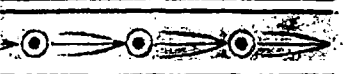


E.A. POE'S
WORKS

8



LITERARY
CRITICISM



THE MONTICELLO EDITION

THE COMPLETE WORKS OF
EDGAR ALLAN POE

Edited by JAMES A. HARRISON

PROFESSOR IN THE UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA



LITERARY CRITICISM

VOLUME ONE



NEW YORK . GEORGE D.
SPROUL . M D C C C C I I

return from Greece. Mr. L. was informed also that Niebuhr would see him on the following day. The result of the interview we must give in the words of our author.

Mr. Lieber became the constant companion of Niebuhr in his daily walks after dinner, during one of which the proposition was discussed to which we have formerly referred — that of our author's writing an account of his journey in Greece. In March 1823, the minister quitted Rome, and took Mr. Lieber with him to Naples. By way of Florence, Pisa, and Bologna, they afterwards went to the Tyrol — and in Innsbruck they parted. A correspondence of the most familiar and friendly nature was, however, kept up, with little intermission, until the death of the historian in 1831.

Mr. Lieber disclaims the design of any thing like a complete record of all the interesting or important sentiments of Niebuhr during his own residence with him. He does not profess to give even all the most important facts or opinions. He observes, with great apparent justice, that he lived in too constant a state of excitement to record regularly all he saw or heard. His papers too were seized by the police — and have undergone its criticism. Some have been lost by this process, and others in a subsequent life of wandering. Still we can assure our readers that those presented to us in the present volume, are of the greatest interest. They enable us to form a more accurate idea of the truly great man to whom they relate than we have hitherto entertained, and have moreover, not unfrequently, an interest altogether their own.

THE LIFE AND SURPRISING ADVENTURES OF ROBINSON CRUSOE, OF YORK, MARINER: WITH A BIOGRAPHICAL ACCOUNT OF DEFOE. ILLUSTRATED WITH FIFTY CHARACTERISTIC CUTS, FROM DRAWINGS BY WILLIAM HARVEY, ESQ. AND ENGRAVED BY ADAMS. NEW YORK: PUBLISHED BY HARPER AND BROTHERS.

[*Southern Literary Messenger*, January, 1836.]

THIS publication is worthy of the Harpers. It is an honor to the country — not more in the fine taste displayed in its getting up, than as evincing a just appreciation of an invaluable work. How fondly do we recur, in memory, to those enchanted days of our boyhood when we first learned to grow serious over Robinson Crusoe! — when we first found the spirit of wild adventure enkindling within us; as by the dim fire light, we labored out, line by line, the marvellous import of those pages, and hung breathless and trembling with eagerness over their absorbing — over their enchainning interest! Alas! the days of desolate islands are no more! “Nothing farther,” as Vapid says, “can be done in that line.” Wo, henceforward, to the Defoe who shall prate to us of “undiscovered bournes.” There is positively not a square inch of new ground for any future Selkirk. Neither in the Indian, in the Pacific, nor in the Atlantic, has he a shadow of hope. The Southern Ocean has been incontinently ransacked, and in the North — Scoresby, Franklin, Parry, Ross & Co. have been little better than so many salt water Paul Prys.

While Defoe would have been fairly entitled to im-

mortality had he never written Robinson Crusoe, yet his many other very excellent writings have nearly faded from our attention, in the superior lustre of the Adventures of the Mariner of York. What better possible species of reputation could the author have desired for that book than the species which it has so long enjoyed ? It has become a household thing in nearly every family in Christendom. Yet never was admiration of any work — universal admiration — more indiscriminately or more inappropriately bestowed. Not one person in ten — nay, not one person in five hundred, has, during the perusal of Robinson Crusoe, the most remote conception that any particle of genius, or even of common talent, has been employed in its creation ! Men do not look upon it in the light of a literary performance. Defoe has none of their thoughts — Robinson all. The powers which have wrought the wonder have been thrown into obscurity by the very stupendousness of the wonder they have wrought ! We read, and become perfect abstractions in the intensity of our interest — we close the book, and are quite satisfied that we could have written as well ourselves ? All this is effected by the potent magic of verisimilitude. Indeed the author of Crusoe must have possessed, above all other faculties, what has been termed the faculty of *identification* — that dominion exercised by volition over imagination which enables the mind to lose its own, in a fictitious, individuality. This includes, in a very great degree, the power of abstraction ; and with these keys we may partially unlock the mystery of that spell which has so long invested the volume before us. But a complete analysis of our interest in it cannot be thus afforded. Defoe is largely indebted to his subject. The idea of man in a state of perfect isolation, although

often entertained, was never before so comprehensively carried out. Indeed the frequency of its occurrence to the thoughts of mankind argued the extent of its influence on their sympathies, while the fact of no attempt having been made to give an embodied form to the conception, went to prove the difficulty of the undertaking. But the true narrative of Selkirk in 1711, with the powerful impression it then made upon the public mind, sufficed to inspire Defoe with both the necessary courage for his work, and entire confidence in its success. How wonderful has been the result !

Besides *Robinson Crusoe*, Defoe wrote no less than *two hundred and eight* works. The chief of these are the *Speculum Grape-Gownorum*, a reply to Roger L'Estrange, and characterized principally by intemperate abuse — a *Treatise against the Turks*, written for the purpose of showing England “that if it was the interest of Protestantism not to increase the influence of a Catholic power, it was infinitely more so to oppose a Mohammedan one” — an *Essay on Projects*, displaying great ingenuity, and mentioned in terms of high approbation by our own Franklin — the *Poor Man's Plea*, a satire levelled against the extravagances of the upper ranks of British society — the *Trueborn Englishman*, composed with a view of defending the king from the abuse heaped upon him as a foreigner — the *Shortest Way with the Dissenters*, a work which created strong excitement, and for which the author suffered in the pillory — the *Reformation of Manners*, a satirical poem, containing passages of uncommon force, that is to say, uncommon for Defoe, who was no poet — *More Reformation*, a continuation of the above — *Giving Alms no Charity*, an excellent treatise — a *Preface to a translation of Drelincourt on Death*, in

which is contained the "true narrative" of Mrs. Veal's apparition — the *History of the Union*, a publication of much celebrity in the days of its author, and even now justly considered as placing him among the "soundest historians of his time" — the *Family Instructor*, "one of the most valuable systems of practical morality in the language" — the *History of Moll Flanders*, including some striking but coarsely executed paintings of low life — the *Life of Colonel Jaque*, in which an account is given of the hero's residence in Virginia — the *Memoirs of a Cavalier*, a book belonging more properly to history than to Fictitious Biography, and which has been often mistaken for a true narrative of the civil wars in England and Germany — the *History of the Plague*, which Dr. Mead considered an authentic record — and *Religious Courtship*, which acquired an extensive popularity, and ran through innumerable editions. In the multiplicity of his other publications, and amid a life of perpetual activity, Defoe found time, likewise to edit his *Review*, which existed for more than nine years, commencing in February 1704, and ending in May 1713. This periodical is justly entitled to be considered the original of the *Tatlers* and *Spectators*, which were afterwards so fashionable. Political intelligence, however, constituted the greater portion of its *material*.

The edition of *Robinson Crusoe* now before us is worthy of all praise. We have seldom seen a more beautiful book. It is an octavo of 470 pages. The fifty wood cuts with which it is ornamented are, for the most part, admirable. We may instance, as particularly good, those on pages 6, 27, 39, 49, 87, 88, 92, 137, 146, 256, and 396. The design on the title page is superlative. In regard to the paper, typog-

raphy, and binding of the work, that taste must be fastidious indeed which can find any fault with either.

THE POETRY OF LIFE. BY SARAH STICKNEY, AUTHOR OF "PICTURES OF PRIVATE LIFE." PHILADELPHIA: REPUBLISHED BY CAREY, LEA, AND BLANCHARD.

[*Southern Literary Messenger*, January, 1836.]

THESE two volumes are subdivided as follows. Characteristics of Poetry — Why certain objects are, or are not poetical — Individual Associations — General Associations — The Poetry of Flowers — The Poetry of Trees — The Poetry of Animals — The Poetry of Evening — The Poetry of the Moon — The Poetry of Rural Life — The Poetry of Painting — The Poetry of Sound — The Poetry of Language — The Poetry of Love — The Poetry of Grief — The Poetry of Woman — The Poetry of the Bible — The Poetry of Religion — Impression — Imagination — Power — Taste — Conclusion.

In a Preface remarkable for neatness of style and precision of thought, Miss Stickney has very properly circumscribed within definite limits the design of her work — whose title, without such explanation, might have led us to expect too much at her hands. It would have been better, however, had the fair authoress, by means of a *different* title, which her habits of accurate thinking might have easily suggested, rendered this explanation unnecessary. Except in some very rare instances, where a context may be tolerated, if not altogether justified, a work, either of the pen or the

Speaking of alterations made in the Second London Edition, the Authors of the work say in their Preface "We believe it will be found that most of those suggested have been adopted, with the exception of one, which proposed the rejection of the first piece of Poetry attached to the Sun Flower." These words excited our curiosity, and turning to page 42, we found six lines from Moore. It seems these had been objected to, not on account of any thing intrinsically belonging to the verses themselves, (what fault indeed could be found there?) but (will it be believed?) on account of the author who wrote them. The Christian Florist deserves the good will of all sensible persons, if for nothing else—for the spirit with which its authors have disregarded a bigotry so despicable.

PAUL ULRIC: OR THE ADVENTURES OF AN ENTHUSIAST. NEW YORK: PUBLISHED BY HARPER & BROTHERS.

[*Southern Literary Messenger*, February, 1836.]

THESE two volumes are by Morris Mattson, Esq. of Philadelphia, and we presume that Mr. Mattson is a very young man. Be this as it may, when we called Norman Leslie the silliest book in the world we had certainly never seen Paul Ulric. *One* sentence in the latter, however, is worthy of our serious attention. "We want a few faithful laborers in the vineyard of literature, to root out the noxious weeds which infest it." See page 116, vol. ii.

In itself, the book before us is too purely imbecile to

merit an extended critique — but as a portion of our daily literary food — as an American work published by the Harpers — as one of the class of absurdities with an inundation of which our country is grievously threatened — we shall have no hesitation, and shall spare no pains, in exposing fully before the public eye its four hundred and forty-three pages of utter folly, bombast, and inanity.

“My name,” commences Mr. Mattson, “is Paul Ulric. Thus much, gentle reader, you already know of one whose history is about to be recorded for the benefit of the world. I was always an enthusiast, but of this I deem it inexpedient to say much at present. I will merely remark that I possessed by nature a wild and adventurous spirit which has led me on blindly and hurriedly, from object to object, without any definite or specific aim. My life has been one of continual excitement, and in my wild career I have tasted of joy as well as of sorrow. [Oh remarkable Mr. Ulric !] At one moment I have been elevated to the very pinnacle of human happiness, at the next I have sunk to the lowest depths of despair. Still I fancied there was always an equilibrium. This may seem a strange philosophy to some, but is it the less true ? The human mind is so constituted as always to seek a level — if it is depressed it will be proportionately elevated, if elevated it will be proportionately depressed. But” says Mr. U., interrupting himself, “I am growing metaphysical !” We had thought he was only growing absurd.

He proceeds to tell us of his father who was born in Lower Saxony — who went, when only a year old, to England — who, being thrown upon the parish, was initiated into the mysteries of boot cleaning — who, at

the age of ten, became a vender of newspapers in the city of London — at twelve sold potatoes in Covent Garden — at fifteen absconded from a soap-boiler in the Strand to whom he had been apprenticed — at eighteen sold old clothes — at twenty became the proprietor of a mock auction in Cheapside — at twenty-five was owner of a house in Regent Street, and had several thousand pounds in the Funds — and before thirty was created a Baronet, with the title of Sir John Augustus Frederick Geoffry Ulric, Bart., for merely picking up and carrying home his Majesty King George the Fourth, whom Mr. U. assures us upon his word and honor, his father found lying beastly drunk, one fine day, in some gutter, in some particular thoroughfare of London.

Our hero himself was born, we are told, on the borders of the Thames, not far from Greenwich. When a well grown lad he accompanies his father to the continent. In Florence he falls in love with a Countess in her thirty-fifth year, who curls his hair and gives him sugar-plums. The issue of the adventure with the Countess is thus told :

“ You have chosen them with much taste,” said the Countess ; “ a beautiful flower is this ! ” she continued, selecting one from among the number, “ its vermillion is in your cheeks, its blue in your eyes, and for this pretty compliment I deserve a — you resist eh ! My pretty, pretty lad, I *will* ! There ! Another, and you may go free. Still perverse ? Oh, you stubborn boy ! How can you refuse ? One — two — three ! I shall *devour* you with kisses ! ”

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We have printed the passage precisely as we find it

in the book — notes of admiration — dashes — italics — and all. Two rows of stars wind up the matter, and stand for the catastrophe — for we hear no more of the Countess. Now if any person over curious should demand why Morris Mattson, Esq. has mistaken notes of admiration for sense — dashes, kisses, stars and Italics for sentiment — the answer is very simple indeed. The author of Vivian Grey made the same mistake before him.

Indeed we have made up our minds to forward Ben D'Israeli a copy of Paul Ulric. He will read it, and if he do not expire upon the spot, it will do him more real service than the crutch. Never was there a more laughable burlesque of any man's manner. Had Mr. Mattson only *intended* it as a burlesque we would have called him a clever fellow. But unfortunately this is not the case. No jackdaw was ever more soberly serious in fancying herself a peacock, than our author in thinking himself D'Israeli the second.

“Every day,” says Paul after the kissing scene, “filled me with a new spirit of romance. I had sailed upon the winding streams of Germany ; I had walked beneath the bright skies of Italy ; I had clambered the majestic mountains of Switzerland.” His father, however, determines upon visiting the United States, and taking his family with him. His reasons for so doing should be recorded. “His republicanism,” says Paul, “had long rendered him an object of aversion to the aristocracy. He had had the hardihood to compare the *salary* of the President with the *civil list* of the King — *consequently he was threatened with an indictment for treason !* My mother suggested the propriety of immediately quitting the country.”

Mr. Mattson does not give us an account of the

voyage. "I have no disposition," says his hero, "to describe a trip across the Atlantic — particularly as I am not in a sentimental mood — otherwise I might turn over the poets, and make up a long chapter of extracts from Moore, Byron, and Rogers of the Old World, or Percival, Bryant, and Halleck of the New." A range of stars, accordingly, is introduced at this crisis of affairs, and we must understand them to express all the little matters which our author is too fastidious to detail. Having sufficiently admired the stars, we turn over the next leaf and "Land ho!" shouted one of the seamen on the fore-topsail yard.

Arrived in Philadelphia, Mr. Ulric (our hero's father) "is divided," so says Mr. Mattson, "between the charms of a city and country life." His family at this time, we are told, consisted of five persons; and Mr. U. Jr. takes this opportunity of formally introducing to us, his two sisters Eleanor and Rosaline. This introduction, however, is evidently to little purpose, for we hear no more, throughout the two volumes, of either the one young lady or the other. After much deliberation the family fix their residence in "Essex, a delightful country village in the interior of Pennsylvania;" and we beg our readers to bear in mind that the surprising adventures of Paul Ulric are, for the most part, perpetrated in the immediate vicinity of this village.

The young gentleman (notwithstanding his late love affair with the Countess) is now, very properly, sent to school — or rather a private tutor is engaged for him — one Lionel Wafer. A rapid proficiency in Latin, Greek, Hebrew, music, dancing, and fencing, is the result; "and with these accomplishments," says the young calf, "I believed myself fitted for the noise

and bustle of the world.” Accordingly, his father having given him a flogging one afternoon, he determines upon running away. In two days he “arrives in one of the Atlantic cities.” Rambling about the streets he enters into conversation with a sharper who succeeds in selling him, for forty dollars, a watch made of tinsel and put together with paste. This and subsequent adventures in the city form the best portion of the book—if *best* should be applied, in any way, to what is altogether abominable. Mr. Ulric goes to the Theatre, and the play is *Romeo and Juliet*. The orchestra “breaks forth in full chorus” and our hero soliloquizes. We copy his soliloquy with the end of placing before our readers what we consider the finest passage in Mr. Mattson’s novel. We wish to do that gentleman every possible act of justice; and when we write down the few words to which we allude, and when we say that they are not absolutely intolerable, we have done all, in the way of commendation, which lies in our power. We have not one other word of praise to throw away upon Paul Ulric.

“Oh music! — the theme of bards from time immemorial — who can sing of thee as thou deservest? What wondrous miracles hast thou not accomplished? The war-drum beats — the clarion gives forth its piercing notes — and legions of armed men rush headlong to the fierce and devastating battle. Again, the drum is muffled, and its deep notes break heavily upon the air, while the dead warrior is borne along upon his bier, and thousands mingle their tears to his memory. The tender lute sounds upon the silvery waters, and the lover throws aside his oar, and imprints a kiss upon the lips of his beloved. The bugle rings in the mountain’s recesses, and a thousand spears are uplifted for a

fearful and desperate conflict. And now the organ peals, and with its swelling notes, the soul leaps into the very presence of the Deity."

Our hero decides upon adopting the stage as a profession, and with this view takes lessons in elocution. Having perfected himself in this art, he applies to a manager, by note, for permission to display his abilities, but is informed that the nights are engaged for two months ahead, and it would be impossible for him to appear during the season. By the influence, however, of some hanger-on of the theatre, his wishes are at length gratified, and he is announced in the bills as "the celebrated Master Le Brun, the son of a distinguished English nobleman, whose success was so unprecedented in London as to have performed fifty nights in succession at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane" — a sentence in which we are at a loss to discover whether the English nobleman, or the English nobleman's son, or the success of the English nobleman's son is the distinguished performer in question.

Our adventurer succeeds in his début, and is in a fair way of becoming a popular performer, when his prospects are suddenly nipped in the bud. His valet one morning announces a Sir Thomas Le Brun, and Sir Thomas Le Brun proves to be that worthy gentleman, Sir John Augustus Frederick Geoffry Ulric, Baronet. A scene ensues. Paul screams, and Sir John clenches his fist. The father makes a speech, and the son makes a speech and a bow. At length they fly into each other's arms, and the drama closes by the old personage taking the young personage home in his carriage. In all this balderdash about the stage, there is not one original incident or idea. The same anecdotes are told, but in infinitely better lan-

guage, in every book of dramatic reminiscences since the flood.

Our author now indulges in what we suppose to be satire. The arrows of his wit are directed, with much pertinacity at least, against one Borel Bunting, by which name it strikes us that Mr. M. wishes to indicate some poor devil of an editor in bonâ fide existence — perhaps some infatuated young person who could not be prevailed upon, by love or money, to look over the MS. of Paul Ulric. If our supposition be true, we could wish Mr. Borel Bunting no better revenge than what the novelist has himself afforded by this public exposure of his imbecility. We must do our readers the favor of copying for their especial perusal, a portion of this vehement attack.

“There has been much speculation as to the birth-place of Borel ; (in this respect he somewhat resembled Homer) but if I have been correctly informed it was in one of the New England States. Further than this I cannot particularize. When he came to Essex he managed to procure a situation in a counting-house, which afforded him the means of support as well as leisure for study. He did not overlook these advantages, and gradually rose in public estimation until he became the editor of the Literary Herald. This gentleman was deeply read in the classics, and had also perused every novel and volume of poetry from the earliest period of English literature down to the present. Such had been his indefatigable research, that there was not a remarkable passage in the whole range of the Waverley fictions, or indeed any other fictions, to which he could not instantly turn. As to poetry, he was an oracle. He could repeat the whole of Shelley, Moore and Wordsworth, *verbatim*. He

was a very Sidrophel in his acquirements. He could tell

“How many scores a flea would jump;” he could prove, also, “that the man in the moon’s a sea Mediterranean,” and

“In lyric numbers write an ode on
His mistress eating a black pudding.”

He composed acrostics extempore by the dozen ; we say *extempore*, though it was once remarked that he was months in bringing them to maturity. He was inimitable, moreover, in his pictures of natural scenery. When a river, or a mountain, or a waterfall was to be sketched, Borel Bunting, of all others, was the man to guide the pencil. He had the rare faculty of bringing every thing distinctly before the mind of the reader—a compliment to which a majority of his brother scribes are not entitled.

Borel Bunting possessed also a considerable degree of critical acumen. Southey was a mere doggerelist ; Cooper and Irving were not men of genius : so said Borel. Pope, he declared, was the first of poets, because Lord Byron said so before him. Tom Jones, he contended, was the most perfect specimen of a novel extant. He was also willing to admit that Goldsmith had shown some talent in his *Vicar of Wakefield*.

In a word, Borel’s wonderful acquirements secured him the favorable attention of many distinguished men ; and at length (as a reward of his industry and merit) he was regularly installed in the chair editorial of the “*Literary Herald*,” an important weekly periodical, fifteen inches in diameter. His salary, it is supposed,

was something less than that received by the President of the United States.

The Literary Herald, Borel (or rather, Mr. Bunting — we beg his pardon) considered the paragon of perfection. No one could ever hope to be distinguished in literature who was not a contributor to its columns. It was the only sure medium through which young Ambition could make its way to immortality. In short (to use one of Bunting's favorite words,) it was the "*nonpareil*" of learning, literature, wit, philosophy, and science.

Mr. Bunting corresponded regularly with many distinguished individuals in Europe. I called upon him one morning just after the arrival of a foreign mail, when he read me portions of seven letters which he had just received. One was from Lafayette, another from Charles X., a third from the author of a fashionable novel, a fourth from Miss L—, a beautiful poetess in London, a fifth from a German count, a sixth from an Italian prince, and a seventh from Stpqrstmosptrsm, (I vouch not for the orthography, not being so well acquainted with the art of spelling as the learned Borel,) a distinguished Russian general in the service of the great "Northern Bear."

The most unfortunate charge that was ever preferred against Borel, in his editorial capacity, was that of *plagiarism*. He had inserted an article in his paper over his acknowledged signature, entitled "*Desultory Musings*," which some one boldly asserted was an extract from Zimmerman on Solitude; and, upon its being denied by the editor, reference was given to the identical page whence it was taken. These things boded no good to the reputation of the scribe; nevertheless, he continued his career without interruption,

and, had he lived in the days of Pope, the latter might well have asked,

“ Who shames a scribbler ? break one cobweb through,
 He spins the slight, self-pleasing thread anew :
 Destroy his fib or sophistry, in vain,
 The creature ’s at his dirty work again —

 Proud of a vast extent of flimsy lines.”

Mr. Ulric now indulges us with another love affair, beginning as follows : “ Oh thou strange and incomprehensible passion ! to what canst thou be compared ? At times thou art gentle as the zephyr ; at others thou art mighty as the tempest. Thou canst calm the throbbing bosom, or thou canst fill it with wilder commotion. A single smile of thy benign countenance calleth new rapture to the anguished heart, and scattereth every doubt, every fear, every perplexity. But enough of this.” True.

A young lady falls into a river or a ditch, (our author says she was fishing for a water-lily) and Mr. Ulric is at the trouble of pulling her out. “ What a charming incident ! ” says Mr. Mattson. Her name is Violet, and our susceptible youth falls in love with her. “ Shall I ever,” quoth Paul, “ shall I ever forget my sensations at that period ? — never ! ! ” Among other methods of evincing his passion he writes a copy of verses “ To Violet,” and sends them to the *Literary Herald*. All, however, is to little purpose. The lady is no fool, and very properly does not wish a fool for a husband.

Our hero now places his affections upon the wife of a silk-dyer. He has a rival, however, in the person of the redoubted editor, Borel Bunting, and a duel

ensues, in which, although the matter is a hoax, and the pistols have no load in them, Mr. Mattson assures us that the editor "in firing, lodged the *contents* of his weapon in the ground a few inches from his feet." The chapter immediately following this adventure is headed with poetical quotations occupying two-thirds of a page. One is from *Byron* — another from *All's Well that Ends Well* — and the third from *Brown's Lecture on Perpetual Motion*. The chapter itself would form not quite half a column such as we are now writing, and in it we are informed that Bunting, having discovered the perpetual motion, determines upon a tour in Europe.

The editor being thus disposed of, Mr. Mattson now enters seriously upon the business of his novel. We beg the attention of our readers while we detail a tissue of such absurdity, as we did not believe it possible, at this day, for any respectable bookseller to publish, or the very youngest of young gentlemen to indite.

Let us bear in mind that the scene of the following events is in the vicinity of Philadelphia, and the epoch, the present day. Mr. Ulric takes a stroll one May morning with his gun. "Nature seems to be at rest," &c. — "the warbling of birds," &c. — "perched among trees," &c. was all very fine, &c. "While gazing," says Paul, "upon these objects," (that is to say, the warbling of the birds) "I beheld a young and beautiful female trip lightly over the grass, and seat herself beneath a willow which stood in the middle of a park." Whereupon our adventurer throws himself into an attitude, and soliloquizes as follows.

