΕ ΤΑΤΟ ἠγνοοῦσι !]

² Metaphors are, evidently, much more important, and more of the *essence* of Poetry, than the other *sorts of words*. It is very easy, and very commonly practised by Poets of no genius or originality, to copy the *technical language*, the *formulæ*, as it were, of Poetry—compound epithets, obsolete words, &c. These occur but now and then: *metaphorical* expression is continually wanted; and the beauty, force, and novelty of it, depend on the writer's own imagination. Indeed, almost all the beauty of Poetry, as far as *language* is concerned, all that distinguishes the Poet of genius, from the versifier who trusts solely to his ear, and to his memory, arises from the *uncommon* and *original* use of *metaphor*; especially, taking that word in Aristotle's latitude, as comprehending all *tropical* expression. *Here*, however, he plainly has *our metaphor* chiefly in view;—the metaphor founded on *resemblance*.

Of the different kinds of words, the *double* are best suited to Dithyrambic Poetry; the *foreign* to Heroic; the *metaphorical* to Iambic. In Heroic Poetry, indeed, they have *all* their place; but to Iambic verse³, which is, as much as may be, an imitation of common speech⁴, those words which are used in common speech are best adapted; and such are, the *common*, the *metaphorical*, and the *ornamental*.

Concerning TRAGEDY, and the imitation by ACTION, enough has now been said.

³ The verse of *Tragedy*. See the NOTE.

⁴ See above--*Part I. Sect. 7.*

P A R T III.
OF THE EPIC POEM.

I.

In what
EPIC
and
TRAGIC
Poetry
agree.

WITH respect to that species of Poetry which imitates by NARRATION, and in *hexameter* verse, it is obvious, that the *fable* ought to be dramatically constructed¹, like that of Tragedy: and that it should have for its subject *one entire and perfect action*, having a *beginning*, a *middle*, and an *end*; so that, forming, like an animal, a *complete whole*, it may afford its *proper*² pleasure: widely differing, in its construction, from history, which necessarily treats, not of *one action*, but of *one time*; and of *all* the events that happened, to one person, or to many, during that time; events, the *relation* of which, to each other, is merely casual³. For, as the naval action at Salamis, and the battle with
the

¹ See below, *Sect. 3.*

² i. e. Opposed, (as appears from what follows,) to that which *history* gives. *Unity of interest* is essential to the pleasure we expect from the Epic Poem; and this cannot exist, at least, in the degree required, without *unity of action*.

³ Compare, *Part II. Sect. 5, 7, and 8.*

the Carthaginians in Sicily, were events of *the same time*, unconnected by any relation to a *common end*, or *purpose*; so also, in *successive* events, we sometimes see one thing *follow* another, without being *connected* to it by such relation. And this is the practice of the generality of *Poets*. Even in this, therefore, as we have before observed⁴, the superiority of HOMER'S genius is apparent, that he did not attempt to bring the *whole* war, though an *entire* action with *beginning* and *end*, into his Poem. It would have been too vast an object, and not *easily comprehended in one view*⁵: or had he forced it into a moderate compass, it would have been perplexed by its variety⁶. Instead of this, selecting one *part* only of the war, he has, from the rest, introduced many Episodes—such as the *catalogue of the ships*, and others—by which he has diversified his Poem. Other Poets take for their subject the actions of *one person*⁷, or of *one period* of

⁴ Part II. Sect. 5.

⁵ See Part II. Sect. 4.

⁶ Because “*the length of the whole would*” then “*not admit of a proper magnitude in the parts;*” and, thus, an *Epic Poem* constructed upon an *historical plan*, would be exactly in the same case with a *Tragedy* “*constructed on an Epic plan.*” See Part II. Sect. 20. and NOTE 153.

⁷ Part II. Sect. 5.

of *time*⁸, or an action which, though *one*, is composed of too many parts. Thus, the author of the *Cypriacs*, and of the *Little Iliad*⁹. Hence it is, that the *ILIAD*, and the *ODYSSEY*, each of them, furnish matter for one Tragedy, or two, at most; but from the *Cypriacs* many may be taken, and from the *Little Iliad*, more than eight; as, *The Contest for the Armour*¹,
Philoctetes,

⁸ Of this kind seems the Poem of *Ariosto*, the *exordium* of which, not only expresses the miscellaneous variety of his matter, but, also, his *principle of unity*.

Le Donne, i cavalier, l'arme, gli amori,
 Le cortesie, l'audaci imprese, io canto,
 Che furo al TEMPO che passaro i Mori, &c.

Ariosto's expedient was, to "intertwist the several actions " together, in order to give something like the appearance of one action," to the whole, as has been observed of *Spenser*: [*Letters on Chivalry*, &c.] he has given his Poem the continuity of basket-work. Or, if I may be indulged in another comparison, his unity, is the unity produced between oil and vinegar by shaking them together; which only makes them *separate by smaller portions*.

⁹ So called, to distinguish it from the *Iliad* of Homer, of which it seems to have been a continuation. See the NOTE.

¹ i. e. Between Ajax and Ulysses. *Æschylus* wrote a Tragedy on this subject, of which the *Ajax* of *Sophocles* is the sequel.—*Dacier*.

*Philoctetes*², *Neoptolemus*, *Eurypylus*³, *The Vagrant*⁴, *The Spartan Women*, *The Fall of Troy*, *The Return of the Fleet*⁵, *Sinon*⁶, and *The Trojan Women*⁷.

Again—the *Epic Poem* must also agree with the *Tragic*, as to its *kinds*: it must be *simple*, or *complicated*, *moral*, or *disastrous*⁸. Its *parts*, also, setting aside Music and Decoration, are the same⁹; for it requires *Revolutions*, *Discoveries*, and *Disasters*; and it must be furnished with proper *sentiments* and *diction*: of *all* which HOMER gave both the first, and the most perfect, example. Thus, of his two Poems, the *Iliad* is of the *simple* and *disastrous* kind; the *Odyssey*, *complicated*, (for it abounds throughout with discoveries,)

² The *Philoctetes* of *Sophocles* only remains.

³ Of the subject of this, and the preceding drama, we know nothing.

⁴ See Pope's *Odyssey*, IV. 335. but what is there rendered *slave*, is, in Homer, *beggar*, or *vagrant*. The story is also touched by Euripides, in his *Hecuba*. See *Potter's Transl.* v. 210, &c.

⁵ See the latter part of NOTE 116.

⁶ The story is well known from Virgil, *Æn.* 2.—*Sophocles* wrote a Tragedy of this title.

⁷ A Tragedy of this name by *Euripides* is extant. See *The Trojan Dames*, in Mr. Potter's translation.

⁸ See Part II. Sect. 19.

⁹ Part I. Sect. 9.

coveries¹;) and *moral*. Add to this, that in *language* and *sentiments* he has surpassed all Poets.

II.

In what
they
DIFFER.

The Epic Poem *differs* from Tragedy, in the *length* of its plan, and in its *metre*.

With respect to *length*, a sufficient measure has already been assigned². It should be such, as to admit of our *comprehending at one view the beginning and the end*: and this would be the case, if the Epic Poem were reduced from its ancient length, so as not to exceed that of such a number of Tragedies, as are performed successively at one hearing³. But there is a circumstance in the nature of Epic Poetry which affords it peculiar latitude in the extension of its plan. It is not in the power of Tragedy to imitate several different actions performed at the *same time*; it can imitate only that *one* which occupies the stage, and in which the actors are employed.

But,

¹ See Pope's translation, XVI. 206, &c. where Ulysses discovers himself to Telemachus: XXI. 212. to the shepherds.—XXIII. 211. to Penelope.—XXIV. 375. to his father.—IX. 17. to Alcinous.—IV. 150, &c. Telemachus is discovered to Menelaus by his tears: v. 189, to Helen, by his resemblance to his father.—XIX. 545. Ulysses is discovered to the old nurse, by the scar.

² See the preceding *Sect.* and *Part II. Sect. 4.*

³ In the dramatic contests. See the *NOTE*.

But, the Epic imitation, being *narrative*, admits of many such simultaneous incidents, properly related to the subject, which swell the Poem to a considerable size.

And this gives it a great advantage, both in point of *magnificence*, and, also, as it enables the Poet to relieve his hearer⁴, and *diversify* his work, by a variety of *dissimilar* Episodes: for it is to the satiety naturally arising from similarity that Tragedies frequently owe their ill success.

With respect to *metre*, the heroic is established by experience as the most proper; so that, should any one compose a *narrative* Poem in any other, or in a variety of metres, he would be thought guilty of a great impropriety. For the heroic is the gravest and most majestic of all measures; and hence it is, that it peculiarly admits the use of *foreign* and *metaphorical* expressions; for in this respect also, the *narrative* imitation is abundant and various beyond the rest. But the Iambic and Trochaic have more *motion*; the latter being adapted to *dance*, the other to *action* and *business*. To *mix* these different metres, as *Chæremon* has done, would be still more absurd. No one, therefore, has ever attempted to compose a Poem of an extended plan in any other than heroic verse; nature itself, as we before observed⁵, pointing out the proper choice.

⁴ "Hearer."—See *Dissert.* I. §. 64, 65.

⁵ *Part I. Sect. 7.*

III.

Epic
Narration
should be
DRAMATIC
and
IMITATIVE.

Among the many just claims of HOMER to our praise, this is one—that he is the only Poet who seems to have understood what part in his Poem it was proper for him to take *himself*. The Poet, in his own person, should speak as little as possible; for he is not then the *imitator*⁶. But other Poets, ambitious to figure throughout, themselves⁷, *imitate* but little, and seldom. HOMER, after a few preparatory lines, immediately introduces a man, a woman, or some other character⁸; for all have their *character*—no where are the *manners* neglected.

IV.

Epic
admits the
WONDERFUL
more easily
and
in a greater
degree than
Tragedy.

The *surprising* is necessary in *Tragedy* †; but the Epic Poem goes farther, and admits even the *improbable* and *incredible*, from which the highest degree of the surprising results, because, there, the

⁶ Strictly speaking. See *Dissertation* I. p. 37.

⁷ This is remarkably the case with *Lucan*; of whom Hobbes says, that “no Heroic Poem raises such admiration of *the Poet*, as his hath done, though not so great admiration of the *persons he introduceth*.”—*[Disc. concerning the Virtues of an Heroic Poem.]*

⁸ As, gods, goddesses, allegorical beings, &c.

† See above, *Part II. Sect. 7. p. 129, 130.*

the action is not *seen**. The circumstances, for example, of the pursuit of Hector by Achilles, are such, as, upon the stage, would appear ridiculous;—the Grecian army standing still, and taking no part in the pursuit, and Achilles making signs to them, by the motion of his head, not to interfere⁹. But in the Epic Poem this escapes our notice. Now the *wonderful* always pleases; as is evident from the additions which men always make in relating any thing, in order to gratify the hearers.

V.

It is from HOMER principally, that other Poets have learned the art of *feigning well*. It consists

FICTION
how made
to pass as
truth.

* The best comment to which I can refer the reader upon all this part of Aristotle, is to be found in the 10th of the *Letters on Chivalry and Romance*, in which the *Italian Poets*, and the privileges of genuine Poetry, are vindicated, with as much solidity as elegance, against those, whom Dryden used to call his "*Prose Critics*"—against that sort of criticism "*which looks like philosophy, and is not.*"—*Dr. Hurd's Dialogues, &c. vol. iii.*

⁹ Pope's *Iliad*, XXII. 267.—Perhaps, the idea of stopping a whole army by a nod, or shake of the head, (a circumstance distinctly mentioned by Homer; but sunk in Mr. Pope's version,) was the absurdity here *principally* meant. If this whole Homeric scene were represented on our stage, in the best manner possible, there can be no doubt, that the effect would justify Aristotle's observation. It would certainly set the audience in a roar.

consists in a sort of *sophism*. When *one thing* is observed to be constantly accompanied, or followed, by *another*, men are apt to conclude, that, if the latter *is*, or *has happened*, the former must also *be*, or must *have happened*. But this is an error. * * * * * For, knowing the *latter* to be true, the mind is betrayed into the false inference, that the *first* is true also¹.

VI.

Of the
IMPROBABLE
and
ABSURD.

The Poet should prefer *impossibilities*² which appear *probable*, to such things as, though *possible*, appear *improbable*. Far from producing a plan

¹ For an attempt to explain Aristotle's meaning in this difficult passage, which, I think, has not hitherto been understood, I must refer the reader to the NOTE.

² This includes all that is called *faery*, *machinery*, ghosts, witches, enchantments, &c.—things, according to *Hobbes*, “beyond the actual bounds, and only within the “conceived possibility of nature.” [See the *Letters on Chivalry*, as above.] Such a being as *Caliban*, for example, is *impossible*. Yet Shakspeare has made the character appear *probable*; not certainly, to *reason*, but to *imagination*: that is, *we make no difficulty about the possibility of it, in reading*. Is not the *Lovelace* of Richardson, in this view, more out of nature, more improbable, than the *Caliban* of Shakspeare? The latter is, at least, consistent I can *imagine* such a monster as *Caliban*: I never could imagine such a man as *Lovelace*.

a plan³ made up of improbable incidents, he should, if possible, admit no one circumstance of that kind; or, if he does, it should be *exterior* to the *action* itself⁴, like the ignorance of *Oedipus* concerning the manner in which *Laius* died; not *within* the drama, like the narrative of what happened at the Pythian games, in the *Electra*⁵; or, in *The Mysians*, the man who travels from Tegea to Mysia without speaking⁶. To say, that
without

³ The *general* plan, *story*, or *argument*, as *Part II. Sect. 17.* including events *prior* to the action, but necessary to be known.

⁴ See the beginning of the *Oedipus* of Sophocles. Though the ignorance of *Oedipus* appears in the drama itself, yet the *circumstances*, upon which the *improbability* of that ignorance depends (his coming to Thebes, marrying *Jocasta*, and living with her twenty years,) are *exterior* to the drama: i. e. *prior* to the opening of the action. See above, *Part II. Sect. 15.*

⁵ See *Brumoy, Th. des Grecs*, I. p. 428. I believe he is right in understanding the absurdity here meant to be—"d'avoir fait raconter comme inconnue, une chose dont *Clytemnestre* auroit pû sçavoir d'ailleurs la verité ou la fausseté, surtout s'agissant d'*Oreste* qu'elle craignoit."—The games in question were probably frequented by all Greece, and whatever happened at them, must have been matter of such public notoriety, that a fraudulent account would have been liable to immediate detection.

⁶ Respecting this Tragedy, see REMARK 30.

without these circumstances the fable would have been destroyed, is a ridiculous excuse: the Poet should take care, from the first, not to construct his fable in that manner. If, however, any thing of this kind has been admitted, and yet is made to pass under some colour of probability, it may be allowed, though even, in itself, *absurd*. Thus in the *Odyssey*⁷, the improbable account of the manner in which *Ulysses* was landed upon the shore of Ithaca, is such, as in the hands of an ordinary Poet, would evidently have been intolerable: but here, the absurdity is concealed under the various beauties, of other kinds, with which the Poet has embellished it.

The *Diction* should be most laboured in the *idle parts*⁸ of the Poem—those, in which neither
manners,

⁷ See Pope's *Transl.* XIII. 138, and the *note* there, and on v. 142. Homer seems, clearly, to have imagined this circumstance, for the sake of the interesting scene which follows when Ulysses wakes. See v. 220, &c. Of the original, v. 187.

⁸ In the *strictly narrative* or *descriptive* parts, where the Poet speaks in his own person, and the *imitation*, the *drama*, which Aristotle considers as the true *business* of Poetry, is suspended. These he calls the *idle parts*. The expression is applicable also to *Tragedy*; for though its *imitation* is throughout, yet every drama must have its *comparatively idle* parts. Such is the description above alluded to, of the chariot-race, in the *Electra* of Sophocles. The chorusses also may, in a great measure be so considered;

manners, nor *sentiments*⁹ prevail; for the manners and the sentiments are only obscured by too splendid a diction¹.

considered; and in them, accordingly, the language is “laboured” and “splendid.”—In *Epic Poetry*, these parts are of great importance to that *variety* which characterizes the species. [See above, *Sect. II.*] In so long a work, relief is wanted, and we are glad to hear the *Poet* in his turn.

⁹ The reader may wonder that Aristotle did not add—“nor *passion.*” But that part of the *Epic and Tragic Poem*, which he calls the *sentiments*, includes the *expression of passion*. See *Part II. Sect. 22.* And the *NOTE* here.

¹ “His diction [*Thomson’s*] is in the highest degree “florid and luxuriant; such as may be said to be to his “images and thoughts *both their lustre and their shade*; “such as invests them with splendour, through which “perhaps they are not always easily discerned.”—*Dr. Johnson’s Life of Thomson.*

P A R T IV.

OF CRITICAL OBJECTIONS,
AND THE PRINCIPLES ON WHICH THEY
ARE TO BE ANSWERED.

I.

PRINCIPLES
on which
Poetry
is to be
DEFENDED.

WITH respect to CRITICAL OBJECTIONS¹, and the ANSWERS to them, the *number* and *nature* of the different *sources*, from which they may be drawn, will be clearly understood, if we consider them in the following manner.

1. The

¹ The original is, *Problems*. This appears to have been a common title of critical works in Aristotle's time. Objections, censures, and the most unreasonable cavils, were conveyed in the civil form of *problems* and *questions*. Thus, many criticisms on *Homer* were published under the title of *Homeric Problems*.

The scope of this part of Aristotle's work is of more importance to his subject than, at first view, it may appear to be. In teaching how to *answer* criticisms, it, in fact, teaches, (as far, I mean, as it goes.) what the Poet should do to avoid giving occasion to them. It seems, indeed, intended as an *apology* for *Poetry*, and a vindication of its privileges upon true *poetical* principles, at a time when the art and its professors were unfairly attacked on all sides, by the cavils of *prosaic* philosophers and sophists, such as *Ariphrades*, *Protagoras*, *Euclid*, &c. and by the *puritanical* objections of PLATO and his followers.

1. The Poet, being an *imitator*, like the painter or any other artist of that kind, must necessarily, when he imitates, have in view one of these *three* objects;—he must represent things, *such as they were, or are*²;—or *such as they are said to be, and believed to be*³;—or, *such as they should be*⁴.

2. Again: all this he is to express in *words*, either *common*, or *foreign* and *metaphorical*—or varied by some of those many *modifications* and peculiarities of language, which are the privilege of Poets.

3. To this we must add, that *what is right* in the *Poetic* art, is a distinct consideration from *what is right* in the *political*, or any *other* art. The faults of *Poetry* are of two kinds, *essential* and *accidental*. If the Poet has undertaken to *imitate* without talents for imitation, his Poetry will be *essentially* faulty. But if he is right in applying himself to Poetic imitation, yet in imitating is occasionally wrong; as, if a horse, for example, were represented moving both his right legs at once;—or, if he has committed *mistakes*, or described things *impossible*, with respect to
other

² Compare *Part I. Sect. 3.*

³ This opens the door for the marvellous; machinery, ghosts, witches, faery, &c.

⁴ Compare *Part I. Sect. 3.*—II. end of *Sect. 15.* and below, *Sect. 5.*

other arts, that of Physic, for instance, or any other—all *such* faults, whatever they may be, are not *essential*, but *accidental* faults, in the Poetry.

II.

APPLICA-
TION
of the
last
Principle.

To the foregoing considerations, then, we must have recourse, in order to obviate the doubts and objections of the critics.

For, in the *first* place, suppose the Poet to have represented things *impossible* with respect to some *other* art. This is certainly a fault. Yet it may be an *excusable* fault, provided the *end* of the *Poet's* art be more effectually obtained by it; that is, according to what has already been said of that *end*, if, by this means, that, or any other part, of the Poem, is made to produce a more *striking effect*⁵. The pursuit of Hector is an instance⁶. If, indeed, this end might as well, or nearly as well, have been attained, without departing from the principles of the particular art in question, the fault, in that case, could not be justified; since faults of *every* kind should, if possible, be avoided.

Still we are to consider, farther, whether a fault be in things *essential* to the Poetic art, or foreign and

⁵ Which is exactly the case with *Homer's* improbable account of the landing of Ulysses, mentioned above, *Part III. Sect. 6.* See *Note 7.*

⁶ *Part III. Sect. 4.*

and *incidental* to it: for it is a far more pardonable fault to be ignorant, for instance, that a hind has no horns⁷, than to *paint* one *badly*.

III.

Farther: If it be objected to the Poet, that he has not represented things conformably to *truth*⁸, he may answer, that he has represented them as they *should* be. This was the answer of *Sophocles*—that “he drew mankind such as they *should* be; *Euripides*, such as they *are*.” And this is the proper answer.

APPLI-
CATION
of the
first
Principle.

But if the Poet has represented things in neither of these ways, he may answer, that he has represented them as they are *said* and *believed* to be. Of this kind are the poetical descriptions of the Gods. It cannot, perhaps, be said, that they are either what is *best*, or what is *true*; but, as *Xenophanes* says, opinions “taken up at random:” these are things, however, not “*clearly known*.”

Again—What the Poet has exhibited is, perhaps, not what is *best*, but it is the *fact*; as in
the

⁷ “*A hind with golden horns*,” is expressly mentioned by Pindar in his 3d Olympic Ode, and by other Greek Poets. This inaccuracy in *natural history*, had probably been the subject of critical cavil.

⁸ i.e. to *common nature*. Above, he expresses it, by “representing things *such* as they *were*, or *are*.”

the passage about the arms of the sleeping soldiers :

- - - *fixed upright in the earth*

Their spears stood by^o. - - -

For such was the custom at that time, as it is now among the Illyrians.

IV.

Censure of
IMMORAL
speech
or
action,
how to be
examined.

In order to judge whether what is *said*, or *done*, by any character, be *well*, or *ill*, we are not to consider that speech or action *alone*¹, whether *in itself*

^o *Iliad*, X. 152.—In Pope's translation, v. 170, &c.—On what *account* this had been objected to by the critics, we are left to guess. Dacier, after Victorius, supposes the objection to be, that the spears, so fastened in the ground, could not be readily disengaged, in case of a sudden attack. I shall only observe, that by Homer's description of the truce in the 3d book, this appears to have been the usual position of their spears when no attack was apprehended, and in open day-light; which makes it the less surprising that it should have been objected to as an impropriety in a situation of nocturnal danger, such as is described in the passage referred to.—What Pope, III. 177, translates, "*rest their spears*," is, in Homer, "*their spears were fixed*." (—*παρα δ' ἐγχεα μακρὰ ΠΕΠΗΓΕΝ*. v. 135.)

¹ This is plainly connected with what precedes, which cannot be properly *applied* without taking in the consideration of *character*, *circumstances*, *motives*, &c.—The speech of Satan, for example, in *Parad. Lost*, IV. 32, *taken in itself*, is horrible: referred to the *character* who

itself it be good, or bad, but also by whom it is spoken or done, to whom, at what time, in what manner, or for what end—whether, for instance, in order to obtain some greater good, or to avoid some greater evil.

V.

For the solution of some objections, we must have recourse to the *Diction*. For example :

ΟΥΡΗΑΣ ΜΕΝ ΠΡΩΤΟΥ—

“ On MULES and dogs the infection *first* began².”

POPE.

This may be defended by saying, that the Poet has, perhaps, used the word *ἑστῆς* in its FOREIGN acceptance of *sentinels*, not in its proper sense, of *mules*.

So also in the passage where it is said of *Dolon*—

- - - ΕΙΔΟΣ ΜΕΝ ἔνν κενε³ - - -

- - - Of form unhappy. - - -

The

speaks it, nothing can be *better*. It is, *poetically* speaking, exactly what it *should* be.

² *Il. I.* 69.—The reason of the objection here is not told, and has been variously guessed by the commentators. *Probably*, the propriety of making the *mules* the *first* sufferers, before horses and other animals, was the matter in dispute. The objection seems frivolous, and the solution improbable.

³ *Il. K.* 316.—Pope, *X.* 375, has followed Aristotle's interpretation :

“ Not blest by nature with the charms of face,
But swift of foot, and matchless in the race.”

APPLICA-
TION
of the
second
Principle,

The meaning is, not, that his *person* was *deformed*, but, that his *face* was *ugly*; for the Cretans use the word ΕΤΕΙΔΕΣ — “*well-formed*” — to express a beautiful *face*.

Again :

ΖΩΠΟΤΕΡΟΝ ΔΕ ΚΕΡΑΙΡΕ⁴ - - -

Here, the meaning is not, “mix it *strong*,” as for intemperate drinkers; but, “mix it *quickly*.”

2. The following passages may be defended by METAPHOR.

“Now pleasing sleep had seal’d each mortal eye;
 “Stretch’d in the tents the Grecian leaders lie;
 “The immortals *slumber’d* on their thrones
 above⁵” - - -

POPE.

The objection of the critics is *supposed* to have been, that an *ill-made* man, could not be a good racer. See Pope’s *Note*.

⁴ *Iliad* IX. 267, 8.—Pope follows the common, and probably the right, acceptance of the word. “Mix *purer* wine.”—Aristotle’s interpretation has not made its fortune with the critics. He seems to have produced it rather as an exemplification of the *sort* of answer which he is here considering, than as an opinion in which he acquiesced himself. It was, probably, an answer which *had* been given. The cavil, according to Plutarch, came from *Zoilus*. [See the *Symposiac Prob.* of Plut. V. 4. where this subject is discussed, and several other conjectural senses of the word Ζωπότερον are proposed.]

⁵ Beginning of *Il.* II.—*What* it was that wanted defence in this passage, and that was to be taken metaphorically, we are not told. That it was the repre-

Again—

“When on the Trojan plain his anxious eye

“Watchful he *fix’d*” - - -

And—

Αυλων συριγγων θ’ ΟΜΑΔΟΝ⁷. - - -

* * * * *

For, ALL⁸, is put *metaphorically*⁹ instead of *many*; *all* being a *species* of *many*.

Here also—

- - - “The Bear ALONE,

“Still shines exalted in th’ ætherial plain,

“Nor bathes his flaming forehead in the main¹.”

POPE.

sensation of the *Gods* as *sleeping*, is the most probable conjecture. This is somewhat softened by Mr. Pope’s “*slumbered*.” *Homer* says—“SLEPT *all the night*.”—*Ευδον παννυχιοι*.

⁶ *Iliad*, X. v. 13. (of the *Orig.* v. 11.) But Pope’s version was not literal enough for my purpose. For the supposed objection, see my NOTE.

⁷ *Ibid.* 15, 16.—*Orig.* 13. The sense of the example may be given, pretty closely, thus :

“The distant voice of flutes and pipes he mark’d

With wonder, and the “*busy hum* of men.”

But this does not answer exactly to the *Greek*, where the word, which I have rendered *hum*, may signify either the *hum* or *murmur* of a multitude, or the *multitude itself*. See the NOTE.

⁸ As the Greek word for ALL, does not occur in any of the preceding examples, we suppose some example, corresponding to this explanation, to have been lost.

⁹ i. e. by *Synecdoche*. See above, p. 166.

¹ *Iliad*, XVIII. v. 565, 566, and see the note there.

ALONE, is metaphorical: the most remarkable thing in any kind, we speak of as the *only* one.

We may have recourse also,

3. TO ACCENT: as the following passage—

ΔΙΔΟΜΕΝ ΔΕ ΟΙ ΕΥΧΘΑ ἄρεσθαι.²—

And this—ΤΟ ΜΕΝ ΟΥ ΚΑΤΑΠΥΘΕΤΑΙ ὄμβρω³—were defended by *Hippias* of Thasos.

4. TO PUNCTUATION; as in this passage of *Empedocles*:—

Αἰψά δὲ θνήτ' ἔφουοντο τὰ πρὶν μάθου ἀθανάτ' εἶναι,
ΖΩΡΑ ΤΕ ΤΑ ΠΡΙΝ ΑΚΡΗΤΑ - - -

i. e. - - - things, before *immortal*,
Mortal became, and *mix'd* before *unmix'd*⁴,
[Their courses changed.]

5. To

² See Pope's *Iliad*, II. 9, and his note. For the Jesuitical distinction of *Hippias's* Theology, see the NOTE.

³ II. Ψ. 328.—Pope's transl. XXIII. 402.—“unperished with the rains.” According to a different accentuation of the word ΟΥ, in the original, it would mean, “where perished with the rains.”—See the NOTE.

⁴ The verses allude to the two great physical principles of *Empedocles*, which he chose to denominate *friendship* and *strife*, and in which modern philosophers have discovered the Newtonian principles of *attraction* and *repulsion*. He held everything to be formed of the four elements, and resolved into them again. *Friendship* was the uniting, *strife*, the separating, principle. The elements

5. TO AMBIGUITY; as in — *παρωχηκεν δε ΠΛΕΩΝ νυξ*⁵ — where the word ΠΛΕΩΝ is ambiguous.

6. TO CUSTOMARY SPEECH: thus, wine mixed with water, or whatever is *poured out* to drink as wine, is called ΟΙΝΟΣ — *wine*: hence, *Ganymede* is said — Διὸ ΟΙΝΟΧΟΕΤΕΙΝ⁶ — to “pour the
“ WINE

elements themselves, in their *separate* and *simple* state, were *immortal*; the things *compounded* of them, were *mortal*; i. e. liable to be resolved into their first principles.—As far as we can make anything of this fragment, it seems intended to express the two *contrary* changes of things; from *immortal* to *mortal*, by the *uniting* principle, and from *mortal* to *immortal*, i. e. from *mixed* to *unmixed*, by the *disuniting* principle. But the words—“*mixed before unmixed*,” will, plainly, express either of these changes, according as we place the comma, after *mixed*, or after *before*. It is imagined, that the critics mistook the punctuation so as to make *Empedocles* express only the same change in different words, and then censured this, as inconsistent with the expression, “*their courses changed*.” [*διαλλαξιποντα κελυθες* — *changing their ways*.]