"It seems that there is an indescribable something in the features of many women — a look, a smile, or a

glance of the eye — that sends the blood thrilling to the heart, and involuntarily kindles the flame of love upon its altar. It is no wonder that sages and philosophers have worshipped with such mad devotion at the shrine of beauty ! It is no wonder that the mighty Pericles knelt at the feet of his beloved Aspasia. It is no wonder that the once powerful Antony sacrificed his country to the fatal embraces of the bewitching Cleopatra ! It is no wonder that the thirst for glory cooled in the heart of the philosophic Abelard, when he beheld the beauty of the exquisite Heloise ! It is no wonder, indeed, that he quitted the dry maxims of Aristotle to practice the more pleasing precepts of Ovid ! But this is rhapsody ! ” It is.

The lady is dressed in white, (probably cambric muslin,) and Mr. Mattson assures us that her features he shall not attempt to describe. He proceeds, however, to say that her “ eyes are hazel, but very dark,” “ her complexion pure as alabaster,” her lips like the lips of Canova’s Venus, and her forehead like — something very fine. Mr. Ulric attempts to speak, but his embarrassment prevents him. The young lady “ turns to depart,” and our adventurer goes home as he came.

The next chapter commences with “ How mysterious is human existence ! ” — which means, when translated, “ How original is Mr. Mattson ! ” This initial paragraph concludes with a solemn assurance that we are perishable creatures, and that it is very possible we may all die — every mother’s son of us. But as Mr. M. hath it — “ to our story.” Paul has discovered the mansion of the young lady — but can see no more of the young lady herself. He therefore stands sentinel before the door, with the purpose “ of making observations.” While thus engaged, he per-

ceives a tall fellow, "with huge black whiskers and a most forbidding aspect," enter the house, in a familiar manner. Our hero is, of course, in despair. The tall gentleman could be no other than the accepted lover of the young lady. Having arrived at this conclusion, Paul espies a column of smoke in the woods, and after some trouble discovers it to proceed from "a log dwelling which stood alone, with its roof of moss, amid the silence and solitude of nature." A dog barks, and an old woman makes her appearance.

This old lady is a most portentous being. She is, however, a little given to drinking; and offers our hero a dram, of which Mr. Mattson positively assures us that gentleman did not accept.

"Can you tell me," says Paul, "who lives in the stone house?"

"Do you mean the Florence mansion?" she asked.

"Very like — who is its owner?"

"A man of the same name — Richard Florence."

"Who is Richard Florence?"

"An Englishman; he came to this country a year or two ago."

"Has he a wife?"

"Not that I know of."

"Children?"

"An only daughter."

"What is her name?"

"Emily."

"Emily! — Is she beautiful?"

"Very beautiful!"

"And amiable?"

"Her like is not to be found."

"What," [exclaims our hero, perhaps starting back and running his fingers through his hair] — "what are

all the fleeting and fickle pleasures of the world ! what the magnificent palaces of kings, with their imperial banquetings and gorgeous processions ! what, indeed, are all the treasures of the earth or the sea, in comparison with the pure, the bright, the beautiful object of our young and innocent affections ! ! ! ”

The name of the old hag is Meg Lawler, and she favors Mr. Ulric with her private history. The morality of her disclosures is questionable — but “morals, at the present day,” quoth Mr. Mattson, “are rarely sought in works of fiction, and perhaps *less* rarely found.” The gentleman means *more* rarely. But let us proceed. Meg Lawler relates a tale of seduction. It ends in the most approved form. “I knew,” says she, “that the day of sorrow and tribulation was at hand, but alas, there was no saving power.” Here follows a double range of stars — after which, the narrative is resumed as follows.

“Dame Lawler paused, and turning upon me her glaring and blood-shot eyes exclaimed —

“Do you think there is a punishment hereafter for the evil deeds done in the body ? ”

“Such,” I replied, “the divines have long taught us.”

“*Then is my destroyer writhing in the agonies of hell ! ! !*”

Mr. Ulric is, of course, electrified, and the chapter closes.

Our hero, some time after this, succeeds in making the acquaintance of Miss Emily Florence. The scene of the first interview is the cottage of Meg Lawler. Mr. U. proposes a walk — the lady at first refuses, but finally consents.

“There were two paths,” says our hero, “either

of which we might have chosen : one led into the forest, the other towards her father's house. I struck into the latter — but she abruptly paused."

"Shall we continue our walk?" I asked, observing that she still hesitated.

"Yes," she at length answered; "but I would prefer the other path"—that is to say the path through the woods—O fi, Miss Emily Florence! During the walk, our hero arrives at the conclusion that his beloved is "some unfortunate captive whose fears, or whose sense of dependence, might render it imprudent for her to be seen in the society of a stranger. In addition to all this, Dame Lawler has told Mr. U. that "she did not believe Emily was the daughter of Mr. Florence"—hereby filling the interesting youth with suspicions, which Mr. Mattson assures us "were materials for the most painful reflection."

On their way home our lovers meet with an adventure. Mr. Ulric happened to espy a — man. Miss Emily Florence thus explains this momentous occurrence. "*There is a band of robbers who have their retreat in the neighboring hills — and this was no doubt one of them. They are headed by a brave and reckless fellow of the name of Elmo — Captain Elmo I think they call him. They have been the terror of the inhabitants for a long time. My father went out some-time ago with an armed force in pursuit of them, but could not discover their biding place. I have heard it said that they steal away the children of wealthy parents that they may exact a ransom.*" Once more we beg our readers to remember that Mr. Mattson's novel is a Tale of the Present Times, and that its scene is in the near vicinity of the city of Brotherly Love.

Having convinced her lover that the man so portentously seen can be nobody in the world but "that brave and reckless fellow" Captain Elmo, Miss Florence proceeds to assure Mr. U. that she (Miss Florence) is neither afraid of man nor of devil — and forthwith brandishes in the eyes of the adventurer an ivory-hilted dagger, or a carving-knife or some such murderous affair. "Scarcely knowing what I did," says our gallant friend, "I imprinted a kiss (the first — burning, passionate, and full of rapture) upon her innocent lips, and — *darted into the woods!!!*" It was impossible to stand the carving-knife.

As Mr. U. takes his way home after this memorable adventure, he is waylaid by an old woman, who turns out to be a robber in disguise. A scuffle ensues, and our hero knocks down his antagonist — what less could such a hero do? Instead however of putting an end at once to his robbiership, our friend merely stands over him and requests him to recite his adventures. This the old woman does. Her name is Dingee O'Dougherty, or perhaps Dingy O'Dirty — and she proves to be one and the same personage with the little man in gray who sold Mr. U. the tinsel watch spoken of in the beginning of the history. During the catechism, however, a second robber comes up, and the odds are now against our hero. But on account of his affectionate forbearance to Dingy O'Dirty no farther molestation is offered — and the three part with an amicable understanding.

Mr. Ulric is now taken ill of a fever — and during his illness a servant of Mr. Florence having left that gentleman's service, calls upon his heroship to communicate some most astounding intelligence. Miss Florence, it appears, has been missing for some days, and her father

receives a letter (purporting to be from the captain of the banditti) in which it is stated that they have carried her away, and would only return her in consideration of a ransom. Florence is requested to meet them at a certain spot and hour, when they propose to make known their conditions. Upon hearing this extraordinary news our adventurer jumps out of bed, throws himself into attitude No. 2, and swears a round oath that he will deliver Miss Emily himself. Thus ends the first volume.

Volume the second commences with spirit. Mr. U. hires "three fearless and able-bodied men to accompany and render him assistance in the event of danger. Each of them was supplied with a belt containing a brace of pistols, and a large Spanish knife." With these terrible desperadoes, our friend arrives at the spot designated by the bandit. Leaving his companions near at hand, he advances, and recognizes the redoubted Captain Elmo, who demands a thousand pounds as the ransom of Miss Emily Florence. Our hero considers this too much, and the Captain consents to take five hundred. This too Mr. U. refuses to give, and with his three friends makes an attack upon the bandit. But a posse of robbers coming to the aid of their leader, our hero is about to meet with his deserts when he is rescued by no less a personage than our old acquaintance Dingy O'Dirty, who proves to be one of the banditti. Through the intercession of this friend, Mr. U. and his trio are permitted to go home in safety—but our hero, in a private conversation with Dingy, prevails upon that gentleman to aid him in the rescue of Miss Emily. A plot is arranged between the two worthies, the most important point of which is that Mr. U. is to become one of the robber fraternity.

In a week's time, accordingly, we behold Paul Ulric, Esq. in a cavern of banditti, somewhere in the neighborhood of Philadelphia!! His doings in this cavern, as related by Mr. Mattson, we must be allowed to consider the most laughable piece of plagiarism on record — with the exception perhaps of something in this same book which we shall speak of hereafter. Our author, it appears, has read Gil Blas, Pelham, and Anne of Geierstein, and has concocted, from diverse passages in the three, a banditti scene for his own especial use, and for the readers of Paul Ulric. The *imitations* (let us be courteous!) from Pelham are not so palpable as those from the other two novels. It will be remembered that Bulwer's hero introduces himself into a nest of London rogues with the end of proving his friend's innocence of murder. Paul joins a band of robbers *near Philadelphia*, for the purpose of rescuing a mistress — the chief similarity will be found in the circumstances of the blindfold introduction, and in the slang dialect made use of by either novelist. The slang in Pelham is stupid enough — but still very natural in the mouths of the cutthroats of Cockaigne. Mr. Mattson, however, has thought proper to bring it over, will I nill I, into Pennsylvania, and to make the pickpockets of Yankeeland discourse in the most learned manner of nothing less than "*flat-catching*," "*velvet*," "*dubbing up possibles*," "*shell-ing out*," "*twisting French lace*," "*wakeful winkers*," "*white wood*," "*pig's whispers*," and "*horses' night-caps*."

Having introduced his adventurer *à la* Pelham, Mr. Mattson entertains him *à la* Gil Blas. The hero of Santillana finds his cavern a pleasant residence, and so does the hero of our novel. Captain Rolando is a

fine fellow, and so is Captain Elmo. In Gil Blas, the robbers amuse themselves by reciting their adventures — so they do in Paul Ulric. In both the Captain tells his own history first. In the one there is a rheumatic old cook — in the other there is a rheumatic old cook. In the one there is a porter who is the main obstacle to escape — in the other ditto. In the one there is a lady in durance — in the other ditto. In the one the hero determines to release the lady — in the other ditto. In the one Gil Blas feigns illness to effect his end, in the other Mr. Ulric feigns illness for the same object. In the one, advantage is taken of the robbers' absence to escape — so in the other. The cook is sick, at the time, in both.

In regard to Anne of Geierstein the plagiarism is still more laughable. We must all remember the proceedings of the *Secret Tribunal* in Scott's novel. Mr. Mattson has evidently been ignorant that the Great Unknown's account of these proceedings was principally based on fact. He has supposed them imaginary *in toto*, and, seeing no good reason to the contrary, determined to have a Secret Tribunal of his own manufacture, and could think of no better location for it than a cavern somewhere about the suburbs of Philadelphia. We must be pardoned for giving Mr. Mattson's account of this matter in his own words.

"Dingee disappeared," [this is our old friend Dingy O'Dirty], "Dingee, [quoth Mr. Mattson,] disappeared — leaving me for a time alone. When he returned, he said everything was in readiness for the ceremony, [the ceremony of Mr. Ulric's initiation as a robber.] The place appointed for this purpose was called the '*Room of Skulls*' — and thither, blindfolded, I was led.

‘ A candidate for our order ! ’ said a voice, which I recognized as O’Dougherty’s.

‘ Let him see the light ! ’ exclaimed another in an opposite direction. The mandate was obeyed, and I was restored to sight.

“ I looked wildly and fearfully around — but no living object was perceptible. Before me stood an altar, hung about with red curtains, and ornamented with fringe of the same color. Above it, on a white Banner, was a painting of the human heart, with a dagger struck to the hilt, and the blood streaming from the wound. Directly under this horrible device, was written, in large letters,

THE PUNISHMENT OF THE UNFAITHFUL.

“ Around, wherever I turned my eyes, there was little else to be seen but skeletons of human bodies — with their arms uplifted, and stretching forward — suspended in every direction from the walls. One of them I involuntarily touched, and down it came with a fearful crash — its dry bones rattling upon the granite floor, until the whole cavern reverberated with the sound. I turned from this spectacle, and opposite beheld a guillotine — the fatal axe smeared with blood ; and near it was a head — looking as if it had just been severed from the body — with the countenance ghastly — the lips parted — and the eyes staring wide open. There, also, was the body, covered, however, with a cloth, so that little was seen except the neck, mangled and bloody, and a small portion of the hand, hanging out from its shroud, grasping in its fingers a tablet with the following inscription :

THE END OF THE BETRAYER.

“I sickened and fell. When I awoke to consciousness I found myself in the arms of O’Dougherty. He was bathing my temples with a fragrant liquor. When I had sufficiently recovered, he put his mouth close to my ear and whispered — ‘Where is your courage man? Do you know there is a score of eyes upon you?’

‘Alas! I am unused to such scenes’ — &c. &c. &c.”

We have only to say, that if our readers are not absolutely petrified after all this conglomeration of horrors, it is no fault either of Paul Ulric’s, Morris Mattson’s, or Dingy O’Dirty’s.

Miss Emily Florence is at length rescued, and with her lover, is rowed down some river in a skiff by Dingy, who thus discourses on the way. We quote the passage as a specimen of exquisite morality.

“Had I the sensibility of many men, a recollection of my crimes would sink me into the dust — but as it is, I can almost fancy them to be so many virtues. I see you smile; but is it not a truth, that everything of good and evil exists altogether in idea? The highwayman is driven by necessity to attack the traveller, and demand his purse. This is a crime — so says the law — so says society — and must be punished as our wise men have decreed. Nations go to war with each other — they plunder — burn — destroy — and murder — yet there is nothing wrong in this, because nations sanction it. But where is the difference between the highwayman, in the exercise of a profession by which he is to obtain a livelihood, and a nation, with perhaps less adequate cause, which despoils an-

other of its treasures, and deluges it in blood ? Is not this a proof that our ideas of immorality and wickedness are derived in a great measure from habit and education ? ” “ The metaphysical outlaw,” [says our hero,] “ the metaphysical outlaw here concluded his discourse.” [What an excessively funny idea Mr. Mattson must have of metaphysics !]

Having left the boat, taking leave of Dingy O’Dirty, and put on a pair of breeches, Miss Florence now accompanies our adventurer to a village hard by. Entering a tavern the lovers seat themselves at the breakfast table with two or three other persons. The conversation turns upon one Mr. Crawford, a great favorite in the village. In the midst of his own praises the gentleman himself enters — “ and lo ! ” says Mr. Ulric, “ in the person of Mr. Crawford, I recognized the notorious Captain Elmo ! ” The hue and cry is immediately raised, but the Captain makes his escape through a window. Our hero pursues him to no purpose, and in returning from the pursuit is near being run over by a carriage and six. The carriage doors happen to be wide open, and in the vehicle Mr. Ulric discovers — oh horrible ! — Miss Emily Florence in the embrace of the fellow with the big whiskers !

Having lost his sweetheart a second time, our adventurer is in despair. But despair, or indeed any thing else, is of little consequence to a hero. “ It is true,” says Paul, “ I was sometimes melancholy ; but melancholy with me is as the radiant sunlight, imparting a hue of gladness to everything around ! ! ” Being, therefore, in excellent spirits with his melancholy, Mr. Ulric determines upon writing a novel. The novel is written, printed, published, and puffed. Why not ? — we have even seen “ *Paul Ulric* ” puffed. But let

us hasten to the *dénouement* of our tale. The hero receives a letter from his guardian angel, Dingy O'Dirty, who, it appears, is in England. He informs Mr. U. that Miss Florence is in London, for he (Dingy O'Dirty) has seen her. Hereupon our friend takes shipping for that city. Of course he is shipwrecked — and, of course every soul on board perishes but himself. He, indeed, is a most fortunate young man. Some person pulls him on shore, and this person proves to be the very person he was going all the way to London to look for — it was Richard Florence himself. What is more to the purpose, Mr. F. has repented of promising Miss Emily to the fellow with the big whiskers. Every thing now happens precisely as it should. Miss E. is proved to be an heiress, and no daughter of Florence's after all. Our hero leads her to the altar. Matters come rapidly to a crisis. All the good characters are made excessively happy people, and all the bad characters die sudden deaths, and go, post haste, to the devil.

Mr. Mattson is a very generous young man, and is not above patronizing a fellow-writer occasionally. Some person having sent him a MS. poem for perusal and an opinion, our author consigns the new candidate for fame to immortality at once, by heading a chapter in Paul Ulric with four entire lines from the MS., and appending the following note at the bottom of the page.

“From a MS. poem entitled ‘*Drusilla*,’ with which we have been politely favored for perusal. It is a delightful work, and shows the writer to be a man of genius and reflection. We hope it will not be long before the lovers of poetry are favored with this production ; it will win deserved celebrity for its author.”

And as a farther instance of disinterestedness, see this conversation between Mr. Mattson's hero, and a young lady in London who wrote for the annuals.

"What do you think of D'Israeli's novels?" — asked she. "Excellent! Excellent!" I replied, "especially Vivian Grey; take for example the scene in the long gallery between Vivian and Mrs. Felix Lorraine."

"Admirable!" — returned the young lady, "but, by the way, how do you like Bulwer?"

"Well enough," I answered.

"Pray, Mr. Ulric, how many female writers of distinction have you in America?" "Honest old Blackwood tells us of but two or three."

"And who are they?"

"Miss Gould, Miss Sedgwick, and Mrs. Sigourney."

"He should have added another — Miss Leslie."

We fancy it is long since Miss Leslie, Miss Gould, Miss Sedgwick, Mrs. Sigourney, Lytton Bulwer, and Ben D'Israeli have been so affectionately patted on the back.

Of Mr. Mattson's *style* the less we say the better. It is quite good enough for Mr. Mattson's matter. Besides — all fine writers have pet words and phrases. Mr. Fay had his "*blisters*" — Mr. Simms had his "*coils*," "*bugs*," and "*old-times*" — and Mr. M. must be allowed his "*suches*" and "*so muches*." Such is genius! — and so much for the Adventures of an Enthusiast! But we must positively say a word in regard to Mr. Mattson's *erudition*. On page 97, vol. ii, our author is discoursing of the novel which his hero is about to indite. He is speaking more particularly of *titles*. Let us see what he says.

“ An ill-chosen title is sufficient to condemn the best of books. Never does an author exhibit his taste and skill more than in this particular. Just think for a moment of *the Frenchman's version of Doctor Johnson's ' Rambler ' into Le Chevalier Errant, and what was still more laughable, his innocently addressing the author by the appellation of Mr. Vagabond!* By the way, the modern fanatics were somewhat remarkable in the choice of their titles. Take for example the following — ‘ *The Shop of the Spiritual Apothecary* ’ and ‘ *Some fine Baskets baked in the Oven of Charity, carefully conserved for the Chickens of the Church, the Sparrows of the Spirit, and the Sweet Swallows of Salvation.* ’ ”

Having admired this specimen of deep research, let us turn to page 125, vol. ii. Mr. Ulric is here vindicating himself from some charges brought against his book. Have patience, gentle reader, while we copy what he says.

“ In the first place we are accused of *vulgarity*. In this respect we certainly bear a strong resemblance to Plautus, who was censured by the satirical Horace for the same thing. Next come *Ignorance, Vanity, and Stupidity*. Of the first two, the classic reader will not forget that Aristotle (who wrote not less than four hundred volumes) was calumniated by Cicero and Plutarch, both of whom endeavored to make it appear that he was *ignorant* as well as *vain*. But what of our stupidity? Socrates himself was treated by Athenaeus as *illiterate*: the divine Plato, called by some the philosopher of the Christians,” &c. &c.

What a learned man is Morris Mattson, Esq.! He is intimately versed not only in Horace, Aristotle, Cicero, Plutarch, Virgil, Homer, Plato, Pliny, and Aristophanes — but (*credat Judæus!*) in Nicander,

Aulus Gellius, Naucrates, Athenæus, Theopompus, and Apollonius Rhodius ! I. D'Israeli, however, the father of Ben D'Israeli aforesaid, is (we have no hesitation in saying it,) one of the most scoundrelly plagiarists in Christendom. He had not scrupled to steal entire passages verbatim from Paul Ulric ! On page 1, vol. ii, second edition, of 'The Curiosities of Literature,' in a chapter on *Titles*, we have all about Dr. Johnson, Le Chevalier Errant, and Mr. Vagabond, precisely in the language of Mr. Mattson. O thou abandoned robber, D'Israeli ! Here is the sentence. It will be seen, that it corresponds with the first sentence italicized in the paragraph (above) beginning 'an ill-chosen title,' &c. "The Rambler was so little understood, at the time of its appearance, that a French journalist has translated it 'Le Chevalier Errant,' and a foreigner drank Johnson's health one day, by innocently addressing him by the appellation of Mr. Vagabond !" And on page 11, of the same volume, we perceive the following, which answers to the *second* sentence italicized in the paragraph above mentioned. "A collection of passages from the Fathers is called 'The Shop of the Spiritual Apothecary' — one of these works bears the elaborate title, 'Some fine Baskets baked in the Oven of Charity, carefully conserved for the Chickens of the Church, the Sparrows of the Spirit, and the Sweet Swallows of Salvation.' There can be no doubt whatever of D'Israeli's having pilfered this thing from Paul Ulric, for Mr. Mattson having, inadvertently we suppose, written *Baskets* for *Biscuits*, the error is adopted by the plagiarist. But we have a still more impudent piece of robbery to mention. The whole of the *erudition* and two-thirds of the *words* in the paragraph

above, beginning 'In the first place we are accused of vulgarity,' &c. is to be found on page 42, vol. i, second edition, of the 'Curiosities !' Let us transcribe some of D'Israeli's words in illustration of our remark. We refer the reader for more particular information to the book itself.

Well, Mr. Mattson, what have you to say for yourself? Is not I. D'Israeli the most impudent thief since the days of Prometheus?

In summing up an opinion of Paul Ulric, it is by no means our intention to mince the matter at all. The book is despicable in every respect. Such are the works which bring daily discredit upon our national literature. We have no right to complain of being laughed at abroad when so villainous a compound, as the thing we now hold in our hand, of incongruous folly, plagiarism, immorality, inanity, and bombast, can command at any moment both a puff and a publisher. To Mr. Mattson himself we have only one word to say before throwing his book into the fire. Dress it up, good sir, for the nursery, and call it the "Life and Surprising Adventures of Dingy O'Dirty." Humph! — only think of Plato, Pliny, Aristotle, Aristophanes, Nicander, Aulus Gellius, Naucrates, Athenæus, Theopompus, and Apollonius Rhodius!!

Such passages as the foregoing may be discovered *passim* in "The American in England." Yet we have heard Mr. Slidell's English called equal to the English of Mr. Irving — than which nothing can be more improbable. The Lieutenant's book is an excellent book — but then it is excellent *in spite of its style*. So great are the triumphs of genius.

RIENZI, THE LAST OF THE TRIBUNES. BY THE
AUTHOR OF "EUGENE ARAM," "LAST DAYS OF
POMPEII," &c. &c. TWO VOLUMES IN ONE.
PHILADELPHIA: REPUBLISHED BY E. L. CAREY
AND A. HART.

[*Southern Literary Messenger*, February, 1836.]

WE have long learned to reverence the fine intellect of Bulwer. We take up any production of his pen with a positive certainty that, in reading it, the wildest passions of our nature, the most profound of our thoughts, the brightest visions of our fancy, and the most ennobling and lofty of our aspirations will, in due turn, be enkindled within us. We feel sure of rising from the perusal a wiser if not a better man. In no instance are we deceived. From the brief Tale — from the "Monos and Daimonos" of the author — to his most ponderous and beloved novels — all is richly, and glowingly intellectual — all is energetic, or astute, or brilliant, or profound. There *may* be men now living who possess the power of Bulwer — but it is quite evident that very few have made that power so palpably manifest. Indeed we know of *none*.