⁵ *Il. K.* 252.—Pope’s translation, *X.* 298. The original says, “*more than two parts of the night are past; the third part remains*.”—This the cavilling critics censured as a sort of *bull*. What is *guessed* to have been the answer, the reader *may* see, but I believe will hardly *wish* to see, in *Dacier’s* notes.

⁶ *Il. γ.* 234. Pope, *XX.* 278, &c.—He renders it—“to bear the cup of Jove.”

“WINE to Jove:” though wine is not the liquor of the Gods. This, however, may also be defended by metaphor⁷.

Thus, again, artificers in *iron* are called *Χαλκεις*—literally, *brasiers*. Of this *kind* is the expression of the Poet—*Κνημῖς νεοτευκτῆ Κασσιτεροιο*⁸.

7. When a word, in any passage, appears to express a *contradiction*, we must consider, in how many *different* SENSES it may there be taken. Here, for instance—

—τη ῥ' ἔσχετο χαλκεον ἔγχ⁹—

“There *stuck* the lance⁹.” POPE.

—the meaning is, was *stopped* only, or *repelled*.

Of

⁷ The metaphor from *species* to *species*. See p. 167.

⁸ *Il. Φ.* 592.—Literally, “greaves of *tin*.” But it is not *customary speech* with us, to say *tin*, for *iron* or *steel*. The *Greek* word for *tin*, however, appears to have been so used.—We are not here to understand the objection to have been pointed at the *improper use* of a word. The critics took, or pretended to take, the word in its *proper* sense, and thence objected to the absurdity of *tin* armour.

⁹ *Il. XX.* 321.—Mr. Pope seems to have translated very accurately here, and to have preserved even the ambiguity of the original; for the verb, to *stick*, admits, like the *Greek* word, (*ἔχεσθαι*) of two senses;—that of being *fastened* to, or *fixed* in, and that of being *stopped*—*prevented from going farther*.—See the NOTE.

- - - “impene-

Of *how many different senses* a word is capable, may best be discovered by considering the different senses that are *opposed* to it.

We may also say, with *Glauco*, that some critics, first take things for granted without foundation, and then argue from these previous decisions of their own; and, having once pronounced their judgment, condemn, as an *inconsistence*, whatever is contrary to their preconceived *opinion*. Of this kind is the cavil of the critics concerning *Icarius*¹. Taking it for granted that he was a Lacedæmonian, they thence infer the absurdity of supposing *Telemachus* not to have seen him when he went to Lacedæmon². But, perhaps, what the Cephaleuans say may be the truth. They assert, that the wife of *Ulysses* was of their country, and that the name of her father was not *Icarius*, but *Icadius*. The
objection

- - - "impenetrable charms
 Secur'd the temper of th' ætherial arms.
 Thro' *two* strong plates the point its passage held,
 But *stopp'd*, and *rested*, by the third *repell'd*;
 Five plates of various metal, various mold,
 Compos'd the shield; of brass each *outward* fold,
 Of tin each *inward*, and the middle, gold:
 THERE STUCK THE LANCE." - - -

¹ Mentioned by Homer as the father of Penelope.

² See Pope's *Odyssey*, IV.

objection itself, therefore, is probably founded on a mistake.

VI.

Censure
of
IMPOSSIBI-
LITY
farther
considered.

The *Impossible*, in general, is to be justified by referring, either to the end of *Poetry* itself, or to what is *best*, or to *opinion*.

For, with respect to *Poetry*, impossibilities, rendered *probable*, are preferable to things *improbable*, though *possible*³.

With respect also to what is *best*⁴, the imitations of *Poetry* should resemble the paintings of ZEUXIS⁵: the example should be more perfect than nature.

To

³ See *Part III. Sect. 6.* and *Note*², p. 184.

⁴ Improved nature, ideal beauty, &c. which, elsewhere, is expressed by, what *should be*. Compare the beginning of this *Part*, and *Sect. 3.*—*Part I. Sect. 3.*—*Part II. Sect. 15.* p. 146.

⁵ “ In ancient days, while *Greece* was flourishing in
“ liberty and arts, a celebrated painter, [*Zeuxis*,] having
“ drawn many excellent pictures for a certain free state,
“ and been generously rewarded for his labours, at last
“ made an offer to paint them a *Helen*, as a *model* and
“ *exemplar* of the most exquisite beauty. The proposal
“ was readily accepted, when the artist informed them,
“ that in order to draw *one Fair*, it was necessary he
“ should contemplate *many*. He demanded therefore a
“ sight of all their finest women. The state, to assist
“ the

To *opinion*, or what is commonly *said to be*, may be referred even such things as are *improbable* and *absurd*; and it may also be said, that events of that kind are, sometimes, not really improbable; since “it is probable, that many things should happen contrary to probability⁶.”

VII.

When things are said, which appear to be *contradictory*, we must examine them as we do in logical confutation: whether the *same thing* be spoken of; whether in the *same respect*, and in the *same sense*. * * * * *

INCONSIS-
TENCE.

VIII.

Improbability, and *vitious manners*, when excused by no necessity, are just objects of critical censure. Such is the improbability in the *Ægeus*⁷ of *Euripides*, and the vitious character of *Mene-laus* in his *Orestes*⁸.

IMPROBA-
BILITY
and
VITIOUS
CHARACTER.

Thus,

“the work, assented to his request. They were
“exhibited before him; he selected the most beautiful;
“and from these formed his *Helen*, more beautiful than
“them all.”—Harris’s *Three Treatises*, p. 216.

⁶ See *Part II. Sect. 20*, at the end; and NOTE 156.

⁷ Of this Tragedy, some inconsiderable fragments only remain.

⁸ See p. 144.

Recapitulation.

Thus, the sources from which the critics draw their *objections* are five: they object to things as *impossible*, or *improbable*, or *of immoral tendency*, or *contradictory*, or *contrary to technical accuracy*. The *answers*, which are *twelve* in number, may be deduced from what has been said⁹.

⁹ The reader, who regards his own ease, will, I believe, do well to take this for granted. If however he has any desire to try the experiment, he may read the NOTE on this passage; and I wish it may answer to him.

P A R T V.

OF THE SUPERIORITY OF TRAGIC TO
EPIC POETRY.

I.

IT may be inquired, farther, which of the two imitations, the EPIC, or the TRAGIC, deserves the preference. OBJECTION
TO
TRAGEDY.

If that, which is the least *vulgar*, or *popular*, of the two be the best, and that be such, which is calculated for the better sort of spectators—the imitation, which extends to every circumstance¹, must, evidently, be the most vulgar, or popular; for there, the imitators have recourse to every kind of motion and gesticulation, as if the audience, without the aid of action, were incapable of understanding them: like bad flute-players, who whirl themselves round, when they would imitate the motion of the Discus, and pull the Coryphæus, when *Scylla* is the subject². Such is Tragedy.

It

¹ Though Aristotle instances in *gesture* only, the objection, no doubt, extended to the *whole* imitative representation of the theatre, including the *stage* and *scenery*, by which *place* is imitated, and the *dresses*, which are necessary to complete the imitation of the *persons*.

² See the NOTES,

It may also be compared to what the modern *actors* are in the estimation of their predecessors; for *Myniscus* used to call *Callipides*, on account of his intemperate action, the *ape*: and *Tyndarus* was censured on the same account. What these performers are with respect to their predecessors, the Tragic imitation, when entire, is to the Epic. The latter, then, it is urged, addresses itself to hearers of the better sort, to whom the addition of gesture is superfluous: but Tragedy is for *the people*³; and being, therefore, the most vulgar kind of imitation, is evidently the inferior.

II.

The
Objection
ANSWERED.

But now, in the *first* place, this censure falls, not upon the *Poet's* art, but upon that of the *actor*; for the gesticulation may be equally laboured in the recitation of an Epic Poem, as it was by *Sosistratus*; and in singing, as by *Mnasitheus*, the *Opuntian*.

Again—All gesticulation is not to be condemned; since even all *dancing* is not; but such only, as is unbecoming—such as was objected to *Callipides*, and is now objected to others,
whose

³ “ It must be allowed, that stage-poetry, of all other, is more particularly levelled to please the *populace*, and its success more immediately depending upon the *common suffrage*.” *Pope's Pref. to Shakspeare.*

whose gestures resemble those of immodest women⁴.

Farther—Tragedy, as well as the Epic, is capable of producing its effect, even without action; we can judge of it perfectly by *reading*⁵. If, then, in *other* respects, Tragedy be superior, it is sufficient that the fault here objected is not *essential* to it.

III.

Tragedy has the *advantage* in the following respects.—It possesses all that is possessed by the Epic; it *might* even adopt its metre⁶: and to this it makes no inconsiderable addition, in the Music and the Decoration; by the latter of which, the illusion is heightened, and the pleasure, arising from the action, is rendered more sensible and striking.

ADVANTAGES
of
Tragedy.

It has the advantage of greater clearness and distinctness of impression, as well *in reading*, as in representation.

It

⁴ As no *actresses* were admitted on the Greek stage, their capital *actors* must frequently have appeared in female parts, such as, *Electra*, *Iphigenia*, *Medea*, &c. This is sufficiently proved by many passages of antient authors; and among others, by a remarkable story of an eminent Greek Tragic actor, told by *Aulus Gellius*. See the NOTE.

⁵ So above, p. 121,—“the power of Tragedy is felt “without representation and actors.”

⁶ See NOTE 36.

It has also that, of attaining the end of its imitation in a shorter compass: for the effect is more pleasurable, when produced by a short and close series of impressions, than when weakened by diffusion through a long extent of time; as the *Oedipus* of SOPHOCLES, for example, would be, if it were drawn out to the length of the *Iliad*.

Farther: there is less *unity*⁷ in all Epic imitation; as appears from this—that any Epic Poem will furnish matter for *several* Tragedies. For, supposing the Poet to chuse a fable *strictly one*, the consequence must be, either, that his Poem, if proportionably contracted, will appear curtailed and defective, or, if extended to the usual length, will become weak, and, as it were, *diluted*. If, on the other hand, we suppose him to employ *several* fables—that is, a fable composed of *several actions*⁸—his imitation is no longer *strictly one*. The *Iliad*, for example, and the *Odyssey* contain many such subordinate parts, each of which has a certain magnitude, and unity,
of

⁷ See p. 59, Note 5.

⁸ Compare *Part II. Sect. 20*, and *Note 9*.—Aristotle is not here speaking of that unconnected, *historical* multiplicity of action, which he had before condemned, [*Part III. Sect. 1.*] but of such as was *essential* to the nature of the Epic Poem. This is plain, from the *example*, which immediately follows; and, indeed, from the very drift of his argument.

of its own: yet is the construction of those Poems as perfect, and as nearly approaching to the imitation of a single action, as possible.

IV.

If then TRAGEDY be superior to the EPIC in all these respects, and, also, in the peculiar *end* at which it aims⁹, (for each species ought to afford, not *any* sort of pleasure indiscriminately, but such only as has been pointed out,) it evidently follows, that TRAGEDY, as it attains more effectually the end of the *art itself*, must deserve the preference.

PREFER-
ENCE
of
TRAGEDY.

AND THUS MUCH CONCERNING TRAGIC and EPIC Poetry in *general*, and their several *species*—the *number* and the *differences* of their *parts*—the causes of their *beauties* and their *defects*—the *censures* of critics, and the principles on which they are to be *answered*.

CONCLU-
SION.

⁹ i.e. according to Aristotle's principles, to give "that pleasure, which arises from terror and pity, through imitation." See p. 139.

N O T E S.

NOTE 1.

P. 101. DITHYRAMBICS—IMITATION.

IF the senses, in which the term *imitation* is applied by Aristotle to Poetry, have been rightly determined in the first Dissertation, there can be no difficulty with respect to the *imitative* nature of the Epic and Dramatic species. That of the Dithyrambic is not quite so obvious, and has accordingly been variously explained. The little, however, that remains of what Aristotle had said upon this subject, seems sufficient to release any commentator, who is willing to be released, from the trouble of conjectural ingenuity. In *Sect. 3. Part I.* where the different *objects* of imitation are considered, he expressly makes Dithyrambic Poetry imitative of *actions*, characters, and manners, as well as the Epic and Dramatic; and he, particularly, mentions the Persians and the Cyclops as *imitated* in the

Dithyrambic and Nomic Poetry of Timotheus and Philoxenus^a. We may conclude, then, that he regarded this kind of Poetry as *imitative* because, though the mythological tales, which furnished the subject of these hymns, were, indeed, articles of Pagan faith, and depended not on the Poet's imagination, yet, in the *detail* of these stories, in describing the actions, and delineating the characters, of the deities themselves, and, still more, of other fabulous and heroic personages occasionally introduced, his fancy and invention must necessarily be, more or less, employed. This, as we have seen, was, in Aristotle's view, *imitation*; whether the form of that imitation was partly *dramatic* and personative, or mere *recital* in the person of the Poet^b. That the Poetry of these Dithyrambic compositions was chiefly of the latter kind, seems to be implied in the expression of Plato, who, where he explains his division of Poetry into *three* sorts—the *purely imitative*, or dramatic, the *purely narrative*, and the *mixed*—refers, for an example of the purely narrative, to Dithyrambic Poetry. Yet he says only, that it is to be found *chiefly* there—ἐν τοῖς δ' αὖ αὐτὴν ΜΑΛΙΣΤΑ ΠΟΥ ἐν Διθυραμβοῖς^c. The expression is remarkable, and leaves room for more than a conjecture, that

^a — ὡς ΠΕΡΣΑΣ καὶ ΚΥΚΛΩΠΑΣ Τιμοθεῦς καὶ Φιλοξένου.

^b Diss. I. p. 36.

^c Rep. lib. iii. p. 394

that the Dithyrambic was sometimes imitative even in the strict sense of Plato; that is, that the dramatic mixture of the Epic was occasionally admitted. Instances of this occur in the Odes of Pindar^d; and many of the Odes of Horace are dramatic^e.

The embarrassment of the commentators seems to have arisen, principally, from the difficulty they found in conceiving, that *fiction* could be admitted into a species of Poetry addressed to the Gods, and founded on the established Theology of the age. The hymns of Callimachus, and those attributed to Homer, might have been sufficient to remove this difficulty. These are not, like the *Orphic* hymns, mere invocations, and *indigitamenta*, consisting in a short and solemn accumulation of epithets and attributes: they are *Epic, narrative hymns*; in which the birth, the actions, and even the characters and manners of the

^d *Olymp.* I. *Antist.* γ, where Pelops speaks. See also *Olymp.* VI. *Epode* α, and γ.—*Olymp.* VIII. *Ep.* β.— And the prophecy of Amphiaraus, in *Pyth.* VIII. *Strophe* γ.— and of Medea, *Pyth.* IV. *Antist.* α, to *Antist.* γ.—The Odes of Pindar, indeed, are not *strictly* Dithyrambic Poetry; but the chief difference was probably that of their *subjects*.

^e See Dr. Warton's *Essay* on Pope, vol. ii. 44, &c. where the beauties of those dramatic Odes, and particularly of the fifth *Epode*, are pointed out and illustrated with much taste.

the deities are described at length, and the fictions of the Poet's imagination are every where engrafted upon the popular creed. The mixture of dramatic imitation, in the Dithyrambic Poetry, is also rendered more probable by the frequent examples of it in these hymns; and especially in those of Homer. From the enthusiastic, wild, *audacious* character^f *peculiarly* attributed to the Bacchic hymns, we have, surely, no reason to suppose in *them* a degree of scruple and reserve, with respect to all this, which we do not find in other antient religious compositions of a more sober and regular cast.

After what has been said, the reader will hardly think it necessary to have recourse to so distant and conjectural an interpretation as that of the Abbé Battoux, who says—"Le
 " Dithyrambe est *imitation*, parceque le Poete,
 " en le composant, exprime d'apres le vraisem-
 " blable, les *sentimens*, les transports, l'ivresse,
 " qui doit regner dans le Dithyrambe^g. This ingenious writer seems to have been forced into this solution of the matter by his desire of extending the principle of Poetic imitation beyond the limits, not only of Aristotle's meaning, but of all reasonable analogy. *All* Lyric Poetry he holds to be *essentially* imitative; and defining it to be that Poetry, "*qui exprime le*
 " *senti-*

^f "*Audaces Dithyrambos.*" *Hor.*

^g Ch. i. of his translation;—*note*, under the text.

sentiment^h," he is reduced to the necessity of making out these *sentiments*, or *feelings*, to be, in some sort, *imitations*; for no other reason, than, that they are assumed and feigned—the temporary produce of that voluntary enthusiasm which the Poet, by the force of his imagination, excites in himself during the moments of composition. But this belongs rather to the style and manner, than to the matter, of Poetry: if *imitation* at all, it is the imitation, not, properly, of the *Poet*, but of the *man*, in order to *become* the Poet.—The general character of Lyric Poetry is enthusiasm; and enthusiasm, says M. Batteux, "n'est autre chose qu'un sentiment " *quel qu'il soit*—amour, colere, joie, admiration, tristesse, &c.—produit par une ideeⁱ." But if all illusive feelings of this kind, raised in us by imagination, are *imitations*, then, not only every artist of genius is an imitator, when he conceives and plans his work, but even every man of sensibility, whenever he is led, by the voluntary excursions of his fancy, into warm and passionate feelings, that are not prompted by *real* circumstances.—It is certain, indeed, that not only Dithyrambic and Lyric Poetry, but Epic also, and perhaps every other species worth regarding,

^h See his *Beaux Arts reduits à un même principe*, ch. on *Lyric Poetry*: and vol. iii. of his *Principes de la littérature*, ch. i. *Traité 6*.

ⁱ *Principes de la Lit. Traité 6. ch. i.*

regarding, has its appropriated style and tone, which every Poet adopts and *imitates*, when he composes in the kind to which it belongs. But the same may be said of a history, a sermon, and even of a letter: for in these also, though we may not imitate any particular writer, we naturally conform to the general style and manner that characterize the particular species of composition. All this however has, manifestly, nothing to do with the *imitation* that we are considering.

The Lyric Poet is not always, and essentially, an *imitator*, any more than the Epic. While he is merely expressing his own *sentiments*, in his own *person*, we consider him not as imitating;—we inquire not whether they are the assumed sentiments of the Poetic character, or the real sentiments of the writer himself; we do not even think of any such distinction. He is understood to *imitate*, in the most *general* view, no otherwise than by *fiction*, by *personation*, by *description*, or by *sound*^k; in the view of Aristotle, only by the *two first* of these.

I will only add, that the Dithyrambic Poetry was, it seems, not originally imitative, but became so by degrees. This fact, and the causes of it, we learn from a curious passage, in the Harmonic Problems of Aristotle, which I shall have occasion to mention in another place. [P. 267]

^k See *Dissert. I.* p. 32.

NOTE 2.

P. 102. FOR AS MEN, SOME THROUGH ART, AND SOME THROUGH HABIT, IMITATE VARIOUS OBJECTS, &c.

I have followed the old and most authentic reading, *δια της ΦΩΝΗΣ*: which, though not unexceptionable, has been rejected, I think, without sufficient reason. The philosopher is, here, only illustrating what he had said of the different *means* of poetical and musical imitation, by comparing those arts, in this respect, with other arts more *strictly* and *obviously imitative*. That he meant to confine his illustration to Painting, was a groundless fancy of Dacier, which led him into two unnecessary corrections of the text, and a very forced and improbable explication of the whole passage. The remark of Aristotle, parenthetically flung in, about *art* and *habit*, (*οἱ μὲν δια τεχνῆς, οἱ δὲ δια συνήθειας*), was by no means *necessary* to his illustration. Dacier extends the parenthesis by the reading he adopts, (*οἱ μὲν δια τεχνῆς, οἱ δὲ δια συνήθειας, ἕτεροι δὲ ΔΙ' ΑΜΦΟΙΝ*), then wonders, why Aristotle, “qui n'écrit pas un seul mot “inutilement,” should enter into such a detail; and then, wantonly alters the text, (from *δια τεχνῆς*, to *δια ΤΥΧΗΣ*), in order to account for it in a manner, that leaves it more wonderful than he found it. Castelvetro had before proposed a

a similar alteration—*ἕτεροι δὲ ἀμφοτέροισι*; but in a sense, which, could it be supported, would be far more to the purpose than that of Dacier: i. e. “others, again, [imitate] *both* by colour “and by figure.” This would answer to what follows,—that the different *means* of imitation, in the Poetical and Musical arts, were used, sometimes *separately*, and sometimes *combined*. To this sense, however, an objection immediately occurs. We may imitate an object by figure without colour, but not by colour without figure. This difficulty, indeed, Castelvetro endeavours to get rid of, by understanding *σχηματα*, here, to denote only the *solid form* of Sculpture, and *χρωματα*, Painting, as *chiefly* characterized by colour; and, thus, for an example of imitation by *both* those means, he is forced to have recourse to the coloured Sculpture of the antients^a. But it

^a That the antients sometimes coloured their statues, is well known. From many passages which might be produced as proofs, I shall select one from Plato, which is curious, and would be, alone, decisive. It is in the beginning of his 4th book *De Repub.*—It had been objected, that, by the severity of his laws relating to his *φύλακες* or magistrates, they were reduced to a worse condition, with respect to happiness, than the rest of the citizens. His answer is, that the aim of his legislation was, not to provide for the superior happiness of any *one part* of his commonwealth, but for the greatest possible happiness of the *whole*. “Suppose,” says

it would be a waste of discussion to enter fully into the merits of an explanation, that is founded on a reading, by no means, I think, sufficiently warranted, either by the authority of MSS. or by any necessity of alteration.

That the words *χρωματα* and *σχηματα* are very frequently joined by the Greek writers to denote painting, is certain^b. But Aristotle is not here speaking of the different *Arts* which employ these *means* of imitation, but of the *means* themselves,

Socrates, “ we were *painting a statue*; and any one
 “ should come, and object to us, as a fault, that we did
 “ not apply the most beautiful colours to the most
 “ beautiful parts of the body—that we had made the
 “ *eyes*, for instance, *black*, when we should have given
 “ them, as being the chief beauty of the human form,
 “ a *purple* colour.—It would,” continues Socrates, “ be
 “ a very reasonable apology, if we should request this
 “ critic not to insist on our making the eyes so beautiful,
 “ as to have no longer the appearance of eyes; but to
 “ consider, only, whether, by giving to each *part* its
 “ *proper* colour, we should not make the *whole* beau-
 “ tiful.—This is precisely the apology I make for our
 “ legislation: I request the objector, not to insist on our
 “ allotting to the guardians of the state *such* a happiness,
 “ as would render them *any thing* else rather than
 “ *guardians*,” &c. *Plato De Rep. lib. iv. p. 420. C.*
Ed. Ser. Ωσπερ ἐν ἀν εἰ—&c.

^b See *Arist. de Rep. lib. viii. cap. 5. p. 455. C.*
Plat. de Rep. x. p. 601. A. De Leg. ii. p. 669. A.

selves, separately and abstractedly. The application of these, singly, or in their various combinations, to those arts, he has left to the reader. It seems probable, (as Victorius has observed,) that Sculpture, at least, was included in Aristotle's idea of *σχηματα*. Possibly, too, the word may be here used in its widest sense, of *figure* or *form* in general; which would take in the *outline* of Painting, the *solid* figure of Sculpture^c, and the *gestures* of the personal Mimic.

That, at least, the word *φωνη* is right, in the old reading, appears highly probable from the frequent mention of the voice, as a principal instrument of imitation, in antient authors^d. It is called by Aristotle, as Mr. Winstanley has judiciously observed, *παντων μιμητικωτατου των μοριων ημιν*^e.

Farther—by this reading the illustration intended is more perfect, as it comprehends more “*means of different kinds*”—*ΓΕΝΕΙ ΕΤΕΡΑ*. The same reason favours also the extension of the word *σχηματα* to Sculpture, at least.

The only objection to the reading, *δια της φωνης*, is, the improbability that Aristotle should, without

^c *Σχημα* is defined by Socrates, in the *ΜΕΝΟ* of Plato, to be, *περας στερες*—“the boundary of *solid* form.”

^d See *Diss.* I. towards the end, *Note*¹. *Victorius* defends the reading on the same ground.

^e *Rhet.* lib. iii. cap. I. § 4.

without any apparent reason, envelop the whole passage in embarrassment and ambiguity, by such a change of phrase:—ΔΙΑ φωνης;—which every reader is naturally led to join, not with the datives, χρωμασι και σχημασι, but with ΔΙΑ τεχνης, and ΔΙΑ συνθηεις: but the word φωνης opposing such a construction, has therefore, probably, been changed to ἀμφου.—This objection has not been solidly answered, I think, either by Victorious, or any other commentator; nor can I think the *change* of phrase here by any means sufficiently accounted for, merely by assigning, as Victorious does, a passage of *Lucian*, where the *phrase itself*, (to which no one objects,) occurs. [See Mr. Winstanley's note.]—I am much inclined, therefore, to admit the reading said by Madius to have been found in an antient MS. and confirming the conjecture of Robortelli,—*ἕτεροι δὲ τῆς ΦΩΝΗΣ*. This would clearly mark the bounds of the parenthesis, and fix the construction: *και χρωμασι, και σχημασι, πολλα μιμνυται τινες — (————) ἕτεροι δὲ τῆς φωνῆς*.

NOTE 3.

P. 102. AND OF ANY OTHER INSTRUMENTS CAPABLE OF A SIMILAR EFFECT, AS, THE SYRINX OR PIPE.

The word Συριγξ is usually understood to mean the *Fistula Panis*, constructed of reeds, differing

differing in length, fastened together with wax and thread:—καλαμων συνθηκη, λινω και κηρω συνδεθεισα— as it is described by Jul. Pollux^a. Tibullus has presented in two lines almost as distinct an idea of its form as can be obtained from a drawing.

Fistula cui *semper decrescit arundinis ordo,*
Nam calamus cerâ jungitur *usque minor.*

[Lib. ii. 5. 31.]

But the Συριγγί of Aristotle, whatever it was, is here mentioned with the Lyre, and the Flute, as having some, though an inferior, degree of the same *power* and *effect*:—τοιαιυται την δυναμιν. This is hardly applicable to so very simple and rude an instrument as the pipe of Pan; a contrivance not beyond the invention of a school-boy. Instruments of nearly the same construction are found, at this day, not only in Turkey, and Arabia, but even in the island of New Amsterdam in the South Seas^b; and it is a circumstance somewhat curious, that, in France, the instrument of the Arcadian deity, or something very like it, is degraded to the use of travelling tinkers, and known by the name of *sifflet de chaudronnier*. The reader may see a description and a figure of it in Mersennus^c; as he may, also, of the South Sea instrument in the Philosophical Transactions, vol. 65, Part I.—But he will not, probably, be
much

^a *Onomast. lib. iv. cap. 9.*

^b Dr. Burney's *Hist. of Music, vol. i. p. 511.*

^c *Harmonic. p. 73.*

much disposed to believe, that the wild and random sounds of this savage whistle have any thing to do with the chromatic system of the Greeks.

But the passage before us is not the only one, where the *Syrinx* is mentioned in a way which naturally leads one to suppose, that some instrument less simple and imperfect than the fistula Panis must be meant. It is often joined with the cithara and the flute, as an instrument of some importance and effect in concerts and choral accompaniments^d. In Lucian's treatise Περὶ Ορχηστῶν, it appears, among other curious information upon the subject, that the words of the drama, which the pantomimic dancer was to express by gesture alone, were, at the same time, sung by a chorus, accompanied by various instruments, among which the syrx is repeatedly mentioned, together with the Αὐλῶν or flute^e. This has, certainly, the appearance of some more powerful instrument than the pastoral syrx.—Indeed, from the passage of Pollux above referred to, there is reason to conclude, that there were two instruments of this denomination; that above described, which he calls the *rude*, or *extemporaneous* syrx, [αὐτοσχέδον] and another,
of

^d See Spanheim, in Callimachum—Hymn. in Dianam, v. 243.

^e *Ed. Benedicti*, p. 942, E.—938, D, E.—945, B.

of similar form, but more artificial construction, which he describes as consisting, not of *reeds*, but of a number of *flutes*, [αὐλοὶ πολλοὶ] arranged in the same manner. The passage is defective; but this seems to me pretty clearly to be the drift of it^f. By flutes, he must, at least, be supposed to mean pipes of larger size, and of more solid materials, such as those of which flutes were made.

It seems, on the whole, very probable, that the syrinx of Aristotle was *either* some such improved construction of the flute of Pan, or, as I rather incline to believe, some kind of single pipe, or flageolet. *Any* single pipe, modulated by the fingers, must be regarded as an instrument far superior to any kind of the fistula Panis, that could be played on only by the clumsy expedient of drawing it along the mouth;—“suprà calamos “ unco percurrere labro,” as Lucretius has well described the operation^g. I cannot indeed say, that

^f The passage should, I think, be written as defective, thus: ἡ μὲν ἔν, (sc. συριγξ,) καλαμῶν ἐστὶ συνθήκη λινῶν καὶ κηρῶ συνδεδεῖσα, ἠγε αὐτοσχέδι⊕. * * * * * ΑΥΛΟΙ πολλοὶ, ἕκαστ⊕ ἢ. τ. ἀλλ.—Salmasius supplied the hiatus thus:—ΑΛΛ’ Ἡ ΣΠΟΥΔΑΙΟΤΕΡΑ, αὐλοὶ πολλοὶ, &c.—I would not answer for the very words; but that something equivalent is omitted, I have little doubt. See *Ed. Hempst.* p. 387. *Note* 43.—where, by the way, Kuhnius commends the emendation, but appears to misunderstand it.

^g *Lib.* v. 1406.

that I have met with any passage in which the word *Συριγξ*, by itself, is *clearly* and *expressly* applied to a *single* musical pipe or flute. But such a sense is perfectly analogous to other common applications of the word^h; and, on the other hand, I know of no clear authority that restrains the meaning of the word, whenever it is singly used, to the fistula Panis. Athenæus speaks of the *μονοκαλαμῶς Συριγξ* invented by Mercury, and opposes it to the *πολυκαλαμῶς*ⁱ; and Spanheim^k, whose authority, in matters of erudition, is as great as the profoundest erudition can give to any man, understands this single-reed-syrinx to be meant in the hymn to Mercury attributed to Homer, where it is said of that god, that—

ΣΥΡΙΓΓΩΝ ἔνοσσην ποιήσατο ΤΗΛΟΘ΄
 ΑΚΟΥΣΤΗΝ. v. 509.

—a mode of characterizing the tone of the instrument, that reminds one of the “ear-piercing life” of Shakspeare.

After all, a modern reader may be still surprised to find any degree of *imitation*, or *expression*, attributed to so trifling an instrument as a flageolet,

^h Vide Lexica : and see Dr. Burney’s Hist of Music, vol. i. p. 511, where it is rightly observed, that “each of the pipes” which composed the fistula Panis, “was, properly, a *Συριγξ*.”

ⁱ P. 184.

^k Ubi suprâ.

flageolet, or a common flute. But, in reading antient authors, it is frequently necessary, if we would either relish, or even understand them, properly, to lay aside modern ideas. And if this be necessary in general, it is, perhaps, peculiarly so in the subject of Music. *Expression*, in our musical language, usually conveys the idea of delicate and refined performance, and is almost appropriated to emotions of the tender and pathetic kind. But, with the antients, *imitation*, or *expression* (for the words appear to have been synonymous¹;) extended to every kind of emotion; to every *effect* produced, in any considerable degree, by Music upon the mind. Now very simple instruments, as well as very simple music, are capable of making impressions, and *strong* impressions, of the *joyous* kind, without any delicacy or refinement, either in the composition, or the execution. It is not, therefore, strange, that the syrinx, a shrill and lively pipe, should be ranked by Aristotle as an instrument of *some* expression; especially if, as it seems probable, the syrinx, of *whatever* kind, was considered as a *pastoral* instrument, and its expressions were, in consequence, aided by the association of rural and pastoral ideas^m. The rude syrinx of Pan
was

¹ See Diss. II.

^m " One of the most affecting styles in music is the pastoral. Some airs," [we may add, and those *instruments*,

was unquestionably of this kind, and appropriated to pastoral useⁿ; and, as far as it can be supposed to have affected by association, *might*, in the musical language of the Greeks, and by a hearer who *felt* that effect from it, be considered and spoken of as *imitative*, without impropriety. But being, as I conceive, of too simple and inconvenient a construction to admit of any expression but what it derived purely from associated ideas, it would not, I think, have been joined by Aristotle with the *most* expressive and *refined* instruments of the ancients, the *cithara*, and the *flute*^o, and mentioned as of “*similar power and effect.*”

ments, also, on which we have been used to hear those airs performed,] “put us in mind of the country, of “*rural sights and rural sounds*, and dispose the heart to “that chearful tranquillity, that pleasing melancholy, “that “*vernal delight*,” which groves and streams, “flocks and herds, hills and vallies, inspire.” Dr. Beattie — *Essay on Poetry and Music*, p. 142.

ⁿ Plato, *Rep.* iii. p. 399. *Serran.*

^o Aristotle, in the 8th book *De Republicâ*, cap. vi. where he is considering what instruments should be used in the musical education of children, excludes the *cithara*, as too complicated and difficult for any but professors. He calls it *τεχνικον ὄργανον*, and ranks it with the *αὐλὴ* or flute. Plato, however, admits the use of the *cithara* in his republic, as a *more* simple instrument than the flute, which he forbids. [*Rep.* iii. *ubi supra.*] For some idea of the delicacy and refinement of execution, and force of expression, expected from the accomplished *Ἀρχηγῆς*, I refer the reader to the *Harmonides* of Lucian, and to a passage in Philostratus, *Ed. Morel.* p. 228.

NOTE 4.

P. 102. FOR THERE ARE DANCERS WHO BY RHYTHM APPLIED TO GESTURE - - -.

The Greek is—οἱ τῶν ὀρχησῶν: but there is great reason to suspect the reading. It is generally rendered, “*Some dancers:*” but Victorius, who understands it in that sense, says—*durus tamen sermo*; and produces no authority for such a phrase. Heinsius proposed—οἱ ΠΟΛΛΟΙ τῶν ὀρχησῶν. The learned reader may, perhaps, agree with me, that—ΕΝΙΟΙ τῶν ὀρχησῶν, would be preferable, as nearer to the text. It is not probable, that the degree of imitative skill here described was possessed by *all* dancers, or even by “*the greater part*” of them. A passage from Aristocles is preserved by Athenæus, in which Telstes, a dancer employed by Æschylus, is mentioned as *remarkable* for this talent:—ΟΥΤΩΣ ΗΝ ΤΕΧΝΙΤΗΣ, ὥς, ἐν τῷ ὀρχεῖσθαι τῆς ἑπτα ἔπει Θεβας, φανερά ποιεῖσθαι τὰ πράγματα δι’ ὀρχησεως. [*Athen. p. 22.*] This dancing appears plainly to have been of that *kind*, which was afterwards pushed to such an excess of cultivation by the *pantomimic* dancers in the age of Augustus²; and which is well known to have divided all
Rome

² — κατὰ τὸν ΣΕΒΑΣΤΟΝ μαλιστα’ αἱ μὲν γὰρ πρῶται ἔκειναι [sc. ὀρχησεῖς] ὡς περ τινες ρίζαι καὶ θεμελιοὶ τῆς Ὀρχησεως ἦσαν.—*Lucian. de Salt. p. 927. Ed. Bened.*

Rome into parties, and even, frequently, to have made the theatre a scene of bloodshed^b. Of this fact, I cannot help adding, that a proof somewhat curious is furnished by Valerius Maximus; who, in the arrangement of his miscellaneous work, places his chapter *De Spectaculis*, immediately after that, *De militaribus institutis*; and gives this reason: “*Proximus militaribus institutis, ad urbana castra, id est, Theatra, gradus faciendus est: quoniam hæc quoque, sæpenumero, animosas acies instruxerunt; excogitataque cultûs Deorum, et hominum delectationis, causâ, non sine aliquo pacis rubore, voluptatem et religionem CIVILI SANGUINE, scenicorum portentorum gratiâ, maculârunt.*” [*Lib. ii. 4.*]—These *scenica portenta* were the Pantomimes.

Aristotle says here, *δια των σχηματιζομενων ρυθμων*. It seems, at first view, that the inverse of this expression would have been more accurate—*δια των ρυθμιζομενων σχηματων*—by *rhythmic gestures*. And, if he had been here considering the imitation of *Dance*, separately, and in itself, he probably would have expressed himself in that way. But dancing is here transiently mentioned, merely to exemplify what he had been saying, of the *combined*, or *separate*, use of *rhythm*, *words*, and *melody*; and to shew, in what manner, not only melody and rhythm might be separated from words, as in *music*; but *rhythm*, also, might be separated

^b See *Tacit.* and *Sucton. passim.*

separated from *melody*, and used alone^c. Any mode of expression, therefore, which would have represented *gestures* (σχήματα) as the principal *means* of the imitation, would not have suited his purpose. It would, also, as *Victorius* and others have observed, have tended to confound the *means* of imitation in the poetic and musical arts, which he is here considering, with those means of a *different kind*, which he had just enumerated, as employed in arts of more obvious and strict imitation, and among which ΣΧΗΜΑΤΑ were mentioned.

It has been also objected, that Aristotle is, here, professedly instancing ἐν ταῖς ΕΙΡΗΜΕΝΑΙΣ ΤΕΧΝΑΙΣ—in the arts “*above-mentioned*”—and yet introduces *Dancing*, which had *not* been mentioned: a difficulty easily overcome, if we consider, that *Dancing* was among the *musical* arts; closely connected with *Poetry*, and, above all, with *Tragedy*.

^c For such an instance, he could have recourse only to *Dance*; and so *Arist. Quintil.*—ῥυθμῶ δὲ ΚΑΘ' ΑΥΤΟΝ ΜΕΝ [ῥοιταί] ἐπι ΨΙΑΗΣ ΟΡΧΗΣΕΩΣ. The whole passage, where he is considering *melody*, *rhythm*, and *words*, in their separate use, and in their various combinations, is curious, and may serve to illustrate this part of Aristotle's treatise.—See p. 31, 32. *Ed. Meib.*

NOTE 5.

P. 102. THE ΕΠΟΠΟΕΙΑ IMITATES BY WORDS ALONE, OR BY VERSE, &c.

In my translation of this perplexing passage, as far as the words — ποιειτο την μιμησιν — inclusively, I have given that sense which is now generally adopted, and in which almost all the commentators are agreed^a. And it has certainly *this* advantage, that it seems to be the only consistent and intelligible version that can be given of the *whole* passage, as it *now* stands. But it appears to me, after the closest attention I have been able to give it, that, in the present condition of the text, no man can reasonably be confident of conveying the true meaning of Aristotle in *any* translation or explanation that he can give.

The passage sets out with an expression most unfortunately ambiguous, and demonstrated to be so, by the very confidence with which the ambiguity has been denied, by critics and commentators of great learning and sagacity, in favour of interpretations directly opposite to each other. Some, by the expression, λογους ψιλοις, have understood Aristotle to mean *prose*, and others, *verse, without music*.—But this is far from being all the difficulty with which a translator has to struggle
in

^a Madius, Beni, Piccolomini, Heinsius, Dacier, Batteux.

in this passage. In the words—εἶθ' ἐνὶ τινὶ γένει
 ΧΡΩΜΕΝΗ ΤΩΝ ΜΕΤΡΩΝ ΤΥΓΧΑΝΘΑ ΜΕΧΡΙ ΤΟΥ
 ΝΥΝ—there is, surely, something defective. All
 render this,—“*or, making use of some one kind*
 “*of metre, AS IT HAS DONE to this day*”^b.” And
 this, indeed, seems the only sense that can be
 given to the words as they stand. But it appears
 to me, that the original cannot, by any fair and
 warranted elliptical construction, be made to
 say this. Heinsius alone gives the fair and
 literal version; “*vel uno tantum genere utatur*
 “*usque ad tempus nostrum*”—in plain English—
 “*whether mixing different metres together, or*
 “*using some one kind of metre to this day*”^c.”
 I am perfectly aware of the elliptical genius of
 the Greek language in general, and of Aristotle’s
 style, in particular; yet to my ears, I confess,
 this English, nonsensical as it is, does not sound
 more strange than the Greek from which it is
 taken. Some word, or words, must, I should
 suppose, have been omitted between *τυγχανθα*,
 and, *μεχρι*.

Again :

^b “*Aut uno aliquo metrorum genere usa sit, quod à*
 “*priscis temporibus ad nostrum usque factitatum est.*”
 Goulston.—“*Ou qu’elle se contente d’une seule espece,*
 “*comme elle l’a fait jusq’ à present.*” Dacier.—And so
 Piccolomini, “*Per quello che si vede fare sino ai tempi*
 “*d’oggi.*”

^c It is so rendered, I find, by the English translator of
 1775; “*either intermixing the various metres, or, using*
 “*one particular sort to this very day.*”

Again: — ἔδεν γαρ ἂν ἔχοιμεν ONOMΑΣΑΙ
 KOINON τῆς Σωφροῦ^Ϟ και Ξεναρχῆς μιμῆς, &c.—
 I submit it to those who are versed in the Greek
 language, whether it seems probable, that, if
 Aristotle had meant to express the sense usually
 given to the words, (i. e. “ for we should other-
 “ wise *have no common name to give to,*” &c.) he
 would have expressed it in *that* Greek? I can
 only say that I know of no similar example.
 But farther: the words are *conditional*—ἔδεν γαρ
 AN ἔχοιμεν—and yet the *condition* is by no means
 clearly pointed out. The sense may be, and has
 been, variously supplied. It seems not impro-
 bable, that there is some omission between the
 words, νυν, and ἔδεν.—I am not able entirely to
 repel a suspicion—for I give it as nothing more—
 that the words, μεχρι τῆς νυν, may belong to *this*
 sentence, and the whole may originally have stood
 thus:—εἴτε μιγνυσα μετ’ ἀλλήλων, εἰθ’ ἐνι τινι γενεῆ
 χρωμενη των μετρων τυγχανουσα. Μεχρι ΓΑΡ τῆς νυν
 ἔδεν EXOMEN, &c. i. e. “ For *we have hitherto* no
 “ common appellation^d,” &c.—So much, as to
 the condition of the *text* in this passage.

The interpretation, which I have followed, has
 been very ably defended by several of the com-
 mentators, whose arguments I need not repeat;
 by none, I think, so powerfully as by Paolo Beni:
 but

^d I have only transposed γαρ, and omitted ἂν, for which
 omission there is MS. authority.

^e *Comment. in Aristotelis Poeticam, Partic. 6.*

but it requires considerable patience to follow him through the controversial *zigzag* of his captious and fatiguing logic.

The strongest support furnished by Aristotle himself to this extension of the term *Epopœia* to *all imitation, fiction, invention, &c. by words only, without music, whether in verse or prose*, is, I think, to be found in *Sect. 6, Part I. [Original, cap. ix.]* For, if a history put into verse would, as he there asserts, be still a *sort* of history, we may infer, that an Epic Poem reduced to prose would, in *his* idea, have been still a *sort*, at least, of Poem.—What he says in the conclusion of that *section*—that the Poet should be the Ποιητής, or *Maker*, rather of his fable, than of his verse, has the same aspect.—The same idea is also favoured by the extent which he *has* actually given to the term *Epopœia*, in *Sect. 3, Part I. [Original, cap. ii.]* where it is expressly applied, not only to the serious Poetry of Homer, but to Poems of a comic, and even burlesque, character. An *Epic Poem* without elevation is, nearly, as repugnant to modern ideas as a *Poem* without verse. It would not appear much more strange to give the title of *Epic Poem* to Tom Jones, than to Hudibras; to apply it to the *Telemaque*, would, undoubtedly, appear much *less* strange^f.

It

^f Itaque video visum esse nonnullis, Platonis & Democriti locutionem, *etsi absit à versu*, tamen, quòd

It may be worth remarking, farther, that there is one circumstance, which, I think, would evidently tend to render this doctrine of Aristotle—if it *was* his doctrine—less extraordinary to the ancients, than it appears to us; and that is, that the difference between metre, and well-measured prose, though, no doubt, sufficient to make them readily distinguished by the ear, seems to have been less than it is with us. To what a degree of refinement they carried their rules for the application of the various poetical feet to their prose compositions, and with what fastidious delicacy of ear they discriminated one combination of syllables from another, is well known from the writings of Cicero, Quintilian, Dion. Halicarnassensis, &c.—It would be thought a strange expression, were a modern writer to say, comparing the Orator and the Poet, that the latter was “*rather more confined by numbers:*” “*num-
meris adstrictior paulo*.”

But,

incitatiùs feratur, et clarissimis verborum luminibus utatur, *potius* POEMA *putandum* quam comicorum Poetarum, apud quos, *nisi quod versiculi sunt*, nihil est aliud quotidiani dissimile sermonis. *Cic. Orat. cap. xx.*

‡ *Cic. de Orat. i. 16.* — So, again, *Or. ad Brutum*, cap. lxxvi. speaking of prose compared with verse, he says, “*at liberior aliquantò oratio.*”—To the same purpose *ibid. cap. xx.* Nam etiam Poetæ quæstionem attulerunt, quidnam esset illud quo ipsi differrent ab oratoribus. Numero maximè videbantur *antea*, et versu; *nunc* apud oratores jam *ipse numerus increbuit*,

But, after all, the chief point of difficulty appears to me to lie, not in Aristotle's asserting, that *Poetry*, in *his* idea of the word, might subsist without verse, but in his giving the name of *Epopæia* to such compositions as the *Mimes* of Sophron, and the *Dialogues* of Plato. But of this, in the next note.

In my translation of the words, *λογοις ψιλοις*, I have ventured to depart from the common interpretation; but without any material change in the sense. They are generally understood to mean *prose*; and Dacier asserts positively, that, "those two words are *never* joined by Aristotle " or Plato in any other sense^h." If he meant, that, wherever *ψιλ*⊕ is joined to *λογ*⊕, it is always used to exclude *metre* only, he is certainly mistaken. He had, himself, but just before, quoted a passage of Plato, in which the expression, *λογοι ψιλοι*, appears clearly to mean, words *without melody*. It is in his second book *De Legibus*, where, complaining, in his usual strain, of the separation of Poetry and Music, he says of the Poets, that they employ *ῥυθμον μεν και ῥήματα*ⁱ

Μελος

^h *Ch. i. Note 22.*

ⁱ I have ventured to alter the word *σχηματα* to *ῥήματα*; a correction, which, I think, the learned reader will see to be obviously necessary, from the purport and expression of the whole passage. The opposition is clear—*ῥυθμον μεν και ΡΗΜΑΤΑ μελος χωρις*—*μελ*⊕ δ' ΑΥ και *ῥυθμος ἀνευ ΡΗΜΑΤΩΝ*.

ΜΕΛΟΣ χωρῖς, ΛΟΓΟΣ ΨΙΛΟΣ ΕΙΣ ΜΕΤΡΑ ΤΙΘΕΝΤΕΣ· μέλος δ' αὐ καὶ ῥυθμὸς ἀνευ ῥημάτων, ψιλὴ κιθαρῖσει τε καὶ αὐλῆσει προσχρωμένοι^κ. The words, λογὸς ψιλὸς εἰς μετρά τιθεντες, Dacier translates, very strangely, “mettant de la simple prose “en vers.” But what has turning prose into verse to do with Plato's complaint?—ψιλοὶ, here, applied to λόγοι, answers evidently to μέλος χωρῖς, and excludes melody; just as, in ψιλὴ κιθαρῖσει καὶ αὐλῆσει, the same adjective answers to ἀνευ ῥημάτων, and excludes words¹. And this appears to me to be the obvious sense of ψιλοῖς in the passage of Aristotle before us. By λόγοις ψιλοῖς, I understand—not, words *without metre*, i. e. Prose—but, words *without music*. It is, surely, most natural, and most to Aristotle's purpose, to apply the privative force of ψιλῶ, here, to the two means of imitation, melody and rhythm; which are excluded in the Epopœia, as words are, in the preceding instance of the flute and the lyre, and both words and music, in that of dance. And thus

^κ Ed. Serr. vol. ii. p. 669.

¹ I find this very passage mentioned by Casaubon, *De Satyrâ*, &c. p. 346, with the same explanation of λογὸς ψιλὸς.—This is not the only instance in Plato that contradicts the assertion of Dacier. In a passage of his Symposium, cited by Victorius, [Ed. Serr. p. 215.] the words—ἀνευ ὀργάνων, ψιλοῖς λόγοις—are, I think, rightly rendered by Serranus, “Sine ullis instrumentis, assâ tantùm simplicique voce.”

thus he *has* actually used the word, in the compound $\psi\iota\lambda\omicron\mu\epsilon\tau\rho\iota\alpha$, in the next chapter. The only difference is, that there he has joined the word $\psi\iota\lambda\omicron$ to metre; here, to *words* in general. But in both places, the meaning is probably the same—i. e. “without *melody* and *rhythm*.”

The word $\lambda\omicron\gamma\omicron$ is, plainly, used by Aristotle, in his first enumeration of the *means* of imitation, [—ἐν Ρυθμῷ καὶ Λογῷ καὶ Ἀρμονίᾳ. *cap.* i.] in the general sense, of language, discourse, or *words*, whether with, or without metre; as we say, “the *words* of a song,” &c. as opposed to the music^m; and that, whether those words are verse, as in general they are, or prose, as in the songs of the *Messiah*, and in the anthems of our church. And, that the word $\lambda\omicron\gamma\omicron$ was purposely used by Aristotle in this latitude, is rendered highly probable by his varying the expression, where he speaks of Tragedy, Comedy, Dithyrambics, and Nomes, to which metre was essential, and substituting there, the word $\mu\epsilon\tau\rho\omega$, for $\lambda\omicron\gamma\omega$ ⁿ. It was natural, then, that he should

say,

^m So Virgil :

“ - - - numeros memini, si VERBA tenerem.”

Ecl. ix.

Nothing is more common than this use of $\lambda\omicron\gamma\omicron$ in Aristotle and Plato. Thus the latter, *De Rep.* lib. iii.— $\tau\omicron\ \mu\epsilon\lambda\omicron$ ἐκ τριῶν ἐστὶ συγκειμενον, ΛΟΓΟΥ ΤΕ ΚΑΙ Ἀρμονίας καὶ ῥυθμῶ—which agrees exactly with Aristotle’s account of the *means* of imitation.

ⁿ ῥυθμῷ, καὶ μελεῖ, καὶ ΜΕΤΡΩΙ. *Cap.* i.

say, when he came to speak of the Epic imitation, as distinguished from those he had before mentioned, that it imitates *by words alone*—i. e. without *melody* and *rhythm*, or, as *we* should say, without *music*. But he adds—ἡ Μετροῖς—“ *or* *verse*.” And why?—Probably, because he thought his expression would be neither clear, nor exact, without it: not *clear*, because the most *usual* meaning of λόγοι ψιλοὶ being *prose*, it might have been so taken here, and he might have appeared to *say*, at least, though no one could reasonably suppose he *meant* it, that the Epic imitates by *prose only*—μονον τοῖς λόγοις ψιλοῖς:—not *exact*, because, metre being, as he himself expressly says, a species, or *part*, of rhythm^o, words, put into metre, were not, strictly speaking, ψιλοὶ, that is, χωρὶς Ἀρμονίας καὶ Ρυθμοῦ. And this is exactly conformable to the expression of Plato in the passage above quoted, where he considers verse, even unaccompanied by music, as still consisting of *rhythm* and words, [Ρυθμον μὲν καὶ ῥήματα Μελῆς χωρὶς;]—plainly regarding metre as a species, or form, of rhythm.

I understand, therefore, the meaning of Aristotle, in this expression—τοῖς λόγοις ψιλοῖς, ἢ τοῖς μετροῖς, to amount to this;—“ by words, without the
“ other means of melody and rhythm, *or at most*,
“ *with so much of rhythm only, as is implied in*
“ *the*

* τα γὰρ μετρά, ὅτι ΜΟΡΙΑ τῶν ῥυθμῶν ἐστὶ, φανερόν. Καρ. iv.

“ *the idea of metre: without rhythm, in its ‘ musical sense of strict time’.*” This sense of the words agrees perfectly with what follows—
 εἶδεν γὰρ ἂν ἔχοιμεν, &c. i. e. “ For otherwise—
 “ if we do not allow the *Epoppœia* to imitate *by*
 “ *words*, in the general sense, whether prose or
 “ verse—we shall have no common name for
 “ Epic imitations in prose; and, if we do not
 “ allow it to imitate in *either one or more* species
 “ of metre, we shall have no common name for
 “ the same kind of imitation in *Elegiac*, or other
 “ verse.”

The great advantage of this sense of *λογοις ψιλοις* is, that, while it leaves in full force that explanation of the *whole* passage, which I have followed, it removes, at the same time, or at least considerably weakens, what has always struck me as one of the strongest objections to it. Nothing appears to me more improbable, than, that Aristotle, advancing a doctrine so new, and so repugnant to the prevailing ideas of his own times, as, that a species of Poetry might subsist without verse, should chuse to present this novelty in the most offensive way, by beginning at once, and without any management, with the mention of *prose*: that he should say—“ The Epic Poem
 “ imitates *by prose alone, or, by verse.*” If by *λογοις ψιλοις* he had meant prose, as Dacier and
 others

† See the quotation from Mr. Harris, p. 108-9.

others contend, would he not naturally — one might say, unavoidably — have reserved those words for the last in the period? Would not the order, in short, have been this? — “by verse alone; “ and that either of a single kind, or mixed—or “ *even by prose.*” As I have rendered the words, *prose* is not *mentioned* at all, but implied only in the general expression of, *words*; as it is, equally, in his first enumeration of the means of imitation — ἐν ῥυθμῷ καὶ ΛΟΓΩ καὶ ἀρμονίᾳ. At the worst, the idea of prose is not, as in the other version, presented *before* that of verse.

With respect to what I have said of the *novelty* of the philosopher’s doctrine, and its remoteness from the common ideas of the ancients concerning the importance of metre to Poetry, I may refer even to his *own* way of speaking, in general, upon that subject. In his Rhetoric, for example, he says—ῥυθμον δεῖ ἔχειν τὸν λόγον, Μέτρον δε, μὴ ΠΟΙΗΜΑ ΓΑΡ ΕΣΤΑΙ.—“ In prose-composition “ there should be rhythm, *but not metre—for “ then it will be a POEM*.” The reader may also be not displeased to see what Isocrates thought of the importance of verse, in a passage, which I have given in NOTE 229, respecting the privileges and advantages of Poetry.—Plato goes so far, as to compare Poetry, when reduced to prose, to a face, which, having no solid beauty of form

ᾧ *Rhet. lib. iii. cap. viii. p. 591. Ed. Duval.*

form and symmetry, has lost its *only* charm, when the bloom of youth, and delicacy of complexion, have deserted it¹. But the zeal of Plato for depreciating Poetry is well known. He would, probably, have approved the indignation of one of the Fathers, who called it “the Devil’s wine.” It must be confessed, however, that he has poured a great deal of this wine into his own writings; and were they to be reduced to *plain* prose, and stripped of that *ἀνθος*—that bloom and colouring of poetic diction, and poetic fancy, by which they are so distinguished, I should be in some pain for the appearance they would make.

But, to return:—After all that is to be said in favour of that interpretation, which, on the whole, I have thought it best to follow, I must end this note, as I began it, by declaring my conviction of the imperfect condition of the original, and confessing my doubt, whether the true meaning
of

¹ — ἔοικε [sc. τὰ τῶν Ποιητῶν, γυμνωθέντα γε τῶν τῆς μουσικῆς ΧΡΩΜΑΤΩΝ, αὐτὰ ἐφ’ αὐτῶν λεγόμενα,] τοῖς τῶν ὈΡΑΙΩΝ προσώποις, ΚΑΛΩΝ ΔΕ ΜΗ, ὅσα γίνονται ἰδεῖν, ὅταν αὐτὰ το ΑΝΘΟΣ προλιπῇ.—*Rep.* x. p. 601. *Ed. Serrani.*—This is quoted by Aristotle, *Rhet.* iii. cap. iv. p. 588. *Duval.*—In Dr. Beattie’s *Essay on Poetry, &c. Part II. ch. ii.* it is, by mistake, attributed to Demosthenes. Nor is the meaning of the passage there fully given. Plato does not content himself with saying, that “versification “is to Poetry, what bloom is to the human countenance.” He says, that versification is to Poetry, what bloom is to a face, *that has no beauty but bloom.*

of Aristotle, in this passage, has yet been, or ever will be, discovered.

NOTE 6.

P. 103. THE MIMES OF SOPHRON AND XENARCHUS, AND THE SOCRATIC DIALOGUES.

Had Aristotle proposed only to extend the term *Ἔπαιμα* to *all imitations of the NARRATIVE kind, whether in verse or prose, whether serious or comic*, this, to a reader who should enter thoroughly into *his* ideas of Poetry, would not, perhaps, appear extraordinary. It would be only classing the different forms of Poetry, as one might expect him to class them, according to what he himself conceived to be the chief and most characteristic difference of their imitations. But here, we find the name applied to compositions of a character strikingly different—to Mimes, and Dialogues; for it is indeed, as Dacier says, a very obvious question, and one which cannot but have occurred to every reader—"les *Dia-*
logues ne ressemblent-ils pas plutot au Poeme
Dramatique, qu' au Poeme Epique?"—An embarrassing question, and which, being at all events to be answered, he answers immediately, and roundly—"Non, sans doute." And why?—Because, says he, "the drama imitates by *words and music*, the Epic Poem, by *words only*." But, to apply the expression of the philosopher

to this critic — πλεξας εν, λυει κακως^a. This is much the same thing as if one should deny, that two men, of form and features strikingly similar, resembled each other, merely because their coats were of different colours; or, to come still nearer to the case, if one should assert that one of these men bore a greater resemblance to a third, with whom he chanced to agree in the single circumstance of *not* wearing a wig. Is it probable, that Aristotle, in classing and denominating a *principal* species of Poetry, should be guided by such a circumstance as the mere absence of *music*? when even metre he regards as not essential, and speaks of it as one of the ἡδυσματα of Poetic language^b. He allows, indeed, that music is the most pleasurable of the ἡδυσματα, or *seasonings*, of Tragedy^c; but, that he regarded it as less essential than metre, is evident from the place which he assigns it in his arrangement of the six parts of Tragedy according to the order of their importance; for he there places it next before the Οψις, or *Decoration*, which he pronounces to be, of all the parts, “the most foreign to the “Poet’s art:” ἡμισα οἰκειον της ποιητικης^d.—On the other hand, the circumstance of *Narration* in
the

^a Cap. xviii.