Viewing him as a novelist — a point of view exceedingly unfavorable (if we hold to the common acceptance of “the novel”) for a proper contemplation of his genius — he is unsurpassed by any writer living or dead. Why should we hesitate to say this, feeling, as we do, thoroughly persuaded of its truth? Scott has excelled him in *many* points, and “The Bride of Lammermuir” is a better book than any individual work by the author of Pelham — “Ivanhoe” is, perhaps, equal to any. Descending to particulars, D’Israeli has a more brilliant, a more lofty, and a more delicate (we do not say a *wilder*) imagination. Lady Dacre has written Ellen Wareham, a more forcible tale of Passion. In some species of wit Theodore Hook rivals, and in broad humor our own Paulding surpasses him. The writer of “Godolphin” equals him in energy. Banim is a better sketcher of character. Hope is a richer colonist. Captain Trelawney is as original — Moore is as fanciful, and Horace Smith is as learned. But who is there uniting in one person the imagination, the passion, the humor, the energy, the knowledge of the heart, the artist-like eye, the originality, the fancy and the learning of Edward Lytton Bulwer? In a vivid wit — in profundity and a Gothic massiveness of thought — in style — in a calm certainty and definitiveness of purpose — in industry — and above all in the power of controlling and regulating by volition his illimitable faculties of mind, he is unequalled — he is unapproached.

As *Rienzi* is the last, so it is the best novel of Bulwer. In the Preface we are informed that the work was commenced two years ago at Rome, but abandoned upon the author’s removing to Naples, for the “Last Days of Pompeii” — a subject requiring more than

Rienzi, the advantage of a personal residence within reach of the scenes described. The idea of the present work, however, was never dismissed from the writer's mind, and soon after the publication of "Pompeii" he resumed his original undertaking. We are told that having had occasion to look into the original authorities whence are derived all the accounts of modern historians touching Rienzi, Mr. B. was induced to believe that no just picture of the Life or Times of that most remarkable man was at present in the hands of the people. Under this impression the novelist had at first meditated a work of History rather than of Fiction. We doubt, however, whether the spirit of the author's intention is not better fulfilled as it is. He has adhered with scrupulous fidelity to all the main events in the *public* life of his hero; and by means of the relief afforded through the personages of pure romance which form the filling in of the picture, he has been enabled more fully to develop the *private* character of the noble Roman. The reader may indeed be startled at the vast difference between the Rienzi of Mr. Bulwer, and the Rienzi of Sismondi, of Gibbon, and of Miss Mitford. But by neither of the two latter are we disposed to swear — and of Sismondi's impartiality we can at no moment be certain. Mr. B., moreover, very justly observes that as, in the work before us, all the *acts* are given from which is derived his interpretation of the principal agent, the public, having sufficient data for its own judgment, may fashion an opinion for itself.

Generally, the true chronology of Rienzi's life is preserved. In regard to the story — or that chain of fictitious incident usually binding up together the constituent parts of a Romance — there is very little of it in the book. This follows necessarily from the char-

acter of the composition — which is essentially Epic rather than Dramatic. The author's apology seems to us therefore supererogative when he says that a work which takes for its subject the crimes and errors of a nation and which ventures to seek the actual and the real in the highest stage of action or passion can rarely adopt with advantage the melo-dramatic effects produced by a vulgar mystery. In his pictures of the Roman populace, and in those of the Roman nobles of the fourteenth century — pictures full at all times of an enthralling interest — Mr. B. professes to have followed literally the descriptions left to us.

Miss Mitford's *Rienzi* will of course be remembered in reading that of Bulwer. There is however but one point of coincidence — a love-intrigue between a relative of the hero and one of the party of the nobles. This, it will be recollected, forms the basis of the plot of *Miss M.* In the *Rienzi* of Bulwer, it is an Episode not affecting in any manner either the story itself, or the destinies of the Tribune.

It is by no means our intention to give an analysis of the volume before us. Every person who reads at all will read *Rienzi*, and indeed the book is already in the hands of many millions of people. Any thing, therefore, like our usual custom of a digest of the narrative would be superfluous. The principal characters who figure in the novel are *Rienzi* himself — his brother, whose slaughter by a noble at the commencement of the story, is the immediate cause of *Rienzi's* change of temper and consequent exaltation — *Adrian di Castello*, a young noble of the family of *Colonna* but attached to the cause of the people — *Martino di Porto* the chief of the house of *Orsini* — *Stephen Colonna*, chief of the house of the *Colonna* — *Walter*

de Montreal, a gentleman of Provence, a knight of St. John, and one of the formidable freebooters who at the head of large "Companies" invaded states and pillaged towns at the period of Rienzi's Revolution — Pandulfo di Guido, a student, whom, under the appellation of Pandolficcio di Guido, Gibbon styles "the most virtuous citizen of Rome" — Cecco del Vecchio, a smith — Giles D'Albornoz of the royal race of Arragon — Petrarch the poet, and the friend of Rienzi — Angelo Villani — Irene, the sister of the Tribune and betrothed to Adrian di Castello — Nina, Rienzi's wife — and Adeline, the mistress of Walter de Montreal.

But as was said before, we should err radically if we regard Rienzi altogether in the light of Romance. Undoubtedly as such — as a fiction, and coming under the title of a novel, it is a glorious, a wonderful conception, and not the less wonderfully and gloriously carried out. What else could we say of a book over which the mind so delightedly lingers in perusal. In its delineations of passion and character — in the fine blending and contrasting of its incidents — in the rich and brilliant tints of its feudal paintings — in a pervading air of chivalry, and grace, and sentiment — in all that can throw a charm over the pages of Romance, the last novel of Bulwer is equal, if not superior, to any of his former productions. Still we would look at the work in a different point of view. It is History. We hesitate not to say that it is History in its truest — in its only true, proper, and philosophical garb. Sismondi's works — were not. There is no greater error than dignifying with the name of History a tissue of dates and details, though the dates be ordinarily correct, and the details indisputably true. Not even with the aid

of acute comment will such a tissue satisfy our individual notions of History. To the effect let us look — to the impression rather than to the seal. And how very seldom is any definite impression left upon the mind of the historical reader! How few bear away — even from the pages of Gibbon — Rome and the Romans. Vastly different was the genius of Niebuhr — than whom no man possessed a more discriminative understanding of the uses and the purposes of the pen of the historiographer. But we digress. Bearing in mind that “to contemplate” — *ιστορεῖν*¹ — should and must be allowed a more noble and a more expansive acceptance than has been usually given it, we shall often discover in Fiction the essential spirit and vitality of Historic Truth — while Truth itself, in many a dull and lumbering Archive, shall be found guilty of all the inefficiency of Fiction.

Rienzi, then, is History. But there are other aspects in which it may be regarded with advantage. Let us survey it as a profound and lucid exposition of the *morale* of Government — of the Philosophies of Rule and Misrule — of the absolute incompatibility of Freedom and Ignorance — Tyranny in the few and Virtue in the many. Let us consider it as something akin to direct evidence that a people is not a mob, nor a mob a people, nor a mob's idol the idol of a people — that in a nation's self is the only security for a nation — and that it is absolutely necessary to model upon the *character* of the governed, the machinery,

¹ History, from *ιστορεῖν*, to contemplate, seems, among the Greeks, to have embraced not only the knowledge of past events, but also Mythology, Esopian and Milesian fables, *Romance*, Tragedy and Comedy. But our business is with things, not words.

whether simple or complex, of the governmental legislation.

It is proper — we are persuaded — that Rienzi should be held up in these many different points of view, if we desire fully to appreciate its own merits and the talents of Mr. Bulwer. But regard it as we will, it is an extraordinary work — and one which leaves nothing farther to accomplish in its own particular region. It is vastly superior to the “Last Days of Pompeii” — more rich — more glowing, and more vigorous. With all and more than all the distinguishing merits of its noble predecessor, it has none of its *chilliness* — none of that platitude which (it would not be difficult to say why) is the inevitable result of every attempt at infusing warmth among the marble wildernesses, and vitality into the statue-like existences, of the too-distantly antique.

We will conclude our notice of Rienzi with an Extract. We choose it not with any view of commending it above others — for the book has many equally good and some better — but to give our readers — such of them as have not yet seen the novel, an opportunity of comparing the passage with some similar things in Boccaccio. We may as well say that in all which constitutes good writing the Englishman is infinitely the superior. What we select is Chapter V, of the sixth Book. Irene, the betrothed of the noble Roman Adrian di Castello being in Florence during the time of the Great Plague, is sought by her lover at the peril of his life. Overpowered by a fever he meets with Irene — but his delirium prevents a recognition. She conveys him to one of the deserted mansions, and officiates as his nurse. Having thrown aside her mantle, under the impression that it retained the

infection of the Pestilence, it is found and worn by another.

Here, in many incidents of extraordinary force — in the call of the Beechini on the third night — in the most agonizing circumstance of Irene's abandonment of Adrian — in the bodily weakness and mental prostration of that young nobleman — in the desolation of the streets — in the meeting with Rienzi — in the colossal dignity of the words, "I am he that was Rienzi!" — in the affectionate attention of the fallen hero — and lastly, in the appalling horror of the vault and its details — may be seen and will be felt much, but not all, of the exceeding power of the "*Last of the Tribunes.*"

CONTI THE DISCARDED : WITH OTHER TALES AND FANCIES, BY HENRY F. CHORLEY. 2 VOLS. NEW YORK : PUBLISHED BY HARPER AND BROTHERS.

[*Southern Literary Messenger*, February, 1836.]

MR. CHORLEY has hitherto written nothing of any great length. His name, however, is familiar to all readers of English Annals, and in whatever we have seen from his pen, evidences of a rare genius have been perceptible. In *Conti*, and in the "other Tales and Fancies" which accompany it, these evidences are more distinct, more brilliant, and more openly developed. Neither are these pieces wanting in a noble, and, to us, a most thrillingly interesting purpose. In

THE MONTICELLO EDITION

THE COMPLETE WORKS OF
EDGAR ALLAN POE

Edited by JAMES A. HARRISON
PROFESSOR IN THE UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA



LITERARY CRITICISM
VOLUME TWO



NEW YORK . GEORGE D.
SPROUL . M D C C C C I I

Upon the whole, we could wish that men possessing the weight of talents and character belonging to Professor Ingraham, would either think it necessary to bestow a somewhat greater degree of labor and attention upon the composition of their novels, or otherwise, would *not* think it necessary to compose them at all.

ELKSWATAWA ; OR THE PROPHET OF THE WEST. A
TALE OF THE FRONTIER. NEW YORK : HARPER
AND BROTHERS.

[*Southern Literary Messenger*, August, 1836.]

THIS novel is written by Mr. James S. French of Jerusalem, Virginia — the author, we believe, of “*Eccentricities of David Crockett*,” a book of which we know nothing beyond the fact of its publication. The plot of *Elkswatawa* is nearly as follows. About the period when rumors were abroad in our frontier settlements, and elsewhere, of contemplated hostilities by the Indians under Tecumseh, one Mr. Richard Rolfe, “a high-toned and chivalrous Virginian,” is a resident of Petersburg. He is left an orphan in early life — is educated under the guidance of an uncle, completes a course of studies at William and Mary, and finally practises law. His uncle now dying, he is left pennyless ; and his want of perseverance precludes any hope of professional advancement. In this dilemma he falls in love. The young lady is “a gentle, quiet, little creature,” has hazel eyes, auburn hair, and “the loveliest face my eyes ever beheld.” Moreover, she is “intellectual without being too much

book-learned, kind without seeming to intend it, and artless without affectation. "Not a dog" says Mr. French, "but read her countenance aright, and would follow her until he obtained his dinner." Besides all this, she has some little property, a penchant for Mr. Richard Rolfe, and a very pretty appellation, which is Gay Foreman. But that the course of true love may not run altogether smooth, the young lady's father "knows a thing or two," and will have nothing to do with our hero. The damsel too refuses to run away with him, and so he is forced to run away by himself. In a word, he resolves "to leave the scene of his unhappiness and seek a home in the western wilds." "Oh poverty ! poverty !" says Mr. Richard Rolfe, in throwing his leg over the saddle, "how often hast thou been sketched in some humble sphere, as fascinating in the extreme — and indeed lovely art thou — *in the abstract !*" — a very neat and very comfortable little piece of positive fact, or as Ben D'Israeli would call it — of aesthetical psychology.

Our hero is next seen in Kentucky, where we find him, on the night of the 10th of August 1809, in the woods, on the banks of the Ohio, in company with one Mr. Earthquake, a hunter. A cry is suddenly heard proceeding from the river. Stealthily approaching the banks, Mr. R. and his friend look abroad and discover — nothing. Earthquake, however, (whom our hero calls Earth for brevity) is of opinion that the Indians have been murdering some emigrant family. While deliberating, a light is discovered on the Illinois bank of the river, and presently a band of Indian warriors become visible. They are dancing a war-dance, with a parcel of bloody scalps in their hands, and (*credat Judaeus !*) with Mr. Rolfe's very identical little

sweetheart in their abominable clutches ! “ Is there a human bosom callous to the appeals of pity ? ” here says Mr. Richard Rolfe, attorney at law, placing his hand upon his heart. Mr. Earthquake, unfortunately, says nothing, but there can be no doubt in any reasonable mind, that had he opened his mouth at all, “ Humph ! here ’s a pretty kettle of fish ! ” would have come out of it.

It appears that Mr. Rolfe having decamped from Petersburg, old Mr. Foreman, as a necessary consequence, becomes unfortunate in business, fails, and goes off to Pittsburg — or perhaps goes to Pittsburg first and then fails — at all events it is incumbent upon him to emigrate and go down the Ohio in a flat-boat with all his family, and so down he goes. He arrives, of course, before any accident can possibly happen to him, exactly opposite the spot where that ill-treated young attorney, Mr. Rolfe, is sitting as aforesaid, with a very long face, in the woods. But having got so far, it follows that he can get no farther. The Indians now catch him — (what business had he to reject Mr. Rolfe ?) they give him a yell — (oh, the old villain !) they kill him — (quite right !) scalp him, and throw him overboard, him and all his family, with the exception of the young lady. Her they think it better to carry across to the Illinois side of the river, and set her, up on the top of a rock just opposite our hero, with a view, no doubt, of letting that interesting young gentleman behold her to the greatest possible advantage.

But the glaring improbability of this *rencontre* (an incident upon which the whole narrative depends) is perhaps the worst feature in Mr. French’s novel. Matters now proceed in a more rational manner. The Indians, eight in number, having finished their war-

dance, make off with their prey. The two hunters (for Mr. R. has turned hunter) swim the river and proceed to follow in pursuit, with the view of seizing any favorable opportunity for rescuing the young lady. There are now some points of interest. At one time, our friends, hiding in the trunk of a tree, are near being discovered by the red men, when these latter are turned from the path by the rattling of a snake. This is a manœuvre on the part of Earthquake, who carries the rattles about his person. Something of the same kind, however, is narrated by Cooper. At another period, one of the eight becoming separated from the party, is waylaid and dexterously slain. Mr. Rolfe too, manages to obtain a glimpse of the face of the captive, and is convinced of her being his inamorata. The pursuit, however, is unsuccessful, and the maiden is carried to the camp of Tecumseh.

We have now a description of this warrior — of his brother Elkswatawa, the Prophet — of the Net-nok-wa, the female chief of the Ottawas — and of Mis-kwa-bun-o-kwa her daughter. The two latter are on a visit to Tecumseh, who refuses, for state reasons, the proffered hand of Mis-kwa-bun-o-kwa. This princess, becoming interested in the fate of our heroine, begs her of the Prophet as a slave. The Prophet yields, and Miss Foreman is carried by Mis-kwa-bun-o-kwa to visit some of the latter's friends on the Wabash, before setting off for the more distant regions of her tribe. In the meantime, our hunters, arriving at the camp, and having reconnoitred it in vain for any traces of the captive, boldly enter the camp itself, and demand the maiden at the hands of the Prophet. His hostile intentions not being yet sufficiently ripe, Elkswatawa receives them with kindness, and gives them fair words, but dis-

claims any knowledge of Miss Foreman. Being desired, however, to aid the search by means of his power as a Prophet, the Indian finally points out the true route of Mis-kwa-bun-o-kwa's party, and our hunters taking leave, determine, as nothing better can be done, to return home for assistance. On their way they come across the body of the Indian, who, it will be remembered, was separated from his party and killed by our friends. Upon his person they find, among other articles, a handkerchief marked with the letters *R. Rolfe*, in the handwriting of our hero. He remembers having exchanged handkerchiefs with Miss F. on the day of his leaving Petersburg, and his doubts are now, consequently, resolved into certainty. This incident determines Rolfe to proceed immediately up the Wabash. Here, too, he fails in the object of his search, and the hunters commence their return. On the route an Indian woman is discovered, bearing a torch, and looking for her son whom she supposes to have been murdered by the whites. Touched with pity, our friends aid her in the search, and the son is found, grievously wounded, but not dead. In her lamentations, the mother drops some few words about a white maiden who has taken shelter in her wigwam, and the hopes of Rolfe are rekindled. They bear the wounded man to the hut, and the white maiden, who is found dead, proves *not* to be Gay Foreman. But the kindness of Rolfe and his companion have excited a deep gratitude in the breasts of the Indian mother and son—the latter is called Oloompa. They pledge their aid in recovering the lady—and, Rolfe having entrusted Oloompa with a letter for his mistress, the hunters resume their journey. Reaching Indiana, they find that, owing to the unsettled state of Indian affairs, no

assistance can be rendered them in regard to the rescue of Miss Foreman. They proceed to Kentucky. Earthquake is made sheriff. Rolfe practises law, and having written to Petersburg in relation to Miss F. receives an answer inducing him to believe himself mistaken in regard to the identity of the captive. In the meantime Netnokwa, Mis-kwa-bun-o-kwa and Miss Foreman are living on the banks of the Red River. The lady is, in some measure, reconciled to her fate by the kind attentions of her Indian friends—who are only prevented from restoring her to the settlements through dread of the Prophet's resentment. Elkswatawa and Tecumseh are busied in uniting the Indian tribes with the view of a general attack upon the whites. An emissary is thus sent to the wigwam of Netnokwa. Influenced by Miss Foreman the princesses treat the messenger with contempt and laugh at the pretensions of the Prophet. He returns home vowing vengeance, and Elkswatawa is induced to send a party of six warriors for the purpose of bringing all the inmates of Netnokwa's cabin to his camp.

The friendly Indian, Oloompa, determines, in the meantime, to redeem his promise made to the two hunters, finds out the wig-wam of Netnokwa, delivers the letter of Rolfe, receives an answer from Miss Foreman, proceeds with it to Kentucky, searches out our hero, and returns with him as a guide to the dwelling of the Indian princess. Earth accompanies them. The cabin is found deserted—the inmates having been carried off the day before in the direction of the Prophet's camp. But the ingenuity of Mis-kwa-bun-o-kwa has contrived to leave, on the shelf of the cabin, a letter for the perusal of Oloompa—whose return was, of course, expected. This letter consists

of a parcel of little clay figures, representing Netnokwa, Mis-kwa-bun-o-kwa, and Miss Foreman, driven by six Indians in the direction of the camp of the prophet. Upon this hint our hero starts with his two companions in pursuit. They fail, however, in overtaking the Indians in time to accomplish a rescue. The captive with her friends is carried to Tippecanoe, where the Prophet (Tecumseh having gone to the South) is expecting an attack from the American army under General Harrison. Entering the camp, Oloompa mingles with the Indians and finally discovers the tent in which are the princesses and Miss Foreman. Learning that the Prophet has granted to Mis-kwa-bun-o-kwa the privilege of passing in and out of the tent at pleasure, restricting her only to the limits of the camp, he obtains an interview with her, and prevails upon her to disguise Miss Foreman to represent herself, (the princess) and thus enable the captive to pass out. The scheme succeeds, and our heroine is restored to the arms of Mr. Rolfe, who is awaiting her beyond the lines. In the meantime, the impatient Indians urge the Prophet to a night attack upon Gen. Harrison. They are repulsed, and at the conclusion of the battle, our friends make their way into the American army. All difficulties now vanish. The lovers are married, and the narrative is brought to a conclusion.

The dry compendium we have given will of course do little more than afford some idea of the *plan* of the novel. Its chief interest depends upon matters which we have avoided altogether, as being independent of this plan, and as forming a portion of our Indian history. Here Mr. French has been very successful. The characters of Tecumseh and Elkswatawa appear to us well drawn, and the manœuvres skilfully detailed

by means of which the vast power of the Prophet was attained. It is possible however, that the bear, tiger, Indian, and snake stories of our friend Earthquake, (with which the volumes are plentifully interlarded,) will be considered as forming the better portions of *Elkswatawa*. We have already adverted to the gross improbability of the main incident upon which the narrative is hinged. In the entire construction of the tale Mr. French has fallen too obviously, we think, into some mannerisms of Sir Walter Scott.

In him (Sir Walter) these *mannerisms*, until the frequency of their repetition entitled them to such appellation, being well managed and not over-done, were commendable. They added great force and precision to the development of his stories. They should now be avoided—as a little too much of a good thing. And to a man of genius the world of invention is *never* shut. There is always something new under the sun—a fact susceptible of positive demonstration, in spite of a thousand dogmas to the contrary. The mannerisms we particularly allude to in Mr. French, are involved in what he so frequently calls the “*bringing up*” of his narrative. Fixing in his mind, every now and then, some particular epoch of his tale, he deems it of essential importance (when it is by no means so) that the action of his various characters should be “brought up,” with entire regularity, to this epoch. The attention is no sooner engaged in one train of adventure, than a chapter closes with some such sentence as the following. “*Leaving* him to prosecute his journey, and the hunters with a perfect knowledge of the route he had taken, we return to the camp of the Prophet,” see chapter 21—or with “*Leaving* the hunters to hover about the temporary camp of

the Indians, we must bring *forward other parts of our story*," see chapter 3 — or with "Thus amusing themselves, they continued their journey, to perform which we must leave them, while we *bring forward other parts of our story*," see chapter 8 — or, "And now having *brought up* the history of the Prophet to the period of which we are writing we will proceed with our narrative," see chapter 14 — or "*Leaving Rolfe* to attend to his profession, and Earthquake to discharge the duties of the office which had just been conferred on him, let us *proceed with other parts of our story*," see chapter 15. Many of the chapters commence in a similar strain, and even in the middle of some of them the same interruptions occur. And this adjustment of the date is so frequently repeated that Mr. French's readers are kept in a constant state of chronological hornpipe.

There are some *inadvertences* to which the author's attention should be called. When Rolfe, and his companion Earthquake, are in the woods on the banks of the Ohio, at the time of the murder of Mr. Foreman's family, they are represented (see page 32, vol. i,) as hearing a sudden cry — upon which, proceeding to the river bank, they look around — and see — nothing. The boat containing the family had sunk before their appearance and no traces remained. Yet on page 113 of the same volume, we find the hunters giving to the Prophet a detailed account of the massacre and burning — things of which they could know nothing whatsoever.

When Mis-kwa-bun-o-kwa (that acute young lady) is about leaving her wigwam on the Red River — forced away by the six Indians of the Prophet, she goes to much trouble in making little dirt babies as a means of informing Rolfe and Oloompa, when they shall arrive,

of the disaster which has befallen her. The six Indians, it is possible, would have taken notice of the dirt babies and destroyed them before their departure — for we are told they were set upon a shelf in the wigwam. At all events, the young princess should have had a less opinion of her own ingenuity, and have requested Miss Foreman to write a *bonâ fide* epistle to her lover. In this manner she would have saved herself no little dabbling in the mud.

In his *dialogues*, our author will observe that he makes a far too frequent use of the *names* of the speakers. Earthquake, for example, cannot say a word to Rolfe, without calling him *Rolfe*, to commence with — and Rolfe does nothing but *Earth* Mr. Earthquake to the end of the chapter. This has the most ludicrous effect imaginable. The colloquy might as well proceed, too, without so excessive an use of the word “said.” The “said Earths” and “said Rolfes” have put us in a positive fever. The general *style* of Mr. French is intrinsically good — but has a certain air of *rawness* which only time and self-discipline will enable him to mellow down. In depicting *character*, the novelist is unequal. Earth is natural, and although drawn with force, still free from the usual exaggerations. We have already spoken of Elkswatawa and Tecumseh. Oloompa is a bold and chivalrous Indian, with a fine ideal elevation of manner. Miss Foreman we dislike, because we cannot comprehend her. In vain we endeavor to form of her, from the portrait before us, any definite image. She is a young lady — and we are told a very pretty one — but Mr. F. must pardon us for saying that she has — no character whatsoever.

Upon the whole we think highly of “*Elkswatawa*,” as evincing a capacity for better things. But if the

question were demanded — What has Mr. French here done for his reputation? — we would reply possibly, upon the spur of the moment — “very little.” Upon second thought we should say — “just nothing at all.”

SHEPPARD LEE : WRITTEN BY HIMSELF. NEW YORK :
HARPER AND BROTHERS.

[*Southern Literary Messenger*, September, 1836.]

LIKE Philothea, this novel is an original in *American Belles Lettres* at least ; and these deviations, however indecisive, from the more beaten paths of imitation, look well for our future literary prospects. Thinking thus, we will be at the trouble of going through briefly, in detail, the plot and the adventures of Sheppard Lee.