^b — λεγω δε ἩΔΥΣΜΕΝΟΝ λογον, τον εχοντα ρυθμον και αρμονιαν και ΜΕΤΡΟΝ. Cap. vi.

^c — μεγαισον των ηδυσματων. Ibid.

^d Ibid.

the person of the Poet he every where seems to make an essential mark of distinction between the Epic and the Dramatic Poem^c: so that, in order to avoid making him absolutely inconsistent with himself, we must be obliged to suppose, with the commentators, that he uses the word Ἐποποιΐα in *two* senses; *here*, in its general and etymological sense, that of *imitating*, or *making*, by words^f, and every where else in the common and limited sense of *narrative* imitation^g. The first of these must be considered as a mere *proposal*: we must understand Aristotle to say no more than this—that some common term, to include *all compositions imitating by words only*, was wanted, and that the term *Epopœia*, was best adapted to that purpose. In the *rest* of his treatise he conforms to the established ideas and language.—This, however, is by no means satisfactory. It still remains, I confess, no inconsiderable difficulty with me, to conceive, that Aristotle should, by applying the term Ἐποποιΐα to *all imitative writing*, whether of a narrative or dramatic form, *without music*, give it an extension inconsistent, as it seems, with his

ὄντι

^c See *Cap.* v.—*Cap.* xxiii. *initio*. So *Cap.* xxiv. ἐν δὲ τῇ Ἐποποιΐᾳ, διὰ τὸ ΔΙΗΓΗΣΙΝ εἶναι, &c.—and *ibid.* ἡ διηγηματικὴ μίμησις, is equivalent to ἡ Ἐποποιητικὴ μίμησις, in *Cap.* xxvi.

^f See the note of Heinsius.

^g As in the passages just referred to, *Note* ^c.

own principles, and confounding those distinctions, which, in his *own* view, were the most essential. If he *had* meant so to apply the term in the passage before us, he would, surely, have been more explicit, and, where, after this passage, he *first* mentioned the *Epopœia* in the usual sense, would have added some words of limitation and distinction to prevent confusion. But this he has not done. Though evidently speaking of the *heroic* and *narrative* Epic, he calls it only, ἡ Ἐποποιία; as if no other application of the word had been mentioned.

Of the MIMES of SOPHRON we can acquire but a very imperfect idea, either from what is said of them in antient authors, or from the fragments that are preserved in Athenæus, Demetrius, and others. It has even been long disputed among the learned, whether they were prose or verse; and, at last, it seems to be settled, that they were neither; a kind of compromise comfortable enough to the disputants on both sides; for if the fragments are something between verse and prose, they, who assert them to be either, are something between right and wrong. I shall not enter into this discussion; but refer the reader to the remarks of the learned Valckenaer on the argument of the *Adoniaζῶσαι* of Theocritus; where he will find some curious and uncommon information upon

this subject^b. That these compositions, however, were either a species of the drama, or, at least, dialogues in the dramatic form, there seems to be no doubtⁱ. Dacier, indeed, asserts, that they were, like the Epic Poem, “une imitation composée de narration et d’action.” But he produces no proof of this, nor do I know of any.— I must farther observe, that, supposing what is related, of the fondness of Plato for the Mimes of Sophron, and of their having been his model in the μιμησις πρωτων of his own dialogues^k, to be true, it may reasonably be inferred, that we ought by no means to confound them with the *Roman Mimes*, or to apply to them, as is too often done, all that is said of the latter by Diomedes, and other writers of that age. Such licentious and obscene trash would not, surely, have been found *under the pillow* of the moral and reforming Plato; and that, ελωφ ἐπι γηρα^ς εἶδ^{ος}, and, as some assert, even in the hour of death^l. In saying this, however, I do not forget, that

^b *Theocriti Decem Eidyllia, Lug. Bat. 1773.* See, particularly, p. 200.

ⁱ See *Cisaubon, de Sat. Poes.* cap. iii. p. 115, 116, and the passage of Plutarch to which he refers, *Sympos. Prob. lib. vii. Prob. viii.* p. 1268. *Æa. H. St.* And, in his treatise *Ποτερα των ζων κ τ. αλ.* p. 1792.

^k See Vauckenaer’s *Theos.* p. 194.

^l Sophron, mimorum quidem scriptor, sed quem Plato adeo probavit, ut suppositos capiti libros ejus, *cum moreretur*, habuisse tradatur. *Quintil. i. 10.*

that *delicacy* is not to be sought for even in the strictest morality of antient times. For the best idea that can now be formed of the manner of this famous mimographer, we must have recourse, I believe, to the fifteenth *Idyl* of Theocritus^m, which, as we are informed in the MS. argument found by Ruhnkenius in the royal library at Paris, is an imitation of a Mime of Sophron upon a similar subjectⁿ. A more exact piece of natural delineation cannot be imagined. It is not, indeed, *la belle nature*; it is the nature of common and simple, or, as some affect to call it, of *low*, life; but copied with so close and faithful a pencil, that, to every reader accustomed, in any degree, to observé the manners of mankind in general, and whose taste is not perverted by affectation, or fettered by rule, the truth and *reality* of the imitation will, I believe, amply compensate for the want of dignity in the thing imitated. To those who receive no pleasure from *this* source, I would rather recommend the *belle nature* of Pope's Pastorals, or the still *finer* nature of Fontenelle's.—I would only observe farther, that this imitation of Sophron is in the strict dramatic form; and that it contains
nothing

^m The Συρακυσσιναι, ἢ Ἀδωνιαζουσαι. The Syracusan women, or, the women at the festival of Adonis.

ⁿ Παρεπλάσε δε ποιηματαιον ἐκ των παρα Σωφρονη θεωμενων τα Ισθμια. Valcken. *Dcccm Eid. Theoc.* p. 188.

nothing in the least degree indecent, or disgusting.

Of the ΛΟΓΟΙ ΣΩΚΡΑΤΙΚΟΙ, by which, undoubtedly, Aristotle meant chiefly, if not solely, the DIALOGUES of PLATO, I shall only observe, that they have all, in a high degree, the dramatic and imitative spirit, and that by far the greater part of them are in the unmixed dramatic form^o, so as to admit of representation; and it, accordingly, appears from Plutarch, that those of the lighter cast among them were sometimes performed by boys, as an entertainment, at the Symposia of the Romans in his time^p.

NOTE 7.

P. 103. CONNECTING THE POETRY, OR MAKING, WITH THE METRE.

— ΣΥΝΑΠΤΟΥΤΕΣ Τῷ ΜΕΤΡῳ ΤΟ ΠΟΙΕΙΝ.—Not, “on applique au vers seul l'idée qu'on a de la Poesie,” as M. Batteux renders it, but, as it is translated by Piccolomini, with his usual exactness—“congiugnendo il verbo, ΠΟΙΕΙΝ, [*Poiein*, “cio é fare,] con la qualità del metro.”—I understand Aristotle's expression to mean, not the connection

^o We have, I think, thirty-two dialogues of Plato, taking those *De Republicá*, and *De Legibus*, which are now divided into books, as each *one* dialogue. Of these thirty-two, only six are in the *narrative* form.

^p Plutarchi Sympos. Prob. lib. vii. Prob. viii.

connection of the general idea of Poetry with that of Verse, though this indeed be *implied*; but, the junction of the word, ΠΟΙΕΙΝ, with the name of some particular metre, in the compound words, ΕΛΕΓΕΙΟΠΟΙΟΙ, ΕΠΟΠΟΙΟΙ, and the like.

NOTE 8.

P. 103. TREATISES OF MEDICINE OR NATURAL PHILOSOPHY IN VERSE.

Two Poems of Empedocles—that concerning *Nature*, and his *Expurgations*—contained together, according to Diog. Laertius, *five thousand* hexameters, and another, on the subject of *Medicine*, *six hundred*.—τα μὲν ἐν περὶ ΦΥΣΕΩΣ αὐτῷ καὶ οἱ Καθαρμοὶ, εἰς ἑπτὰ τεινεσι πεντακισχιλία, ὁ δὲ ΙΑΤΡΙΚΟΣ λόγος, εἰς ἑπτὰ ἑξακοσια [*End of the Life of Empedocles.*] This, by the way, confirms the emendation of Heinsius—φυσικόν, for μεσικόν. Nothing, I believe, is known of any antient Poem on the subject of Music.

The earliest philosophy was *natural* philosophy, and the earliest vehicle of that philosophy was verse. Orpheus, Hesiod, Parmenides, Xenophanes, Empedocles, and Thales, are all mentioned by Plutarch as poet-philosophers of this kind. Pythagoras is said to have written a Poem *On the Universe*, in hexameters^a. This measure

^a Περὶ τῆς Ὀυρανίας, ἐν ἑπτασι. Diog. Laert. VIII. 7.—And see Plut. Περὶ τῆς μητρὸς ἑμμετρα, &c. p. 716. H. Steph.

sure was, at least, suited to the *dignity* of philosophical speculation. We cannot say so much of the verse chosen by Epicharmus for the vehicle of a treatise *Concerning sensible and intellectual objects*—Περὶ τῶν αἰσθητῶν καὶ νοητῶν—part of which is quoted by Diog. Laertius in his life of Plato^b. It was written in the Trochaic tetrameter, a very unphilosophical measure, if rightly characterized by Aristotle, who gives it the epithets of τροχαιον—ὀρχηστικον—ΚΟΡΔΑΚΙΚΩΤΕΡΟΝ^c. An English reader would be surprised, on opening a didactic and philosophical Poem, to find it written in the measure of—“*Jolly mortals, fill your glasses,*” &c.

NOTE 9.

P. 103. HOMER AND EMPEDOCLES HAVE NOTHING IN COMMON BUT THEIR METRE.*

In his book *De Poetis*, Aristotle spoke somewhat differently. He there said, as cited by Diog.

^b III. 10.

^c *Rhet.* iii. 8. *Poet.* cap. xxiv. The word, κορδακιωτερον, cannot be adequately translated. “A jiggish measure,” would be weak, to the force of the original. The Κορδαξ is known to have been a kind of dance, so full of buffoonery and indecency, that Theophrastus makes it one of the marks of his *Profligate Man*, that “he will even dance the Κορδαξ, sober, and without a mask.”—*Theophrasti Charact.* cap. vi. Περὶ Απονοιας.

Diog. Laertius, “ that Empedocles resembled “ Homer *in the beauty of his* DICTION; abound- “ ing in metaphors, and making a happy use of “ the other embellishments of Poetic language^a.” It does not seem easy to make this perfectly consistent with what he *here* asserts—that Empedocles had *nothing* in common with Homer *but his metre*. He *meant*, I suppose, no more, than that Empedocles had nothing of the *true* Poetic character of Homer, his *invention, imitation, &c.* But he certainly has *said* more.

NOTE 10.

P. 104. SO, ALSO, THOUGH ANY ONE SHOULD CHUSE TO CONVEY HIS IMITATION IN EVERY KIND OF METRE, &c.

The conjecture of Heinsius, who contended, that—ἐκ ἡδῆ και ποιητην προσαγορευτεον—should be read interrogatively, I have rejected, because the sense it gives the passage appears to me to be trifling. It makes Aristotle say—“ If Poets are “ to be denominated from their *metre*, what “ name is to be given to him, who writes a “ Poem in *all sorts* of metre? You cannot call “ him

^a — εν δε τῷ Περι Ποιητων φησιν [Αριστοτελης] ὅτι και ὈΜΗΡΙΚΟΣ ὁ Ἐμπεδοκλής, και δειν⊕ περι την ΦΡΑΣΙΝ γεγυνε, μεταφορικ⊕ τε ὦν, και τοις ἄλλοις τοις περι ποιητικῆν ἰπιτευγμασι χρωμεν⊕. *Diog. Laert. lib. viii. 57.*

“ him an Εποποιῶν, an Ιαμβοποιῶν, &c. Is he,
 “ therefore, *not to be called a Poet at all*, be-
 “ cause you cannot call him the Poet, or *Maker*,
 “ of this or that particular metre?”—But the
 answer to this would surely be obvious: “ We
 “ cannot, it is true, call him any *one* of these,
 “ exclusively; we call him *all* these; he is the
 “ Poet of *every* metre, in which he composes;
 “ and, in *our* ideas, the *more* a Poet, in propor-
 “ tion to the number of the different measures,
 “ of which he shows himself a master.”—I must
 also remark, that, in this way of understanding
 the passage, the word, ὁμοίως, is not accounted
 for, nor fairly rendered, I think, either in the
 version of Heinsius, or in any of those that
 follow him.

I have, also, rejected the reading of Victorius
 —’ΟΥ ποιοιτο την μιμησιν; because it appears to
 me, that the phrase will not admit of the sense,
 in which it is rendered, of *not imitating at all*.—
 It is observed by Victorius himself, that the
 phrase, ποιεισθαι την μιμησιν, is never used by
 Aristotle as equivalent to μιμεισθαι *only*, but
 always where he is speaking of the *means*,
 or *manner*, by, or in, which, the imitation is
made. Thus, *ch. i.*—ΠΟΙΟΥΝΤΑΙ την μιμησιν ΕΝ
 ΡΥΘΜΩΙ και ΛΟΓΩΙ και ΑΡΜΟΝΙΑΙ.—Again—
 ΔΙΑ ΤΡΙΜΕΤΡΩΝ κ. τ. αλ. ΠΟΙΟΙΤΟ την μιμησιν.
 And, at the end, ΕΝ ’ΟΙΣ ΠΟΙΟΥΝΤΑΙ την
 αιμησιν—“ the different *means*, *by which* they
 form

form or execute their imitation.”—Thus, too, *ch.* xxiv.—εἰ γὰρ τις ΕΝ ΑΛΛΩΙ ΤΙΝΙ ΜΕΤΡΩΙ διηγηματικὴν μιμησὶν ΠΟΙΟΙΤΟ.—*ch.* vi. ΕΝ ΤΟΥΤΟΙΣ [sc. μελοποιῖα καὶ λεξεί] ΠΟΙΟΥΝΤΑΙ τὴν μιμησὶν. So *ibid.* with a participle—ΠΡΑΤΤΟΝΤΕΣ ΠΟΙΟΥΝΤΑΙ τὴν μιμησὶν—as in the passage before us, ἅπαντα τὰ μετρά ΜΙΓΝΥΩΝ ΠΟΙΟΙΤΟ τὴν μιμησὶν.—The construction and the sense are the same, when the same mode of expression is applied to other subjects; as, *cap.* iv.—τὰς μαθησεις ΠΟΙΕΙΤΑΙ ΔΙΑ ΜΙΜΗΣΕΩΣ—And, *Rhet. lib.* i. *cap.* i. *sect.* 3. ΔΙΑ ΤΩΝ ΚΟΙΝΩΝ ΠΟΙΕΙΣΘΑΙ τὰς πεισεις καὶ τὰς λογὰς—i. e. “to “argue through the medium of common and “popular truths.”—I do not know of any instance, in which ποιεῖσθαι τὴν μιμησὶν is used in any other way, or put simply for μιμεῖσθαι. I cannot, for example, conceive, that Aristotle, instead of, τὸ τε γὰρ ΜΙΜΕΙΣΘΑΙ συμφυτον τοῖς ἀνθρώποις, (*cap.* iv.) would have written—τὸ τε γὰρ ΠΟΙΕΙΣΘΑΙ ΜΙΜΗΣΙΝ συμφυτον, &c. It appears to me, that, whether the phrase be used positively, or negatively, *some imitation* is equally implied; and this sentence—εἰ τις ἅπαντα τὰ μετρά μιγνύων ΟΥ ΠΟΙΟΙΤΟ ΤΗΝ μιμησὶν—I should by no means think it accurate to translate—“If “any one, mixing all sorts of metre, should *not imitate*;—but, (to construe literally for the sake of clearness,) “if any one should not *make* “THE, (or, which is the same thing, HIS) “imitation

“*imitation by mixing* all sorts of metre.” This, I confess, appears clearly to me to be the fair English of that Greek; but as this certainly cannot be the meaning of Aristotle here, I must abandon the reading which gives it, and content myself with following that explanation, which is encumbered with the fewest difficulties^a. The sense, in this way, does not materially differ from that, which is given to the passage by those who adopt the reading of Victorius. The word, ὁμοίως, has thus its proper force. So has, ἐκ ΗΔΗ, ΚΑΙ ποιητὴν προσαγορευτεον. As if Aristotle had said—“Such a writer we might, certainly, on the first glance, call, a *versifier*—a *metre-maker*—ἐποποιον, ἔλεγειοποιον, &c. but we should not *immediately* (ΗΔΗ), *merely on account of the variety of his versification*, allow him also the title of *Poet*—ΚΑΙ ποιητὴν προσαγορευτεον.”

I must, however, be again permitted to declare my doubt, as to the integrity of the text.—I have here given, as I have been obliged to do in many other places, that sense, which appears to me the *best* that can be given to the original *as it stands*; not that, upon which I can with any *confidence* rely, as the *clear* meaning of the author.

^a According to the version of Goulston.—“Similiter verò etiam si quis omnia metrorum generum uno in opere permiscens, *imitationem instituerit*, (quemadmodum Chærenon, &c.) non statim Poetæ titulo, *ob carmen, sed ob imitationem*, insigniendus.” See also Castelvetro, p. 25, 26.

NOTE 11.

P. 104. AS CHÆREMON HAS DONE IN HIS CENTAUR.

From some curious fragments of this Poet preserved, or, rather, half-preserved, in Athenæus, his genius appears to have been of a gay and voluptuous cast, and to have delighted in minute description of pleasurable objects. In the lines quoted by Athenæus from his Tragedy of *Æneus*, which are a description of a group of beautiful virgins sporting by moon-light, there is certainly some fancy, and some elegance; but, of that kind, the effect of which is, perhaps, somewhat counteracted by too much appearance of affectation and research. And this corresponds with the character given of this Poet by Aristotle, in his *Rhetoric* [*lib.* iii. *cap.* xii.] that he was, ἀκριβης ὡςπερ λογογραφός; and of that class of Poets, whom he calls ἀναγνώσιμοι; that is, whose productions, as we commonly express it, *read* better than they *act*; are more adapted to the *closet*, than to the *stage*. The antient Poets, both Greek and Roman, were often, I believe, indebted, for their *descriptive ideas*, to Painting, or Sculpture. This passage of Chæremon is certainly very *picturesque*, and was, probably, suggested by some painting on the same subject.

Athenæus

Athenæus says of this Poet, that he was particularly fond of dwelling upon the description of flowers—ἐπικαταφορῶ ἐπι τα ἀνθη* ; and cites some lines of that kind from his Tragedies.

In his CENTAUR, which Athenæus calls δράμα πολυμετρον, we must understand, that even the *dialogue* was in various metres; for in the *choral* parts this would have been no innovation.

NOTE 12.

P. 105. POLYGNOTUS—PAUSON—DIONYSIUS.

Polygnotus and *Pauson* are also mentioned by Aristotle in his 8th book *De Rep. cap. v.* where, speaking of Painting with a view to education, he says, that “ young men should “ not be permitted to contemplate the works of “ PAUSON, but those only of POLYGNOTUS, and “ of other artists who excelled in *moral expres- sion*².” It seems probable, from this passage, that the pictures of *Pauson* were not only of a ludicrous, but also of a licentious cast. To what a degree the abuse of this art was carried in Aristotle’s time, appears from another passage,
[*Rep.*

* *Athen. lib. xiii. p. 608.*

² — Δει μη τα ΠΑΥΣΩΝΟΣ θεωρειν τας νεκς, αλλα τα ΠΟΛΥΓΝΩΤΟΥ, κ’ αν ει τις αλλῶ των γραφειων η των αγαλαματοποιων εστιν ηθικῶ.—*De Rep. viii. 5.*

[*Rep. lib. vii. cap. xvii.*] in which he says, the magistrate should suffer no “licentious and indecent paintings or statues,” such as would endanger the morals of youth: but the exception that follows is curious;—“*Unless*,” he adds, “in the *temples* of some DEITIES OF THAT CHARACTER, whose legal and established worship consists in ludicrous and wanton rites^b.”

While I am upon this subject, I cannot forbear adding a singular passage of Euripides, where Hippolytus, vindicating himself, and asserting his chastity, says, with a *naïveté* that, I fear, would hardly be received with decent gravity by a modern audience;—

Λεχες γαρ, εἰς τοδ' ἡμερας, ἄγνον δεμας.
 Ουκ οἶδα ΠΡΑΞΙΝ ΤΗΝΔΕ, πλην λογῶ κλυων,
 ΓΡΑΦΗ ΤΕ ΛΕΥΣΣΩΝ· ἔδε ταυτα γαρ σκοπειν
 Προθυμῶ εἶμι, ΠΑΡΘΕΝΟΝ ΨΥΧΗΝ ἔχων.

Hippol. v. 1003.

I am a stranger to the couch of love;
 Nor know I of its rites more than the tale
 May have informed me, or the *Painter's pencil*
Presented to mine eye; yet on such picture
 Dwells not mine eye delighted, for my mind
 Is as a virgin's pure. - - -

[Mr. Potter's Translation, v. 1060.]

The

^b — μήθεν μήτε ἀγαλλμα μήτε γραφην εἶναι ΤΟΙΟΥΤΩΝ ΠΡΑΞΕΩΝ ΜΙΜΗΣΙΝ· εἰ μὴ παρα τισι ΘΕΟΙΣ ΤΟΙΟΥΤΟΙΣ, οἷς και τον τωθασμον αποδιδωσιν ὁ νομῶ.—

The Pauson mentioned by Aristotle was probably the same painter, whose poverty only is recorded by Suidas^c, and of whose wit we have a curious specimen in Ælian^d.

Of DIONYSIUS, too, very little is known. That he excelled in *natural* representation and exact resemblance—in exhibiting men, such as he *saw* them, without ideal grace on the one hand, or exaggerated deformity on the other—is known, I believe, only from this passage of Aristotle. Dacier says this account is confirmed by Ælian; but I think he is mistaken. It appears to me, that the *μεγέθει* of which Ælian speaks, as the only difference between the paintings of Polygnotus and those of Dionysius, is literal, not figurative, magnitude. He says only, that the pictures of Dionysius, “except, that they were “*on a small scale*, were *exact* imitations of “Polygnotus, in the *expression of passions* and “*manners, the attitudes* of the figures, the “lightness and transparency of the draperies, “and every other circumstance^e.” It is not
easy

^c Παυσων[⊕] πτωχότερ[⊕], was proverbial. *Suidas*. And see *Aristoph. Plut.* 602. *Thesmoph.* 958. *Acharn.* 854.

^d Lib. xiv. cap. xv.—And see Dacier’s note on the passage of Aristotle.

^e ὁ μὲν Πολυγνώτ[⊕] ἔγραφε τὰ μεγάλα, καὶ ἐν τοῖς ΤΕΛΕ-
ΙΟΙΣ εἰργάζετο τὰ ἄλλα· τὰ δὲ τῶν Διονυσίου, ΠΛΗΝ ΤΟΥ
ΜΕΓΕΘΟΥΣ, τὴν τῶν Πολυγνώτ[⊕] τέχνην ἔμμελλο εἰς τὴν
VOL. I. S ἀκριβείαν,

easy to see how Dionysius could copy so exactly, εἰς ἀκριβειαν, the *expression*, and the *forms*, or *attitudes*, of Polygnotus, without copying, at the same time, his greatness of manner, and his improvement of that nature which he imitated; for these seem entirely to depend upon those two circumstances, the expression of the countenance, and the airs and attitudes of the figures^f.

It seems, therefore, doubtful, whether Aristotle and Ælian speak of the same person. There must, in all probability, have been more painters than one, of that name; which was so common, that the *writers* so called, alone, furnished Meursius with matter for a whole book.—The
pictures

ἀκριβειαν, παῖθ, και ἡθ, και σχηματων χρηση, ἱματιων λεπτοτητας, και τα λοιπα.—Ælian. iv. 3. If the sense of the *whole passage* left room for doubt as to the sense of the word μεγαθ, it would, I think, be sufficiently fixed by what follows—ἐν ΤΕΛΕΙΟΙΣ. i. e. *justâ staturâ*, as rightly rendered by Perizonius; in *large figures*,—*as large as life*, &c. Dacier's "visoit a la perfection," is nothing to the purpose.

^f "The painter has no other means of giving an
"idea of the dignity of the mind, but by that *external*
"appearance which grandeur of thought does generally,
"though not always, impress on the *countenance*; and
"by that correspondence of *figure* to sentiment and
"situation, which all men wish, but cannot command."
—Sir Jos. Reynolds's *Disc. on Painting*, p. 111.

pictures of Dionysius *the Colophonian* are mentioned by Plutarch^g as being painted with considerable *strength* of pencil, [—ἰσχυρὸν ἔχοντα καὶ τόνον,] but in a manner which appeared forced and laboured, [ἐκβεβιασμένον,] and which he opposes to the freedom and facility of *Nicomachus*, who seems to have been the *Fà Presto* of the antient painters^h. This fault, so likely to be that of the artist who aims at an exact and scrupulous resemblance of the nature that is before his eyes, may, perhaps, afford some presumption, that Plutarch and Aristotle speak of the *same* painter.

What Aristotle says of these *three* styles of picturesque imitation, is easily applied to modern times. The productions, indeed, of these antient artists, were perishable and of short duration;—“At *genus* immortale manet:” these specific characters have subsisted, and probably will subsist, in every period of the art. For the name of Polygnotus, it is obvious enough to substitute that of RAPHAEL, or other masters of the higher Italian schools. “When a man,” says Mr. Richardson, with that simplicity of enthusiasm, which gives so amusing a singularity to his writings,

^g Life of *Timoleon*—vol. i. p. 461. *Hen. Steph.*

^h Luca Giordano was called, Luca *Fà Presto*. Pliny says of *Nicomachus*—“Nec fuit alius in *câ arte* *velocior.*”—*Lib. xxxv. cap. x.*

writings¹—“When a man enters into that awful
 “gallery at Hampton-court^k, he finds himself
 “amongst a sort of people *superior to what he*
 “*has ever seen*, and very probably to what those
 “really *were*¹.” This is exactly the *βελτιονας η*
καθ’ ημας of Aristotle. “Michael Angelo,” says
 the same author, “no where *saw* such living
 “figures as he cut in marble.”—The Flemish
 and Dutch schools will supply plenty of substi-
 tutes for the *Dionysii* of antient painting—those,
 who, like Protogenes, “in *picturâ verum esse*,
 “non *verisimile*, volunt^m.” Rembrandt must
 occur to every body. Even Rubens “took his
 “figures too much *from the people before him*.”
 [*Sir Jos. Reynolds’s Disc.* p. 133.]

As for the *Pausans*, the buffoons of the art,
they are to be seen in the windows of every
 print-shop. We must not, however, confound
 with these “Tom Browns of the mob,” as Mr.
 Walpole

¹ See Mr. Walpole’s just apology for the singularities
 of Richardson’s style, and just censure of those, who
 saw nothing, in that sensible and original writer, but an
 object of derision.—*Anecdotes of Painting*.

^k Where the Cartoons then were.

¹ *Theory of Painting*, p. 96. Ed. 1773.

^m *Plin.* lib. xxxv. cap. x. See his account of the
 laboriousness of that painter.—See also *Ælian. Var.*
Hist. lib. xii. cap. xli. and *Plut.* in *Demet.* p. 1646
 Ed. H. S.

Walpole calls them", the moral humour of Hogarth, or the sportive, but harmless, exaggerations of Mr. Bunbury. Hogarth, indeed, in general, and in his greatest works, seems rather to belong to the *highest* class of the *exact* imitators of *vulgar nature*—των ΦΑΥΛΩΝ. His Country-dance, however, may be mentioned as an example, and an admirable one, of *exaggerated* comic imitation, in which men are made, in some degree at least, "worse than they are"—ΧΕΙΡΟΥΣ ΕΙΧΑΖΕ.—And if any man can look at this print, or at the *Family-piece*, the *Coffee-house Patriots*, or the *Long Story*, of Mr. Bunbury, without feeling a high degree of that pleasure which arises from the perception of strong humour, he must, I think, be still more unprovided with a sense of the ridiculous, than even that Crassus, who is recorded to have laughed *once*, though once only, in his life°.

NOTE 13.

P. 105. WITH THE MUSIC OF THE FLUTE
AND OF THE LYRE. - - -

Thus PLATO, in the very language of Aristotle,
—τα περι της ῥυθμης και πασαν μουσικην ἐσι τροπων
μιμηματα BEATIONΩΝ και ΧΕΙΡΩΝΩΝ ΑΝΘΡΩ-
ΠΩΝ. [De Leg. vii. p. 798. D.] A modern
reader,

ⁿ *Anec. of Painting*, vol. iv. p. 149.

^o *Cic. de Fin.* v. 39.

reader, that is, a person who reads an antient author with modern ideas, might be inclined to ask, how men are to be represented as better, or worse, than they are, or how, indeed, represented at all, in a harpsichord lesson, or a solo for a German flute? But the same reader, supposing him in any degree conversant with music, would surely be at no loss to conceive, that it admits of the difference of *serious* and *comic expression*; and admits of it in various degrees, from the highest elevation and dignity of style, down to the coarse and vulgar jollity of the gavot, or the hornpipe. Now the meaning of Aristotle, put into modern musical language, amounts, I apprehend, to no more than that. Suppose, then, the music, in these different styles, to be accompanied by *words*, relating the actions, or imitating the speech, of low, or elevated characters; *we* might say, that the music was *expressive* of such actions, or characters; the *antients* would have said, that it *imitated* them. On the contrary, suppose this music merely instrumental, *we* should, in general, only say, that it was grand, and sublime, or comic, mean, vulgar, &c. But the antients, from the close, and almost inseparable connection of *their* Music with Poetry, and particularly with the most imitative sort of Poetry, the Dramatic^P; and partly, also, from the nature of
of

^P Diss. II. p. 75, &c.

of their Music itself^a, would, in this case likewise, have retained much the same language, and would have considered this Music as *imitative* of the manners and passions of exalted, or vulgar characters, or even as *representing* those characters themselves.—But the different ideas, or rather, the different language, of the antients and the moderns on this subject, I have considered more fully, and endeavoured to account for, in the *Second Dissertation*.

NOTE 14.

P. 105. CLEOPHON, AS THEY ARE.—

It may be worth while to remark, that the character Aristotle gives of the *diction* of Cleophon^a—that it was of the common and familiar kind, without Poetic elevation—corresponds with the account here given of the general object of his Poetry, the exact delineation of common nature and common life. He who means to represent *men* as they *are*, will also, of course, represent their *language* nearly as it *is*.

The only Poet of this name, of whom, I believe, any account is given, is recorded as a *Tragic Poet*^b: but Aristotle undoubtedly alludes here

^a Diss. II. p. 76.

^a Part II. Sect. 26. Of the *Orig.* cap. xxii.

^b *Suidas* v. CLEOPHON. He gives the names of some of his Tragedies.

here to a Poem of the narrative kind. In another part of his works he mentions a Poem of Cleophon, called MANDRABULUS^c. From the proverbial expression—ἐπι Μανδραβελῆ χῶρει το πρᾶγμα (“worse and worse, like the affairs of *Mandrabulus*”—) in Lucian^d, and the account of its origin in Suidas, and Hesychius^e, it seems very improbable that the Poem was a *Tragedy*. We may rather conclude it to have been of a comic cast; and it seems no unreasonable conjecture, to suppose, that it might be of the narrative kind; modelled, perhaps, in some respects, upon the MARGITES of Homer. At least, the two heroes seem to have been of kindred characters.

NOTE 15.

P. 105. HEGEMON - - - - INVENTOR OF PARODIES.

See Athenæus, p. 698, 699, and 406, 407. And Fabric. *Biblioth. Gr.* lib. ii. cap. vii. — The Athenians were delighted with this sort of *fun*—of all expedients to raise a laugh, the cheapest, and, at the same time, the most infallible. HOMER was the great and inexhaustible resource
of

^c *De Soph. Elench.* cap. xv. where we should, I suppose, for Μανδροβελῆ, read, Μανδραβελῆ.

^d *De Mercede conduct.* 478. *Ed. Benedict.*

^e v. Ἐπι τῆς Μανδραβελῆ.

of these Parodists. The best and most considerable specimen remaining, of this kind of Poem, seems to be the Homeric description of an Attic supper by *Mutron*, a great Parodist, and a great eater, in Athenæus, lib. iv. cap. v. Isaac Casaubon calls it, “Carmen ingeniosum, et leporis ac venustatis plenissimum.”—The first three lines may serve as a specimen:—

Δειπνα μοι ἔνεπε, Μῆσα, πολυτροφα καὶ μάλα
πολλά^a,

Ἄ Ξενοκλῆς ῥήτωρ ἐν Ἀθηναίς δειπνίσειν ἡμᾶς,
Ἥλθον γὰρ κ' ἀκείσε, πολὺς δὲ μοι ἔσπετο λιμῶ^b.

The Poem, it must be confessed, has some pleasantry, and much dexterity of comical perversion. We cannot wonder at its effect upon a people, who had all Homer in their memories. It is easy to conceive the roar of the Athenian *upper gallery*, when, in the description of the cook, bringing in the supper, they heard this line:

Τῷ δ' ἀρὰ τεσσαράκοντα μελαιναὶ ΧΥΤΡΑΙ
ἔποντο^c.

Sometimes the Parody depended on a pun; of which Athenæus gives, with great complacence,
a curious

^a Ἀνδρα μοι ἔνεπε, Μῆσα, πολυτροπον, ὅς μάλα πολλά.
Hom. Od. init.

^b Ἥλθον γὰρ κ' ἀκείσε, πολὺς δὲ μοι ἔσπετο λαῶ.
Hom.

^c Τῷ δ' ἀρὰ τεσσαράκοντα μελαιναὶ γῆες ἔποντο.

Hom. in Catal. passim.

a curious example, in a scrap from a Parody of *Eubæus*, describing a quarrel between a barber and a potter. The barber, whose wife, it seems, the other attempts to force from him, addresses the potter in the language of Nestor^d :—

Μητε συ τονδ', ἀγαθῶ περ ἔων, ἀποαιρεσ
ΚΟΥΡΗΝ,

Μητε συ, ΠΗΛΕΙΔΗ. - - -

— where the joke depends on the allusion to ΠΗΛΟΣ, *mud*, or *clay*; and, probably, to the trade of the speaker, in the word *κερην*; or, perhaps, to the instrument of his art, which we may suppose the *actor* of the Parody to have brandished at his adversary.—But I do not mean to take to myself the honour of this illustration of an Attic joke. It is to be found in the *Poetics* of *J. C. Scaliger*.—See *Athen.* p. 699. B.

NOTE 16.

P. 106. THE DELIAD. - - -

The conjecture of Castelvetro, *την ΔΕΙλιαδα*, (which might be rendered, *The Poltroniad*,) was certainly ingenious, but, I think, unnecessary. Dacier's account is probably right; and both his idea, and the common reading, seem to receive some support from the similar national titles that are preserved of other pieces of this Poet; such
as,

^d See II. I. 275, &c.

as, Κρητες, Λακωνες, Αημνιαι. — See *Suidas* and *Fabricius*.

NOTE 17.

P. 106. SO, AGAIN, WITH RESPECT TO DITHYRAMBICS AND NOMES.

The expression, in this passage, is too general, and too little is known of the examples mentioned in it, to admit of perfect satisfaction, with respect to any thing farther than its general meaning; i. e. that *both* Dithyrambic and Nomic Poetry admitted the same differences in the *objects* of their imitation. For so, I think, the sense requires us to understand; not, that the imitation of *heroic* characters was appropriated to the one, and that of *light* characters to the other. Both these species of Poetry were *hymns*; and though the Dithyrambic, or hymn to Bacchus, might, indeed, from its wild and free character, be privileged with a greater latitude and variety of imitation, yet I know of no authority that will warrant our going so far, as to suppose, that they were essentially distinguished from each other in this respect, like Tragedy and Comedy^a.

The construction of the Greek I understand to be this:—μιμησαιτο αν τις, ως Τιμοθεος και Φιλοξενος [sc. ἐμιμησαντο] Περσας και Κυκλωπας.

I am

^a Yet so the last Ox. editor seems to understand:—
 “*Hoc differre Nomos à Dithyrambis, quod illis personas
 “ graves, his leves imitentur.*” p. 273.

I am astonished, that any commentators should have taken either of the compositions here mentioned for dramas; an idea totally repugnant to the plain sense of the whole passage, and to the evident purpose for which these examples are cited. With respect to the Περσαι, the passage of Pausanias may be regarded as decisive;— Πυλαδε — ἀδοντῶ Τιμοθεε ΝΟΜΟΝ, τε Μιλησιε, ΠΕΡΣΑΣ^b.

The Poem of Philoxenus here meant must, clearly, have been either a Nome, or a Dithyrambic Poem; most probably, the latter. Philoxenus is recorded as a Dithyrambic Poet; and Aristotle's illustration will be more complete, if we understand him to exemplify in *each* of the kinds of Poetry in question. It is by no means *certain*, that the *Cyclops* of Philoxenus mentioned by Athenæus, Ælian, and others, is the piece here alluded to: and, if it were, which, undoubtedly, appears rather probable, I know of no sufficient proof that it was a *Drama*, as it has been repeatedly called. If Ælian is to be regarded, it certainly was not; for he calls it μελος—a term appropriated to Lyric Poetry.—τον ΚΥΚΛΩΠΑ εἰργασατο, των ἑαυτε ΜΕΛΩΝ το καλλιστον^c.

I men-

^b *Paus. Arcad.*—And the Poem began with an hexameter verse which is there quoted. Yet Fabricius calls it a Tragedy.

^c *Æl. Var. Hist. lib. xii. cap. 44.*

I mentioned, in the conclusion of NOTE 1. a problem of Aristotle, from which it appears, that the Dithyrambic Poetry was not originally *imitative*, but became so by degrees. It is the 15th of the Harmonic Problems, *Sect.* 19. It is there said, that the Dithyrambics, *after they became imitative*, laid aside the antistrophical form, (i. e. the division into corresponding stanzas^d;) in which, before, they had been composed^e. And the reason assigned for this is, that, originally, these Dithyrambic hymns were performed by chorusses of *gentlemen*, [ἐλευθεροί] who could not sing in the style of artists, and professors: [ἀγωνιστικῶς ἀδεῖν:] the words were, therefore, set to the simplest kind of melody, such as that, in which the same air is repeated to similar stanzas, as in our ballads^f. But afterwards, it seems, the performance

ance

^d Ἀντιστροφῶν—ΙΣΗ, ὍΜΟΙΑ. *Hesych.*

^e —ἐπειδὴ μίμητικοὶ ἐγένοντο, ἐκεῖ ἐχρῶσιν ἀντιστροφῶν, πρότερον δὲ εἶχον.

^f Διὸ ἀπλῆτερα ἐποιεῖντο αὐτοῖς τὰ μέλη· ἢ δὲ ἀντιστροφῶν ἀπλῆν ἀριθμῶν γὰρ ἔστι καὶ ἐνὶ μετρεῖται: i. e. (if I understand it rightly,) it consists of a *number* of parts that *have one common measure*.

That, in the Strophe and Antistrophe of the Greek Ode, the same musical strain was repeated, is clear from *Dionys. Hal. de Struct. Orat.* § 19. τοῖς δὲ τὰ μέλη γραφοῦσι, κ. τ. αλ. And also from what Aristotle, in this Prob. says of the *Nomes*, which were *not* antistrophical, and the *melodies* of which, as well as the *words* τῆ μίμησες ἠκολαθεῖ ΑΕΙ ΕΤΕΡΑ γινόμενα.

ance of these hymns, like that of the Nomes, was left to professed musicians, the ἀγωνισται, or masters of the art, who contended with each other in trials of skill, and who were, of course, to exert all their *imitative* powers. The symmetry of strophe and antistrophe, and the simplicity of air regularly repeated, were ill adapted to this purpose, which required length, variety, and frequent changes^g of metre, melody, rhythm, mode, genus, &c. in conformity to the various subjects of imitation, and transitions of expression^h.—This account, which affords some little glimpse of curious information, with respect both to the Nomic and Dithyrambic hymn, is confirmed, as far as the latter is concerned, by Dionysius Halicarn. *De Structurá Orat. Sect. 19*. He there traces the progress of all this Lyric *corruption*, and names TIMOTHEUS and PHILOXENUS as the principal authors of these licentious and wicked innovations—“for, in the time of the *old Poets*,” he says, “the

^g See Dr. Burney's *Hist. of Music*, vol. i. p. 61, &c.

^h —ἀγωνιστων—ὧν ἡδὴ μιμῆσθαι δυναμένων καὶ διατείνεσθαι, ἢ ὧδῃ ἐγένετο μακρὰ καὶ πολυειδῆς. καθάπερ ἐν τα ΡΗΜΑΤΑ, καὶ τα ΜΕΛΗ τῆ μιμησῆς ἠκολούθει, αἰετῆρα γινόμενα.—He adds, μαλλον γὰρ τῶ μελεὶ ἀνάγκη μιμῆσθαι ἢ τοῖς ῥήμασι.—by which, I suppose, he means, that in this union of poetical and musical imitation in the Nomes, the *musical* imitation was considered as the principal and most essential object.

“ the Dithyrambic ode was an *orderly* and *regular* composition¹.”

Plutarch, too, in the Dialogue *Περὶ Μουσικῆς*, speaks exactly the same language. Timotheus and Philoxenus are there repeatedly stigmatized as corrupters of the *good old music*; and the Πινδαρεὶς and Σιμωνιδεὶς τροπὴ, is opposed to the Φιλοξενεὶς^k, with a zeal similar to that, with which, in modern music, we sometimes hear the style of Corelli and Geminiani opposed and preferred to the heterodox novelties of Haydn and Boccherini.

The manner, in which Aristotle, in this problem, speaks of the Nomes, when compared with his expressions relative to the Dithyrambics, rather leads one to suppose, that the former were not, even *originally*, composed in the antistrophic form^l: the least, however, that can be inferred from it, is, that they discarded that form, and, consequently, became complicated, artificial, and imitative, long before a similar revolution took place in the Dithyrambic Poetry and Music.— I may, also, observe that the variety of imitation,
and

^l — παρα γε τοῖς ἀρχαίοις ΤΕΤΑΓΜΕΝΟΣ ΗΝ Ο ΔΙΘΥΡΑΜΒΟΣ. What he means by τεταγμενὴ is sufficiently explained in the first paragraph of the same section.

^k *Plut. Ed. H. Steph. p. 2092, and 2084.*

¹ Δία τι οἱ μὲν Νομοὶ ἐκ ἐν ἀντιστροφῶν ΕΠΟΙΟΥΝΤΟ ;— and, οἱ Νομοὶ ἀγωνιστῶν ΗΣΑΝ.

and changes of expression, clearly attributed by Aristotle to the Nomes, seem to confirm what I said above—that they did not *exclude* the same variety, in the *objects* of their imitation, which the Dithyrambic Poem confessedly admitted.

I will just add, that this problem of Aristotle throws light upon a passage in his Rhetoric, which has embarrassed his commentators. He there [*lib. iii. cap. 9.*] compares the diction that is divided into periods, to the *Antistrophic Odes* “of the *old Poets* :” but, the *λεξις εἰρομένη*, in which the sentence has no other unity than that which copulatives give it^m, nor any other measure than the completion of the *sense*, and the necessity of taking breathⁿ, or, as *Cicero*, in few words, so admirably describes it, “*illa sine intervallis lo-*”
“*quacitas perennis et profluens*”^o—this Aristotle compares to what he calls the *ἀναβολαί* in Dithyrambic Poetry; meaning, I think, evidently, the long, irregular, *protracted* Odes of the more modern Dithyrambic Poets; such as those, of which he speaks in the Problem. For the word, *Αναβολη*, here, does not, I believe, signify *exordium*,
præmium,

^m — τῷ συνδεσμῷ μιαν.

ⁿ ἢ ἔθεν ἔχει τελεῶ καθ' αὐτήν, ἂν μὴ τὸ πρᾶγμα λεγόμενον τελειῶθῃ. The *periodic* diction, as opposed to this, he calls *εὐαναπνευστῶ*. [§ 3.]—*Ille rudis, inconditè fundit quantum potest, et id quod dicit SPIRITU, NON ARTE, determinat.*
—*Cic. de Or. iii. 44.*

^o *De Or. iii. 48.*

proœmium, as usually understood, but was, probably, the name by which these ᾠδαι μακραι και πολυειδεις^p were distinguished, and opposed to the old and simple Dithyrambic *in stanzas*.

NOTE 18.

P. 106. EITHER IN NARRATION, - - - AND THAT, AGAIN, EITHER, &c.

It may safely be pronounced, that the original here, either is not as Aristotle left it, or, was carelessly and ambiguously written. As the ambiguity, however, does not affect the *general* sense of the passage, it is scarcely worth while to engage in a minute discussion of the comparative merits of the two different constructions, which have been adopted by different commentators and translators. The learned reader knows, or may see, what has been said on both sides. I have preferred that construction, which has always appeared to me to result most obviously and naturally from the words of the original.—ἐν τοις αυτοις, και τα αὐτα μιμεισθαι ἐστιν, ὅτε μὲν ΑΠΑΓΓΕΛΟΝΤΑ (ἢ ἕτερον τι γιγνεμενον, ὡσπερ Ὀμηρὸς ποιει, ἢ ὡς τον αὐτον, και μη μεταβαλλοντα,) η παντας ὡς ΠΡΑΤΤΟΝΤΑΣ και ἐνεργοντας τας μιμειμενας.—

In the other, and most usual way of taking this passage, the mixture of *mere narration*, and
dramatic

^p See note ^h.

dramatic imitation, in the Epic species, is expressed by the words, ὅτε μὲν ἀπαγγελλόντα, ἢ ἕτερον τι γιγνομενον. But it seems not likely, that Aristotle would thus oppose the word ἀπαγγελλόντα, τὸ ἕτερον τι γιγνομενον; because the term, ἀπαγγελία, is constantly applied by him, throughout the treatise, to the *narrative* species in general: it is opposed, not to the *dramatic part* of the Epic, but to the *drama* itself. Απαγγελία and διηγησις, are used by him as synonymous terms, and are both applied to the *whole* of the Homeric, or dramatic, Epic Poem^a.

On the other hand, the words—ἢ ἕτερον τι γιγνομενον—seem evidently opposed to—ἢ ὡς τὸν αὐτὸν καὶ μὴ μεταβαλλόντα, and should, therefore, be joined with *them*, not with ἀπαγγελλόντα.—Lastly, in this way of understanding the passage, Aristotle divides the different *manners* of imitation, as he might naturally be expected to divide them, into those which characterize the two great and principal species, of which he means to treat—the *NARRATIVE* and the *DRAMATIC*. The two different *modes* of the former, i. e. the *pure* narrative, and the *dramatic* narrative, are, with more propriety than in the other construction, (in *his* view of the subject, at least,) flung into a subdivision.

In

^a See ch. v.—τῶ δὲ ----- ΑΠΑΓΓΕΛΙΑΝ εἶναι—speaking of the Epic Poem.—And *cap.* vi. in the definition of Tragedy — καὶ ἐστὶ δι' ΑΠΑΓΓΕΛΙΑΣ. So, ch. xxiii. and xxiv. *passim*.

In either construction, however, Aristotle agrees with *Plato* in enumerating *three* kinds of Poetry, the purely dramatic, the purely narrative, and the mixed^b. But the generality of the commentators seem, too hastily, to have taken it for granted, that Aristotle must therefore necessarily enumerate them in the same manner; and they have, accordingly, moulded the flexible and ambiguous construction of this passage, exactly upon the division of *Plato*^c.

I was glad to find myself supported here by the judgment of the accurate *Piccolomini*, whose version coincides with mine.—In *UN MODO*, per via di *narratione*,—*e questo*, ò ponendo se stesso alle volte il Poeta in persona d'altri, come fà *Homero*, over conservando sempre la propria persona non mutata mai. Nel *ALTRO MODO* poi, introducendo persone à trattare et negoziare, come se le stesse persone che sono imitate, fussero.

With respect to the *imitation* here expressly allowed by Aristotle to subsist even in *mere* narration, without the intermixture of any thing dramatic, see *Diss. I. p. 37, &c.*

^d *Plato, Rep.* lib. iii. p. 392, D. to 394, D. *Ed. Serrani.* But, for the difference of *Plato's* doctrine, or rather of his *language*, from that of *Aristotle*, see *Diss. I. p. 60.*

^e See, particularly, *Is. Casaubon, De Sat. Poes.* cap. iii. *init.* I agree perfectly with *Mr. Winstanley*, that his emendations are not necessary. [But see *REMARK 7. vol. ii. p. 461.*]

NOTE 19.

P. 106. ELEVATED CHARACTERS—

Gr. ΣΠΟΥΔΑΙΟΥΣ.

The adjective Σπουδαῖος, and its opposite, Φαυλός, are words of considerable latitude. They, each of them, comprehend a number of different, though related, ideas, for which *we* have not, that I know of, any common word. Propriety itself, therefore, requires of a translator that, which, at first view, seems contrary to propriety—that he should render each of those words differently in different places. To have translated σπουδαῖος here, “good,” or “virtuous,” as it may *generally* be translated, would only have been giving an English *word* with a Greek *idea*, which none but readers of Greek would have affixed to it.

The Greeks appear to have applied the word, ΣΠΟΥΔΑΙΟΝ, to *whatever was, on any account, ἀξιον σπουδης*—whatever was *respectable, important, admirable, serious, valuable, &c.* as opposed to ΦΑΥΛΟΝ, which was applied, not to *vice* only, but to whatever was *contemptible, trifling*^a, *light, ordinary,*

^a Demosthenes has this expression:—ὁ μετρίως καὶ ΦΑΥΛΑΣ λαβὼν πληγὰς—*Orat. κατὰ Κορώνου*.—So, *bad*, is sometimes used in *familiar English*, for, *trifling*: “no bad blows.”

ordinary, ridiculous—or, as we say in familiar English, *good for nothing*. Hence the various senses of both these words in the Greek writers, according as they were applied to persons, and things, that were the objects of *esteem*, or *contempt*, on *different accounts*. Sometimes, therefore, *σπυδαί*Ⓞ may be rendered by “*good*;” sometimes by “*serious, earnest*,” &c.—Sometimes, as in this passage, and in the definition of Tragedy, by “*elevated*,” “*important*,” &c.^b

Suidas explains the word, not only by *Εναρετ*Ⓞ, but by *ΣΟΦΟΣ*, and *ΕΥΔΟΚΙΜΟΣ*. See also the article, *Φαυλ*Ⓞ. Hesychius gives, as synonymous to *Φαυλ*Ⓞ, not only the general word, *Κακ*Ⓞ, but, *ΕΥΤΕΛΗΣ*—*‘ΑΠΛΟΥΣ*—*ΚΑΤΑΓΕΛΛΑΣΤΟΣ*. And Phavorinus—*φαυλον, το κακον, και το ευτελες, και το μικρον, και ΟΥΔΑΜΙΝΟΝ*—Angl. “*good for nothing*.”

Some kind of *virtue*, in the extended sense given to the word *ΑΡΕΤΗ* by the antient writers on morals, was, indeed, always implied in the epithet *Σπυδαί*Ⓞ; but it included such good qualities, and endowments, as we do not usually call *virtues*; or, at least, such as we never include in our idea of a *virtuous man*^c: as,

wisdom,

^b Thus, Dacier—les gens plus *considerables*.—Piccolomini—persone *grave*:—attione *grave e magnifica*.—Heinsius—*honestos*. Goulston,—*præstantes*, &c.

^c See Hume’s *Principles of Morals*, Sect. 6. Part I.—particularly p. 111, &c.—and the note, p. 104.

wisdom, courage, eloquence, &c.—Thus Aristotle himself;—*το δε ΣΠΟΥΔΑΙΟΝ ειναι, εσι το ΤΑΣ ΑΡΕΤΑΣ. εχειν*^d. And what are these *virtues*?—they are—“*all laudable habits.*”—*των εξων τας ΕΠΑΙΝΕΤΑΣ, ΑΡΕΤΑΣ λεγομεν*^e.

The subject of Criticism is necessarily connected, in some degree, with that of Ethics; and unless we understand well the *moral* language of any writer, we cannot be competent judges of his criticism.

NOTE 20.

P. 107. IN SUPPORT OF THESE CLAIMS THEY ARGUE FROM THE WORDS THEMSELVES.

Ποιημενοι τα ονοματα σημειον.—The participle, *ποιημενοι*, should be applied, I think, to *all* the Dorians—not confined, as in Dacier's translation, to those of Peloponnesus. See Goulston's version, which appears to me to be right.

Aristotle begins by saying expressly, that the *Dorians, in general*, laid claim to both Tragedy and Comedy, *on account of the term ΔΡΑΜΑ*, which was a Doric word:—ΔΙΟ (i. e. from the term *Δραματα*, just before mentioned,) *αντιποιενται*

ΤΗΣ

^d *Mag. Moral.* i. i.

^e *Eth. Nicom.*—*End of Book I.*—I may also refer the reader, on this subject, to *Cic. de Or.* lib. ii. cap. 84. “*Virtus autem, quæ est per se ipsa laudabilis,*” &c.

της τε Τραγωδίας και της Κωμωδίας ΟΙ ΔΩΡΙΕΙΣ.—
 He then mentions the *peculiar* claims of the
 Megarians to Comedy, and of the Dorians of
 Peloponnesus to Tragedy; throwing in, paren-
 thetically, some *other* arguments on which the
 former *also* founded their title to the invention of
 Comedy: after which, he returns, at the word
 ποιημενοι, to shew, how these people concurred in
 arguing from the etymology of the *words* them-
 selves; *all* of them, from the word δραμα, as it
 was common to Tragedy and Comedy, and they,
 who laid claim to *Comedy*, both from that, and
also from the derivation of the word Κωμωδία.

The construction, in this way, is, I confess,
 somewhat parenthetical and embarrassed; but
 the reader, who is accustomed to the style of
 Aristotle, will not, I believe, consider this as
 affording alone any sufficient presumption against
 the explanation here given.

NOTE 21.

P. 108. THE FIGURES OF THE MEANEST
 AND MOST DISGUSTING ANIMALS. - - -

Θηριων τε μορφας των ΑΤΙΜΟΤΑΤΩΝ.—This
 reading is strongly supported by the arguments
 of Victorius, the authority of MSS. and the sense
 and purport of the passage itself, which seems to
 require instances of *mean*, or *disgusting*, rather
 than of *terrible*, objects. Thus too Plutarch, in

the passages referred to by Victorius, which undoubtedly allude to this of Aristotle.—Γεγραμμενη ΣΑΤΡΑΝ η ΠΙΘΗΚΟΝ,—— ἰδοντες ἠδομεθα και θαυμαζομεν, οὐχ ὡς καλον, ἀλλ' ὡς ὁμοιον· ἔστι γαρ ἔδυναται καλον γευεσθαι ΤΟ ΑΙΣΧΡΟΝ— κ. τ. αλ.—And presently after—και ΝΟΣΩΔΗ ΜΕΝ ΑΝΘΡΩΠΟΝ, και ΤΠΟΥΛΟΝ, ὡς ἀτερπες θεαμα, φευγομεν· κ. τ. αλ.—See also his *Sympos. Problems, lib. v. Prob. 1.*

NOTE 22.

P. 108. TO LEARN IS A NATURAL PLEASURE - - -

To the same purpose, in his *Rhetoric, lib. i. cap. xi. p. 537. Ed. Duval.* Ἐπει δε το ΜΑΝΘΑΝΕΙΝ τε ἠδύ, και το θαυμαζειν, και τα τοιαυτα, ἀναγκη ἠδεα εἶναι, το τε μεμιμημενον^a, ὡσπερ ΓΡΑΦΙΚΗ, και ΑΝΔΡΙΑΝΤΟΠΟΙΙΑ, και ΠΟΙΗΤΙΚΗ, και παν ὁ ἀν εὐ μεμιμημενον ἢ, καὶ μη ἢ ἠδύ ἔ το μιμημα· ἔ γαρ ἐπι τετῷ χαιρει, ἀλλα συλλογισμῶ ἴσι, ὅτι ΤΟΥΤΟ ΕΚΕΙΝΟ· ὡσε ΜΑΝΘΑΝΕΙΝ τι συμβαινει.—“ And as it is by nature delightful
“ to LEARN, to ADMIRE, and the like, hence we
“ necessarily receive pleasure from *imitative*
“ arts,

^a I cannot but suspect this reading. It was perhaps, originally, το τε ΜΙΜΟΤΜΕΝΟΝ: otherwise, μεμιμημενον must here be taken *actively*, which, though not unusual, is in *this* place, I think, improbable, because the same participle immediately follows, in the *passive* sense.

“ arts, as PAINTING, SCULPTURE, and POETRY,
 “ and from whatever is well imitated, even
 “ though the original may be disagreeable; for
 “ our pleasure does not arise from the beauty of
 “ the thing itself, but from the *inference*—the
 “ *discovery*, that “ THIS IS THAT,” &c. so that
 “ we seem to LEARN something.” - - -

Μαθηματικὴ—to learn, to know, i. e. merely to recognize, discover, &c. See Harris, *On Music, Painting, &c.* ch. iv. note (b). The meaning is sufficiently explained by what follows. Dryden, who scarce ever mentions Aristotle without discovering that he had looked only at the wrong side of the tapestry^c, says—“ Aristotle tells us, “ that imitation pleases because it *affords matter* “ *for a reasoner* to enquire into the truth or “ falsehood of imitation,” &c.^d But Aristotle is not

^c “ Methinkes this *translating*,” says Don Quixote, “ is just like looking upon the *wrong side of arras hangings*; that although the pictures be scene, yet they are “ full of *thred-ends*, that darken them, and they are not “ scene with the plainnesse and smoothnesse as on the “ other side.” *Shelton's Don Quixote. Sec. part, ch. lxii.*

^d *Parallel between Poetry and Painting*, prefixed to his translation of Dufresnoy. Dryden seems to have taken his idea from Dacier's note on this place, which is extremely confused, and so expressed, as to leave it doubtful, whether he misunderstood the original, or only explained himself awkwardly.—The use that Dryden made of French critics and translators is well known.