The hero relates his own story. He is born “some-where towards the close of the last century,” in the State of New Jersey, in one of the oldest counties that border upon the Delaware river. His father is a farmer in good circumstances, and famous for making good sausages for the Philadelphia market. He has ten children besides Sheppard. Nine of these die, however, in six years, by a variety of odd accidents — the last expiring in a fit of laughter at seeing his brother ridden to death by a pig. Prudence, the oldest sister, survives. The mother, mourning for her children, becomes melancholy and dies insane. Sheppard is sent to good schools, and afterwards to the College at Nassau Hall, in Princeton, where he remains three years, until his father’s decease. Upon this occurrence he finds himself in possession of the bulk of the property ;

his sister Prudence had recently married, receiving only a small farm in a neighboring county. After making one or two efforts to become a man of business, our hero hires an overseer to undertake the entire management of his property.

Having now nothing to do, and time hanging heavily on his hands, Sheppard Lee tries many experiments by way of killing the enemy. He turns sportsman, but has the misfortune to shoot his dog the first day, and upon the second his neighbor's cow. He breeds horses and runs them, losing more money in a single hour than his father had ever made in two years together. At the suggestion of his overseer he travels, and is robbed of his baggage and money, by an intelligent gentlemanly personage from Sing Sing. He thinks of matrimony, and is about coming to a proposal, when his innamorata, taking offence at his backwardness, casts her eyes upon another wooer, who has made her an offer, and marries him upon the spot.

Upon attaining his twenty-eighth year, Mr. Lee discovers his overseer, Mr. Aikin Jones, to be a rogue, and himself to be ruined. Prudence, the sister, tells our hero moreover, that he has lost all the little sense he ever possessed, while her husband is so kind as to inform him that "he is wrong in the upper story." A quarrel ensues and Mr. Lee is left to bear his misfortunes alone.

In Chapter V, we have a minute description of the state of the writer's affairs at this epoch, and it must be owned that his little property of forty acres presented a sufficiently woe-begone appearance. One friend, however, remains steadfast, in the person of our hero's negro servant, Jim Jumble — an old fellow that had been the slave of his father and was left to

him in the will. This is a crabbed, self-willed old rascal, who will have every thing his own way. Having some scruples of conscience about holding a slave, and thinking him of no value whatever, but, on the contrary, a great deal of trouble, our hero decides upon setting him free. The old fellow, however, bursts into a passion, swears he will *not* be free, that Mr. Lee is his master and shall take care of him, and that if he dares to set him free he will have the law of him, "he will by ge-hosh!"

At length, in spite of even the services of Jim Jumble, our hero is reduced to the point of despair. His necessities have compelled him to mortgage the few miserable acres left, and ruin stares him in the face. He attempts many ingenious devices with a view of amending his fortune—buys lottery tickets which prove all blanks—purchases stock in a southern gold mining company, is forced to sell out at a bad season, and finds himself with one-fifth the sum invested—gets a new coat, and makes a declaration to a rich widow in the neighborhood, who makes him the laughing stock of the country for his pains—and finally turns politician, choosing the strongest party, on the principle that the majority must always be right. Attending a public meeting he claps his hands and applauds the speeches with so much spirit, that he is noticed by some of the leaders. They encourage him to take a more prominent part in the business going on, and at the next opportunity he makes a speech. Being on the hurrah side he receives great applause, and indeed there is such a shouting and clapping that he is obliged to put an end to his discourse sooner than he had intended. He is advised to set about converting all in the neighborhood who are not of the right way

of thinking, and the post office in the village is hinted at as his reward in case the county is gained. Mr. Lee sets about his task valiantly, paying his own expenses, and the hurrahs carry the day. His claim to the postofficeship is universally admitted, but, in some way or other, the appointment is bestowed upon one of the very leaders who had been foremost in commending the zeal and talents of our author, and in assuring him that the office should be his. Mr. Lee is enraged, and is upon the point of going over to the anti-hurrahs, when he is involved in a very remarkable tissue of adventure. Jim Jumble conceives that money has been buried by Captain Kidd, in a certain ugly swamp, called the Owl-Roost, not many rods from an old church. The stories of the negro affect his master to such a degree that he dreams three nights in succession of finding a treasure at the foot of a beech-tree in the swamp. He resolves to dig for it in good earnest, choosing mid-night, at the full of the moon, as the moment of commencing operations. On his way to the Owl-Roost at the proper time, he passed by the burial ground of the old church, and the wall having fallen down across his path, he strikes his ankle against a fragment — the pain causing him to utter a groan. To his amazement this interjection of suffering is echoed from the grave yard; a voice screaming out in awful tones, O Lord! O Lord! and, casting his eyes around, our hero beholds three or four shapes, whom he supposes to be devils incarnate, dancing about among the tomb-stones. The beech-tree, however, is finally reached in safety, and by dint of much labor a large hole excavated among the roots. But in his agitation of mind the adventurer plants an unlucky blow of the mattock among the toes of his right foot, and

sinking down upon the grass, "falls straightway into a trance."

Upon recovering from his trance, Mr. Lee finds himself in a very singular predicament. He feels exceedingly light and buoyant, with the power of moving without exertion. He sweeps along without putting his feet to the ground, and passes among shrubs and bushes without experiencing from them any hindrance to his progress. In short, he finds himself to be nothing better than a ghost. His dead body is lying quietly beside the excavation under the beech-tree. Mr. Lee is entirely overcome with horror at his unfortunate condition, and runs, or rather flies, instinctively to the nearest hut for assistance. But the dogs, at his approach, run howling among the bushes, and the only answer he receives from the terrified family is the discharge of a blunderbuss in his face. Returning in despair to the beech-tree and the pit, he finds that his body has been taken away. Its disappearance throws him into a phrenzy, and he is about to run home and summon old Jim Jumble to the rescue, when he hears a dog yelping and whining in a peculiarly doleful manner, at some little distance down in the meadow. Coming to a place in the edge of the marsh where are some willow trees, and an old worn fence, he there discovers to his extreme surprise the body of a certain well-to-do personage, Squire Higginson. He is lying against the fence, stone dead, with his head down, and his heels resting against the rails, and looking as if, while climbing, he had fallen down and broken his neck.

Our hero pities the condition of Mr. Higginson, but being only a ghost, has no capacity to render him assistance. In this dilemma he begins to moralize

upon the condition of Mr. H. and of himself. The one has no body — the other no soul. “Why might not I” — says, very reasonably, the ghost of Mr. Lee, “Why might not I — that is to say my spirit — deprived by an unhappy accident of its natural dwelling — take possession of a tenement which there remains no spirit to claim, and thus, uniting interests together, as two feeble factions unite together in the political world, become a body possessing life, strength, and usefulness? Oh, that I might be Squire Higginson!”

The words are scarcely out of his mouth, before our hero feels himself vanishing, as it were, into the dead man’s nostrils, “into which his spirit rushes like a breeze,” and the next moment he finds himself John Hazlewood Higginson, Esquire, to all intents and purposes — kicking the fence to pieces in a lusty effort to rise upon his feet, and feeling as if he had just tumbled over it. We must here give a couple of pages in the words of the author.

Our hero finds that in assuming the body of Squire Higginson, he has invested himself with a troublesome superfluity of fat — that he has moreover a touch of the asthma — together with a whizzing, humming, and spinning in the head. One day, while gunning, these infirmities prove more than usually inconvenient, and he is upon the point of retreating to the village to get his dinner, when a crowd of men make their appearance, and setting up a great shout, begin to run towards him at full speed. Hearing them utter furious cries, and perceiving a multitude of dogs in company, he is seized with alarm and makes for the woods. He is overtaken however, charged with the murder of Sheppard Lee, and committed by Justice Parkins — a

mass of evidence appearing against him, among which that of Jim Jumble is not the least important, who swears that the prisoner came to his house, shot his bull-dog, threatened to blow his brains out, and bragged that he had "just finished Mr. Lee."

In this dilemma our hero relates the whole truth to the prosecuting attorney, and is considered a madman for his pains. The body of Sheppard Lee, however, not appearing, the prisoner is set at liberty, and takes his way to Philadelphia in the charge of some new friends appertaining to him as John Hazlewood Higginson, Esquire. He finds himself a rich brewer, living in Chestnut street, and the possessor of lands, houses, stocks, and Schuylkill coal-mines in abundance. He is troubled nevertheless with inveterate gout, and a shrew of a wife, and upon the whole he regrets his former existence as plain Sheppard Lee. Just opposite our brewer's residence is the dwelling of Mr. Periwinkle Smith, an aristocrat, wealthy or supposed to be so, although some rumors are abroad touching mortgages. He has an only daughter, and among her frequent visitors is one Isaac Dulmer Dawkins, Esq., a young dandy of the first water, tall, slim, whiskered, mustached, of pure blood, and living on his wits. This personage is often noted by our hero, upon his passage to and from the house of Mr. Smith. Suddenly his visits are discontinued — a circumstance which the brewer has soon an opportunity of explaining to his satisfaction. Going to the Schuylkill for the purpose of drowning himself, and thus putting an end at once to the gout and the assiduities of Mrs. Higginson, our hero is surprised at finding himself anticipated in his design by I. Dulmer Dawkins, Esq., who leaps into the river at the very spot selected for his own

suicide. In his exertions to get Mr. D. out, he is seized with apoplexy — reviving partially from which, he discovers a crowd attempting to resuscitate the dandy.

As I. Dulmer Dawkins, our friend finds himself beset by the duns, whom he habitually puts off by suggestions respecting a rich uncle, of whose very existence he is sadly in doubt. Having ceased to pay attention to Miss Smith, upon hearing the rumors about the mortgages, it appears that he was jilted in turn by a Miss Betty Somebody, and thus threw himself into the river in despair. His adventures are now various and spirited, but his creditors grow importunate, and vow they will be put off no longer with the old story of the rich uncle, when an uncle, and a rich one, actually appears upon the tapis. He is an old vulgar fool, and I. Dulmer Dawkins, Esquire, is in some doubts about the propriety of allowing his claim to relationship, but finally consents to introduce the old quiz, son and daughter, into fashionable society, upon considering the pecuniary advantages to himself. With this end he looks about for a house, and learns that the residence of Periwinkle Smith is for sale. Upon calling upon that gentleman however, he is treated very civilly indeed, being shown the door, after having sufficiently ascertained that the rumors about the mortgages should have been construed *in favor* of Mr. Smith — that he is a richer man than ever, and that his fair heiress is upon the point of marriage with a millionaire from Boston. He now turns his attention to his country cousin, Miss Patty Wilkins, upon finding that the uncle is to give her forty thousand dollars. At the same time, lest his designs in this quarter should fail, he makes an appointment to run off with the only

daughter of a rich shaver, one Skinner. The uncle Wilkins has but little opinion of I. Dulmer Dawkins, and will not hearken to his suit at all. In this dilemma our hero resorts to a trick. He represents his bosom friend and ally, Mr. Tickle, as a man of fashion and property, and sets him to making love to Miss Patty, in the name of himself, I. Dulmer. The uncle snaps at the bait, but the ally is instructed to proceed no farther without a definite settlement upon Miss Patty of the forty thousand dollars. The uncle makes the settlement and matters proceed to a crisis — Mr. Tickle pleasing himself with the idea of cheating his bosom friend I. Dulmer, and marrying the lady himself. A farce of very pretty finesse now ensues, which terminates in Miss Patty giving the slip to both lovers, bestowing her forty thousand dollars upon an old country sweetheart, Danny Baker, and I. Dulmer's finding, upon flying, as a dernier ressort, to the broker's daughter, that she has already run away with Sammy, Miss Patty Wilkins' clodhopper brother.

Driven to desperation by his duns, our hero escapes from them by dint of hard running and takes refuge, without asking permission, in the sick chamber of old Skinner, the shaver. Finding the old gentleman dead, he takes possession of his body forthwith, leaving his own carcass on the floor.

The adventures in the person of Abram Skinner are full of interest. We have many racy details of stock-jobbing and usury. Some passages, of a different nature, are well written. The miser has two sons, and his parsimony reduces them to fearful extremity. The one involves him deeply by forgery; and the other first robs his strong box, and afterwards endeavors to murder him.

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Horrors such as these induce our hero to seek a new existence. Filling his pockets with money, he sets off in search of a corpse of which to take possession. At length, when nearly exhausted, a drunken fellow, apparently dead, is found lying under a shed. Transferring the money from his own person to that of the mendicant, he utters the usual wish, once, twice, thrice — and in vain. Horribly disconcerted, and dreading lest his charm should have actually deserted him, he begins to kick the dead man with all the energy he has left. At this treatment the corpse suddenly becomes animated, knocks our hero down with a whiskey jug, and makes off with the contents of his pockets, being a dozen silver spoons, and four hundred dollars in money. This accident introduces us to the acquaintance of a genuine philanthropist, Mr. Zachariah Longstraw, and this gentleman being at length murdered by a worthy ex-occupant of Sing-Sing, to whom he had been especially civil, our hero reanimates his body with excessive pleasure at his good fortune. The result is that he finds himself cheated on all sides, is arrested for debt, and is entrapped by a Yankee pedlar and carried off to the South as a tit-bit for the anti-abolitionists. On the route he ascertains (by accidentally overhearing a conversation) that the missing body of Sheppard Lee, which disappeared in so mysterious a manner from the side of the pit at the Owl-Roost, was carried off by one Dr. Feuerteufel, a German, who happened to be in search of subjects for dissection, and whose assistants were the dancing spectres in the church yard, which so terribly disconcerted our hero when on his way to the beech-tree. He is finally about to be hung, when a negro who was busied in preparing the gallows, fortu-

nately breaks his neck in a fall, and our adventurer takes possession of his body forthwith.

In his character of Nigger Tom, Mr. Lee gives us some very excellent chapters upon abolition and the exciting effects of incendiary pamphlets and pictures, among our slaves in the South. This part of the narrative closes with a spirited picture of a negro insurrection, and with the hanging of Nigger Tom.

Our hero is revived, after execution, by the galvanic battery of some medical students, and having, by this sudden display of life, frightened one of them to death, he immediately possesses himself of his person. As Mr. Arthur Megrim, he passes through a variety of adventures, and fancies himself a coffee-pot, a puppy, a chicken, a loaded cannon, a clock, a hamper of crockery ware, a joint stock, a Greek Demi-God and the Emperor of France. Dr. Feuerteufel now arrives in the village with a cargo of curiosities for exhibition — among which are some Mummies. In one of them our hero recognizes the identical long missed body of Sheppard Lee.

Sheppard Lee now makes his way home into New Jersey (pursued however the whole way by the German Doctor, crying “Mein Gott! Ter Tyfel! and stop my mummy!”) and is put to bed and kindly nursed after his disaster by his Sister Prudence and her husband. It now appears (very ingenious indeed) that, harassed by his pecuniary distress, our hero fell into a melancholy derangement, and upon cutting his foot with the mattock, as related, was confined to bed, where his wonderful transmigrations were merely the result of delirium. At least this is the turn given to the whole story by Prudence. Mr. Lee, however,

although he partially believes her in the right, has still a shadow of doubt upon the subject, and has thought it better to make public his own version of the matter, with a view of letting every body decide for himself.

We must regard "Sheppard Lee," upon the whole, as a very clever, and not altogether unoriginal, *jeu d'esprit*. Its incidents are well conceived, and related with force, brevity, and a species of *directness* which is invaluable in certain cases of narration — while in others it should be avoided. The language is exceedingly unaffected and (what we regard as high praise) exceedingly well adapted to the varying subjects. Some fault may be found with the conception of the metempsychosis which is the basis of the narrative. There are two general methods of telling stories such as this. One of these methods is that adopted by the author of Sheppard Lee. He conceives his hero endowed with some idiosyncrasy beyond the common lot of human nature, and thus introduces him to a series of adventure which, under ordinary circumstances, could occur only to a plurality of persons. The chief source of interest in each narrative is, or should be, the contrasting of these varied events, in their influence upon a character *unchanging* — except as changed by the events themselves. This fruitful field of interest, however, is neglected in the novel before us, where the hero, very awkwardly, partially loses, and partially does not lose, his identity, at each transmigration. The sole object here in the various metempsychoses seem to be, merely the depicting of seven different conditions of existence, and the enforcement of the very doubtful moral that every person should remain contented with his own. But it is clear that both these points could have been more forcibly shown, without any reference

to a confused and jarring system of transmigration, by the mere narrations of seven different individuals. All deviations, especially wide ones, from nature, should be justified to the author by some specific object — the object, in the present case, might have been found, as above-mentioned, in the opportunity afforded of depicting widely-different conditions of existence actuating *one* individual.

A second peculiarity of the species of novel to which Sheppard Lee belongs, and a peculiarity which is *not* rejected by the author, is the treating the whole narrative in a jocular manner throughout (inasmuch as to say “I know I am writing nonsense, but then you must excuse me for the very reason that I know it”) or the solution of the various absurdities by means of a dream, or something similar. The latter method is adopted in the present instance — and the idea is managed with unusual ingenuity. Still — having read through the whole book, and having been worried to death with incongruities (allowing such to exist) until the concluding page, it is certainly little indemnification for our sufferings to learn that, in truth, the whole matter was a dream, and that we were very wrong in being worried about it all. The damage is done, and the apology does not remedy the grievance. For this and other reasons, we are led to prefer, in this kind of writing, the *second* general method to which we have alluded. It consists in a variety of points — principally in avoiding, as may easily be done, that *directness* of expression which we have noticed in Sheppard Lee, and thus leaving much to the imagination — in writing as if the author were firmly impressed with the truth, yet astonished at the immensity, of the wonders he relates, and for which, professedly, he neither claims nor antici-

pates credence — in minuteness of detail, especially upon points which have no immediate bearing upon the general story — this minuteness not being at variance with indirectness of expression — in short, by making use of the infinity of arts which give verisimilitude to a narration — and by leaving the result as a wonder not to be accounted for. It will be found that *bizarreries* thus conducted, are usually far more effective than those otherwise managed. The attention of the author, who does not depend upon explaining away his incredibilities, is directed to giving them the character and the luminousness of truth, and thus are brought about, unwittingly, some of the most vivid creations of human intellect. The reader, too, readily perceives and falls in with the writer's humor, and suffers himself to be borne on thereby. On the other hand what difficulty, or inconvenience, or danger can there be in leaving us uninformed of the important facts that a certain hero *did not* actually discover the elixir vitæ, *could not* really make himself invisible, and *was not* either a ghost in good earnest, or a bonâ fide Wandering Jew?

taining power to bear itself up at its present height of popularity."

We take from Volume 1, the following passage in regard to Schiller's "Don Carlos," a comparison of which drama with the "Filippo" of Alfieri, will be found in this number of the Messenger. The words we copy are those of Mrs. Hemans.

In perusing these volumes the reader will not fail to be struck with the evidence they contain of a more than ordinary *joyousness* of temperament in Mrs. Hemans. He will be astonished also in finding himself able to say that he has at length seen a book, dealing much in strictly personal memoirs, wherein no shadow of vanity or affectation could be discerned in either the Memorialist or his subject. In concluding this notice we must not forget to impress upon our friends that we have been speaking altogether of the work issued by Saunders and Otley, publishers of the highest respectability, who have come among us as strangers, and who, as such, have an undeniable claim upon our courtesy. Their edition is embellished with two fine engravings, one of the poetess's favorite residence in Wales, the other of the poetess herself. We shall beg our friends also to remember that this edition, and this exclusively, is printed for the benefit of the children of Mrs. Hemans. To Southerners, at least, we feel that nothing farther need be said.

THE POSTHUMOUS PAPERS OF THE PICKWICK CLUB :
CONTAINING A FAITHFUL RECORD OF THE PERAM-
BULATIONS, PERILS, TRAVELS, ADVENTURES, AND
SPORTING TRANSACTIONS OF THE CORRESPONDING
MEMBERS. EDITED BY "BOZ." PHILADELPHIA :
PUBLISHED BY CAREY, LEA AND BLANCHARD.

[*Southern Literary Messenger*, November, 1836.]

IN our June "Messenger," we spoke at some length of the "Watkins Tottle and other Papers," by "Boz." We then expressed a high opinion of the comic power, and of the rich imaginative conception of Mr. Dickens — an opinion which the "Pickwick Club" has fully sustained. The author possesses nearly every desirable quality in a writer of fiction, and has withal a thousand negative virtues. In his delineation of Cockney life he is rivalled only by the author of "Peter Snook," — while in efforts of a far loftier and more difficult nature, he has greatly surpassed the best of the brief tragic pieces of Bulwer, or of Warren. Just now, however, we can only express our opinion that his general powers as a prose writer are equalled by few. The work is to be continued, and hereafter we may give at some length the considerations which have led us to this belief. From the volume before us we quote the concluding portion of a vigorous sketch, entitled "A Madman's MS." The writer is supposed to be an hereditary madman, and to have labored under the disease for many years, but to have been conscious of his condition, and thus, by a strong effort of the will, to have preserved his secret from the eye of even his most intimate friends.

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ADDRESS DELIVERED BEFORE THE BALTIMORE LYCEUM, ATHENAEUM SOCIETY, WILLIAM WIRT SOCIETY, WASHINGTON LYCEUM, PHILO-NOMIAN SOCIETY AND FRANKLIN ASSOCIATION, LITERARY AND SCIENTIFIC SOCIETIES OF BALTIMORE, ON THE 4TH OF JULY, 1836. BY Z. COLLINS LEE, ESQ.

[*Southern Literary Messenger*, November, 1836.]

HAVING reason to be well aware of Mr. Lee's oratorical powers, we were not altogether at liberty to imagine his Address, merely from the deep attention with which, we are told, its *delivery* was received, the impassioned and scholar-like performance we now find it upon perusal. Few similar things indeed have afforded us any similar pleasure. We have no intention, however, of speaking more fully, at this late day, of an Address whose effect must have depended so largely upon anniversary recollections. We allude to it *now* with the sole purpose of recording, in brief, our opinion of its merits, and of quoting one of its passages without comment.

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“ASTORIA ; OR, ANECDOTES OF AN ENTERPRISE BEYOND THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS.” BY WASHINGTON IRVING. PHILADELPHIA. CAREY, LEA AND BLANCHARD.

[*Southern Literary Messenger*, January, 1837.]

MR. IRVING'S acquaintance at Montreal, many years since, with some of the principal partners of the great North-West Fur Company, was the means of interesting him deeply in the varied concerns of trappers, hunters, and Indians, and in all the adventurous details connected with the commerce in peltries. Not long after his return from his late tour to the prairies, he held a conversation with his friend, Mr. John Jacob Astor, of New York, in relation to an enterprize set on foot, and conducted by that gentleman, about the year 1812, — an enterprize having for its object a participation, on the most extensive scale, in the fur trade carried on with the Indians in all the western and northwestern regions of North America. Finding Mr. I. fully alive to the exciting interest of this subject, Mr. Astor was induced to express a regret that the true nature and extent of the enterprize, together with its great national character and importance, had never been generally comprehended ; and a wish that Mr. Irving would undertake to give an account of it. To this he consented. All the papers relative to the matter were submitted to his inspection ; and the volumes now before us (two well-sized octavos) are the result. The work has been accomplished in a masterly manner — the modesty of the title affording no indication of the

fulness, comprehensiveness, and beauty, with which a long and entangled series of detail, collected, necessarily, from a mass of vague and imperfect data, has been wrought into completeness and unity.

Supposing our readers acquainted with the main features of the original fur trade in America, we shall not follow Mr. Irving in his vivid account of the primitive French Canadian Merchant, his jovial establishments and dependents — of the licensed traders, missionaries, *voyageurs*, and *coureurs des bois* — of the British Canadian Fur Merchant — of the rise of the great Company of the “North-West,” its constitution and internal trade; its parliamentary hall and banquetting room; its boating, its huntings, its wassailings, and other magnificent feudal doings in the wilderness. It was the British Mackinaw Company, we presume, — (a Company established in rivalry of the “North-West,”) the *scene* of whose main operations first aroused the attention of our government. Its chief factory was established at Michilimackinac, and sent forth its pirogues, by Green Bay, Fox River, and the Wisconsin, to the Mississippi, and thence to all its tributary streams — in this way hoping to monopolize the trade with all the Indian tribes on the southern and western waters of our own territory, as the “North-West” had monopolized it along the waters of the North. Of course we now began to view with a jealous eye, and to make exertions for counteracting the influence hourly acquired over our own aborigines by these immense combinations of foreigners. In 1796, the United States sent out agents to establish rival trading houses on the frontier, and thus, by supplying the wants of the Indians, to link their interests with ours, and to divert the trade, if possible, into national

channels. The enterprize failed — being, we suppose, inefficiently conducted and supported ; and the design was never afterwards attempted until by the individual means and energy of Mr. Astor.