He

not here speaking of *reasoners*, or *inquiry*; but, on the contrary, of the vulgar, the generality of mankind, whom he expressly *opposes* to philosophers, or reasoners: and his συλλογιζεσθαι is no more than that rapid, habitual, and imperceptible act of the mind, that “raisonnement aussi prompt que le coup d’œil,” (as it is well paraphrased by M. Batteux,) by which we *collect*, or *infer*, from a comparison of the picture with the image of the original in our minds, that it was intended to represent that original.

The fullest illustration of this passage is to be found in another work of Aristotle, his *Rhetoric*, *lib. iii. cap. x.*^e, where he applies the same principle to metaphorical language, and resolves the pleasure we receive from such language, into that which arises from the μαθησις TAXEIA—the exercise of our understandings in *discovering* the meaning, by a *quick* and *easy* perception of some quality or qualities common to the thing *expressed*, and the thing *intended*—to a mirror, for example, and to the theatre, when the latter is called metaphorically, “The mirror of human life^f.”

In

He commends “*Dacier’s late excellent translation of Aristotle*,” in the *Paral. between Poet. and Paint.* just before the passage above quoted.

* *Ed. Duval.* In other Ed. differently divided, cap. vi.

^f See Harris’s *Philol. Inq.* p. 190, and note*.

In the Problems, *Sect.* 19, *Prob.* V. the same principle is applied to Music. The Problem is, Why we are more pleased with singing when we are acquainted with the air that is sung, than when it is new to us?—And one of the answers is, *ὅτι ἴδου το μανθανειν*—i. e. to say, this is such a tune, or song, &c. And indeed the pleasure afforded by *recognition*, is no where, perhaps, more visibly illustrated, than in the raptures and rhythmical agitation of a popular audience, at the return of the leading air, in that species of infallible ear-trap, the RONDEAU.—I must add, as somewhat amusing, that Plato makes use of this principle to prove a dog to be a philosophical animal: “ for, (he argues,) *το φιλομαθες και φιλοσοφον, τ’ αυτον*, the love of *knowing*, and the love of *wisdom*, are one and the same thing. Now dogs are delighted with *knowing*, simply, and disinterestedly; they fawn upon every one whom they know, and bark at the approach of every stranger^g; and that, without having ever experienced good from the one, or harm from the other^h.”

The

^g Every person, of whom, in Aristotle’s language, they cannot say—*Ουτ’ ἐκειν’*. “ This is he.”

^h *Ὁν μὲν ἂν ἴδῃ ΑΓΝΩΤΑ, χαλεπαινει, ἔδεν δὴ κακον προπεπονθως· ὃν δ’ ἂν ΓΝΩΡΙΜΟΝ, ἀσπαζεται, κ’ ἂν μηδεν πωποτε ὑπ’ αὐτε ἀγαθον πεπονθοι.*—*Αλλα μὴν κομψον γε φαινεται το παθ’ αὐτε της φυσεως, και ΩΣ ΑΛΗΘΩΣ ΦΙΛΟΣΟΦΟΝ:* κ. τ. αλ. *Recp.* ii. p. 376. *Serran.*

The philosophy of Aristotle here, though undoubtedly true, as far as it goes, will, I am afraid, to those who examine it, hardly appear to be perfectly satisfactory, or to reach the bottom of the subject. It is however to be considered, that what he has said, seems applicable *chiefly* to rude and unskilful spectators, and should, perhaps, be considered as a description of the effect of a picture or a statue upon children, and the multitude, who are little accustomed to view works of imitative art. And even with respect to *them*, the principle seems scarcely applicable but to portraits, and *individual* resemblances, such as may not be instantly recognized. When we look at a picture of that kind, we may not discover, till after a comparison of, at least, a few moments, that it is an imitation of *this* or *that* person; but, that it is an imitation of *a man*, we see at once; and where there is not even a momentary ignorance, or doubt, I do not see how any *information*¹ can be said to be acquired by the spectator, nor how, on the philosopher's own principles, (if I rightly understand him,) the pleasure conveyed by the imitation, can, in any sense, be resolved into that, which the mind receives from the exertion of its own powers in *inferring*, or *discovering*, the resemblance.— I say, on Aristotle's *own* principles, because, in
the

¹ See below, note¹.

the passage above referred to^k, where he explains himself more fully in applying the principle to metaphor, he expressly allows, that this pleasure of recognition, is not afforded by *proper* or *common* words, since they instantly suggest their meaning and cannot be mistaken^l. Now a painting, considered as an imitation of a man, a horse, a house, *in general*, obviously answers in this respect, unless the imitation be grossly imperfect*, to the *common* and familiar word; the one suggesting its *original*, as readily and immediately, as the other suggests its *idea*.

Among Aristotle's illustrations of this physical principle of the pleasure of *self-information*, as it might be called, there are two short passages, in

^k Rhet. iii. 10.

^l —τα δε κυρια ΙΣΜΕΝ.—“ The Stagirite having told us what a natural pleasure we derive from *INFORMATION*, and having told us that, in the subject of words, *exotic words want that pleasure from being obscure, and common words from being too well known,*” adds, &c. Harris, *Phil. Inq.* p. 190, note*.

* As it was, when Painting was in its *infant* state—*εν γαλαξι και σπαργανοις*—according to the quaint expression of Ælian, *Hist. Var.* x. 10.—of which he seems to have been fond; for it occurs before *lib. viii. cap. 8*. It seems very properly guarded, in both places, by a —*τροπον τινα*.—The old painters of whom Ælian speaks were little aware of Aristotle's principle, when they wrote under their pictures—Τατο βεης—Εκεινο ισηπ⊙—Τατο δενδρον.

in particular, which seem to be so explicit with regard to the nature of that pleasure, that I will venture to add to the length of this note by a transcript and translation of them both. They will, I think, satisfy the learned reader that I have not, in the foregoing remarks, misrepresented the philosopher's meaning.

After having applied the principle to metaphor, he applies it in like manner to the *enthymemes*, or arguments, of the orator.

Διο ἔτε τα ἐπιπολαια των ἐνθυμηματων εὐδοκίμει· (ἐπιπολαια γὰρ λεγομεν τα παντι δηλα, και Ἄ ΜΗΔΕΝ ΔΕΙ ΖΗΤΗΣΑΙ·) ἔτε ὅσα εἰρημενα ἀγνωσμενα ἐσι· ἀλλ' ὅσων, ἢ ἅμα λεγομενων ἢ γνωσις γινεται, και εἰ μη προτερον ὑπηρεχεν, ἢ μικρον ὑσεριζει ἢ διανοια· γινεται γὰρ ὍΙΟΝ ΜΑΘΗΣΙΣ· ἐκεινωσ δε, ἔδετερον^m.

“ For the same reason, we are pleased,
 “ neither with *superficial* arguments, (by which
 “ we mean such as are obvious to every one,
 “ and require no thought or *search* in the hearer;)
 “ nor with such as we do not understand when
 “ we have heard them; but, with those, which
 “ the mind apprehends, either *while* we hear
 “ them, (though not at *first*,) or in the *moment*
 “ *after* they are delivered:—for by *these*, we,
 “ *in a manner*, LEARN something: by the
 “ *others*,

^m *Rhet.* iii. 10.

“ *others, we learn nothing in either of these ways*.”

The other passage, in which the nature of the pleasure that Aristotle means is still more expressly marked, is this :

Παντων δε των—συλλογισμων θορυβειται μαλιζα τα τοιαυτα οσα αρχομενα ΠΡΟΟΡΩΣΙ, μη τῷ ἐπιπολης εἶναι· ἀμα γαρ και ΑΥΤΟΙ ΕΦ ΕΑΥΤΟΙΣ ΧΑΙΡΟΥΣΙ προαισθανόμενοι· και ὅσων τούτων ὑπεριζῶσιν, ὡσθ' ἀμα εἰρημεων γνωριζειν^ο.

“ Of all arguments, those are most applauded^p, of which the audience have no sooner heard the *beginning*, than they *foresee* the conclusion;—not, however, from their being *trite* and *obvious*; for they are pleased, [*not only with the ingenuity of the speaker, but*]^q at the same
“ time,

ⁿ ἴδιτερον—i. e. neither *while* we hear them, nor *as soon as* we have heard them.

^ο *Rhet.* ii. cap. xxiii. *Duval*. In some other editions, cap. xix.

^p “ *applauded*” - - - θορυβειται. The commentators strangely mistake the sense of this word here, and in *lib.* i. c. ii. They render it, absurdly,—*vehementiùs percellunt—perturbant maximè, &c.*—Whether an audience be *pleased*, or *displeased*, to any great degree, *noise* is equally the consequence; and the word *θορυβειν* is used, sometimes for the uproar of *approbation*, and sometimes for that of *dislike*.

^q I insert these words, because, though not in the original, they seem plainly implied in the expression—*ἌΜΑ γαρ ΚΑΙ αἰτοι, &c.*

“ time, WITH THEMSELVES and their own *sagacity*.—Those arguments, also, afford pleasure, which, the *moment after* they are delivered, we are no longer at a loss to apprehend.”

NOTE 23.

P. 108. IN A MORE TRANSIENT AND COMPENDIOUS MANNER. - - -

Επι βραχυ:—literally, “for a *short time*.” As PLATO, *Rep.* iii. p. 396, *κατα βραχυ*, *for a moment—en passant*. Dacier’s explanation—*Quoi qu’ils ne soient pas tous également propres à apprehendre*,—is, surely, wide of Aristotle’s purpose. None of the versions, that I have seen, seem to give the exact idea, except that of Heinsius:—*“Quamquam minor breviorque ad hos perveniat voluptas.”*

NOTE 24.

P. 108. FROM THE WORKMANSHIP. - - -

Δια την ΑΠΕΡΓΑΣΙΑΝ—“neatness”—“*finishing*,” &c. In the following passages of PLATO, it is opposed to a slight sketch:—*και αυτων τετων* [sc. *δικαιοσυνης, σωφροσυνης, &c.*] *εχ’ υπογραφην* *δει, ωσπερ νυν θεασασθαι, αλλα την τελεωτατην ΑΠΕΡΓΑΣΙΑΝ μη παριεναι* *Rep.* vi. p. 504. So again, *lib.* viii. p. 548, the verb, *απεργαζεσθαι*, is opposed to *υπογραφειν*.

NOTE 25.

P. 109. METRE—A SPECIES OF RHYTHM.

Μορια—*parts*.—The following passage will ascertain the sense of the word in this place, and justify my version. Explaining the different senses in which the word Μερ^ς was used, Aristotle says,—ἔτι, εἰς ἃ το εἶδ^ς διαιρεθεῖσιν ἂν, ἄνευ τῆ Ποιη, καὶ ταυτὰ ΜΟΡΙΑ λεγεται τῆσ' διο τὰ ΕΙΔΗ, τῆ ΓΕΝΟΥΣ φασιν εἶναι ΜΟΡΙΑ.—*Metaphys. lib. v. cap. 25*.—So, in *this* treatise, *cap. 5*.—τῆ Δισχρησ εἰς το Γελοιοῦ ΜΟΡΙΟΝ—“ a part, or *species*, of “ the ridiculous.”

NOTE 26.

P. 109. THOSE PERSONS, IN WHOM, ORIGINALLY, THESE PROPENSITIES WERE THE STRONGEST, &c.

It is obvious to remark here, that Aristotle, in this deduction of the art from the *mimetic* and *musical* instincts, includes verse in his idea of Poetry, which he, at least, considered as *imperfect* without it. All that he drops, elsewhere, to the disparagement of metre, must be understood only comparatively: it goes no farther, than to say, that imitation, that is, fiction and invention, without verse, deserves the title of *Poetry*, or *Making*, *better* than verse without imitation.

An eminent writer has adjusted this matter, and set it on its true and solid basis, in his Dissertation *On the idea of Universal Poetry*^a. What is there said, of “the origin and first application of Poetry among all nations,” will furnish the best comment I can give, upon the passage which is the subject of this note.

“*Poetry* is every where of the most early growth, preceding every other sort of composition; and being destined for the *ear*, that is, to be either sung, or at least recited, it adapts itself, even in its first rude essays, to that sense of measure, and proportion in sounds, which is so natural to us. The hearer’s attention is the sooner gained by this means, his entertainment quickened, and his admiration of the performer’s art excited. Men are ambitious of pleasing, and ingenious in refining upon what they observe will please. So that musical cadences and harmonious sounds, which nature dictated, are farther softened and improved by art, till Poetry become as ravishing to the ear, as the images, it presents, are to the imagination. In process of time, what was at first the extemporaneous production of genius or passion, under the conduct of a *natural ear*, becomes the labour of the closet, and is conducted by artificial rules; yet still, with a secret reference to the *sense* of
“ hearing,

^a Dr. Hurd’s *Horace*, vol. ii.

“ hearing, and to that acceptation which melo-
 “ dious sounds meet with in the recital of ex-
 “ pressive words.”

NOTE 27.

P. 110. MARGITES.

The scraps that have been preserved of this Poem, the *Dunciad* of HOMER, are so few, and so short, that it may be worth while, for the convenience of the reader, to collect them.—

Μεσαων θεραπων και ἐκηβολε Απολλων^α,

—a line as likely to be found in one kind of Poem as in another, and which affords about as good a *sample* of *this* Poem, as a brick does of the building from which it was taken.—The other fragments are a little more interesting, as they give some idea of the hero of the Poem.

ΤΟΝΔ' ἔτ' αὐ σκαπτηρα θεοι θεσαν, ἔτ' ἀροτηρα,
 Οὐτ' ἄλλως τι σοφον^β πασης δ' ἡμαρτανε τεχνης^β.
 Πολλ' ἠπισατο ἔργα, κακως δ' ἠπισατο παντα^γ.

—This last stroke of character is not peculiarly antique. The line is of easy application in all times.

^α Cited by the Scholiast on the *Aves* of Aristophanes, v. 914.

^β Preserved by Aristotle, *Eth. lib. vi. cap. 7*, as far as the word σοφον. The remainder of the second line is in *Clem. Alexand. Strom. lib. i.*

^γ Plato, *Alcib. Secund. p. 147. Ed. Serrani.*

times. It is not so easy to reconcile it with some other accounts, which seem to make *Margites* a downright idiot; such as, his not being able to number beyond five; his abstaining from all intercourse with his bride, lest she should complain of him to her mother, &c^d.—One cannot well conceive, how such a man should, as Homer expressly says, “*know how to do many things*;” even though he did them ever so ill. But a tale, still more ridiculous, is told of this curious personage by *Eustathius*^e.

NOTE 28.

P. 110. HIS MARGITES BEARS THE SAME ANALOGY TO COMEDY, AS HIS ILIAD AND ODYSSEY TO TRAGEDY.

Whenever Aristotle speaks of COMEDY, we must remember, that he speaks of the Old, or Middle Comedy, which was no other than what *we* should call farce, and to which his definition of Comedy was adapted: *μιμησις φλυλοτερων*; that is, as he explains himself, “an imitation of “RIDICULOUS characters^a.”—This remark is necessary to explain what is here said of the *Margites*.

^d Suidas, Art. MARGITES.

^e *Eustath.* ad Hom. Odyss. K.—See also Kuster's note on Suidas, Art. MARGITES.

^a Chap. v. *Translation*, § 8. Part I. And see Dr. Hurd's *Diss. on the Provinces of the Drama.* ch. ii. p. 201.

Margites. A Poem, which, as far as we can form any idea of it, celebrated the blunders and absurdities of an idiot, cannot well be conceived to have been analogous to any thing, that would now be denominated a *Comedy*. It seems to verge to the very bottom of the dramatic scale; “jusq’ au *bouffon*; celui-ci sera l’extrême de “la Comedie, le plus bas degré de l’échelle, “opposé au *terrible* qui est à l’autre bout^b.” The *Bourgeois Gentilhomme* of Moliere is certainly farce, however excellent in its way. But Mons. Jourdain is a very *Ulysses*, compared with *Margites*.

NOTE 29.

P. 111. BY SUCH SUCCESSIVE IMPROVEMENTS AS WERE MOST OBVIOUS.

Ὅσον ἐγένετο φανερόν αὐτῆς—literally, “*so much of it as was manifest*.”—I doubt of the reading: but, taking it as it stands, I have given what appears to me to offer itself as the most natural and simple meaning of the expression, if not **the only** one that it will reasonably bear.

^b Fontenelle, Preface to his *Comedies*, vol. vii. of his works.

NOTE 30.

P. 111-12. ÆSCHYLUS - - - - ABRIDGED
THE CHORAL PART.

The words are, ΤΑ ΤΣ ΧΟΡΟΣ. Aristotle would hardly have expressed himself thus, had he meant, as Madius, Bayle, and others, have understood, a retrenchment in the *number* of choral performers. ΤΑ ΤΣ ΧΟΡΟΣ, the choral *part*, is opposed to ΤΑ ἄπο σκηνης, the *dialogue*, *Prob.* xv. of *Sect.* 19. It is singular, that Stanley should misunderstand this passage; and still more singular, that he should cite *Philostratus*, who is directly against him: for his words are, συνέσειλε τας χορους, ΑΠΟΤΑΔΗΝ ΟΝΤΑΣ: “*he contracted the chorusses, which were immoderately long*.”

This is confirmed by one of Aristotle’s *Problems*, referred to by *Victorius*^b. The Problem is, Δια τι οι περι Φρυνιχον ησαν μαλλον μελοποιοι; (meaning, I suppose, more *Musicians* than the dramatic Poets of his own time :) The answer is, η, δια το πολλαπλασια ειναι τοτε τα μελη εν ταις των μετρων τραγωδαις;—I believe the passage may be rectified by transposition—πολλ. ειναι τοτε τα μελη των μετρων εν τ. τ. Perhaps, too, we should read, των ΤΡΙΜΕΤΡΩΝ. But, even taking it as it stands, it may sufficiently answer our purpose, as it shews clearly

^a Stanl. in vit. Æschyli, *Ed. Pauw*, p. 706.

^b *Sect.* 19. *Prob.* xxxi.

clearly enough how much the Lyric parts of Tragedy, before the time of *Æschylus*, wanted contraction.

The prolixity of the Tragic Chorus, we know, was sometimes trying to the patience of an Athenian audience. This is pleasantly glanced at by *Aristophanes* in his *Ορνιθες*: where the Chorus of birds, descanting on the convenience of wings, tell the spectators, that if *they* had wings, whenever, in the Theatre, they “*found themselves hungry, and were tired with the Tragic Chorus,*” “*they might fly home and eat their dinners, and fly back again, when the Chorus was over.*”

XOP.

Ουδεν ἐς' ἀμεινον, ἐδ' ἠδιον, ἢ φυσαι πτερα.
 Αυτιχ', ὕμων των θεατων εἰ τις ἦν ὑποπτεροῦ,
 Εἰτα, πεινων, τοις χοροισι των Τραγωδων ἤχθετο,
 Εκπετομενοῦ ἀν ἐτῶ ἤρισησεν, ἐλθων οἰκαδε,
 Κατ' ἀν, ἐμπλησθεις, ἐφ ἡμας αὐθις αὐ κατεπτατο.
 v. 786.

NOTE 31.

P. 112. AND MADE THE DIALOGUE THE PRINCIPAL PART OF TRAGEDY.

— Καὶ τον λογον πρωταγωνισην παρεσκευασε. —
 Victorious, and others, have supposed Aristotle to mean the *Prologue*. But it seems to be a sufficient objection to this sense, that no example has been

produced of the word *πρωταγωνιστης*, used as merely synonymous to *πρωτῶς*; as signifying *first* only, not *principal*. Nor is it easy to discover any reason, why Aristotle should have recourse here to an unusual and ambiguous expression, when, presently after, in speaking of the improvements of Comedy [cap. v.], he makes use of the proper established term, *προλογῶς*. There seem to be no words in the Greek language, of which the sense is more clearly fixed, than that of *πρωταγωνιστης*—*πρωταγωνισειν*. They occur frequently, and always, as far as I know, in the same sense, of *principal*—*primas agere*, &c. To this sense, therefore, I thought it necessary to adhere. But I confess I cannot be satisfied with either of the explanations which have been given of the word *ΛΟΓΟΣ*. It appears strange to say, that Æschylus *first* introduced two actors, and then to add, as a *distinct* improvement, that he also *first* introduced a *principal part* or *character*:—unless we are to understand; what seems not very probable, that the two actors even of Æschylus himself were, *at first*, personages of equal dignity and importance in the drama, like the two kings of Brentford in the Rehearsal; and that, *afterwards*, he was the first who corrected this error, (in which he would probably have been followed by other Poets,) and reduced the drama to unity of action by a proper subordination of characters. But, admitting this *sense* to be without difficulty, the *expression* of it,

I think, is not. *Λογος*, for a *part* in the drama, *rôle*, *personnage*, (as Dacier,) *character*, &c. seems harsh, and unusual. At least, I know no example of it.

The difficulties which attend both the *expression* and the *sense*, in each of these interpretations, have almost convinced me, that the very construction of the words has been mistaken; and that the meaning is, “ he *made* the *discourse*, or “ *dialogue*, the *principal part* of Tragedy.” This is well connected with what precedes, and agreeable to the known history of the Tragic drama, in which, originally, the Chorus was the *essential*, and the Episodes, or dramatic part, only the *accessory*. But Æschylus “ abridged the *Chorus*, “ and made the *Episodic part* the *principal*.” *Λογος*, here, may well be understood to mean what Aristotle elsewhere calls *λεξις*; the *speaking*, or *recitative*, part of Tragedy, whether delivered by one or more actors, as opposed to the *μελη*, or Lyric part^a. *Παρεσκευασε*, *reddidit*, *effecit*, &c. as, (to take the first instance of this common use of that verb which the Lexicons offer me)—*εὐσεβέστερος τε και σωφρονέστερος τῶς συνουτας παρεσκευασεν* —“ *magis pius et temperatos reddidit*^b.” And thus Aristotle himself, *cap. xix.* *ὅταν ἡ ἐλεεινα ἡ δεινα* — *δεη παρασκευαζεν*. i. e. to *make things* piteous,

^a See NOTE 90.

^b *Xenophon*. So Isocrates, *Παρασκευαζε σεαυτον πλεονεκτειν μεν δυναμενον, &c Ad Demonicum*.

piteous, terrible, &c. as in Goulston's version ; and that of the accurate Piccolomini :—" Quando " occorre d'havere à *far parere le cose, ò mise- " rabili, ò atroci,"* &c.—If the use of *πρωταγω- νιστης* as an adjective be an objection, it is one to which the other explanations are equally liable. On the whole, I have not scrupled to prefer this sense in my version^c.

NOTE 32.

P. 112. SOPHOCLES ---- ADDED THE DE-
CORATION OF PAINTED SCENERY.

To adjust exactly the rival claims of Æschylus and Sophocles with respect to the *Ὀψις*, or decoration, of the Tragic stage, would be a desperate undertaking. Some accounts are so liberal to Æschylus, as scarce to leave his successors any room for farther improvements. They give him "*paintings, machinery, altars, tombs, trumpets, " ghosts, and furies :*"—to which others add a very singular species of Tragic improvement, the "*exhibition of drunken men.*"—*την δε σκηνην ἐκοσμησε, και την ὄψιν των θεωμένων κατεπληξε τη λαμπροτητι—ΓΡΑΦΑΙΣ και μηχαναις, βωμοις τε και ταφοις, σαλπιγξιν, ειδωλοις, ἐρινυσι.*—MS. life of Æschylus, quoted by Stanley, *In vitam Æschyli,*
and

^c Since this note was written, the same explanation has been given, and well supported, in the Camb. edit. of 1785. *Præl.* p. xxxi. &c.

and by *Fabric. Bib. Gr. lib. ii. cap. xvi. Sect. 2.*—
 And *Athenæus* says, *πρωτῶ ἐκεῖνῶ - - - παρη-*
γαγε τὴν τῶν ΜΕΘΥΝΤΩΝ ΟΨΙΝ ἐς τραγωδίαν.
 p. 428.—He adds an example. In the Tragedy
 called *Καβειροί*, he introduced “*Jason and his*
retinue drunk!”

The passage given by Dacier from *Vitruvius*
 is very general; it says only, “*scenam fecit*.”
 This may, or may not, include painting; which,
 indeed, rather seems to be implied, in what fol-
 lows, about the improvements of Democritus and
 Anaxagoras, where the “*imagines ædificiorum*
“*in scenarum picturis*” are mentioned. But all
 this is far outweighed by the testimony of Aristotle,
 who here explicitly attributes the introduction of
painted scenery to Sophocles.

NOTE 33.

P. 112. IT WAS LATE BEFORE TRAGEDY - - -
 ATTAINED ITS PROPER DIGNITY.

—Οψε ἀπεσεμνωθη:—and to “*late*,” we might
 add, *imperfectly*. For, what Horace says of the
 Roman Tragedy, is, in *some* measure, though per-
 haps not equally, applicable to the Greek:

- - - - in longum tamen ævum

Manserunt, hodieque manent *vestigia ruris*.

Ep. ad Aug. v. 160.

Prejudice

* Primus Agatharcus Athenis, Æschylo docente
 Tragœdiam, scenam fecit. *Vitruv. Præf. in lib. vii.*

Prejudice aside, it cannot surely be said, that the Greek Tragedy, in the hands, at least, of Æschylus, Sophocles, or Euripides, ever attained its *proper dignity*. I do not speak of *modern* dignity; of that uniform, unremitting strut of pomp and solemnity, which is now required in Tragedy. This was equally unknown to the manners, and to the Poetry, of the antients. I speak only of such a degree of dignity as excludes, not simplicity, but meanness—the familiar, the jocose, the coarse, the *comic*. Now it cannot, I think, be said, with any truth, that these are thoroughly excluded in *any* of the Greek Tragedies that are extant: in *some* of them they are admitted to a very considerable degree. In particular, something of this sort—of what the French call *mesquin*—is almost constantly to be found in the *short dialogue* of the Greek Tragedies; in that part, I mean, which the eye, when we turn over any Tragedy, easily distinguishes from the rest, by its being carried on in a regular alternation of single verses^a. In this “close fighting” of the dialogue, as Dryden calls it^b, which seems to have retained something of the spirit

^a A sensible writer has justly remarked the ill effect of this symmetrical sort of conversation upon the illusion of the drama. [Letters on various subjects, by Mr. Jackson of Exeter, vol. ii. p. 109.] The English reader may see an example of it in Milton's *Comus*, v. 277—290.

^b Essay on Dram. Poesy.

spirit of the old satyric *diverbia*, where, in the origin of the Greek, as well as of the Roman drama,

VERSIBUS ALTERNIS opprobria rustica fundunt,
HOR.

—in this part of the dialogue, we generally find, mixed indeed frequently with fine strokes of nature and feeling, somewhat more than what Brumoy calls “un petit vernis de familiarité;” especially when these scenes are, as they often are, scenes of altercation and angry repartee. In the *Iphigenia in Aulide* of Euripides, Menelaus, in the struggle with the old messenger for the letter, threatens to *break his head with his sceptre*,

Σκηπτρῷ ταχ' ἀρά σου καθαιμαξῶ καρα.

v. 311.

Fairly rendered by Mr. Potter's *verse*—

“Soon shall thy head this sceptre stain with
“ blood.”

Unfairly dignified by Brumoy's *prose*—

“Prends garde qu'une mort prompte ne punisse
“ ton audace.”

Even Sophocles, who gave the Tragic tone, in general, its proper pitch, between the ὄγκος of Æschylus, and the ἰσχυροτης of Euripides^d, is by

no

^c Theatre des Grecs, tome iii. p. 205.

^d Aristophanes, in *The Frogs*, makes Euripides boast to Æschylus - - -

— ὡς παρελαβον την τεχνην παρα σε το πρωτον εὔθους

Οιδεσαν ὑπο κομπασματων και ρηματων ἐπαχθων

ΙΣΧΝΑΝΑ ΜΕΝ ΠΡΩΤΙΣΟΝ ΑΥΤΗΝ, ΚΑΙ ΤΟ ΒΑΡΟΣ ἄφειλον.

no means free from some mixture of this *alloy* in the language of his short dialogue. For example: in the scene between Ulysses and Neoptolemus in the *Philoctetes*, [v. 1250.] when Neoptolemus declares his resolution of restoring to Philoctetes his bow and arrows, at which Ulysses expresses his surprise by a repetition of the question, Τί φησ;—τιν' εἰρηκας λογον;—Neoptolemus replies, “*Would you have me tell you the same thing two or three times over?*”

Δις τ' αὐτὰ βελεῖ καὶ τρεῖς ἀναπολεῖν μ' ἐπή^ε;
v. 1267.

In another scene of this Poet, between Teucer and Menelaus, after a long altercation about the interment of Ajax, Menelaus says—

Ἐν σοὶ φρασῶ—τονδ' ἐστὶν ἔχει θαπτεον.

—to which Teucer replies—

Σὺ δ' ἀντακχσον τῆτον ὡς τεθαψεται^ε.

In plain English, but no plainer than the Greek—
“*M. One thing I'll tell you—he shall not be*
“*buried.*”

^e The reader may also see something of the same cast in the scene between Oedipus and Creon, *Oed. Tyr.* v. 550, &c. And in that between Oedipus and the two Shepherds, v. 1162, &c. — These scenes of snarling altercation, I suppose, were what gave occasion to the ridiculous idea of some Comic Poet, that “*Sophocles seemed to have been assisted, in writing his Tragedies, by a mastiff-dog.*”

Κυων τις ἔδοκει συμποιεῖν Μολοττικῶ. *Diog. Laert.* IV. 20.

^f *Ajax.* v. 159, 160.

“ buried. T. And I’ll tell *another* thing—he “ *shall* be buried.”—Certainly this approaches very nearly to the language of a contest between two washerwomen.

These may be reckoned among the passages, in which the spirit of Sophocles, according to the observation of a great critic, σβεννυται ἀλογως πολλακις, και πιπτει ἀτυχιστα. [*Longin. Sect. 33.*]

In the *Antigone* there is a scene of altercation between Creon, Ismene, and Antigone, in which, when Ismene, pleading for her sister, asks Creon whether he will put *her* to death, who was to become the wife of his son, his answer is—

ΑΡΩΣΙΜΟΙ γαρ χείτερον εἰσι ΓΥΑΙ^ε.

The prejudiced admirers of the antients are very angry at the least insinuation that *they* had any idea of our *barbarous* Tragi-Comedy. But after all, it cannot be dissembled, that, if they had not the *name*, they had the *thing*, or something very nearly approaching to it. If that be Tragi-Comedy, which is partly serious and partly comical, I do not know why we should scruple to say, that the *Alcestis* of Euripides is, *to all intents and purposes*, a Tragi-Comedy. I have not the least doubt, that it had upon an Athenian audience the proper *effect* of Tragi-Comedy; that is,
that

^ε v. 576. This is not *much* more delicate than the answer of one of the Ægyptian fugitives to King Psammeticus.—*Herod. Euterp. p. 63. ed. H. Steph.*

that in some places it made them cry, and in others, laugh. And the best thing we have to hope, for the credit of Euripides, is, that he *intended* to produce this effect. For though he may be an unskilful Poet, who *purposes* to write a Tragi-Comedy, *he* surely is a more unskilful Poet, who writes one without knowing it.

The learned reader will understand me to allude particularly to the scene, in which the domestic describes the behaviour of Hercules; and to the speech of Hercules himself, which follows. Nothing can well be of a more comic cast than the servant's complaint^h. He describes the hero as the most greedy* and ill-mannered guest he had ever attended, under his master's hospitable roof; calling about him, eating, drinking, and *singing*, *in a room by himself*, while the master and all the family were in the height of funereal lamentation.

He

^h *Alcestis*, v. 757, &c.

* Hercules was renowned for his ἀδνηφαια. The following extravagant description of his eating, preserved by Athenæus from the *Busiris*, a satyric drama of Epicharmus, affords a curious specimen of the satyric *fun*.

Πρωτον μεν, αικ' ε̅σθοντ' ιδης νιν, αποθανοις.

Βρεμει μεν ο φαρυγξ ενδοθ', αραδει δ' α̅ γναθ̅,

Ψοφει δ' ο γομφι̅, τετριγε δ' ο κλυοδων,

Σιζει δε ταις ρινεσσι, κινει δ' οτατα

Των τετραποδων ε̅χ' η̅ττον - - - *Athen. lib. x. imit.*

He was not contented with such refreshments as had been set before him ;

----- ἔτι σωφρονως ἐδεξάτο
 Τα προστυχοντα ξενια -----
 ΑΛΛ' εἰ τι μη φερομεν, ΩΤΡΥΝΕΝ φερειν.

Then he drinks—

Ἐως ἔθερμην' αὐτον ἀμφιβασα φλοξ
 Οἶνος -----

—crowns himself with myrtle, and sings, ΑΜΟΥΣ' ΤΛΑΚΤΩΝ—and all this, alone. “ Cette description,” says Fontenelle, “ est si burlesque, qu'on diroit d'un crocheteur qui est de confrairie¹.” A censure somewhat justified by Euripides himself, who makes the servant take Hercules for a thief:

— πανουργον ΚΛΩΠΙΑ και ΛΗΙΣΤΗΝ τινα.

The speech of Hercules, φιλοσοφεντῶ ἐν μεθῃ, as the scholiast observes, (v. 776,) “ philosophizing in his cups,” is still more curious. It is, indeed, full of the φλοξ οἶνος, and completely justifies the attendant's description. Nothing can be more *jolly*. It is in the true spirit of a modern drinking song; recommending it to the servant to uncloud his brow, enjoy the present hour, think nothing of the morrow, and drown his cares in *love* and *wine*:

ὍΥΤΟΣ

¹ Œuvres de Font. vol. ix. p. 415.

‘ΟΥΤΟΣ^κ—τι σεμνον και πεφροντικῶς βλεπεις;
 Ου χρη σκυθρωπον, κ. τ. αλ.

ΔΕΥΡ’ ΕΛΘ’, ὅπως ἂν και σοφωτεροῦς γενη.
 Τα θνητα πραγματ’ οιδας ἦν ἔχει φυσιν;
 ΟΙΜΑΙ ΜΕΝ ‘ΟΥ ΠΟΘΕΝ ΓΑΡ;—ἀλλ’ ἀκβε με.
 Βροτοις ἀπασι κατθανειν ὀφειλεται,
 Κ’ εκ ἐσι θνητων ὄσις ἔξεπισαται
 Την αὐριον μελλυσαν εἰ βιωσεται.

Ευφρανε σαυτον ΠΙΝΕ!—τον καθ ἡμεραν
 Βιον λογιζε σον, τα δ’ ἄλλα, της τυχης.
 Τιμα δε και την πλειστον ἡδισην θεων
 ΚΥΠΡΙΝ βροτοισιν—κ. τ. λ. υ. 783—812.

If any man can read this, without supposing it to have *set* the audience *in a roar*, I certainly cannot demonstrate that he is mistaken. I can only say, that I think he must be a very grave man himself, and must forget that the Athenians were not a very grave people. The zeal of Pere Brumoy in defending this Tragedy, betrays him into a little indiscretion. He says, “ tout cela “ à fait penser à quelques critiques modernes “ que cette piece etoit une Tragicomedie ; “ chimere inconnu aux anciens. Cette piece “ *est du gout des autres Tragedies antiques*!”

Indeed

^κ “ You, fellow !” —Mr. Potter’s translation.

^λ *Tome* iii. p. 206.

Indeed they, who call this play a Tragi-Comedy, give it rather a favourable name; for, in the scenes alluded to, it is, in fact, of a lower species than our Tragi-Comedy: it is, rather, *burlesque Tragedy*; what Demetrius calls τραγωδία παιζουσα^m. Much of the comic cast prevails in other scenes; though mixed with those genuine strokes of simple and universal nature, which abound in this Poet, and which I should be sorry to exchange for that monotonous and unaffecting level of Tragic dignity, which never falls, and never rises.

I will only mention one more instance of this Tragi-comic mixture, and that from Sophocles. The dialogue between Minerva and Ulysses, in the first scene of the *Ajax*, from v. 74 to 88, is perfectly ludicrous. The cowardice of Ulysses is almost as comic as the cowardice of Falstaff. In spite of the presence of Minerva, and her previous assurance, that she would effectually guard him from all danger by rendering him invisible, when she calls Ajax out, Ulysses, in the utmost trepidation, exclaims—

Τι δράς, Αθανα; μηδαιμως σφ' ἕξω καλεῖⁿ.

Minerva

^m Περὶ Ἐξμ § 170.—Ὁ δὲ γελῶς, says this writer, ἐχρήσθη τραγωδίας. Neither Euripides, nor Sophocles, seem to have held this as an inviolable maxim.

ⁿ v. 74.—Ἄγγιξέ, “What are you about, Minerva?—by no means call him out.”

Minerva answers:—

Ου σιγ' ἀνεξή, μηδε δειλιαν ἀρεις^ο;

But Ulysses cannot conquer his fears:—

ΜΗ, ΠΡΟΣ ΘΕΩΝ—ἀλλ' ἐνδον ἀρκειτω μενων^ρ.

And in this tone the conversation continues; till, upon Minerva's repeating her promise that Ajax should not see him, he consents to stay; but in a line of most comical reluctance, and with an *aside*, that is in the true spirit of Sancho Pança:—

Μενοιμ' ἀν' ΗΘΕΛΟΝ Δ' ΑΝ ΕΚΤΟΣ ΩΝ
ΤΥΧΕΙΝ^ι.

No unprejudiced person, I think, can read this scene without being convinced, not only, that it must have actually produced, but that it must have been *intended* to produce, the effect of Comedy.

It appears, indeed, to me, that we may plainly trace in the Greek Tragedy, with all its improvements, and all its beauties, pretty strong marks of its popular and *Tragi-comic* origin. For, *Τραγωδία*, we are told, was, originally, the only dramatic

^ο “ Will you not be silent, and lay aside your fears!”

^ρ “ Don't call him out, for heaven's sake:—let him stay within.”

^ι “ I'll stay—(*aside*) but I wish I was not here.”—

“ J'avoue,” says Brumoy, “ que ce trait n'est pas à la louange d'Ulysse, ni de Sophocle.” (*Tome iii.*)

dramatic appellation^r; and when, afterwards, the *ludicrous* was separated from the *serious*, and distinguished by its appropriated name of *Comedy*, the separation seems to have been imperfectly made, and *Tragedy*, distinctively so called, seems still to have retained a tincture of its original merriment. Nor will this appear strange, if we consider the popular nature of the Greek spectacles. The *people*, it is probable, would still require, even in the midst of their Tragic emotion, a little *dash* of their old satyric *fun*, and Poets were obliged to comply, in some degree, with their taste^s.

When

^r *Casaub. De Sat. Poesi*, p. 21, 22.—Constat sanè primis temporibus ignoratum fuisse discrimen inter Tragœdiam et Comœdiam: - - - nam et Τρυγωδία et Τραγωδία, primitùs nomen fuit commune, quod posteā διεσπασθη, ut ait Aristoteles, et veteres critici testantur. Idem: [sc. *Athenæus*] τραγωδία, το παλαιον, ἢν ὄνομα κοινον και προς την Κωμωδιαν ὑπερον δε, το μεν κοινον ὄνομα ἐσχεν ἡ Τραγωδία ἡ δε Κωμωδία, ἰδιον.

• “ Scenical representations, being then intended, not, “ as in our days, for the entertainment of the better sort, “ but on certain great solemnities, indifferently for the “ diversion of the *whole city*, it became necessary to “ consult the taste of the multitude, as well as of those, “ *quibus est equus, et pater, et res.*” *Notes on Hor. vol. i.* p. 93. See also p. 195.—*Plato* calls Tragedy, της ποιησεως ΔΗΜΟΤΕΡΠΙΕΣΤΑΤΟΝ τε και Ψυχαγωγικωτατον. *Min. vol. ii. p. 321. Serr.*

When we speak of the Greek Tragedies as correct and perfect models, we seem merely to conform to the established language of prejudice, and content ourselves with echoing, without reflection or examination, what has been said before us. Lord Shaftsbury, for example, talks of Tragedy's being "*raised to its height* by "*Sophocles and Euripides, and no room left for* "*further excellence or emulation.*" *Advice to an Author, Part II. Sect. 2.* where the reader may also see his unwarrantable and absurd interpretation of Aristotle's phrase, ἔσχε την ἑαυτης φουσιν, by which he makes the philosopher, "*declare, that whatever idea might be formed of* "*the utmost perfection of the kind of Poem, it* "*could, in practice, rise no higher than it had* "*been already carried in his time.*" I should be sorry to be ranked in the class of those critics, who prefer that Poetry which has the fewest faults, to that which has the greatest beauties^t. I mean only to combat that conventional and
hearsay

^t Ποτερον ποτε κρεττον εν ποιημασι και λογοις—μεγεθ^θ εν ενις διημαρτημενον, η, το συμμετρον μεν εν τοις κατορθωμασιν, υγιες δε παντη και αδιαπτωτον. Long. Sect. 33. The υγιες παντη και αδιαπτωτον is, surely, by no means the character of the Greek Tragedians. They who think it worth searching for must lay aside Sophocles, and Shakspeare. In the French Theatre, perhaps, they may find it; but they must be content, I fear, to take with it, the συμμετρον εν τοις κατορθωμασι.

hearsay kind of praise, which has so often held out the Tragedies of the Greek Poets, as elaborate and perfect models, such as had received the last polish of art and meditation. The true praise of Æschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides, is, (in *kind* at least, though not in *degree*,) the praise of Shakspeare; that of strong, but irregular, unequal, and hasty genius. Every thing, which this genius and the feeling of the moment could produce, in an early period of the art, before time, and long experience, and criticism, had cultivated and refined it, these writers possess in great abundance: what meditation, and “*the labour and delay of the file*” only can effect, they too often want. Of Shakspeare, however, compared with the Greek Poets, it may justly, I think, be pronounced, that he has *much* more, both of this *want*, and of that *abundance*.

NOTE 34.

P. 112. ORIGINALLY, THE TROCHAIC TETRAMETER WAS MADE USE OF, &c.

As the Trochaic measure was still occasionally admitted, even in the improved and serious Greek Tragedy, and, in particular, occurs very frequently in the Tragedies of Euripides, it is natural to suppose, that a still more frequent use of it would be one of the characteristics of the *satyric* drama, which seems to have been only a

sort of *revival*, in an improved and regular form, of the old *Trochaic Tragedy*^a with its chorus of dancing satyrs^b. It seems therefore somewhat remarkable, though I have not seen it noticed, that in the only satyric drama extant, the *CYCLOPS*, and that written by *Euripides*, who has made so much use of this measure in his *Tragedies*, not a single Trochaic tetrameter is to be found.

NOTE 35.

P. 113. THE IAMBIC IS, OF ALL METRES, THE MOST COLLOQUIAL, &c.

Compare *Rhet. lib. iii. cap. i.* and *cap. viii.*
Ed. Duval. And *Demet. Περὶ Ἑρμ. Sect. 43.*

NOTE 36.

P. 113. - - - SELDOM INTO HEXAMETER, AND ONLY WHEN WE DEPART FROM THE USUAL MELODY OF SPEECH.

It has been thought strange, that Aristotle should introduce here the mention of *hexameters*, when he has been speaking only of *Trochaic* and *Iambic* verse, and is accounting for the adoption of

^a Aristotle's expression on this subject elsewhere, is, οἱ τὰς ΤΡΑΓΩΔΙΑΣ ποιῶντες - - - ἔκ τῶν τετραμμετρῶν εἰς τὸ ἰαμβεῖον μετεβῆσαν, &c. *Rhet. iii. 1.*

^b See *Casaub. de Sat. Poes. lib. i. c. 3.*

of the latter, in preference, not to the *hexameter*, but to the Trochaic *tetrameter*: and it has, therefore, been doubted, whether we should not read τετραμετρα^a. But the established reading, I believe, is right. The *Trochaic tetrameter*, Aristotle has, both here, and in his Rhetoric, characterized as σατυρικον—τροχερον—ὀρχησικωτερον—and even κορδακικωτερον^b. He did not, I apprehend, consider it as being, in any degree, λεκτικον. It was therefore entirely out of the question, when a metre proper for the *general* dialogue of Tragedy was to be sought for: but the *hexameter* was not so; and it might, without absurdity, be asked by an objector, as Castelvetro and Piccolomini have observed, why *that* species of verse was not adopted; especially as the Tragic Poets were the successors of the Epic, or Heroic^c, and Homer, according to Plato, was “*the first of Tragic Poets*”^d. As its character was grave and stately, it might seem, on that account, well adapted to Tragedy, where, indeed, we actually find it occasionally introduced. But Aristotle objects to it as less proper, because, though σεμνον, it was at the same time, ἔ λεκτικον^e. He allows,

^a *Ed Ox.* 178c, p. 277.

^b See above, NOTE 8. and^c.

^c —ἀντι των ἐπων, τραγωδοδιδασκαλοι. ch. iv. *Transl.*
Part I Sect 6.

^d —πρωτον των τραγωδιοποιων.—*Repub. lib. x. p. 607.*

^e *Rhet. iii. 8.*

allows, however, that it was not *so* remote from the rhythm of common speech, but that it *might* be casually produced, like the Iambic, though it rarely happened^f. He even goes so far, as to allow, in his concluding chapter, that Tragedy “*might adopt the Epic metre*”^g.—All this seems to afford sufficient support to the common reading. The *Heroic* and *Iambic* feet are, in the same manner, considered together, *Rhet.* iii. 8.

By λεκτικη ἀρμονια, Aristotle means what Aristoxenus calls ΜΕΛΟΣ λογωδες^h. We must not suppose him to use the word ἀρμονια here, in that lax and general sense, in which we commonly apply

^f See *Quintil. lib. ix. ch. 4.*—The most singular instance of involuntary versification that I ever met with, is to be found, where no one would expect to find such a thing,—in Dr. Smith’s *System of Optics*. The 47th Sect. of *ch. ii. book i.* begins thus:—

“ When parallel rays

“ Come contrary ways

“ And fall upon opposite sides” - - -

If, as Quintilian says, “*Versum in oratione fieri, multò fœdissimum est, totum; sicut etiam in parte, de forme*”—what would he have said to *half* an Anapaestic stanza, in rhyme, produced in a *mathematical* book, the author of which, too, was supposed to have possessed an uncommon delicacy of ear?

^g —τῷ μετρῷ [sc. τῆς ἐπιποιίας] ἐξέσι χρησθαι. *Cap. ult.*

^h *Harmon. lib. i. p. 18. Ed. Meib.*—Ἀρμονια, here, is equivalent to μελῶς, as chap. i. iv. vi. &c.

apply it to the *rhythm* of speech, when we talk of the *harmony* of a verse or a period. He speaks with his usual accuracy. Speech, as well as Music, has its *melody* and its *rhythm*; and these, in speech animated by passion, are so modified, as to approach, more or less perceptibly, to *musical* melody and rhythm¹. And what Aristotle here asserts, I think, is, that the Greeks seldom, or never, departed so far from the usual *rhythm* of speech, as to run into hexameter verse, except when they were led, by the same cause, to depart equally from its usual *melody* or *tones*.

NOTE 37.

P. 113. THE EPISODES WERE MULTIPLIED. - - -

The mistakes, into which some commentators have been led by annexing to the term *Επεισοδιον*, as applied by Aristotle to Tragedy, the modern and *Epic* idea of a *digression*, "*hors-d'œuvre, intermede, morceau d'attache*," have been well pointed out by Le Bossu, *Tr. du Poeme Ep. liv. ii. ch. iv. v. vi.*^b. But he appears to me to have gone too far, and to have fallen into the
opposite

¹ See Diss. II. p. 77, 78. and note ^x.

² Batteux's note on this passage.

^b The Abbé D'Aubignac had led the way, in his *Pratique du Theatre, liv. iii. ch. i.*

opposite error, by extending the word even to the most *essential* parts of the general action, to which he will not allow the *ἱπεισοδία* to be, in any sense, *added, united, &c.*—but insists that they *constitute* that action, “comme les membres “sont la matiere des corps^c.” With this idea, he had, indeed, some reason to call the word *ἱπεισοδίων*, “*terme trompeur* ;” for, in this application of it, all sight of its etymological sense is lost. By all that I can gather from an attentive comparison of all the passages in which Aristotle uses the word, there appears to me no reason to suppose, that he any where meant to apply it indiscriminately to *all* the incidents of a fable; and it is for this reason that I have no where ventured to render it by the word *incident*, which would have been too general^d. Le Bossu’s definition is,—“Les Episodes sont *les parties necessaires de l’action etendues avec des circonstances vraisemblables.*”—The death of Cato, for example, in the Tragedy of Addison, answers to this definition. But would Aristotle have called that an *Episode*? I can scarce think it. The most I can conceive is, that he might have applied the term *ἱπεισοδία* to the particular *circumstances*

^c Chap. vi.

^d For the *incidents in general*, without distinction of essential or episodic, Aristotle’s word seems to be *μερη*—*parts* of the action. So, *ch. viii. and xxiv.*

cumstances and *detail* of the action, which were the *additions* of the Poet's fancy. Le Bossu mentions, as an instance, the escape of Orestes by means of the ablution, in the *Iphig. in Taur.* of Euripides; which, he says, Aristotle calls an *Episode*^e. But, it is not the *escape* of Orestes, (ἡ σωτηρία) that Aristotle so denominates; this was an *essential* circumstance, and is expressly included by him in that general sketch of the plot, *into* which the ἐπεισοδία were afterwards to be worked: and *one* of these Episodes was the detail of the *manner* in which the escape was effected, δια τῆς καθαρσεως.—See NOTE 143.

The word ἐπεισοδιον is, I think, used by Aristotle only in *two* senses: 1. The *technical* sense, in which it is clearly defined to mean, *all that part, or, rather, those parts, of a Tragedy, that are included between entire choral odes*^f. 2. It is evidently applied, in other passages, to the particular *parts*, subordinate actions, circumstances, or *incidents*, of the fable; but only, I think, to *such*, as were not *essential* parts of the Poet's plan or story, though they might be, and indeed ought to be, closely connected with it:—*such*, as, however important in the action, by contributing to promote the catastrophe, were yet no way necessitated by history, or popular tradition, or, in
subjects

^e Ch. xvii.—Transl. Part II. Sect. 17.

^f Ch. xii.—Transl. Part II. Sect. 10.

subjects of pure invention, by the Poet's *general* and determined plan, but depended on the invention or the choice of the Poet, who might, without any alteration in the καθολικὸν λογικόν, as Aristotle calls it, of his drama, have conducted the action to its catastrophe by different *means* ^g.

The word ἐπεισοδιον, then, appears to me never to be used by Aristotle but in its proper and derivative sense, of something *more or less* adventitious or accessory—something inserted, superadded, *introduced* ^h, at pleasure, by the Poet. But the *Epic* Poem, from its extent of plan, and the variety requisite to its purpose, admits, and requires, subordinate actions of greater length and slighter relation to the principal action of the fable, than is consistent with the shorter compass, closer unity ⁱ, and different end, of *Tragedy*. As the *Episodes* of Epic Poetry,

^g This distinction is very well illustrated by Le Bossu, *liv. ii. ch. v.* “Mais, s'il étoit nécessaire,” &c.—to the end. But, in other respects, this chapter is *embrouillé*. He confounds (as the reader will see by his marginal quotations) οἰκειον, *proper, natural, connected, &c.* with ἰδιον—*necessary, essential* to the story, &c. He confounds an *Episode* with an essential action *episoded*, i. e. extended and filled up by episodic or invented *circumstances*.

^h Ἐν δὲ τοῖς ἐπιδεικτικοῖς [λογοῖς], δεῖ τὸν λόγον ΕΠΕΙΣΟΔΙΟΤΝ ἐπαινοῖς, ὅσον Ἰσοκράτης ποιεῖ· αἰεὶ γὰρ τινὰ ΕΙΣΑΓΕΙ. *Rhet. iii. cap. xvii. p. 605. Dival.*

ⁱ —ἦττον μὲν ὅποια μίμησις ἢ τῶν ἐποποιῶν. *ch. ult.*

Poetry, therefore, had more distinctness, *entireness*, and projection from the subject, if I may so express myself, than those of Tragedy, this, as it was the most obvious, became in time almost the only, application of the term; till, at length, from the frequent *abuse* of this *Epic* privilege of *variety*, and the μεταβαλλειν τι ακροντα^k, scarce any other idea was annexed to the word *Episode*, than that of *digression*, *hors-d'œuvre*, something foreign to the subject, or connected with it only by the slightest thread. Hence, too, in *modern* language, the word, I think, is applied only to *entire* actions of this additional, or digressive kind; not to the minuter circumstances or incidents which form the detail of an action. Thus, we call the whole story of Dido, in the *Æneid*, an *Episode*; but we should not give that name to any of the incidents by which the death of Turnus (an action essential to the fable,) is *circumstantiated*, though equally *introduced* and *supplied* by the Poet, and therefore equally, in Aristotle's sense, ἐπεισοδια. And so much, as to his use of this term, in general. Whether these remarks are well or ill founded, will best appear, when we come to apply them to the particular passages in which the word occurs. In that now before us, it is used, I think, in the *second* of the two senses I mentioned; and its best comment seems to be another passage, *cap.* xxiv. [*Transl. Part III. Sect. 2.*] where the
critic

^k *Cap.* xxiv.

critic observes the advantage which the *Epic Poem* has in the *variety* of its Episodes, and assigns the *want* of that variety, as one common cause of ill success in Tragic writing:—το γὰρ ΟΜΟΙΟΝ ταχὺ πληρὺν ἐκπιπτειν ποιεὶ τὰς τραγωδίας.

NOTE 38.

P. 113. THE RIDICULOUS—A SPECIES OF TURPITUDE OR DEFORMITY; SINCE IT MAY BE DEFINED, &c.

It has been asserted by some writers of eminence, that Aristotle here speaks, not of what is *laughable* or ludicrous, *in general*, but only of the *ridiculous*, in that particular sense of the word, in which it is distinguished from the merely *risible*, and implies *laughter mixed with disapprobation or contempt*^a. This, however, is certainly not what Aristotle has *said*; for the word γελοῖον, which he uses, is as general as possible, and answers exactly to our word *laughable*. And it is in this general sense, justified, I think, by common usage, that I have used the word *ridiculous* in my version. For though in a philosophical speculation the distinction above-mentioned may be necessary for clearness, and is undoubtedly well founded, yet, in common language, the word *ridiculous* is never used with this nice appropriation,

^a Beattie, *On Laughter and Ludicrous composition*—*ch. i. p. 326.*—Lord Kaims, *El. of Criticism*, i. *ch. vii.*

priation, but applied, like its Latin original, to *whatever excites laughter*.

But it is objected, that, if Aristotle means the *laughable in general*, his account of the matter is false; because “men laugh at that, in which there is neither *fault* nor *turpitude* of any kind^b.” I answer, that this is true *in English*, but not true *in Greek*. Our word, *turpitude*, is confined, I think, to a *moral* sense, and I suppose is here so used by Dr. Beattie; and it is certainly true, that we laugh at many things that have in them no *turpitude* of *that* kind—nothing *morally wrong*. But the Greek word, ΑΙΣΧΡΟΝ, was a word of wide extent, and seems manifestly used here by Aristotle in its utmost latitude; comprehending every thing that is, in any degree, *ugly* or *deformed*, from atrocious villainy, the highest *moral ugliness*, to a ridiculous cast of features in an *ugly face*. It is the opposite to ΚΑΛΟΝ, which was used in a correspondent latitude of application.—The objections, which have been made to this passage, have chiefly, I think, been owing to this,—that the objectors have not been sufficiently aware of the extensive signification in which the Greeks used the words, καλον, αισχρον, —ἀρετη, κακια—σπευδαιον, φαυλον—ἀμαρτημα, &c.—We translate the words of ancient authors by words to which we annex different ideas, and then raise objections

^b Dr. Beattie, *ibid.* p. 332.

objections and difficulties from our own mistakes. The consequence of taking *αἰσχρον* here in the restrained sense of *moral turpitude*, has been, that those writers, who have so taken it, have been obliged to deny, that *γελοιον* means *laughable*, because the laughable in general could not truly be defined, “a species of *moral turpitude*.”

It plainly was not Aristotle's design here to enter into an accurate inquiry about the nature of laughter, and the distinction of *risible* and *ridiculous* objects. This he had perhaps done, in that part of this mutilated treatise, which related to Comedy, and to which he himself refers in his *Rhetoric*^c. His purpose, here, seems to have been, merely to support and explain his account of Comedy; *i.e.* that it was *μιμησις φαυλοτερων*, “an imitation of *bad* characters;” that is, as he immediately limits the sense of the *general* term *φαυλον*,—of *ridiculous*, or *laughable*, characters^d. Such, he continues, are properly denominated *φαυλοι*, *κακοι*, *bad*, &c. because the *laughable* (*γελοιον*) is one species of the *αἰσχρον*, taken in its most general sense. “But to *what* species, or class,” it was obvious to ask, “does it belong?”—To *that* class, it is answered, of things *αἰσχροα*, which

^c — διωριεται δε περι γελοιων χωρις εν τοις περι ποιητικης. *Rhet.* i. 11. *Ed. Duval.*—ειρηται ΠΟΣΑ ΕΙΔΗ ΓΕΛΟΙΩΝ εστιν, εν τοις περι ποιητικης. *Ibid.* iii 18.

^d See NOTE 19—One of the explanations of *φαυλον* in *Hesychius* is *καταγελασθον*.

which are *neither destructive nor painful*: for these, exciting terror or pity, are the property of Tragedy^e. And he asserts, I think, plainly, that *the laughable in general*, το γελοιον, *i. e. every thing* that excites laughter, is ἀμαρτημα ΤΙ και αἰσχη^g ἀνώδυνον και ἔφθαρτικον—is, in some respect or other, *faulty, wrong, deformed*, but neither painful nor pernicious. What follows, about a ridiculous face, is, I think, clearly, not an *illustration* merely, as Dr. Campbell understands it to be^f, but an *instance*. This seems evident from Aristotle's using the very word αἰσχηρον; (προσωπον αἰσχηρον) which he would hardly have done, had he just before used the words αἰσχηρον and αἰσχη^g, as Dr. Campbell and Dr. Beattie contend that he *has* used them, in a *moral* sense only.