John Jacob Astor was born in Waldorf, a German village, near Heidelberg, on the banks of the Rhine. While yet a youth, he foresaw that he would arrive at great wealth, and, leaving home, took his way, alone, to London, where he found himself at the close of the American Revolution. An elder brother being in the United States, he followed him there. In January, 1784, he arrived in Hampton Roads, with some little merchandize suited to the American market. On the passage he had become acquainted with a countryman of his, a furrier, from whom he derived much information in regard to furs, and the manner of conducting the trade. Subsequently he accompanied this gentleman to New York, and, by his advice, invested the proceeds of his merchandize in peltries. With these he sailed to London, and having disposed of his adventure advantageously, he returned the same year (1784) to New York, with a view of settling in the United States, and prosecuting the business thus commenced. Mr. Astor's beginnings in this way were necessarily small — but his perseverance was indomitable, his integrity unimpeachable, and his economy of the most rigid kind. “To these,” says Mr. Irving, “were added an aspiring spirit, that always looked upward ; a genius bold, fertile, and expansive ; a sagacity quick to grasp and convert every circumstance to its advantage, and a singular and never wavering confidence of signal success.” These opinions are more than re-echoed by the whole crowd of Mr. Astor's numerous acquaintances and friends, and are most

strongly insisted upon by those who have the pleasure of knowing him best.

In the United States, the fur trade was not yet sufficiently organized to form a regular line of business. Mr. A. made annual visits to Montreal for the purpose of buying peltries ; and, as no direct trade was permitted from Canada to any country but England, he shipped them, when bought, immediately to London. This difficulty being removed, however, by the treaty of 1795, he made a contract for furs with the North-West Company, and imported them from Montreal into the United States—thence shipping a portion to different parts of Europe, as well as to the principal market in China.

By the treaty just spoken of, the British possessions on our side of the Lakes were given up, and an opening made for the American fur-trader on the confines of Canada, and within the territories of the United States. Here, Mr. Astor, about the year 1807, adventured largely on his own account ; his increased capital now placing him among the chief of American merchants. The influence of the Mackinaw Company, however, proved too much for him, and he was induced to consider the means of entering into successful competition. He was aware of the wish of the Government to concentrate the fur-trade within its boundaries in the hands of its own citizens ; and he now offered, if national aid or protection should be afforded, “to turn the whole of the trade into American channels.” He was invited to unfold his plans, and they were warmly approved, but, we believe, little more. The countenance of the Government was nevertheless of much importance, and, in 1809, he procured from the legislature of New York, a charter,

incorporating a Company, under the name of the "American Fur Company," with a capital of one million of dollars, and the privilege of increasing it to two. He himself constituted the Company, and furnished the capital. The board of directors was merely nominal, and the whole business was conducted with his own resources, and according to his own will.

We here pass over Mr. Irving's lucid, although brief account of the fur-trade in the Pacific, of Russian and American enterprize on the North-western coast, and of the discovery by Captain Gray, in 1792, of the mouth of the river Columbia. He proceeds to speak of Captain Jonathan Carver, of the British provincial army. In 1763, shortly after the acquisition of the Canadas by Great Britain, this gentleman projected a journey across the continent, between the forty-third and forty-sixth degrees of northern latitude, to the shores of the Pacific. His objects were "to ascertain the breadth of the continent at its broadest part, and to determine on some place on the shores of the Pacific, where Government might establish a post to facilitate the discovery of a north-west passage, or a communication between Hudson's Bay and the Pacific Ocean." He failed twice in individual attempts to accomplish this journey. In 1774, Richard Whitworth, a member of Parliament, came into this scheme of Captain Carver's. These two gentlemen determined to take with them fifty or sixty men, artificers and mariners, to proceed up one of the branches of the Missouri, find the source of the Oregon, (the Columbia,) and sail down the river to its mouth. Here a fort was to be erected, and the vessels built necessary to carry into execution their purposed discoveries by sea. The British Government sanctioned the plan, and

every thing was ready for the undertaking, when the American Revolution prevented it.

The expedition of Sir Alexander Mackenzie is well known. In 1793, he crossed the continent, and reached the Pacific Ocean in latitude $52^{\circ} 20' 48''$. In latitude $52^{\circ} 30'$ he partially descended a river flowing to the South, and which he erroneously supposed to be the Columbia. Some years afterwards he published an account of his journey, and suggested the policy of opening an intercourse between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, and forming regular establishments "through the interior and at both extremes, as well as along the coasts and islands." Thus, he thought, the entire command of the fur trade of North America might be obtained from latitude 48° north to the pole, excepting that portion held by the Russians. As to the "American adventurers" along the coast, he spoke of them as entitled to but little consideration. "They would instantly disappear," he said, "before a well regulated trade." Owing to the jealousy existing between the Hudson's Bay and North-west Company, this idea of Sir Alexander Mackenzie's was never carried into execution.

The successful attempt of Messieurs Lewis and Clarke was accomplished, it will be remembered, in 1804. Their course was that proposed by Captain Carver in 1774. They passed up the Missouri to its head waters, crossed the Rocky Mountains, discovered the source of the Columbia, and followed that river down to its mouth. Here they spent the winter, and retraced their steps in the spring. Their reports declared it practicable to establish a line of communication across the continent, and first inspired Mr. Astor with the design of "grasping with his individual hands this

great enterprize, which, for years, had been dubiously yet desirously contemplated by powerful associations and maternal governments."

His scheme was gradually matured. Its main features were as follows. A line of trading posts was to be established along the Missouri and Columbia, to the mouth of the latter, where was to be founded the chief mart. On all the tributary streams throughout this immense route were to be situated inferior posts trading directly with the Indians for their peltries. All these posts would draw upon the mart at the Columbia for their supplies of goods, and would send thither the furs collected. At this latter place also, were to be built and fitted out coasting vessels, for the purpose of trading along the North-west coast, returning with the proceeds of their voyages to the same general rendezvous. In this manner the whole Indian trade, both of the coast and the interior, would converge to one point. To this point, in continuation of his plan, Mr. Astor proposed to despatch, every year, a ship with the necessary supplies. She would receive the peltries collected, carry them to Canton, there invest the proceeds in merchandize, and return to New York.

Another point was also to be attended to. In coasting to the North-west, the ship would be brought into contact with the Russian Fur Company's establishments in that quarter; and as a rivalry might ensue, it was politic to conciliate the good will of that body. It depended chiefly for its supplies upon transient trading vessels from the United States. The owners of these vessels, having nothing beyond their individual interests to consult, made no scruple of furnishing the natives with fire arms, and were thus productive of much injury. To this effect the Russian government had

remonstrated with the United States, urging to have the traffic in arms prohibited — but, no municipal law being infringed, our government could not interfere. Still, it was anxious not to offend Russia, and applied to Mr. Astor for information as to the means of remedying the evil, knowing him to be well versed in all the concerns of the trade in question. This application suggested to him the idea of paying a regular visit to the Russian settlements with his annual ship. Thus, being kept regularly in supplies, they would be independent of the casual traders, who would, consequently, be excluded from the coast. This whole scheme Mr. Astor communicated to President Jefferson, soliciting the countenance of Government. The cabinet “joined in warm approbation of the plan, and held out assurance of every protection that could, consistently with general policy, be afforded.”

In speaking of the motives which actuated Mr. Astor in an enterprize so extensive, Mr. Irving, we are willing to believe, has done that high-minded gentleman no more than the simplest species of justice. “He was already,” says our author, “wealthy beyond the ordinary desires of man, but he now aspired to that honorable fame which is awarded to men of similar scope of mind, who by their great commercial enterprizes, have enriched nations, peopled wildernesses, and extended the bounds of empire. He considered his projected establishment at the mouth of the Columbia, as the emporium to an immense commerce ; as a colony that would form the germ of a wide civilization ; that would, in fact, carry the American population across the Rocky Mountains, and spread it along the shores of the Pacific, as it already animated the shores of the Atlantic.”

A few words in relation to the North-west company. This body, following out in part the suggestion of Sir Alexander Mackenzie, had already established a few trading posts on the coast of the Pacific, in a region lying about two degrees north of the Columbia — thus throwing itself between the Russian and American territories. They would contend with Mr. Astor at an immense disadvantage, of course. They had no good post for the receipt of supplies by sea ; and must get them with great risk, trouble and expense, over land. Their peltries also would have to be taken home the same way — for they were not at liberty to interfere with the East India company's monopoly, by shipping them directly to China. Mr. Astor would therefore greatly undersell them in that, the principal market. Still, as any competition would prove detrimental to both parties, Mr. A. made known his plans to the North-west company, proposing to interest them one third in his undertaking. The British company, however, had several reasons for declining the proposition — not the least forcible of which we presume, was their secret intention to push on a party forthwith, and forestall their rival in establishing a settlement at the mouth of the Columbia.

In the meantime Mr. Astor did not remain idle. His first care was to procure proper coadjutors, and he was induced to seek them principally from among such clerks of the North-west company, as were dissatisfied with their situation in that body — having served out their probationary term, and being still, through want of influence, without a prospect of speedy promotion. From among these (generally men of capacity and experience in their particular business), Mr. A. obtained the services of Mr. Alexander M'Kay (who

had accompanied Sir Alexander Mackenzie in both of his expeditions), Mr. Donald M'Kenzie, and Mr. Duncan M'Dougal. Mr. Wilson Price Hunt, a native citizen of New Jersey, and a gentleman of great worth, was afterwards selected by Mr. Astor as his chief agent, and as the representative of himself at the contemplated establishment. In June 1810, "articles of agreement were entered into between Mr. Astor and these four gentlemen, acting for themselves, and for the several persons who had already agreed to become, or should thereafter become, associated under the firm of "*The Pacific Fur Company*." This agreement stipulated that Mr. A. was to be the head of the company, to manage its affairs at New York, and to furnish every thing requisite for the enterprize at first cost and charges, provided an advance of more than four hundred thousand dollars should not at any time be involved. The stock was to consist of a hundred shares, Mr. Astor taking fifty, the rest being divided among the other partners and their associates. A general meeting was to be held annually at Columbia river, where absent members might vote by proxy. The association was to continue twenty years—but might be dissolved within the first five years, if found unprofitable. For these five years Mr. A. agreed to bear all the loss that might be incurred. An agent, appointed for a like term, was to reside at the main establishment, and Mr. Hunt was the person first selected.

Mr. Astor determined to begin his enterprize with two expeditions—one by sea, the other by land. The former was to carry out every thing necessary for the establishment of a fortified post at the mouth of the Columbia. The latter, under the conduct of Mr. Hunt, was to proceed up the Missouri and across the

Rocky Mountains to the same point. In the course of this overland journey, the most practicable line of communication would be explored, and the best situations noted for the location of trading rendezvous. Following Mr. Irving in our brief summary of his narrative, we will now give some account of the first of these expeditions.

A ship was provided called the *Tonquin*, of two hundred and ninety tons, with ten guns, and twenty men. Lieutenant Jonathan Thorn of the United States navy, being on leave of absence, received the command. He was a man of courage, and had distinguished himself in the Tripolitan war. Four of the partners went in the ship — M'Kay and M'Dougal, of whom we have already spoken, and Messieurs David and Robert Stuart, new associates in the firm. M'Dougal was empowered to act as the proxy of Mr. Astor in the absence of Mr. Hunt. Twelve clerks were also of the party. These were bound to the service of the company for five years, and were to receive one hundred dollars a year, payable at the expiration of the term, with an annual equipment of clothing to the amount of forty dollars. By promises of future promotion, their interests were identified with those of Mr. Astor. Thirteen Canadian voyageurs, and several artisans, completed the ship's company. On the 8th of September, 1810, the *Tonquin* put to sea. Of her voyage to the mouth of the Columbia, Mr. Irving has given a somewhat ludicrous account. Thorn, the stern, straight-forward officer of the navy, having few ideas beyond those of duty and discipline, and looking with supreme contempt upon the motley "lubbers" who formed the greater part of his company, is painted with the easy yet spirited pencil of an artist indeed; while

M'Dougal, the shrewd Scotch partner, bustling, yet pompous, and impressed with lofty notions of his own importance as proxy for Mr. Astor, is made as supremely ridiculous as possible, with as little apparent effort as can well be imagined ; — the portraits, however, carry upon their faces the evidence of their own authenticity. The voyage is prosecuted amid a series of petty quarrels, and cross purposes, between the captain and his crew, and, occasionally, between Mr. M'Kay and Mr. M'Dougal. The contests between the two latter gentlemen were brief, it appears, although violent. "Within fifteen minutes," says Captain Thorn in a letter to Mr. Astor, "they would be caressing each other like children." The *Tonquin* doubled Cape Horn on Christmas day, arrived at Owhyhee on the eleventh of February, took on board fresh provisions, sailed again with twelve Sandwich islanders on the 28th, and on the 22d of March arrived at the mouth of the *Columbia*. In seeking a passage across the bar, a boat and nine men were lost among the breakers. On the way from Owhyhee a violent storm occurred ; and the bickerings still continued between the partners and the captain — the latter, indeed, grievously suspecting the former of a design to depose him.

The *Columbia*, for about forty miles from its mouth is, strictly speaking, an estuary, varying in breadth from three to seven miles, and indented by deep bays. Shoals and other obstructions render the navigation dangerous. Leaving this broad portion of the stream in the progress upwards, we find the mouth of the river proper — which is about half a mile wide. The entrance to the estuary from sea is bounded on the south by a long, low, and sandy beach stretching into the ocean, and

called Point Adams. On the northern side of the frith is Cape Disappointment, a steep promontory. Immediately east of this cape is Baker's Bay, and within this the Tonquin came to anchor.

Jealousies still continued between the captain and the worthy M'Dougal, who could come to no agreement in regard to the proper location for the contemplated establishment. On April the fifth, without troubling himself farther with the opinions of his coadjutors, Mr. Thorn landed in Baker's Bay, and began operations. At this summary proceeding, the partners were, of course, in high dudgeon, and an open quarrel seemed likely to ensue, to the serious detriment of the enterprise. These difficulties, however, were at length arranged, and finally on the 12th of April, a settlement was commenced at a point of land called Point George, on the southern shore of the frith. Here was a good harbor, where vessels of two hundred tons might anchor within fifty yards of the shore. In honor of the chief partner, the new post received the title of *Astoria*. After much delay, the portion of the cargo destined for the post was landed, and the Tonquin left free to proceed on her voyage. She was to coast to the north, to trade for peltries at the different harbors, and to touch at Astoria on her return in the autumn. Mr. M'Kay went in her as supercargo, and a Mr. Lewis as ship's clerk. On the morning of the 5th of June she stood out to sea, the whole number of persons on board amounting to three and twenty. In one of the outer bays Captain Thorn procured the services of an Indian named Lamazee, who had already made two voyages along the coast, and who agreed to accompany him as interpreter. In a few days the ship arrived at Vancouver's island, and came to anchor in the harbor

of Neweetee, much against the advice of the Indian, who warned Captain Thorn of the perfidious character of the natives. The result was the merciless butchery of the whole crew, with the exception of the interpreter and Mr. Lewis, the ship's clerk. The latter, finding himself mortally wounded and without companions, blew up the ship and perished with more than a hundred of the enemy. Lamazee, getting among the Indians, escaped, and was the means of bearing the news of the disaster to Astoria. In relating at length the thrilling details of this catastrophe, Mr. Irving takes occasion to comment on the headstrong, although brave and strictly honorable character of Lieutenant Thorn. The danger and folly, on the part of agents, in disobeying the matured instructions of those who deliberately plan extensive enterprizes such as that of Mr. Astor, is also justly and forcibly shown. The misfortune here spoken of, arose, altogether, from a disregard of Mr. A.'s often repeated advice — to admit but few Indians on board the Tonquin at one time. Her loss was a serious blow to the infant establishment at Astoria. To this post let us now return.

The natives inhabiting the borders of the estuary were divided into four tribes, of which the Chinooks were the principal. Comcomly, a one-eyed Indian, was their chief. These tribes resembled each other in nearly every respect, and were, no doubt, of a common stock. They live chiefly by fishing — the Columbia and its tributary streams abounding in fine salmon, and a variety of other fish. A trade in peltries, but to no great amount, was immediately commenced and carried on. Much disquiet was occasioned at the post by a rumor among the Indians that thirty white men had appeared on the banks of the Columbia, and were build-

ing houses at the second rapids. It was feared that these were an advance party of the North-west company endeavoring to seize upon the upper parts of the river, and thus forestall Mr. Astor in the trade of the surrounding country. Bloody feuds in this case might be anticipated, such as had prevailed between rival companies in former times. The intelligence of the Indians proved true — the “North-west” had erected a trading house on the Spokan river, which falls into the north branch of the Columbia. The Astorians could do little to oppose them in their present reduced state as to numbers. It was resolved, however, to advance a counter-check to the post on the Spokan, and Mr. David Stuart prepared to set out for this purpose with eight men and a small assortment of goods. On the fifteenth of July when this expedition was about starting, a canoe, manned with nine white men, and bearing the British flag, entered the harbor. They proved to be the party dispatched by the rival company to anticipate Mr. Astor in the settlement at the mouth of the river. Mr. David Thompson, their leader, announced himself as a partner of the “North-west” — but otherwise gave a very peaceable account of himself. It appears, however, from information subsequently derived from other sources, that he had hurried with a desperate haste across the mountains, calling at all the Indian villages in his march, presenting them with British flags, and “proclaiming formally that he took possession of the country for the North-west company, and in the name of the king of Great Britain.” His plan was defeated, it seems, by the desertion of a great portion of his followers, and it was thought probable that he now merely descended the river with a view of reconnoitering. M'Dougal treated the gentlemen

with great kindness, and supplied them with goods and provisions for their journey back across the mountains — this much against the wishes of Mr. David Stuart, “who did not think the object of their visit entitled them to any favor.” A letter for Mr. Astor was entrusted to Thompson.

On the twenty-third of July, the party for the region of the Spokan set out, and after a voyage of much interest, succeeded in establishing the first interior trading post of the company. It was situated on a point of land about three miles long and two broad, formed by the junction of the Oakinagan with the Columbia. In the meantime the Indians near Astoria began to evince a hostile disposition, and a reason for this altered demeanor was soon after found in the report of the loss of the Tonquin. Early in August the settlers received intelligence of her fate. They now found themselves in a perilous situation, a mere handful of men, on a savage coast, and surrounded by barbarous enemies. From their dilemma they were relieved, for the present, by the ingenuity of M'Dougal. The natives had a great dread of the small-pox, which had appeared among them a few years before, sweeping off entire tribes. They believed it an evil either inflicted upon them by the Great Spirit, or brought among them by the white men. Seizing upon this latter idea, M'Dougal assembled several of the chieftains whom he believed to be inimical, and informing them that he had heard of the treachery of their northern brethren in regard to the Tonquin, produced from his pocket a small bottle. “The white men among you,” said he, “are few in number, it is true, but they are mighty in medicine. See here! In this bottle I hold the small-pox safely corked up; I have but to draw the

cork and let loose the pestilence, to sweep man, woman and child from the face of the earth !” The chiefs were dismayed. They represented to the “Great Small-Pox Chief” that they were the firmest friends of the white men, that they had nothing to do with the villains who murdered the crew of the Tonquin, and that it would be unjust, in uncorking the bottle, to destroy the innocent with the guilty. M'Dougal was convinced. He promised not to uncork it until some overt act should compel him to do so. In this manner tranquillity was restored to the settlement. A large house was now built, and the frame of a schooner put together. She was named the Dolly, and was the first American vessel launched on the coast. But our limits will not permit us to follow too minutely the details of the enterprize. The adventurers kept up their spirits, sending out occasional foraging parties in the Dolly, and looking forward to the arrival of Mr. Hunt. So wore away the year 1811 at the little post of Astoria. We now come to speak of the expedition by land.

This, it will be remembered, was to be conducted by Mr. Wilson Price Hunt, a native of New Jersey. He is represented as scrupulously upright, of amiable disposition, and agreeable manners. He had never been in the heart of the wilderness, but having been for some time engaged in commerce at St. Louis, furnishing Indian traders with goods, he had acquired much knowledge of the trade at second hand. Mr. Donald M'Kenzie, another partner, was associated with him. He had been ten years in the interior, in the service of the North-west Company, and had much practical experience in all Indian concerns. In July 1810, the two gentlemen repaired to Montreal,

where everything requisite to the expedition could be procured. Here they met with many difficulties — some of which were thrown in their way by their rivals. Having succeeded, however, in laying in a supply of ammunition, provisions, and Indian goods, they embarked all on board a large boat, and with a very inefficient crew, the best to be procured, took their departure from St. Ann's, near the extremity of the island of Montreal. Their course lay up the Ottawa, and along a range of small lakes and rivers. On the twenty-second of July, they arrived at Mackinaw, situated on Mackinaw island, at the confluence of Lakes Huron and Michigan. Here it was necessary to remain some time to complete the assortment of Indian goods, and engage more voyageurs. While waiting to accomplish these objects, Mr. Hunt was joined by Mr. Ramsay Crooks, a gentleman whom he had invited, by letter, to engage as a partner in the expedition. He was a native of Scotland, had served under the North-west Company, and been engaged in private trading adventures among the various tribes of the Missouri. Mr. Crooks represented, in forcible terms, the dangers to be apprehended from the Indians — especially the Blackfeet and Sioux — and it was agreed to increase the number of the party to sixty upon arriving at St. Louis. Thirty was its strength upon leaving Mackinaw. This occurred on the twelfth of August. The expedition pursued the usual route of the fur-trader — by Green bay, Fox and Wisconsin rivers, to Prairie du Chien, and thence down the Mississippi to St. Louis, where they landed on the third of September. Here, Mr. Hunt met with some opposition from an association called the Missouri Fur Company, and especially from its leading partner, a Mr. Manuel

Lisa. This company had a capital of about forty thousand dollars, and employed about two hundred and fifty men. Its object was to establish posts along the upper part of the river and monopolize the trade. Mr. H. proceeded to strengthen himself against competition. He secured to Mr. Astor the services of Mr. Joseph Miller. This gentleman had been an officer of the United States' Army, but had resigned on being refused a furlough, and taken to trading with the Indians. He joined the association as a partner ; and, on account of his experience and general acquirements, Mr. Hunt considered him a valuable coadjutor. Several boatmen and hunters were also now enlisted, but not until after a delay of several weeks. This delay, and the previous difficulties at Montreal and Mackinaw, had thrown Mr. H. much behind his original calculations, so that he found it would be impossible to effect his voyage up the Missouri during the present season. There was every likelihood that the river would be closed before the party could reach its upper waters. To winter, however, at St. Louis would be expensive. Mr. H. therefore, determined to push up on his way as far as possible, to some point where game might be found in abundance, and there take up his quarters until spring. On the twenty-first of October he set out. The party were distributed in three boats — two large Schenectady barges and a keel boat. By the sixteenth of November they reached the mouth of the Nodowa, a distance of four hundred and fifty miles, where they set up their winter quarters. Here, Mr. Robert M'Lellan, at the invitation of Mr. Hunt, joined the association as a partner. He was a man of vigorous frame, of restless and imperious temper, and had distinguished himself

as a partisan under General Wayne. John Day also joined the company at this place — a tall and athletic hunter from the backwoods of Virginia. Leaving the main body at Nodowa, Mr. Hunt now returned to St. Louis for a reinforcement. He was again impeded by the machinations of the Missouri Fur Company, but finally succeeded in enlisting one hunter, some voyageurs, and a Sioux interpreter, Pierre Dorion. With these, after much difficulty, he got back to the encampment on the seventeenth of April. Soon after this period the voyage up the river was resumed. The party now consisted of nearly sixty persons — five partners, Hunt, Crooks, M'Kenzie, Miller, and M'Lellan; one clerk, John Reed; forty Canadian voyageurs; and several hunters. They embarked in four boats, one of which, of a large size, mounted a swivel and two howitzers.

We do not intend, of course, to proceed with our travellers throughout the vast series of adventure encountered in their passage through the wilderness. To the curious in these particulars we recommend the book itself. No details more intensely exciting are to be found in any work of travels within our knowledge. At times full of life and enjoying the whole luxury to be found in the career of the hunter — at times suffering every extremity of fatigue, hunger, thirst, anxiety, terror, and despair — Mr. Hunt still persisted in his journey, and finally brought it to a successful termination. A bare outline of the route pursued is all we can attempt.