But it is objected—"We can never suppose that Aristotle would have called distorted features "*a certain fault or slip*"^g." To call them a *slip*, would indeed sound strangely; because that expression conveys the idea of something *morally* wrong. But when we say, that a very long nose, or a wide mouth, is a *fault* in a face, we use a very common expression; the word *fault* having, I think, the same latitude of application as the Greek word ἀμαρτημα.

It

^e See *cap. xii. initio*.—Transl. Part II. *End of Sect. 9.*

^f *Philos. of Rhetoric, book i. ch. iii. Sect. 1.*

^g *Ibid.*

It must be observed, however, that all Aristotle says is, that these two characters, *deformity of some sort*, and *the absence of pain, or hurt*, are to be found in every object of laughter: he neither says, nor implies, the *converse*—that every thing so qualified is laughable^h. With respect to *one* of these characters — the absence of *pain or harm*—there can be no doubt. It is only saying that we cannot laugh at that which shocks us. As to the *other* general character, *deformity, ugliness, something wrong, &c.* (ἀμαρτημα ΤΙ και αισχῶ) it seems to me, that these expressions, taken in that large sense, in which Aristotle plainly means to use them, amount to much the same as those used by modern philosophers to characterize the *risible* in general; such as, “*incongruity, incongruous association, striking unsuitableness*”ⁱ—“*disproportion, inconsistency and dissonance of circumstances in the same object*”^k.—“With respect to works both of nature, and of art,” says the ingenious and philosophical author of the *Elements*

^h “ Though every incongruous combination is not “ ludicrous, every ludicrous combination is incongruous.” Dr. Beattie, *On Laughter, &c.* ch. ii. p. 351.

ⁱ *Phil. of Rhet.* book i. p. 89, 93.

^k Beattie, *On Laughter*, from Dr. Gerrard. So Akenside—

----- some incongruous form,
Some stubborn dissonance of things combin'd.
Pl. of Im. b. iii. v. 250.

Elements of Criticism, “none of them are risible
 “but what are *out of rule*, some remarkable
 “defect or excess; a very long *visage*, for
 “example, or a very short one. Hence, nothing
 “just, proper, decent, *beautiful, proportioned*, or
 “grand, is risible¹.” This appears to me to be
 exactly the meaning, and to approach very near
 to the language, of Aristotle. For, of whatever
 may be thus characterized it surely may be said,
 that it has *some species of fault, deformity, or*
distortion: in Aristotle’s words, ἀμαρτημα τι και
 αἰσχρον — αἰσχρον τι και ΔΙΕΣΤΡΑΜΜΕΝΟΝ.

Aristotle’s account, then, of the γελαιον, appears
 to be right, as far as it goes. It might, indeed, be
 objected to, as *too general*, had he given it as the
 result of an exact and particular analysis of the
 subject. But this, as I have already observed, was
 not his purpose in this place.

It is farther objected by Dr. Campbell, that to
 speak of *laughter in general*, “would have
 “been foreign to Aristotle’s purpose:” because,
 “laughter is not his theme, but Comedy; and
 “laughter only so far as Comedy is concerned
 “with it. Now the concern of Comedy reaches
 “no farther than that kind of ridicule which
 “relates to manners^m.”—Undoubtedly it was
 this

¹ Lord Kaims, *Bl. of Crit. vol. i. ch. vii.* Yet he,
 too, objects to Aristotle’s definition, as “obscure and
 imperfect.”—*Ch. xii.*

^m *Phil. of Rhet. b. i. ch. iii. sect. 1.*

this kind of ridicule that Aristotle had principally in view. But I apprehend, that the Comedy here in question was concerned with the ridiculous or laughable in general. For Aristotle's notion of Comedy, as an excellent writer has observed, "was taken from the state and practice of the Athenian stage; that is, from the *old* or *middle* Comedy, which answers to his description. The great revolution which the introduction of the *new Comedy* made in the drama, did not happen till afterwardsⁿ." Now the old and middle Comedy, as I have before observed^o, were no other than what *we* should call Farce. To raise a laugh was so eminently their object, that *the ridiculous* (το γελασιον) is frequently used by Plato, as synonymous to *Comedy*, and substituted for it; as *pity* is also for *Tragedy*^p. Nor was it even very "foreign to Aristotle's purpose" to instance in a ridiculous face; for that this also was an established source of *fun* in the Greek theatre, is well known from the curious account of the comic masks

ⁿ *Disc. on the Provinces of the Drama*, p. 201.

^o NOTE 28.

^p Ἄρ' ἐχ' ὁ αὐτὸς λογὸς καὶ περὶ ΤΟΥ ΓΕΛΟΙΟΥ;—meaning *Comedy*: and presently after, ταῦτον ποιεῖς ὅπερ ἐν ΤΟΙΣ ΕΛΛΟΙΣ, i.e. in *Tragedy*. *De. Rep. lib. x.* p. 606. *ed. Serv.*—See also *De Leg.* p. 816. where, in perfect agreement with Aristotle, he uses this expression: ἴσα μὲν ἐν ΠΕΡΙ ΓΕΛΩΤΑ ἐστὶ παιγνία, ἃ δὲ ΚΩΜΩΔΙΑΝ ΠΑΝΤΕΣ ΛΕΓΟΜΕΝ—κ. τ. ἀλ.

masks in Jul. Pollux ; who says, particularly of those of the old Comedy, that they were *ridiculous caricaturas* of the persons represented :— *ἐπι το γελοιοτερον ἐσχηματισο*⁹. The Athenians were certainly not more delicate than Cicero, who thought, we know, that bodily deformities were “ *satis bella materies ad jocandum*.” He, also, agrees perfectly with Aristotle, or rather follows him, in his account of the ridiculous : “ *Locus autem et regio quasi ridiculi TURPITUDE ET DEFORMITATE QUADAM continetur*.”

NOTE 39.

P. 114. ITS POETS HAVE BEEN RECORDED.

The original is, *οἱ λεγόμενοι αὐτῆς ποιηταὶ μνημονεύονται* : the only fair translation of which, I think, is, “ they who are *called* its Poets.” But as it seems not easy to find any reasonable meaning for this, I have not translated the word at all. The text is probably corrupt. Castelvetro conjectured, very ingeniously, *ὀλίγοι μὲν οἱ αὐτῆς ποιηταί*.—But this Greek, *ὀλίγοι οἱ ποιηταί*, is, I fear, what the critics call, *πονηρὰ κομματῶ*.

I will

⁹ *Lib. iv. cap. xix.* And see Lucian, *De Salt.* p. 925. *ed Bened.* He says, that the ridiculousness of the comic masks was regarded as a part of the entertainment ; *μερῶ τῆς τέρψης.*

^r *De Or. lib. ii. cap. 59.*

^s *Ibid. ii. 58.*

I will venture to mention another conjecture that has occurred to me. The learned reader will dispose of it as he pleases. It seems not improbable that Aristotle wrote, Ἡδη δε σχηματα τινα αὐτης ἔχουσης ὍΙΑ ΛΕΓΟΜΕΝ, ὍΙΙ αὐτης, &c. i. e. "When it had acquired a certain form, *such as we say*," alluding to what he had said of Homer's suggesting, by his *Margites*, the true *form*, or *idea*, of Comedy, in which the *ridiculous* was substituted for the more *inveective* of the old *Iambic*, or *Satyric form*^a. Τα της κωμικης ΣΧΗΜΑΤΑ πρωτῶ ὑπεδειξεν, ἢ ψογην, ἀλλὰ ΤΟ ΓΕΛΟΙΟΝ δραματοποιήσας, [cap. iv.] See, also, what he says immediately after, of the *forms* (σχηματα) of Tragedy and Comedy being *ἐπισημοτερα*, in higher credit and esteem, than those of the old *satirical* and *encomiastic* poems which preceded them: for this seems to accord with what he here says, that Comedy was *neglected* till it attained something of this its proper form, and aimed at its proper object, the ridiculous. The reader will see the connection: Ἡ δε κωμικη, δια το ΜΗ ΣΠΟΥΔΑΖΕΣΘΑΙ ἔξ ἄρχης, ἐλάθειν. — ἩΔΗ ΔΕ ΣΧΗΜΑΤΑ τινα αὐτης ἔχουσης ὍΙΑ ΛΕΓΟΜΕΝ, ὍΙΙ αὐτης ποιηται μνημονευονται. — This differs from the present reading only by the insertion of a single letter, A, which might easily have been omitted, from its resemblance to the Λ that follows.

^a — της ἰαμβικης ἰδεας.

N O T E S.

NOTE 40.

P. 114. PROLOGUES.

We are not, I think, to look for a sense of the word Προλογος, as here applied to *Comedy*, different from that, in which it is applied, *ch. xii.* [*Transl. Part II. Sect. 10.*] to *Tragedy*. In both, it was that *introductory* part of the drama, the business of which was, to give the spectator, either directly, in its very outset, or, more obliquely, in the course of it, so much information relative to the subject of the piece, as would enable him to follow the action without confusion^a. This we learn clearly from the following passage in that part of Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, where he explains and illustrates the oratorical *exordium*, by a comparison of it with that of the Epic Poem, and with the *prologue* of a drama. After giving, as examples, the openings of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, he goes on, και οι Τραγικοι δηλασι περι το δραμα, κἀν μη εϋθως, ὡσπερ Ευριπιδης, ἀλλ' ἐν τῷ προλογῷ γε ποῦ δηλοῖ, ὡσπερ και Σοφοκλῆς.—ΚΑΙ Ἡ ΚΩΜΩΔΙΑ Ὠσαυτῶς^b.—This clearly excludes the *separate* prologue,

^a This purpose is well expressed in the *Rhet. lib. iii. cap. 14.*—ὁ δὲς ὡσπερ εἰς τὴν χεῖρα τὴν ἀρχὴν, ποιεῖ ἐχομενον ἀκολουθεῖν τῷ λογῷ.

^b *Rhet. iii. 14.* The instance there given from Sophocles, Ἐμοὶ πατὴρ ἦν Πολυβος, seems an interpolation; for

prologue, such as that of the *Roman Comedy*; and it is, also, irreconcilable with Dacier's idea, that by the *prologue*, in the passage we are considering, Aristotle meant what was afterwards called the *Parabasis*; for this was merely an address from the Poet to the audience, through the mouth of the Chorus, occurring indifferently in any part of the play, and even, sometimes, at the *end* of it^c. It seems to differ from the prologue of the *Roman Comedy*, and of the modern drama, only in its being delivered by the Chorus, and in the body of the piece^d.

Tragedy, according to the usual account of it, seems to have consisted, at *first*, only of *two* parts, the *Χορικον*, and *Επεισοδιον*^e, and to have *begun* and *ended* with those *choral* songs, which were then
esteemed

for those words are not *in any part* of the *προλογος* of the *Oedipus Tyr.* even according to Aristotle's own definition of the word, *cap.* xii.—The sense too seems better without it; for he means, I think, to say, that it was the *general* practice of Sophocles to convey this information more *indirectly*, and *somewhere* in the Prologue, as it was the *general* practice of Euripides to do this *professedly*, and in the very opening.

^c As in the *Ελληνισ.* of *Aristophanes*, which closes with the *Παραβασις*.—See *Suidas*, v. *παραβ.* and *Jul. Pollux*.

^d See the *Parabasis* of the *Nubes*, v. 518, which, its indecency excepted, is much of the same cast with the Prologues of *Terence*.

^e *Cap.* xii. *Transl. Part II. Sect.* 10.

esteemed the *essential* part of Tragedy. But, afterwards, these scanty fables, μικροὶ μῦθοι, as Aristotle calls them, were drawn out to their proper size^f, not only by introducing a greater variety of *episodic* incidents^g, but by prefixing to the *first* choral song, (or to the first *speech* of the *entire chorus*, according to Aristotle's account of the *Parode*, *cap.* xii.) the introductory part called Προλογός, and adding, after the *last*, the concluding part called Εξόδος. The case was probably the same with *Comedy*. The *Phallic* songs, from which it received its birth^h, were, I suppose, regarded originally as the essential part of the *Comic* drama, in the same manner as the *Bacchic* hymns were of the *Tragic*. Aristotle plainly speaks of *Comedy*, as having gradually received similar additions and improvements to those of *Tragedy*ⁱ; and, among these, that of the Προλογός. That such an introductory part, or *act*, which should be, as Aristotle expresses it, δαγμά λογος, and ὁδοποιήσεις τῷ ἐπιόντι^k, was indeed still more necessary to *Comedy* than to *Tragedy*, is obvious from the very nature of the former drama^l.

The

^f *Cap.* iv.

^g See NOTE 37.

^h *Cap.* iv.

ⁱ προσωπα—προλογος—πληθὴ ὑποκριτῶν.—*Masks* were used in *Tragedy* also. *Æschylus* was, “*persona*—repertor honestæ,” according to *Horace*.

^k *Rhet.* ubi suprâ.

^l See NOTE 59, and the passage from *Athenæus*.

The nature and office of the *Greek* prologue, and its two different *manners*, are, I observe, very exactly expressed by Terence in the conclusion of his *separate* prologue to the *Adelphi*; as they are also very well exemplified in the two first scenes.

Dehinc, ne expectetis argumenta fabulæ.

Senes qui primi venient, hi, partem aperient,
In agendo partem ostendent. - - -

That is, as I understand it, *part* of the plot they will open to you in the way of direct narration, like the prologues of Euripides, (as, in the soliloquy of *Mitio*,) and *part* they will *discover* in a more oblique and dramatic way, in the scene of action and dialogue that follows: “*In agendo partem ostendent.*”

I ventured, in a former note*, to say, that the Greek Tragedy appeared to me to have retained, with all its improvements, some traces of its origin. Something of this may be perceived, I think, in the very opening of many of the Greek dramas: but especially in those of *Euripides*, whose inartificial prologues of explanatory narration, addressed directly to the spectators, remind us of the state of tragedy previous to the introduction of the *dialogue*; when it consisted only of a story told between the *acts*, (if I may so speak,) of the Dithyrambic *Chorus*, which was then

* NOTE 33, p. 308.

then the main body and substance of the entertainment. When I read the opening of the *Hecuba*:

ΗΚΩ, νεκρῶν κευθμῶνα καὶ σκοτεινὰς πύλας
 Λιπῶν, ἰὺ Ἀθῆναι χάρις ἄρισται θεῶν,
 ΠΟΛΥΔΩΡΟΣ, Ἐκαβῆς παῖς γεγῶσ της Κισσεῶς
 Πρῆμα μὲτε πατρὸς — κ. τ. αλ.^ῃ - - -

—that of the *Persæ* of Æschylus:—

ΤΑΔΕ μὲν Πέρσων τῶν οἰχομένων
 Ἑλλάδ' εἰς αἶαν πῖσα καλεῖται. - - -

—or, even the—

- - - - - ΑΥΤΟΣ ὡδ' ἐληλυθα
 Ο ΠΑΣΙ ΚΑΕΙΝΟΣ ΟΙΔΙΠΟΤΕ ΚΑΛΟΥ-
 ΜΕΝΟΣ ' - - -

—of Sophoclesⁿ, I cannot help thinking of the single actor of Thespis, announcing his own name and family, and telling the simple tale of his achievements or misfortunes.

This sort of *direct* explanation was afterwards, with much more propriety, taken from the *persons* of the *drama*, and consigned to the *actors* in a *detached*

ⁿ Almost all the Tragedies of Euripides open in the same manner. See, in particular, *Iphig. in Taur.* *Bacchæ*, and *I'hænisæ*.

ⁿ *Oed. Tyr.* v. 8.—Of all the *openings* of this Poet, that of the *Trachiniæ* resembles most the manner of Euripides.

detached prologue, such as those of *Plautus* and *Terence*: a practice, which, if we did not know the attachment of Ben Jonson to every thing antient, we might suspect he meant to ridicule, by the pleasant use he has made of it in the prologue to his puppet-shew of *Hero and Leander*, in the *Bartholomew Fair*.

“ Gentles, that no longer your expectations may wander,
 “ Behold our chief actor, amorous *Leander*,
 “ With a great deal of cloth lapp’d about him like a scarf,
 “ For he yet serves his father, a dyer at Puddle-wharf,” &c.

The next, and the *last* step, in the history of *Prologues*, was again to leave the *argument*, as it had been left by *Sophocles*, to the oblique information and gradual development of the action itself, and to make the separate prologue subservient to other purposes, unconnected with the subject of the drama.—The worst of these purposes, and the greatest possible abuse of the term, is to be found in what is called the *Prologue* of the *French Opera*; which is wholly composed of two ingredients, almost equally disgusting to a just *poetical*, or *moral* taste—*allegory* and *adulation*°.

° See *Rousseau's* account of it, *Dict. de Musique*, art. PROLOGUE.

NOTE 41.

P. 114. EPICHARMUS AND PHORMIS FIRST INVENTED COMIC FABLES. - - -

Dacier, here, raises unnecessary difficulties. His positive assertion, that, in the old and middle Comedy, “ Il n’y avoit rien de feint,” [Notes 10 and 13] is surprising. The slightest inspection of Aristophanes will confute it. Was it, then, a *fact*, that *Socrates* used to be suspended in a basket for the benefit of aerial meditation? and that *Æschylus* and *Euripides* weighed their verses in a pair of scales, to decide, by that means, a contest for superiority, after they were dead^a? &c. Farther, it seems not easy to reconcile this assertion of Dacier’s, to what he afterwards says, *ch. ix. note 8*.

Μυθας ποιειν, is clearly *to invent plots or subjects*; and whatever is invented, or feigned, is, in Aristotle’s language, καθολικη, or *general*, as opposed to a strictly *historical* plot, which is καθ’ ἑκαστον, *particular*. See *ch. ix.*^b which is the best comment on this passage; especially what is there said of *Comedy*. The expression, therefore, which Aristotle presently after uses, in speaking of Crates, ἀφεμενⓄ της ἰαμβικης ἰδεας, καθολικη ποιειν λογικης ἢ μυθικης, I understand to be no more than

^a *Nubes*, Act I. Sc. III.—*Kanaw*, Act V. Sc. III.

^b *Transl.* Part II. Sect. 6.

than the development of the shorter expression which preceded, *μυθες ποιειν*. He does not say, that Crates was the first *Poet*, but only the first *Athenian Poet*, who invented such comic subjects. The distinction seems clearly marked : *το μεν εν εξ αρχης εκ ΣΙΚΕΛΙΑΣ ηλθε: ΤΩΝ ΔΕ ΑΘΗΝΗΣΙ, Κρατης πρωτ*—*κ. τ. αλλ.*

NOTE 42.

P. 114. EPIC POETRY AGREES SO FAR WITH TRAGIC, &c.

Of the corruption of this passage I have no doubt. It has been proposed to eject the words, *μετα λογες*. My suspicion rather falls upon the word *μετρος*; which, as it adds nothing but embarrassment to the sense, (*λογ*, *speech*, or *words*, being a general term, and including *metre*, as in *ch. i*.) I have omitted. It appears to me, likewise, that the only meaning, which can reasonably be given to the expression, *μεχρι ΜΟΝΟΥ μετρος*, is—"as far as *metre alone*; i. e. without "considering the *other means* of imitation, *melody* "and *rhythm*." And, accordingly, some commentators, by *μετρον ΑΠΛΟΥΝ*, understand *verse alone*, without *music*. But had this been Aristotle's meaning, he would probably have used the appropriated and *clear* word, *φιλον*^b. The proper and obvious sense of *μετρον απλεν*, is, *a simple*, or *single*,

^a See NOTE 5. p. 234, &c.

^b *Ibid.*

single, kind of metre^c. This sense seems also supported by what he says of the *metrical* difference of the Epic and Tragic Poems, *cap.* xxiv. where melody and rhythm are not taken into the comparison, but the different *kinds* of *metre* only, and their being *one*, or *many*:—εἰ γὰρ τις ἐν ἄλλῳ τινὶ μετρῷ διηγηματικὴν μιμησὶν ποιοίτο, ἢ ἐν ΠΟΛΛΟΙΣ, ἀπρεπὲς αὖ φαίνοίτο. And farther, that Aristotle did not mean to express by *μετρον ἀπλεν*, the exclusion of melody and rhythm, appears the more probable, because he sufficiently expresses this presently afterwards, when he says, that some of the *parts* of Tragedy were *peculiar* to it. Now these *parts*, are no other than the decoration, (*ὄψις*,) and the *Melopœia*, which included *melody* and *rhythm*.

On the whole, it seems not improbable, that the passage originally stood in some such way as this:
Ἡ μὲν ἐν Ἐποποιίᾳ τῇ Τραγωδίᾳ μεχρὶ μόνου τοῦ μετὰ λόγου μιμησὶν εἶναι σπεδαιῶν ἠκολοθῆσεν.

NOTE 43.

P. 115. THIS, AT FIRST, WAS EQUALLY THE CASE WITH TRAGEDY ITSELF.

It seems to have been taken for granted, without any foundation, by Dacier, and other commentators,

^c Ἀπλη — MONOEΙΔΗΣ — *Suidas*. Ἀπλεν — ΑΣΥΝΘΕΤΟΝ. *Hes.* So, ἀπλεν is opposed by Aristotle to πεπλεγμενον, *cap.* x. *et passim*: and to διπλεν, *cap.* xiii. & xxi.

commentators, that the modern rule, (for an *antient* rule it certainly is not,) of what is called the *unity of time*, was strictly adhered to in every period of the Greek drama: and this has led them, in this passage, to confound the length of the *action*, or fable, with that of the *representation*; for these, where a strict unity of time is observed, are indeed the same. But Aristotle here says plainly, that in the earliest state of Tragedy, *no rule at all*, with respect to the time of the action, was observed; that it was not only allowed to exceed “*a single revolution of the sun,*” but was “*indefinite*” (ἀόριστος) like that of the Epic Poem. This evidently cannot be applied, without absurdity, to the time of representation. Yet so it is applied by Dacier in his note on this passage, p. 70.

But it appears farther, I think, from what is said, and plainly said, in this chapter, that, after all we have heard so often about this famous unity of time, the rule receives not the least support from Aristotle’s authority. Every one, who knows how much stress has been laid by modern critics on the *three dramatic unities*, and happens not to be well acquainted with Aristotle’s treatise on Poetry, would, I suppose, naturally take it for granted, that they are all explicitly laid down, and enforced by him, as essential and indispensable laws, in that famous code of dramatic criticism. But the fact is, that, of these three rules,

rules, the only one that can be called important—that of the *unity of action*—is, indeed, clearly laid down and explained, and, with great reason, considered by him as indispensable. Of the two other unities, that of *place* is not once mentioned, or even hinted, in the whole book; and all that is said, respecting the *time* of the action, is said in this chapter, and in these words: “Tragedy *endeavours, as far as possible, to confine its action within the limits of a single revolution of the sun, or nearly so*.”^a Almost all the commentators seem agreed in understanding the expression, *μια περιόδὸς ἡλίου*, to mean only an artificial day. But I own I could never yet perceive any good reason, why we should not permit Aristotle to *mean* what he seems, in plain terms, to *say*. If he meant only *twelve* hours, why did he prefer an expression so ambiguous, to say the *least* of it, as *μιαν περιόδον ἡλίου*, to the clear and obvious expression of *μιαν ἡμέραν*?—But, to wave this question, the utmost, which the most strenuous advocates for the unity of time can make of this passage, is this—that the Poet should *endeavour, as far as possible, to confine the supposed time of the action to that of a single day, or nearly so*. Now it seems allowed, that

^a — ὅτι μαλιστὰ πειράται ὑπο μίαν περιόδον ἡλίου εἶναι, ἢ μικρόν ἐξάλλαττειν. *Cap. v.*

that none of the Greek Tragedies extant could have taken up, in the representation, more than three or four hours. What Aristotle, therefore, here says, is so far from being a rule for the unity of time, that, on the contrary, it is saying as plainly as possible, that, in *his* view, it was no duty incumbent on the dramatic Poet even to *aim* at the observance of such a rule: for, had he thought otherwise, his mode of expression would, surely, have been very different. He would have proposed the strict unity of time—the exact coincidence of the actual time of *representation* with the supposed time of the *action*—as the point of perfection, at which the Poet was to aim: he would have said, “Tragedy *endeavours*, as far as possible, to confine its *action* within the time of *representation*, or *nearly so.*”

It is certain, indeed, that the nature of the drama, *strictly* and *rigorously* considered, would require, I will not say, to the perfection, but to the *closeness*, of its imitation, the exact coincidence here mentioned; and it is on this foundation only, that *any* rule at all relative to time could be necessary, and that the dramatic Poet could, with any reason, be denied the privilege of the *Epic*. All I contend for is, that Aristotle has no where required such a coincidence; that he has not even mentioned it; much less has he, either here, or in any other part of his work,

enjoined it as a rule. His rule is, as *generally* understood, “confine your action, as nearly as “you can, to a single day;”—or, as I think, in conformity to his plain words, it *should* be understood—“to a single revolution of the sun, or “twenty-four hours^b.”

It may, perhaps, be objected, that Aristotle has not delivered this in the form of a *rule*; that he only refers to *fact*, and to the usual *practice* of the dramatic Poets of his time. “*Tragedy* endeavours,” &c. But, surely, to mention the general practice of Poets with seeming approbation, or, at least, without a word to the contrary, is, in fact, to erect that practice, (as he has done on many other occasions throughout his treatise,) into a rule.—It is sufficient for my purpose, that, at least, he has given no *other* rule.

Moreover,

^b It is diverging to hear Castelvetro gravely setting forth the inconveniences of being shut up for *four and twenty* hours in a theatre:—“Il tempo *stretto* è quello, “che i veditori possono à suo agio dimorare fedendo in “theatro; il quale io non veggo che possa passare il “giro del sole, si come dice Aristotele, cio è, hore “dodici: conciosia cōsa che per le necessità del corpo, “come è, mangiare, bere, *diporre i superflui pesi del* “*ventre e della vesica*, dormire, e per altre necessità, “non possa il popolo continuare oltre il predetto *ter-* “*mino* così fatta dimora in theatro.”—p. 109.

Moreover, what he here says of the practice of the Greek dramatists, seems somewhat adverse to the language of those modern critics, who so often appeal, if I mistake not, to that very practice, for the support of their rigorous unity of time. For, if his expression does not prove, that he thought the rule of a *single revolution of the sun* the only rule which the Poets *ought* to observe, it surely proves, because it actually says, that he thought it the only rule, which, in general, they *did* observe. But what says Dacier? “ Une
 “ Tragedie, pour être parfaite, ne doit occuper
 “ ni plus, ni moins de tems, pour l’action, que
 “ pour la representation; car elle est alors dans
 “ toute la vraisemblance. *Les Tragiques Grecs*
 “ L’ONT TOUJOURS PRATIQUÉ.” What he adds, it seems not very easy to comprehend: “ Et ils
 “ s’en sont fait une loi si indispensable, que *pour*
 “ *ne la pas violer, ils ont quelquefois violenté leurs*
 “ *incidens*, d’une maniere que je ne conseillerois
 “ pas de suivre:” *i. e.* in plain English, (for I can make nothing else of it,) “ they have so
 “ scrupulously adhered to the rule, that, some-
 “ times, for the sake of observing it, they have
 “ been obliged to break it.” *p.* 118.

I believe, every reader, who, in perusing the Greek Tragedians, has taken the pains to examine this matter, must be sensible, that what Dacier so confidently asserts, of their *constant* adherence
 to

to this rule, is palpably false. I shall only mention one remarkable instance of the utter neglect of it, and that in SOPHOCLES; who, in this, as in other respects, is usually regarded, I think, as the most correct and regular of the three Greek Poets whose Tragedies are in our hands. In his *Trachiniæ*, v. 632, Lichas sets out to carry the poisoned garment to Hercules, whom he finds upon the *Cenæan* promontory, which is said^c to be about sixty Italian miles from the scene of the action. At v. 734, Hyllus, who was present when his father received the garment, arrives with the terrible relation of its effects. Thus, during the performance of about *a hundred lines*, a journey of about one hundred and twenty Italian miles is supposed to have been taken.—For this, and other instances of the same kind, I must content myself with referring the reader to the sensible and well written *Estratto della Poetica d'Aristotile*, published among the posthumous works of Metastasio, and which did not fall into my hands till all my notes were written. It contains many ingenious and sagacious observations. The subject of the dramatic unities, in particular, is discussed at large, and, I think, in a very masterly and satisfactory way. And, with respect to the strict unities of *time* and *place*, he seems perfectly to have succeeded in shewing, that no such rules were imposed

^c By Metastasio.

posed on the Greek Poets by the critics, or by themselves;—nor *are* imposed on *any* Poet, either by the *nature*, or the *end*, of the dramatic imitation itself^d.

It would be inexcusable to quit this subject without reminding the reader, that the unities of time and place, were long ago powerfully, and, in my opinion, unanswerably combated, as far as their *principles* are concerned, by Dr. Johnson, in his preface to Shakspeare, p. 20, &c.

^d *Capitolo 5.*

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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