Proceeding up the river, our party arrived, on the twenty-eighth of April, at the mouth of the Nebraska, or Platte, the largest tributary of the Missouri, and about six hundred miles above its junction with the

Mississippi. They now halted for two days, to supply themselves with oars and poles from the tough wood of the ash, which is not to be found higher up the river. Upon the second of May, two of the hunters insisted upon abandoning the expedition, and returning to St. Louis. On the tenth, the party reached the Omaha village, and encamped in its vicinity. This village is about eight hundred and thirty miles above St. Louis, and on the west bank of the stream. Three men here deserted, but their place was luckily supplied by three others, who were prevailed upon, by liberal promises, to enlist. On the fifteenth, Mr. Hunt left Omaha, and proceeded. Not long afterwards, a canoe was descried navigated by two white men. They proved to be two adventurers who, for some years past, had been hunting and trapping near the head of the Missouri. Their names were Jones and Carson. They were now on their way to St. Louis, but readily abandoned their voyage, and turned their faces again toward the Rocky Mountains. On the twenty-third Mr. Hunt received, by a special messenger, a letter from Mr. Manuel Lisa, the leading partner of the Missouri Fur Company, and the gentleman who rendered him so many disservices at St. Louis. He had left that place, with a large party, three weeks after Mr. H., and, having heard rumors of hostile intentions on the part of the Sioux, a much dreaded tribe of Indians, made great exertions to overtake him, that they might pass through the dangerous part of the river together. Mr. H., however, was justly suspicious of the Spaniard, and pushed on. At the village of the Poncas, about a league south of the river Quicourt, he stopped only long enough to procure a supply of dried buffalo meat. On the morning

of the twenty-fifth, it was discovered that Jones and Carson had deserted. They were pursued, but in vain. The next day three white men were observed, in two canoes, descending the river. They proved to be three Kentucky hunters — Edward Robinson, John Hoback, and Jacob Rizner. They also had passed several years in the upper wilderness, and were now on their way home, but willingly turned back with the expedition. Information derived from these recruits induced Mr. Hunt to alter his route. Hitherto he had intended to follow the course pursued by Messieurs Lewis and Clarke — ascending the Missouri to its forks, and thence, by land, across the mountains. He was informed, however, that, in so doing, he would have to pass through the country of the Black-feet, a savage tribe of Indians, exasperated against the whites, on account of the death of one of their men by the hands of Captain Lewis. Robinson advised a more southerly route. This would carry them over the mountains about where the head waters of the Platte and the Yellowstone take their rise, a much more practicable pass than that of Lewis and Clarke. To this counsel Mr. Hunt agreed, and resolved to leave the Missouri at the village of the Arickaras, at which they would arrive in a few days. On the first of June, they reached “the great bend” of the river, which here winds for about thirty miles round a circular peninsula, the neck of which is not above two thousand yards across. On the morning of June the third, the party were overtaken by Lisa, much to their dissatisfaction. The meeting was, of course, far from cordial, but an outward appearance of civility was maintained for two days. On the third, a quarrel took place, which was near terminating seriously. It

was, however, partially adjusted, and the rival parties coasted along opposite sides of the river, in sight of each other. On the twelfth of June, they reached the village of the Arickaras, between the forty-sixth and forty-seventh parallels of north latitude, and about fourteen hundred and thirty miles above the mouth of the Missouri. In accomplishing thus much of his journey, Mr. Hunt had not failed to meet with a crowd of difficulties, at which we have not even hinted. He was frequently in extreme peril from large bodies of the Sioux, and, at one time, it was a mere accident alone which prevented the massacre of the whole party.

At the Arickara village our adventurers were to abandon their boats, and proceed westward across the wilderness. Horses were to be purchased from the Indians; who could not, however, furnish them in sufficient numbers. In this dilemma, Lisa offered to purchase the boats, now no longer of use, and to pay for them in horses, to be obtained at a fort belonging to the Missouri Fur Company, and situated at the Mandan villages, about a hundred and fifty miles further up the river. A bargain was made, and Messieurs Lisa and Crooks went for the horses, returning with them in about a fortnight. At the Arickara village, if we understand, Mr. Hunt engaged the services of one Edward Rose. He enlisted as interpreter when the expedition should reach the country of the Upsarokas or Crow Indians, among whom he had formerly resided. On the eighteenth of July the party took up their line of march. They were still insufficiently provided with horses. The cavalcade consisted of eighty-two, most of them heavily laden with Indian goods, beaver traps, ammunition,

and provisions. Each of the partners was mounted. As they took leave of Arickara, the veterans of Lisa's company, as well as Lisa himself, predicted the total destruction of our adventurers amid the innumerable perils of the wilderness.

To avoid the Blackfeet Indians, a ferocious and implacable tribe of which we have before spoken, the party kept a southwestern direction. This route took them across some of the tributary streams of the Missouri, and through immense prairies bounded only by the horizon. Their progress was at first slow, and, Mr. Crooks falling sick, it was necessary to make a litter for him between two horses. On the twenty-third of the month, they encamped on the banks of a little stream nicknamed Big River, where they remained several days, meeting with a variety of adventures. Among other things they were enabled to complete their supply of horses from a band of the Cheyenne Indians. On the sixth of August the journey was resumed, and they soon left the hostile region of the Sioux behind them. About this period a plot was discovered on the part of the interpreter, Edward Rose. This villain had been tampering with the men, and proposed, upon arriving among his old acquaintances the Crows, to desert to the savages with as much booty as could be carried off. The matter was adjusted, however, and Mr. Rose, through the ingenuity of Mr. Hunt, quietly dismissed. On the thirteenth, Mr. H. varied his course to the westward, a route which soon brought him to a fork of the Little Missouri, and upon the skirts of the Black Mountains. These are an extensive chain, lying about a hundred miles east of the Rocky Mountains, stretching northeasterly from the south fork of the river Platte to the

great north bend of the Missouri, and dividing the waters of the Missouri from those of the Mississippi and Arkansas. The travellers here supposed themselves to be about two hundred and fifty miles from the village of the Arickaras. Their more serious troubles now commenced. Hunger and thirst, with the minor difficulties of grizzly bears, beset them at every turn, as they attempted to force a passage through the rugged barriers in their path. At length they emerged upon a stream of clear water, one of the forks of Powder river, and once more beheld wide meadows and plenty of buffalo. They ascended this stream about eighteen miles, directing their march towards a lofty mountain which had been in sight since the seventeenth. They reached the base of this mountain, which proved to be a spur of the Rocky chain, on the thirtieth, having now come about four hundred miles since leaving Arickara.

For one or two days they endeavored in vain to find a defile in the mountains. On the third of September they made an attempt to force a passage to the westward, but soon become entangled among rocks and precipices, which set all their efforts at defiance. They were now too in the region of the terrible Upsarokas, and encountered them at every step. They met also with friendly bands of Shoshonies and Flat-heads. After a thousand troubles, they made some way upon their journey. On the ninth they reached Wind river, a stream which gives its name to a range of mountains consisting of three parallel chains, eighty miles long and about twenty-five broad. "One of its peaks," says our author, "is probably fifteen thousand feet above the level of the sea." For five days Mr. Hunt followed up the course of Wind river, crossing and recrossing it. He had been assured by

the three hunters who advised him to strike through the wilderness, that by going on up the river, and crossing a single mountain ridge, he would come upon the head waters of the Columbia. The scarcity of game, however, determined him to pursue a different course. In the course of the day after coming to this resolve, they perceived three mountain peaks, white with snow, and which were recognized by the hunters as rising just above a fork of the Columbia. These peaks were named the Pilot Knobs by Mr. Hunt. The travellers continued their course for about forty miles to the south-west, and at length found a river flowing to the west. This proved to be a branch of the Colorado. They followed its current for fifteen miles. On the eighteenth, abandoning its main course, they took a north-westerly direction for eight miles, and reached one of its little tributaries, issuing from the bosom of the mountains, and running through green meadows abounding in buffalo. Here they encamped for several days, a little repose being necessary for both men and horses. On the twenty-fourth the journey was resumed. Fifteen miles brought them to a stream about fifty feet wide, which was recognized as one of the head waters of the Columbia. They kept along it for two days, during which it gradually swelled into a river of some size. At length it was joined by another current, and both united swept off in an unimpeded stream, which from its rapidity and turbulence had received the appellation of Mad river. Down this they anticipated an uninterrupted voyage, in canoes, to the point of their ultimate destination — but their hopes were very far from being realized.

The partners held a consultation. The three hunters who had hitherto acted as guides, knew nothing

of the region to the west of the Rocky Mountains. It was doubtful whether Mad river could be navigated, and they could hardly resolve to abandon their horses upon an uncertainty. The vote, nevertheless, was for embarkation, and they proceeded to build the necessary vessels. In the meantime, Mr. Hunt, having now reached the head waters of the Columbia, reputed to abound in beaver, turned his thoughts to the main object of the expedition. Four men, Alexander Carson, Louis St. Michel, Pierre Detayé, and Pierre Delaunay, were detached from the expedition, to remain and trap beaver by themselves in the wilderness. Having collected a sufficient quantity of peltries, they were to bring them to the dépôt at the mouth of the Columbia, or to some intermediate post to be established by the company. These trappers had just departed, when two Snake Indians wandered into the camp, and declared the river to be unnavigable. Scouts sent out by Mr. Hunt finally confirmed this report. On the fourth of October, therefore, the encampment was broken up, and the party proceeded to search for a post in possession of the Missouri Fur Company, and said to be somewhere in the neighborhood, upon the banks of another branch of the Columbia. This post they found without much difficulty. It was deserted — and our travellers gladly took possession of the rude buildings. The stream here found was upwards of a hundred yards wide. Canoes were constructed with all despatch. In the meantime another detachment of trappers was cast loose in the wilderness. These were Robinson, Reznor, Hoback, Carr, and Mr. Joseph Miller. This latter, it will be remembered, was one of the partners — he threw up his share in the expedition, however, for a life of more perilous

adventure. On the eighteenth of the month (October) fifteen canoes being completed, the voyagers embarked, leaving their horses in charge of the two Snake Indians, who were still in company.

In the course of the day the party arrived at the junction of the stream upon which they floated, with Mad river. Here Snake river commences — the scene of a thousand disasters. After proceeding about four hundred miles, by means of frequent portages, and beset with innumerable difficulties of every kind, the adventurers were brought to a halt by a series of frightful cataracts, raging, as far as the eye could reach, between stupendous ramparts of black rock, rising more than two hundred feet perpendicularly. This place, they called “The Caldron Linn.” Here Antoine Clappine, one of the voyageurs, perished amid the whirlpools, three of the canoes stuck immoveably among the rocks, and one was swept away with all the weapons and effects of four of the boatmen.

The situation of the party was now lamentable indeed — in the heart of an unknown wilderness, at a loss what route to take, ignorant of their distance from the place of their destination, and with no human being near them from whom counsel might be taken. Their stock of provisions was reduced to five days’ allowance, and famine stared them in the face. It was therefore more perilous to keep together than to separate. The goods and provisions, except a small supply for each man, were concealed in *caches* (holes dug in the earth), and the party were divided into several small detachments which started off in different directions, keeping the mouth of the Columbia in view as their ultimate point of destination. From this post

they were still distant nearly a thousand miles, although this fact was unknown to them at the time.

On the twenty-first of January, after a series of almost incredible adventures, the division in which Mr. Hunt enrolled himself struck the waters of the Columbia some distance below the junction of its two great branches, Lewis and Clarke rivers, and not far from the influx of the Wallah-Wallah. Since leaving the Caldron Linn, they had toiled two hundred and forty miles through snowy wastes and precipitous mountains, and six months had now elapsed since their departure from the Arickara village, on the Missouri — their whole route from that point, according to their computation, having been seventeen hundred and fifty-one miles. Some vague intelligence was now received in regard to the other divisions of the party, and also of the settlers at the mouth of the Columbia. On the thirty-first, Mr. Hunt reached the falls of the river, and encamped at the village of Wish-Ram. Here were heard tidings of the massacre on board the Tonquin. On the fifth of February, having procured canoes with much difficulty, the adventurers departed from Wish-Ram, and, on the fifteenth, sweeping round an intervening cape, they came in sight of the long-desired *Astoria*. Among the first to greet them on their landing, were some of their old comrades who had parted from them at Caldron Linn, and who had reached the settlement nearly a month before. Mr. Crooks and John Day, being unable to get on, had been left with some Indians in the wilderness — they afterwards came in. Carrière, a voyageur, who was also abandoned through the sternest necessity, was never heard of more. Jean Baptiste Prévost, likewise a voyageur, rendered frantic by famine, had been drowned in the Snake river. All parties had

suffered the extremes of weariness, privation and peril. They had travelled from St. Louis, thirty-five hundred miles. Let us now return to Mr. Astor.

As yet he had received no intelligence from the Columbia, and had to proceed upon the supposition that all had gone as he desired. He accordingly fitted out a fine ship, the *Beaver*, of four hundred and ninety tons. Her cargo was assorted with a view to the supply of Astoria, the trade along the coast, and the wants of the Russian fur company. There embarked in her, for the settlement, a partner, five clerks, fifteen American laborers, and six Canadian voyageurs. Mr. John Clarke, the partner, was a native of the United States, although he had passed much of his life in the northwest, having been employed in the fur trade since the age of sixteen. The clerks were, chiefly, young American gentlemen of good connexions. Mr. Astor had selected this reinforcement with the design of securing an ascendancy of American influence at Astoria, and rendering the association decidedly national. This, from the peculiar circumstances of the case, he had been unable to do in the commencement of his undertaking.

Captain Sowle, the commander of the *Beaver*, was directed to touch at the Sandwich islands, to enquire about the fortunes of the *Tonquin*, and ascertain, if possible, whether the settlement had been effected at Astoria. If so, he was to enlist as many of the natives as possible and proceed. He was to use great caution in his approach to the mouth of the Columbia. If every thing was found right, however, he was to land such part of his cargo as was intended for the post, and to sail for New Archangel with the Russian supplies. Having received furs in payment, he would return to

Astoria, take in the peltries there collected, and make the best of his way to Canton. These were the strict letter of his instructions — a deviation from which was subsequently the cause of great embarrassment and loss, and contributed largely to the failure of the whole enterprize. The Beaver sailed on the tenth of October, 1811, and, after taking in twelve natives at the Sandwich islands, reached the mouth of the Columbia, in safety, on the ninth of May, 1812. Her arrival gave life and vigor to the establishment, and afforded means of extending the operations of the company, and founding a number of interior trading posts.

It now became necessary to send despatches over land to Mr. Astor at New York, an attempt at so doing having been frustrated some time before by the hostility of the Indians at Wish-Ram. The task was confided to Mr. Robert Stuart, who, though he had never been across the mountains, had given evidence of his competency for such undertakings. He was accompanied by Ben. Jones and John Day, Kentuckians; Andri Vallar and Francis Le Clerc, Canadians; and two of the partners, Messieurs M'Lellan and Crooks, who were desirous of returning to the Atlantic States. This little party set out on the twenty-ninth of June, and Mr. Irving accompanies them, in detail, throughout the whole of their long and dangerous wayfaring. As might be expected, they encountered misfortunes still more terrible than those before experienced by Mr. Hunt and his associates. The chief features of the journey were the illness of Mr. Crooks, and the loss of all the horses of the party through the villany of the Upsarokas. This latter circumstance was the cause of excessive trouble and great delay. On the thirtieth of April, however, the party arrived

in fine health and spirits at St. Louis, having been ten months in performing their perilous expedition. The route taken by Mr. Stuart coincided nearly with that of Mr. Hunt, as far as the Wind river mountains. From this point the former struck somewhat to the south-east, following the Nebraska to its junction with the Missouri.

War having at length broken out between the United States and England, Mr. Astor perceived that the harbor of New York would be blockaded, and the departure of the annual supply ship in the autumn prevented. In this emergency he wrote to Captain Sowle, the commander of the *Beaver*, addressing him at Canton. The letter directed him to proceed to the factory, at the mouth of the Columbia, with such articles as the establishment might need, and to remain there subject to the orders of Mr. Hunt. In the meantime nothing had yet been heard from the settlement. Still, not discouraged, Mr. A. determined to send out another ship, although the risk of loss was so greatly enhanced that no insurance could be effected. The *Lark* was chosen — remarkable for her fast sailing. She put to sea on the sixth of March, 1813, under the command of Mr. Northrop, her mate — the officer first appointed to command her having shrunk from his engagement. Within a fortnight after her departure, Mr. A. received intelligence that the North-west company had presented a memorial to Great Britain, stating the vast scope of the contemplated operations at Astoria, expressing a fear that, unless crushed, the settlement there would effect the downfall of their own fur trade, and advising that a force be sent against the colony. In consequence, the frigate *Phœbe* was ordered to convoy the armed ship *Isaac Todd*, belonging to

the North-west company, and provided with men and munitions for the formation of a new establishment. They were directed "to proceed together to the mouth of the Columbia, capture or destroy whatever American fortress they would find there, and plant the British flag on its ruins." Upon this matter's being represented to our government, the frigate *Adams*, Captain Crane, was detailed for the protection of Astoria; and Mr. A. proceeded to fit out a ship called the *Enterprize*, to sail in company with the frigate, and freighted with additional supplies. Just, however, as the two vessels were ready, a reinforcement of seamen was wanted for Lake Ontario, and the crew of the *Adams* were, necessarily, transferred to that service. Mr. A. was about to send off his ship alone, when a British force made its appearance off the Hook, and New York was effectually blockaded. The *Enterprize* therefore was unloaded and dismantled. We now return to the *Beaver*.

This vessel, after leaving at Astoria that portion of her cargo destined for that post, sailed for New Archangel on the fourth of August, 1812. She arrived there on the nineteenth, meeting with no incidents of moment. A long time was now expended in negotiations with the drunken governor of the Russian fur colony — one Count Baranoff — and when they were finally completed, the month of October had arrived. Moreover, in payment for his supplies, Mr. Hunt was to receive seal-skins, and none were on the spot. It was necessary, therefore, to proceed to a seal-catching establishment belonging to the Russian company at the island of St. Paul, in the sea of Kamschatka. He set sail for this place on the fourth of October, after having wasted forty-five days at New Archangel. He arrived

on the thirty-first of the month — by which time, according to his arrangement, he should have been back at Astoria. Now occurred great delay in getting the peltries on board ; every pack being overhauled to prevent imposition. To make matters worse, the Beaver one night was driven off shore in a gale, and could not get back until the thirteenth of November. Having at length taken in the cargo and put to sea, Mr. Hunt was in some perplexity as to his course. The ship had been much injured in the late gale, and he thought it imprudent to attempt making the mouth of the Columbia in this boisterous time of the year. Moreover, the season was already much advanced ; and should he proceed to Astoria as originally intended, he might arrive at Canton so late as to find a bad market. Unfortunately, therefore, he determined to go at once to the Sandwich islands, there await the arrival of the annual ship from New York, take passage in her to the settlement, and let the Beaver proceed on her voyage to China. It is but justice to add that he was mainly induced to this course by the timid representations of Captain Sowle. They reached Woahoo in safety, where the ship underwent the necessary repairs, and again put to sea on the first of January, 1813, leaving Mr. Hunt on the island.

At Canton, Captain Sowle found the letter of Mr. Astor, giving him information of the war, and directing him to convey the intelligence to Astoria. He wrote a reply, in which he declined complying with these orders, saying that he would wait for peace, and then return home. In the meantime Mr. Hunt waited in vain for the annual vessel. At length, about the twentieth of June, the ship Albatross, Captain Smith, arrived from China, bringing the first news of the war

to the Sandwich islands. This ship Mr. H. chartered for two thousand dollars, to land him, with some supplies, at Astoria. He reached this post on the twentieth of August, where he found the affairs of the company in a perishing condition, and the partners bent upon abandoning the settlement. To this resolution Mr. Hunt was finally brought to consent. There was a large stock of furs, however, at the factory, which it was necessary to get to a market, and a ship was required for this service. The Albatross was bound to the Marquesas, and thence to the Sandwich islands; and it was resolved that Mr. H. should sail in her in quest of a vessel, returning, if possible, by the first of January, and bringing with him a supply of provisions. He departed on the twenty-sixth of August, and reached the Marquesas without accident. Commodore Porter soon afterward arrived, bringing intelligence that the British frigate *Phœbe*, with a store-ship mounted with battering pieces, together with the sloops of war *Cherub* and *Racoon*, had all sailed, from Rio Janeiro, on the sixth of July, bound for the mouth of the Columbia. Mr. H., after in vain attempting to purchase a whale ship from Commodore Porter, started, on the twenty-third of November, for the Sandwich islands, arriving on December the twentieth. Here he found Captain Northrop, of the *Lark*, which had suffered shipwreck on the coast about the middle of March. The brig *Pedlar* was now purchased for ten thousand dollars, and, Captain N. being put in command of her, Mr. H. sailed for Astoria on the twenty-second of January, 1814, with the view of removing the property there, as speedily as possible, to the Russian settlements in the vicinity — these were Mr. Astor's orders sent out by the *Lark*. On the

twenty-eighth of February the brig anchored in the Columbia, when it was found that, on the twelfth of December, the British had taken possession of the post. In some negotiations carried on, just before the surrender, on the part of the North-west company and M'Dougal, that worthy personage gave full evidence that Captain Thorn was not far wrong in suspecting him to be no better than he should be. He had been for some time secretly a partner of the rival association, and shortly before the arrival of the British, took advantage of his situation as head of the post, to barter away the property of the company at less than one third of its value.

Thus failed this great enterprize of Mr. Astor. At the peace, Astoria itself, by the treaty of Ghent, reverted with the adjacent country to the United States, on the principle of *status ante bellum*. In the winter of 1815, Congress passed a law prohibiting all traffic of British traders within our territories, and Mr. A. felt anxious to seize this opportunity for the renewal of his undertaking. For good reasons, however, he could do nothing without the direct protection of the government. This evinced much supineness in the matter; the favorable moment was suffered to pass unimproved; and, in despite of the prohibition of Congress, the British finally usurped the lucrative traffic in peltries throughout the whole of our vast territories in the North-west. A very little aid from the sources whence he had naturally a right to expect it, would have enabled Mr. Astor to direct this profitable commerce into national channels, and to render New York, what London has now long been, the great emporium for furs.

We have already spoken of the masterly manner in

which Mr. Irving has executed his task. It occurs to us that we have observed one or two slight discrepancies in the narrative. There appears to be some confusion between the names of M'Lellan, M'Lennon and M'Lennan — or do these three appellations refer to the same individual? In going up the Missouri, Mr. Hunt arrives at the Great Bend on the first of June, — the third day after which (the day on which the party is overtaken by Lisa) is said to be the third of *July*. Jones and Carson join the expedition just above the Omaha village. At page 187, vol. 1, we are told that the two men “who had joined the company at the Maha village” (meaning Omaha, we presume), deserted and were pursued, but never overtaken — at page 199, however, Carson is recognized by an Indian who is holding a parley with the party. The Lark too, only sailed from New York on the sixth of March, 1813, and on the tenth, we find her, much buffeted, somewhere in the near vicinity of the Sandwich Islands. These errors are of little importance in themselves but may as well be rectified in a future edition.

GEORGE BALCOMBE. A NOVEL. NEW YORK.
HARPER AND BROTHERS.

[*Southern Literary Messenger*, January, 1837.]

THE scene of this novel is laid partly in Missouri, and partly in Virginia. The hero proper of the book — that is to say, the *object* of the narrative — is a Mr. William Napier of Craiganet, in the Old Dominion — George Balcombe, although the most important of the

THE MONTICELLO EDITION

THE COMPLETE WORKS OF
EDGAR ALLAN POE

Edited by JAMES A. HARRISON

PROFESSOR IN THE UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA



LITERARY CRITICISM

VOLUME THREE



NEW YORK . GEORGE D.
SPROUL . M D C C C C I I

Poe was immensely proud of this "red rag" of learning, and waved it repeatedly in the "Marginalia" and elsewhere, bringing his reputation for erudition thereby perilously near charlatanry. His repeated quotations from August Wilhelm von Schlegel show the profound influence of this scholar and of his brother on the plastic nature of Poe; the mediævalism of his romantic mind leaned psychologically toward the Germans, in spite of his disclaimers; and his tendencies to morbid inquiry and metaphysical speculation placed him, against his will perhaps, in the camp of Jung-Stilling, Lavater, Spurzheim, and La Motte Fouqué.

The student of Poe, as he follows our presentation of the critical side of the poet, will for the first time, we think, obtain a connected idea of Poe's chronologically varying views of Longfellow, Bulwer, Dickens, Bryant, Willis, Cooper, and Lowell, and be able to see that Poe estimated differently at different times and not with the confusion reprints of his works would indicate. Poe may contradict himself, — only he may not now do it in the same breath and the same review, as heretofore. We are not responsible for his self-contradictions; we are responsible only for the purity of his text.

The great mass of the reviews here presented is new and comes from the original text in *Burton's*, *Graham's*, etc. "Old reviews, when reprinted, have been carefully corrected by the originals.

LITERARY CRITICISM.

MIDDLE PERIOD.

REVIEW OF STEPHENS' ARABIA PETRÆA.

[Text: *New York Review*, October, 1837.]

MR. STEPHENS has here given us two volumes of more than ordinary interest — written with a freshness of manner, and evincing a manliness of feeling, both worthy of high consideration. Although in some respects deficient, the work too presents some points of moment to the geographer, to the antiquarian, and more especially to the theologian. Viewed only as one of a class of writings whose direct tendency is to throw light upon the Book of Books, it has strong claims upon the attention of all who read. While the vast importance of critical and philological research in dissipating the obscurities and determining the exact sense of the Scriptures cannot be too readily conceded, it may be doubted whether the collateral illustration derivable from records of travel be not deserving at least equal consideration. Certainly the evidence thus afforded, exerting an enkindling influence upon the popular imagination, and so taking palpable hold upon the popular understanding, will not fail to become in time a most powerful because easily available instrument in the downfall of unbelief. Infidelity itself has often afforded unwilling and unwitting testimony to the truth.

It is surprising to find with what unintentional precision both Gibbon and Volney (among others) have used, for the purpose of *description*, in their accounts of nations and countries, the identical phraseology employed by the inspired writers when foretelling the most improbable events. In this manner scepticism has been made the root of belief, and the providence of the Deity has been no less remarkable in the extent and nature of the means for bringing to light the evidence of his accomplished word, than in working the accomplishment itself.

Of late days, the immense stores of biblical elucidation derivable from the East have been rapidly accumulating in the hands of the student. When the "Observations" of Harmer were given to the public, he had access to few other works than the travels of Chardin, Pococke, Shaw, Maundrell, Pitts, and D'Arvieux, with perhaps those of Nau and Troilo, and Russell's "Natural History of Aleppo." We have now a vast accession to our knowledge of Oriental regions. Intelligent and observing men, impelled by the various motives of Christian zeal, military adventure, the love of gain, and the love of science, have made their way, often at imminent risk, into every land rendered holy by the words of revelation. Through the medium of the pencil, as well as of the pen, we are even familiarly acquainted with the territories of the Bible. Valuable books of eastern travel are abundant—of which the labours of Niebuhr, Mariti, Volney, Porter, Clarke, Chateaubriand, Burckhardt, Buckingham, Morier, Seetzen, De Lamartine, Laborde, Tournefort, Madden, Maddox, Wilkinson, Arundell, Mangles, Leigh and Hogg, besides those already mentioned, are merely the principal, or the

most extensively known. As we have said, however, the work before us is not to be lightly regarded : highly agreeable, interesting, and instructive, in a general view, it also has, in the connexion now adverted to, claims to public attention possessed by no other book of its kind.

In an article prepared for this journal some months ago, we had traced the route of Mr. Stephens with a degree of minuteness not desirable now, when the work has been so long in the hands of the public. At this late day we must be content with saying, briefly, in regard to the earlier portions of the narrative, that, arriving at Alexandria in December, 1835, he thence passed up the Nile as far as the Lower Cataracts. One or two passages from this part of the tour may still be noted for observation. The annexed speculations, in regard to the present city of Alexandria, are well worth attention.

“The present city of Alexandria, even after the dreadful ravages made by the plague last year, is still supposed to contain more than 50,000 inhabitants, and is decidedly growing. It stands outside the Delta in the Libyan Desert, and, as Volney remarks, ‘It is only by the canal which conducts the waters of the Nile into the reservoirs in the time of inundation, that Alexandria can be considered as connected with Egypt.’ Founded by the great Alexander, to secure his conquests in the East, being the only safe harbour along the coast of Syria or Africa, and possessing peculiar commercial advantages, it soon grew into a giant city. Fifteen miles in circumference, containing a population of 300,000 citizens and as many slaves, one magnificent street 2000 feet broad ran the whole

length of the city, from the Gate of the Sea to the Canopic Gate, commanding a view at each end, of the shipping, either in the Mediterranean or in the Mareotic Lake, and another of equal length intersected it at right angles ; a spacious circus without the Canopic Gate for chariot-races, and on the east a splendid gymnasium more than six hundred feet in length, with theatres, baths, and all that could make it a desirable residence for a luxurious people. When it fell into the hands of the Saracens, according to the report of the Saracen general to the Calif Omar, ‘it was impossible to enumerate the variety of its riches and beauties ;’ and it is said to ‘have contained four thousand palaces, four thousand baths, four hundred theatres or public edifices, twelve thousand shops, and forty thousand tributary Jews.’ From that time, like everything else which falls into the hands of the Mussulman, it has been going to ruin, and the discovery of the passage to India by the Cape of Good Hope gave the death-blow to its commercial greatness. At present it stands a phenomenon in the history of a Turkish dominion. It appears once more to be raising its head from the dust. It remains to be seen whether this rise is the legitimate and permanent effect of a wise and politic government, combined with natural advantages, or whether the pacha is not forcing it to an unnatural elevation, at the expense, if not upon the ruins, of the rest of Egypt. It is almost presumptuous, on the threshold of my entrance into Egypt, to speculate upon the future condition of this interesting country ; but it is clear that the pacha is determined to build up the city of Alexandria if he can : his fleet is here, his army, his arsenal, and his forts are here ; and he has forced and centred here a commerce that was before divided

between several places. Rosetta has lost more than two thirds of its population. Damietta has become a mere nothing, and even Cairo the Grand has become tributary to what is called the regenerated city." Vol. I. pp. 21, 22.

We see no presumption in this attempt to speculate upon the future condition of Egypt. Its destinies are matter for the attentive consideration of every reader of the Bible. No words can be more definitive, more utterly free from ambiguity, than the prophecies concerning this region. No events could be more wonderful in their nature, nor more impossible to have been foreseen by the eye of man, than the events foretold concerning it. With the earliest ages of the world its line of monarchs began, and the annihilation of the entire dynasty was predicted during the zenith of that dynasty's power. One of the most lucid of the biblical commentators has justly observed that the very attempt once made by infidels to show, from the recorded number of its monarchs and the duration of their reigns, that Egypt was a kingdom previous to the Mosaic era of the deluge, places in the most striking view the extraordinary character of the prophecies regarding it. During two thousand years prior to these predictions Egypt had never been without a prince of its own; and how oppressive was its tyranny over Judæa, and the neighbouring nations! It, however, was distinctly foretold that this country of kings should no longer have one of its own — that it should be laid waste by the hand of strangers — that it should be a base kingdom, the basest of the base — that it should *never* again exalt itself among the nations — that it should be a desolation surrounded by desola-

tion. Two thousand years have now afforded their testimony to the infallibility of the Divine word, and the evidence is still accumulative. "Its past and present degeneracy bears not a more remote resemblance to the former greatness and pride of its power than the frailty of its mud-walled fabric now bears to the stability of its imperishable pyramids." But it should be remembered that there are other prophecies concerning it which still await their fulfilment. "The whole earth shall rejoice, and Egypt *shall not be for ever base*. The Lord shall smite Egypt; he shall smite and heal it; and they shall return to the Lord, and he shall be entreated of them, and shall heal them. In that day shall Isaac be the third with Egypt and with Assyria, even a blessing in the midst of the land." Isa. xix. 19-25. In regard to the present degree of political power and importance to which the country has certainly arisen under Mohammed Aly (an importance unknown for many centuries), the fact, as Mr. Keith observes in his valuable "Evidence of Prophecy," may possibly serve, at no distant period, to illustrate the prediction which implies, that however base and degraded it might be throughout many generations, it would, notwithstanding, have strength sufficient to be looked to for aid or protection even at the time of the restoration of the Jews to Judæa, who will seek "to strengthen themselves in the strength of Pharaoh, and trust in *the shadow of Egypt*." How emphatically her present feeble prosperity is, after all, but the *shadow* of the Egypt of the Pharaohs, we leave to the explorer of her pyramids, the wanderer among the tombs of her kings, or the fragments of her Luxor and her Carnac.

At Djiddeh, formerly the capital of Upper Egypt and the largest town on the Nile, Mr. Stephens

encountered two large boat-loads of slaves — probably five or six hundred — collected at Dongola and Senjaar. “In the East,” he writes, “slavery exists now precisely as it did in the days of the patriarchs. The slave is received into the family of a Turk, in a relation more confidential and respectable than that of an ordinary domestic ; and when liberated, which very often happens, stands upon the same footing with a freeman. The curse does not rest upon him for ever ; he may sit at the same board, dip his hand in the same dish, and, if there are no other impediments, may marry his master’s daughter.”

Morier says, in his *Journey through Persia* : “The manners of the East, amid all the changes of government and religion, are *still the same*. They are living impressions from an original mould ; and, at every step, some object, some idiom, some dress, or some custom of common life reminds the traveller of ancient times, and confirms, above all, the beauty, the accuracy, and the propriety of the language and history of the Bible.”

Sir John Chardin, also, in the Preface to his *Travels in Persia*, employs similar language : “And the learned, to whom I communicated my design, encouraged me very much by their commendations to proceed in it ; and more especially when I informed them that it is not in Asia, as in our Europe, where there are frequent changes, more or less, in the form of things, as the habits, buildings, gardens, and the like. In the East they are constant in all things. The habits are at this day in the same manner as in the precedent ages ; so that one may reasonably believe that, in that part of the world, the exterior forms of things (as their manners and customs) are the same now as they were two thousand years since, except in such changes as

have been introduced by religion, which are, nevertheless, very inconsiderable."

Nor is such striking testimony unsupported. From all sources we derive evidence of the conformity, almost of the identity, of the modern with the ancient usages of the East. This steadfast resistance to innovation is a trait remarkably confined to the regions of biblical history, and (it should not be doubted) will remain in force until it shall have fulfilled all the important purposes of biblical elucidation. Hereafter, when the ends of Providence shall be thoroughly answered, it will not fail to give way before the influence of that very Word it has been instrumental in establishing ; and the tide of civilization, which has hitherto flowed continuously, from the rising to the setting sun, will be driven back, with a partial ebb, into its original channels.

Returning from the Cataracts, Mr. Stephens found himself safely at Cairo, where terminated his journeyings upon the Nile. He had passed "from Migdol to Syene, even unto the borders of Ethiopia." In regard to the facilities, comforts, and minor enjoyments of the voyage, he speaks of them in a manner so favourable, that many of our young countrymen will be induced to follow his example. It is an amusement, he says, even ridiculously cheap, and attended with no degree of danger. A boat with ten men is procured for thirty or forty dollars a month, fowls for three piastres a pair, a sheep for half or three quarters of a dollar, and eggs for the asking. "You sail under your own country's banner ; and when you walk along the river, if the Arabs look particularly black and truculent, you proudly feel that there is safety in its folds."

We now approach what is by far the most interest-

ing and the most important portion of his tour. Mr. S. had resolved to visit Mount Sinai, proceeding thence to the Holy Land. If he should return to Suez, and thus cross the desert to El Arich and Gaza, he would be subjected to a quarantine of fourteen days on account of the plague in Egypt; and this difficulty might be avoided by striking through the heart of the desert lying between Mount Sinai and the frontier of Palestine. This route was beset with danger; but, apart from the matter of avoiding quarantine, it had other strong temptations for the enterprise and enthusiasm of the traveller — temptations not to be resisted. “The route,” says Mr. Stephens, “was hitherto untrav-elled,” and, moreover, it lay through a region upon which has long rested, and still rests, a remarkable curse of the Divinity, issued through the voices of his prophets. We allude to the land of Idumæa — the Edom of the Scriptures. Some English friends, who first suggested this route to Mr. Stephens, referred him, for information concerning it, to Keith on the Prophecies. Mr. Keith, as our readers are aware, contends for the *literal* fulfilment of prophecy, and in the treatise in question brings forward a mass of evidence, and a world of argument, which we, at least, are constrained to consider, as a whole, irrefutable. We look upon the *literalness* of the understanding of the Bible predictions as an *essential* feature in prophecy — conceiving minuteness of detail to have been but a portion of the providential plan of the Deity for bringing more visibly to light, in after-ages, the *evidence* of the fulfilment of his word. No general meaning attached to a prediction, no general fulfilment of such prediction, could carry, to the reason of mankind, inferences so unquestionable, as its particular

and minutely incidental accomplishment. General statements, except in rare instances, are susceptible of misinterpretation or misapplication: details admit no shadow of ambiguity. That, in many striking cases, the words of the prophets have been brought to pass in every particular of a series of minutiae, whose very meaning was unintelligible before the period of fulfilment, is a truth that few are so utterly stubborn as to deny. We mean to say that, in *all* instances, the most strictly literal interpretation will apply. There is, no doubt, much unbelief founded upon the *obscurity* of the prophetic expression; and the question is frequently demanded — “wherein lies the use of this obscurity? — why are not the prophecies distinct? — These words, it is said, are incoherent, unintelligible, and should be therefore regarded as untrue. That many prophecies are absolutely unintelligible should not be denied — it is a part of their essence that they should be. The obscurity, like the apparently irrelevant detail, has its object in the providence of God. Were the words of inspiration, affording insight into the events of futurity, *at all times* so pointedly clear that he who runs might read, they would in many cases, even when fulfilled, afford a rational ground for unbelief in the inspiration of their authors, and consequently in the whole truth of revelation; for it would be supposed that these distinct words, exciting union and emulation among Christians, had thus been merely the means of working out their own accomplishment. It is for this reason that the most of the predictions become intelligible only when viewed from the proper point of observation — the period of fulfilment. Perceiving this, the philosophical thinker, and the Christian, will draw no argument from the obscurity, against

the verity of prophecy. Having seen palpably, incontrovertibly fulfilled, even one of these many wonderful predictions, of whose meaning, until the day of accomplishment, he could form no conception; and having thoroughly satisfied himself that no human foresight could have been equal to such amount of foreknowledge, he will await, in confident expectation, that moment certainly to come when the darkness of the veil shall be uplifted from the others.¹

¹ We cannot do better than quote here the words of a writer in the *London Quarterly Review*. "Twenty years ago we read certain portions of the prophetic Scriptures with a belief that they were true, because other similar passages had in the course of ages been proved to be so; and we had an indistinct notion that all these, to us obscure and indefinite denunciations, had been — we knew not very well when or how — accomplished; but to have graphic descriptions, ground plans, and elevations showing the actual existence of all the heretofore vague and shadowy denunciations of God against Edom, does, we confess, excite our feelings, and exalt our confidence in prophecy to a height that no external evidence has hitherto done."

Many prophecies, it should be remembered, are in a state of gradual fulfilment — a chain of evidence being thus made to extend throughout a long series of ages, for the benefit of man at large, without being confined to one epoch or generation, which would be the case in a fulfilment suddenly coming to pass. Thus, some portion of the prophecies concerning Edom has reference to the year of recompense for the controversy of Sion.

One word in regard to the work of Keith. Since penning this article we have been grieved to see, in a New York daily paper, some strictures on this well-known treatise, which we think unnecessary, if not positively unjust; and which, indeed, are little more than a revival of the old story trumped up for purposes of its own, and in the most bitter spirit of unfairness, by the *London Quarterly Review*. We allude especially to the charge of plagiarism from the work of Bishop Newton. It would be quite as reasonable to accuse Dr. Webster of having stolen his Dictionary from Dr. Johnson, or any other compiler of having plundered any other. But the work of Keith, as we learn from himself, was written hastily, for the immediate service, and at the urgent solicitation, of a friend,

Having expressed our belief in the literal fulfilment of prophecy in *all* cases,¹ and having suggested, as one reason for the non-prevalence of this belief, the improper point of view from which we are accustomed to regard it, it remains to be seen what were the principal predictions in respect to Idumæa.

“From generation to generation it shall lie waste ; *none shall pass through it* for ever and ever. But the cormorant and the bittern shall possess it ; the owl also and the raven shall dwell in it ; and he shall stretch out upon it the line of confusion and the stones of emptiness. They shall call the nobles thereof to the kingdom, but none shall be there, and all her princes shall be nothing. And thorns shall come up in her palaces, nettles and brambles in the fortresses thereof ; and it shall be a habitation for dragons and a court for owls. The wild beasts of the desert shall also meet with the wild beasts of the island, and the satyr shall cry to his fellow ; the

whose faith wavered in regard to the “Evidences of Prophecy,” and who applied to the author to aid his unbelief with a condensed view of these Evidences. In the preface of the book thus composed, with no view to any merits of authorship, and, indeed, with none except that of immediate utility, there is found the fullest disclaimer of all pretension to originality — surely motives and circumstances such as these should have sufficed to secure Dr. Keith from the unmeaning charges of plagiarism, which have been so pertinaciously adduced. We do not mean to deny that, in the blindness of his zeal, and in the firm conviction entertained by him of the general truth of his assumptions, he frequently adopted surmises as facts, and did essential injury to his cause by carrying out his positions to an unwarrantable length. With all its inaccuracies, however, his work must still be regarded as one of the most important triumphs of faith, and, beyond doubt, as a most lucid and conclusive train of argument.

¹ Of course it will be understood that a proper allowance must be made for the usual hyperbolic tendency of the language of the East.

screech-owl also shall rest there, and find for herself a place of rest. There shall the great owl make her nest, and lay and hatch, and gather under her shadow ; there shall the vultures also be gathered, every one with her mate. Seek ye out of the Book of the Lord, and read ; no one of these shall fail ; none shall want her mate ; for my mouth it hath commanded, and his spirit it hath gathered them. And he hath cast the lot for them, and his hand hath divided it unto them by line ; they shall possess it for ever and ever, from generation to generation shall they dwell therein." Isaiah xxxiv. 5, 10-17. "Thus will I make Mount Seir most desolate, and *cut off from it him that passeth out and him that returneth.*" Ezekiel : xxxv. 7.

In regard to such of the passages here quoted as are not printed in Italics, we must be content with referring to the treatise of Keith already mentioned, wherein the evidences of the fulfilment of the predictions in their most minute particulars are gathered into one view. We may as well, however, present here the substance of his observations respecting the words—"none shall pass through it for ever and ever," and "thus will I make Mount Seir desolate, and cut off from it him that passeth out and him that returneth."

He says that Volney, Burckhardt, Joliffe, Henniker, and Captains Irby and Mangles, adduce a variety of circumstances, all conspiring to prove that Idumæa, which was long resorted to from every quarter, is so beset on every side with dangers to the traveller, that literally *none pass through it* ; that even the Arabs of the neighbouring regions, whose home is the desert, and whose occupation is wandering, are afraid to enter it, or to conduct any within its borders. He says, too, that amid all this manifold testimony to its truth, there

is not, in any single instance, the most distant allusion to the prediction — that the evidence is unsuspecting and undesigned.

A Roman road passed directly through Idumæa from Jerusalem to Akaba, and another from Akaba to Moab ; and when these roads were made, at a time long posterior to the date of the predictions, the conception could not have been formed, or held credible by man, that the period would ever arrive when none should pass through it. Indeed, seven hundred years after the date of the prophecy, we are informed by Strabo that the roads were actually in use. The prediction is yet more surprising, he says, when viewed in conjunction with that which implies that travellers should *pass by* Idumæa — “every one that goeth by shall be astonished.” The routes of the pilgrims from Damascus, and from Cairo to Mecca, the one on the east and the other towards the south of Edom, along the whole of its extent, go by it, or touch partially on its borders, *without going through it*.

Not even, he says, the cases of Seetzen and Burckhardt can be urged against the literal fulfilment, although Seetzen actually *did* pass through Idumæa, and Burckhardt traversed a considerable portion of it. The former died not long after the completion of his journey ; and the latter never recovered from the effects of the hardships endured on the route — dying at Cairo. “Neither of them,” we have given the precise words of Mr. Keith, “lived to return to Europe. *I will cut off from Mount Seir him that passeth out and him that returneth.*” Strabo mentions that there was a direct road from Petra to Jericho, of three or four days’ journey. Captains Irby and Mangles were eighteen days in reaching it from Jerusalem. They

did not *pass through* Idumæa, and they did return. Seetzen and Burckhardt did pass through it, and they did *not* return."

"The words of the prediction," he elsewhere observes, "might well be understood as merely implying that Idumæa would cease to be a thoroughfare for the commerce of the nations which adjoined it, and that its highly-frequented marts would be forsaken as centres of intercourse and traffic ; and easy would have been the task of demonstrating its truth in this limited sense which scepticism itself ought not to be unwilling to authorize."

Here is, no doubt, much inaccuracy and misunderstanding ; and the exact boundaries of ancient Edom are, apparently, not borne in mind by the commentator. Idumæa proper was, strictly speaking, only the mountainous tract of country east of the valley of El-Ghor. The Idumæans, if we rightly apprehend, did not get possession of any portion of the south of Judæa till after the exile, and consequently until after the prophecies in question. They then advanced as far as Hebron, where they were arrested by the Maccabees. That "Seetzen actually did pass through Idumæa," cannot therefore be asserted ; and thus much is in favour of the whole argument of Dr. Keith, while in contradiction to a branch of that argument. The traveller in question (see his own Narrative), pursuing his route on the east of the Dead Sea, proceeded no farther in this direction than to Kerek, when he retraced his way — afterwards going from Hebron to Mount Sinai, over the desert eastward of Edom. Neither is it strictly correct that he "died not long after the completion of his journey." Several years afterwards he was actively employed in Egypt, and finally died, not from constitu-

tional injury sustained from any former adventure, but, if we remember, from the effects of poison administered by his guide in a journey from Mocha into the heart of Arabia. We see no ground either for the statement that Burckhardt owed his death to hardships endured in Idumæa. Having visited Petra, and crossed the western desert of Egypt in the year 1812, we find him, four years afterwards, sufficiently well, at Mount Sinai. He did not die until the close of 1817, and then of a diarrhœa brought about by the imprudent use of cold water.

But let us dismiss these and some other instances of misstatement. It should not be a matter of surprise that, perceiving, as he no doubt did, the *object* of the circumstantiality of prophecy, clearly seeing in how many wonderful cases its minutiae had been fulfilled, and withal being thoroughly imbued with a love of truth, and with that zeal which is becoming in a Christian, Dr. Keith should have plunged somewhat hastily or blindly into these inquiries, and pushed to an improper extent the principle for which he contended. It should be observed that the passage cited just above in regard to Seetzen and Burckhardt is given in a footnote, and has the appearance of an after-thought, about whose propriety its author did not feel perfectly content. It is certainly very difficult to reconcile the literal fulfilment of the prophecy with an acknowledgment militating so violently against it as we find in his own words — “Seetzen actually *did pass through* Idumæa, and Burckhardt *travelled through* a considerable portion of it.” And what we are told subsequently in respect to Irby and Mangles, and Seetzen and Burckhardt — that these *did not* pass through Idumæa, and *did* return, while those *did* pass through and *did not* return — where a passage from Ezekiel is brought to sustain col-

literally a passage from Isaiah — is certainly not in the spirit of literal investigation ; partaking, indeed, somewhat of *équivoque*.

But in regard to the possibility of the actual passage through Edom, we might now consider all ambiguity at an end, could we suffer ourselves to adopt the opinion of Mr. Stephens, that he himself had at length traversed the disputed region. What we have said already, however, respecting the proper boundaries of that Idumæa to which the prophecies have allusion, will assure the reader that we cannot entertain this idea. It will be clearly seen that he did not *pass through* the Edom of Ezekiel. That he might have done so, however, is sufficiently evident. The indomitable perseverance which bore him up amid the hardships and dangers of the route actually traversed, would, beyond doubt, have sufficed to ensure him a successful passage even through Idumæa the proper. And this we say, maintaining still an unhesitating belief in the literal understanding of the prophecies. It is essential, however, that these prophecies be literally rendered ; and it is a matter for regret as well as surprise, that Dr. Keith should have failed to determine so important a point as the exactness or falsity of the version of his text. This we will now briefly examine.

Isaiah xxxiv. 10.

לְנֶחֱדָיִם	— “ For an eternity,”	{	“ For an eternity of eternities,”
נְעֻחֵיכֶם	— “ of eternities,”		
אֵי	— “ not,”	{	“ passing over or through,” ¹
מִבֶּר	— “ moving about,”		
בָּהּ	— “ in it.”		

¹ *The R. V. is correct, “ None shall pass through it for ever and ever.”*

“For an eternity of eternities (there shall) not (be any one) moving about in it.” The literal meaning of “*כָּה*” is “*in it*,” not “*through it*.” The participle “*עָבֵר*” refers to one moving to and fro or up and down, and is the same term which is rendered “*current*,” as an epithet of money, in Genesis xxiii. 16. The prophet means that there shall be no marks of life in the land, no living being there, no one moving up and down in it: and are, of course, to be taken with the usual allowance for that hyperbole which is a main feature, and indeed the genius of the language.

Ezekiel xxxv. 7.

וְנָתַתִּי — “and I will give,”

אֶת־הָהָר — “mount.”

שֵׁעִיר — “Seir,”

לְשִׁבְכָהּ — “for a desolation,”

וְשִׁמְמָהּ — “and a desolation,”

וְהִכָּרְתִּי — “and I will cut off,”

מִמֶּנּוּ — “from it,” through”]

עָבֵר — “him that goeth” [“him that passeth

וְשָׁב — “and him that returneth.”

“And I will give mount Seir for an utter desolation, and will cut off from it him *that passeth and repasseth therein*.” The reference here is the same as in the previous passage, and the inhabitants of the land are alluded to as moving about therein, and actively employed in the business of life. The meaning of “*passing and repassing*” is sanctioned by Gesenius, s. v. vol. 2, p. 570, Leo’s Trans. Compare Zachariah vii. 14, and ix. 8. There is something analogous in the Hebrew-Greek phrase occurring in Acts ix. 28. Καὶ ἦν μετ’ αὐτῶν εἰσπορευόμενος καὶ ἐκπορευόμενος ἐν

Ἱερουσαλήμ. “And he was with them in Jerusalem coming in and going out.” The Latin “*versatus est*” conveys the meaning precisely ; which is, that Saul, the new convert, was on intimate terms with the true believers in Jerusalem, moving about among them to and fro, or in and out. It is plain, therefore, that the words of the prophets, in both cases, and when literally construed, intend only to predict the general desolation and abandonment of the land. Indeed, it should have been taken into consideration, that a strict prohibition on the part of the Deity, of an entrance into, or passage through, Idumæa, would have effectually cut off from mankind all evidence of this prior sentence of desolation and abandonment ; the prediction itself being thus rendered a dead letter, when viewed in regard to its ulterior and most important purpose — the dissemination of the faith.

Mr. Stephens was strongly dissuaded from his design. Almost the only person who encouraged him was Mr. Gliddon, our consul ; and but for him the idea would have been abandoned. The dangers indeed were many, and the difficulties more. By good fortune, however, the sheik of Akaba was then at Cairo. The great yearly caravan of pilgrims for Mecca was assembling beneath the walls, and he had been summoned by the pacha to escort and protect them through the desert as far as Akaba. He was the chief of a powerful tribe of Bedouins, maintaining, in all its vigour, the independence of their race, and bidding defiance to the pacha, while they yielded him such obedience as comported with their own immediate interests.

With this potentate our traveller entered into negotiation. The precise service required of him was to conduct Mr. Stephens from Akaba to Hebron, through the

land of Edom, diverging to visit the excavated city of Petra, — a journey of about ten days. A very indefinite arrangement was at length made. Mr. Stephens, after visiting Mount Sinai, was to repair to Akaba, where he would meet the escort of the Bedouin. With a view to protection on his way from Cairo to the Holy Mountain, the latter gave him his signet, which he told him would be respected by all Arabs on the route.

The arrangements for the journey as far as Mount Sinai had been made for our traveller by Mr. Gliddon. A Bedouin was procured as guide who had been with M. Laborde to Petra, and whose faith, as well as capacity, could be depended upon. The caravan consisted of eight camels and dromedaries, with three young Arabs as drivers. The tent was the common tent of the Egyptian soldiers, bought at the government factory, being very light, easily carried and pitched. The bedding was a mattress and coverlet: provision, bread, biscuit, rice, macaroni, tea, coffee, dried apricots, oranges, a roasted leg of mutton, and two large skins containing the filtered water of the Nile. Thus equipped, the party struck immediately into the desert lying between Cairo and Suez, reaching the latter place, with but little incident, after a journey of four days. At Suez, our traveller, wearied with his experiment of the dromedary, made an attempt to hire a boat, with a view of proceeding down the Red Sea to Tor, supposed to be the Elino, or place of palm-trees mentioned in the Exodus of the Israelites, and only two days' journey from Mount Sinai. The boats, however, were all taken by pilgrims, and none could be procured — at least for so long a voyage. He accordingly sent off his camels round the head of the gulf, and crossing himself by water, met them on the Petrean side of the sea.

“I am aware,” says Mr. Stephens, “that there is some dispute as to the precise spot where Moses crossed; but having no time for scepticism on such matters, I began by making up my mind that this was the place, and then looked round to see whether, according to the account given in the Bible, the face of the country and the natural landmarks did not sustain my opinion. I remember I looked up to the head of the gulf, where Suez or Kolsum now stands, and saw that almost to the very head of the gulf there was a high range of mountains which it would be necessary to cross, an undertaking which it would have been physically impossible for 600,000 people, men, women, and children to accomplish, with a hostile army pursuing them. At Suez, Moses could not have been hemmed in as he was; he could go off into the Syrian desert, or, unless the sea has greatly changed since that time, round the head of the gulf. But here, directly opposite where I sat, was an opening in the mountains, making a clear passage from the desert to the shore of the sea. It is admitted that from the earliest history of the country, there was a caravan route from the Rameseh of the Pharaohs to this spot, and it was perfectly clear to my mind that, if the account be true at all, Moses had taken that route; that it was directly opposite me, between the two mountains, where he had come down with his multitude to the shore, and that it was there he had found himself hemmed in, in the manner described in the Bible, with the sea before him, and the army of Pharaoh in his rear; it was there he stretched out his hand and divided the waters; and probably on the very spot where I sat the children of Israel had kneeled upon the sands to offer thanks to God for his miraculous interposition. The distance, too, was in confirma-

tion of this opinion. It was about twenty miles across ; the distance which that immense multitude, with their necessary baggage, could have passed in the space of time (a night) mentioned in the Bible. Besides my own judgment and conclusions, I had authority on the spot, in my Bedouin Toualeb, who talked of it with as much certainty as if he had seen it himself ; and, by the waning light of the moon, pointed out the metes and bounds according to the tradition received from his fathers."

Mr. Stephens is here greatly in error, and has placed himself in direct opposition to all authority on the subject. It is quite evident, that since the days of the miracle, the sea *has* "greatly changed" round the head of the gulf. It is now several feet lower, as appears from the alluvial condition of several bitter lakes in the vicinity. On this topic Niebuhr, who examined the matter with his accustomed learning, acumen, and perseverance, is indisputable authority. But he merely agrees with all the most able writers on this head. The passage occurred at Suez. The chief arguments sustaining this position are deduced from the ease by which the miracle could have been wrought, on a sea so shaped, by means of a strong wind blowing from the northeast.

Resuming his journey to the southward, our traveller passed safely through a barren and mountainous region, bare of verdure, and destitute of water, in about seven days to Mount Sinai. It is to be regretted, that in his account of a country so little traversed as this peninsula, Mr. Stephens has not entered more into detail. Upon his adventures at the Holy Mountain, which are of great interest, he dwells somewhat at length.

At Akaba he met the Sheik as by agreement. A horse of the best breed of Arabia was provided, and, although suffering from ill health, he proceeded manfully through the desert to Petra and Mount Hor. The difficulties of the route proved to be chiefly those arising from the rapacity of his friend, the Sheik of Akaba, who threw a thousand impediments in his way with the purpose of magnifying the importance of the service rendered, and obtaining, in consequence, the larger allowance of *bucksheesh*.

The account given of Petra agrees in all important particulars with those rendered by the very few travellers who had previously visited it. With these accounts our readers are sufficiently acquainted. The singular character of the city, its vast antiquity, its utter loss, for more than a thousand years, to the eyes of the civilized world; and, above all, the solemn denunciations of prophecy regarding it, have combined to invest these ruins with an interest beyond that of any others in existence, and to render what has been written concerning them familiar knowledge to nearly every individual who reads.

Leaving Petra, after visiting Mount Hor, Mr. Stephens returned to the valley of El-Ghor, and fell into the caravan route for Gaza, which crosses the valley obliquely. Coming out from the ravine among the mountains to the westward, he here left the road to Gaza, and pushed immediately on to Hebron. This distance (between the Gaza route and Hebron) is, we believe, the only positively *new* route accomplished by our American tourist. We understand that, in 1826, Messieurs Strangeways and Anson passed over the ground, on the Gaza road from Petra, to the point where it deviates for Hebron. On the part of Mr.

Stephens' course, which we have thus designated as new, it is well known that a great public road existed in the later days of the Roman empire, and that several cities were located immediately upon it. Mr. Stephens discovered some ruins, but his state of health, unfortunately, prevented a minute investigation. Those which he encountered are represented as forming rude and shapeless masses; there were no columns, no blocks of marble, or other large stones, indicating architectural greatness. The Pentinger Tables place Helusa in this immediate vicinity, and, but for the character of the ruins seen, we might have supposed them to be the remnants of that city.

The latter part of our author's second volume is occupied with his journeyings in the Holy Land, and, principally, with an account of his visit to Jerusalem. What relates to the Dead Sea we are induced to consider as, upon the whole, the most interesting, if not the most important portion of his book. It was his original intention to circumnavigate this lake, but the difficulty of procuring a boat proved an obstacle not to be surmounted. He traversed, nevertheless, no little extent of its shores, bathed in it, saw distinctly that the Jordan *does* mingle with its waters, and that birds floated upon it, and flew over its surface.

But it is time that we conclude. Mr. Stephens passed through Samaria and Galilee, stopping at Nablous, the ancient Sychem; the burial-place of the patriarch Joseph; and the ruins of Sebaste; crossed the battle-plain of Jezreel; ascended Mount Tabor; visited Nazareth, the lake of Genesareth, the cities of Tiberias and Saphet, Mount Carmel, Acre, Tyre, and Sidon. At Beyroot he took passage for Alexandria, and thence, finally returned to Europe.

The volumes are written in general with a freedom, a frankness, and an utter absence of pretension, which will secure them the respect and good-will of all parties. The author professes to have compiled his narrative merely from "brief notes and recollections," admitting that he has probably fallen into errors regarding facts and impressions — errors he has been prevented from seeking out and correcting by the urgency of other occupations since his return. We have, therefore, thought it quite as well not to trouble our readers, in this cursory review, with references to parallel travels, now familiar, and whose merits and demerits are sufficiently well understood.

We take leave of Mr. Stephens with sentiments of hearty respect. We hope it is not the last time we shall hear from him. He is a traveller with whom we shall like to take other journeys. Equally free from the exaggerated sentimentality of Chateaubriand, or the sublimated, the *too French* enthusiasm of Lamartine on the one hand, and on the other from the degrading spirit of utilitarianism, which sees in mountains and waterfalls only quarries and manufacturing sites, Mr. Stephens writes like a man of good sense and sound feeling.

feeling on the part of the usurer is a very antique conception at best. But we repeat that, in spite of these and a hundred other serious blemishes, we esteem "Tortosa" as by far the best American play. Mr. Willis, we are happy to perceive, has nearly altogether thrown aside the besetting sin of his earlier days — the sin of affectation. This was his worst enemy — vanquishing it, he has nothing to fear. Mr. Colman cannot be too highly praised for the beauty of this publication, which forms a volume of his "Dramatic Library."

UNDINE : A MINIATURE ROMANCE ; FROM THE GERMAN OF BARON DE LA MOTTE FOUQUÉ. COLMAN'S LIBRARY OF ROMANCE, EDITED BY GRENVILLE MELLEN. SAMUEL COLMAN, NEW YORK.

[Text : *Burton's Gentleman's Magazine*, September, 1839.]

THE republication of such a work as "Undine," in the very teeth of our anti-romantic national character, is an experiment well adapted to excite interest, and in the crisis caused by this experiment — for a crisis it is — it becomes the duty of every lover of literature for its own sake and spiritual uses to speak out, and speak boldly, against the untenable prejudices which have so long and so unopposedly enthralled us. It becomes, we say, his plain duty to show, with what ability he may possess, the full value and capacity of that species of writing generally, which, as a people, we are too prone to discredit. It is incumbent upon him to make head, by all admissible means in his power, against that evil genius of mere matter-of-fact, whose groveling and degrading assumptions are so happily set forth in the pert little query of Monsieur Casimir Périer —

“*A quoi un poète est-il bon ?*” The high claims of “Undine” and its extensive foreign reputation render it especially desirable that he should make use of a careful analysis of the work itself—not less than of the traits of its class—with a view of impressing upon the public mind at least his individual sense of its most exalted and extraordinary character. Feeling thus, we are grieved that our limits, as well as the late hour in which we take up the book, will scarcely permit us to speak of it otherwise than at random. The story runs very nearly in this manner :—

Sir Huldbrand of Ringstetten, a knight of high descent, young, rich, valorous, and handsome, becomes slightly enamoured, at a tournament, of a lady Bertalda, the adopted daughter of a German Duke. She, being entreated by the knight for one of her gloves, promises it upon condition of his exploring the recesses of a certain haunted forest. He consents, and is beset with a crowd of illusory and fantastic terrors, which, in the end, compel him to an extremity of the wood, where a long grassy peninsula of great loveliness juts out into the bosom of a vast lake. Of this peninsula, the sole inhabitants are an old fisherman and his wife, with their adopted daughter, Undine, a beautiful and fairy-like creature of eighteen, and of an extravagantly wild and perverse, yet amiable and artless, temperament. The old couple had rejoiced, some years before, in a child of their own, who, playing one day by the water’s edge, fell in suddenly and at once disappeared. In the depth of their grief for her loss they were astonished and delighted, one summer’s evening, with the appearance in their hut of the little Undine, who was dripping with water, and who could give no very distinct account of herself, — her language being of a singular

nature, and her discourse turning upon such subjects as "golden castles" and "crystal domes." She had remained with the fisherman and his wife ever since, and they had come to look upon her as their own.

By these good people Sir Huldbrand is hospitably entertained. In the meantime, a brook, swollen by rains, renders the peninsula an island, and thoroughly cuts off his retreat. In the strict intercourse which ensues the young man and maiden become lovers, and are finally wedded by a priest, who is opportunely cast away upon the coast. After the marriage, a new character seems to pervade Undine; and she at length explains to her husband (who is alarmed at some hints she lets fall) the true history of her nature, and of her advent upon the island.

She is one of the race of water-spirits — a race who differ, personally, from mankind only in a greater beauty, and in the circumstance of possessing no soul. The words of Undine, here divulging her secret to Huldbrand, will speak as briefly as we could do, and far more eloquently: "Both we and the beings I have mentioned as inhabiting the other elements vanish into air at death and go out of existence, spirit and body, so that no vestige of us remains; and when you hereafter awake to a purer state of being, we shall remain where sand and sparks and wind and waves remain. We, of course, have no souls. The element moves us, and, again, is obedient to our will while we live, though it scatters us like dust when we die; and as we have nothing to trouble us, we are as merry as nightingales, little gold-fishes, and other pretty children of nature. But all beings aspire to rise in the scale of existence higher than they are. It was therefore the wish of my father, who is a powerful water-prince in the Mediter-

raean Sea, that his only daughter should become possessed of a soul, although she should have to endure many of the sufferings of those who share that gift. Now the race to which I belong have no other means of obtaining a soul than by forming, with an individual of your own, the most intimate union of love."

Undine has an uncle, Kühleborn, who is the spirit of a brook, the brook which had cut off the retreat of the knight. It was this uncle who had stolen the fisherman's daughter, who had brought Undine to the island, and who had, by machination in the haunted forest, forced Huldbrand upon the peninsula. The wedding having been accomplished, the brook is dried up; and the married pair, attended by the priest, make their way to the city where the tournament had been held, and where Bertalda and her friends were much alarmed at the long absence of the knight. This lady, who had loved him and who is, in fact, the lost daughter of the fisherman (having been carried safely to a distant shore by Kühleborn, and found and adopted by a Duke), — this lady is sadly grieved at the marriage of the knight, but feels an unaccountable prepossession in favour of the bride, becomes her most intimate friend, and at length goes to live with her at the castle of Ringstetten — much in opposition to the wishes of the priest and of Kühleborn. The disasters of the drama now commence. Huldbrand insensibly forgets his love for Undine and recalls his passion for Bertalda. He is even petulant to his bride, who is aware of all, but utters no reproach. She entreats him, however, to be careful not to reproach her when they are crossing a brook or in any excursion upon the water, as, in such case, her friends, the water-spirits, who resent his behaviour, would have power to bear her away entirely

and forever. In a passage down the Danube, however, with Undine and Bertalda, he forgets the caution, and upon a trifling occasion bitterly reproves his gentle bride — for whom he still feels a lingering affection. She is thus forced to leave him, and melts into the waters of the river.

Huldbrand returns with Bertalda to Castle Ringstetten. His grief, at first violent, settles down at length into a tender melancholy, and finally is merged, although not altogether, in a growing passion for the fisherman's daughter. He sends for the priest; who obeys the summons in haste, but refuses to perform the marriage ceremony. He represents that for many nights previous, Undine had appeared to him in a dream, imploring him with deep sighs, and saying — “Ah! prevent him, dear father! I am still living! Ah! save his life! Ah! save his soul!” Huldbrand, however, rejects the advice of the priest, and sends to a neighbouring monastery for a monk, who promises to do his bidding in a few days.

Meantime, the knight is borne, in a dream, as if on swans' wings, to a certain spot in the Mediterranean Sea. Here he is held hovering over the water, which becomes perfectly transparent. He sees Undine weeping bitterly and in conversation with Kühleborn. This conversation gives Huldbrand to know that Undine still lives, and still retains her soul, although separated for ever from her husband — and that, if he should again marry, it will be her fate and her duty to cause his death, in obedience to a law of the water-spirits. Kühleborn is insisting upon this necessity. He tells Undine that the knight is about to wed — and reminds her of what she must do.

“I have not the power,” returned Undine, with a

smile. "Do you not remember? I have sealed up the fountain securely, not only against myself, but all of the same race." [This is a fountain in the courtyard of Castle Ringstetten, which Undine had caused to be covered up, while she lived upon earth, on account of its affording Kühleborn and other water-spirits who were ill-disposed to the knight, the means of access to the castle.]

"Still, should he leave his castle," said Kühleborn, "or should he once allow the fountain to be uncovered, what then? for doubtless he thinks there is no great murder in such trifles?"

"For that very reason," said Undine, still smiling amid her tears, "for that very reason he is this moment hovering in spirit over the Mediterranean Sea, and dreaming of this voice of warning which our conversation affords him. It is for this that I have been studious in disposing the whole vision."

Notwithstanding all this, however, Huldbrand weds Bertalda. She in the gayety of her spirit, upon the night of the wedding, causes the fountain to be uncovered, without the knowledge of the knight, who has never revealed his dream to her. She does this, partly on account of a fancied virtue in the water, and partly through an arrogant pleasure in undoing what the first wife had commanded to be done. Undine immediately ascends and accomplishes the destruction of the knight.

This is an exceedingly meagre outline of the leading event of the story; which, although brief, is crowded with incident. Beneath all, there runs a mystic or under current of meaning, of the simplest and most easily intelligible, yet of the most richly philosophical character. From internal evidence afforded by the book itself, we gather that the author has deeply suf-

fered from the ills of an ill-assorted marriage — and to the bitter reflections induced by these ills, we owe the conception and peculiar execution of “Undine.”

In contrast between the artless, thoughtless, and careless character of Undine before possessing a soul, and her serious, enwrapped, and anxious yet happy condition after possessing it — a condition which with all its multiform cares and disquietudes, she still feels to be preferable to her original fate — M. Fouqué has beautifully painted the difference between the heart unused to love, and the heart which has received its inspiration.

The jealousies which follow the marriage, arising from the conduct of Bertalda, are the natural troubles of love — but the precautions of Kühleborn and the other water-spirits, who take umbrage at Huldbrand's treatment of his wife, are meant to picture certain difficulties from the interference of relations in conjugal matters — difficulties which the author has himself experienced. The warning of Undine to Huldbrand — “reproach me not upon the waters, or we part for ever” — is meant to embody the truth that quarrels between man and wife are seldom or never irremediable unless when taking place in the presence of third parties. The second wedding of the knight, with his gradual forgetfulness of Undine and Undine's intense grief beneath the waters, are dwelt upon so pathetically and so passionately, that there can be no doubt of the personal opinions of the author on the subject of such marriages — no doubt of his deep personal interest in the question. How thrillingly are these few and simple words made to convey his belief that the *mere death* of a beloved wife does not imply a final separation so complete as to justify an union with another : “The fisherman had loved Undine with exceeding tenderness,

and it was a doubtful conclusion to his mind, that the mere disappearance of his beloved child could be properly viewed as her death !” This is where the old man is endeavouring to dissuade the knight from wedding Bertalda.

We have no hesitation in saying that this portion of the design of the romance — the portion which conveys an undercurrent of meaning — does not afford the fairest field to the romanticist — does not appertain to the higher regions of ideality. Although, in this case, the plan is essentially distinct from Allegory, yet it has too close an affinity to that most indefensible species of writing — a species whose gross demerits we cannot now pause to examine. That M. Fouqué was well aware of the disadvantage under which he laboured — that he well knew the field he traversed not to be the fairest — and that a personal object alone induced him to choose it — we cannot and shall not doubt. For the hand of the master is visible in every line of his beautiful fable. “Undine” is a model of models, in regard to the high artistical talent which it evinces. We could write volumes in a detailed commentary upon its various beauties in this respect. Its unity is absolute — its keeping unbroken. Yet every minute point of the picture fills and satisfies the eye. Everything is attended to, and nothing is out of time or out of place.

We say that some private and personal design to be fulfilled has thrown M. Fouqué upon that objectionable undercurrent of meaning which he has so elaborately managed. Yet his high genius has nearly succeeded in turning the blemish into a beauty. At all events he has succeeded, in spite of a radical defect, in producing what we advisedly consider the finest romance

in existence. We say this with a bitter kind of half-consciousness that only a very few will fully agree with us — yet these few are our all in such matters. They will stand by us in a just opinion.

Were we to pick out *points* for admiration in “Undine,” we should pick out the greater portion of the story. We cannot say whether the novelty of its conception, or the loftiness of its ideality, or its intense pathos, or its rigorous simplicity, or that high artistical talent with which all are combined, is the particular to be chiefly admired. Addressing those who have read the book, we may call attention to the delicacy and grace of transition from subject to subject — a point which never fails to test the power of the writer — as, for example, at page 128, when, for the purposes of the story, it becomes necessary that the knight, with Undine and Bertalda, shall proceed down the Danube. An ordinary novelist would have here tormented both himself and his readers, in his search for a sufficient *motive* for the voyage. But, in connexion with a fable such as “Undine” how all-sufficient seems the simple motive assigned by Fouqué! — “In this grateful union of friendship and affection winter came and passed away; and spring with its foliage and tender green, and its heaven of softest blue, succeeded to gladden the hearts of the three inmates of the castle. The season was in harmony with their minds, and their minds imparted their own hues to the season. *What wonder, then, that its storks and swallows inspired them also with a disposition to travel!*”

Again, we might dwell upon the exquisite *management of imagination*, which is so visible in the passages where the brooks are water-spirits, and the water-spirits brooks — neither distinctly either. What can be more

ethereally ideal than the frequent indeterminate glimpses caught of Kühleborn — or than his singular and wild lapses into shower and foam? — or than the evanishing of the white wagoner and his white horses into the shrieking and devouring flood? — or than the gentle melting of the passionately weeping bride into the chrystal waters of the Danube? What can be more divine than the character of the soulless Undine? — what more august than her transition into the soul-possessing wife? What can be more intensely beautiful than the whole book? We calmly think — yet cannot help asserting with enthusiasm — that the whole wide range of fictitious literature embraces nothing comparable in loftiness of conception, or in felicity of execution, to those final passages of the volume before us which embody the uplifting of the stone from the fount by the order of Bertalda, the sorrowful and silent re-advent of Undine, and the rapturous death of Sir Huldbrand in the embraces of his spiritual wife.

HYPERION: A ROMANCE. BY THE AUTHOR OF "OUTREMER." TWO VOLUMES. SAMUEL COLMAN, NEW YORK.

[Text: *Burton's Gentleman's Magazine*, October, 1839.]

WERE it possible to throw into a bag the lofty thought and manner of the "Pilgrims of the Rhine," together with the quirks and quibbles and true humour of "Tristram Shandy," not forgetting a few of the heartier drolleries of Rabelais, and one or two of the Phantasy Pieces of the Lorrainean Callôt, the whole, when well shaken up, and thrown out, would be a very tolerable

be put to the blush by one who had attentively perused this work, and who yet had never crossed the Atlantic.

NIGHT AND MORNING : A NOVEL. BY THE AUTHOR OF "PELHAM," "RIENZI," "EUGENE ARAM," ETC. TWO VOLUMES. REPUBLISHED BY HARPER AND BROTHERS, NEW YORK.

[Text : *Gramam's Magazine*, April, 1841.]

THE Right Hon. Charles Leopold Beaufort, of Beaufort Court, England, a proud and misanthropical old bachelor, with a rental of twenty thousand pounds, has two nephews, Philip and Robert Beaufort. The former, who is the elder of the two and heir-apparent to the uncle's estate, is thoughtless and generous, with unsteady principles. The latter is a crafty man-of-the-world, whose only honesty consists in appearing honest — a scrupulous decorist. Philip, in love with Catharine Morton, the daughter of a tradesman, and in fear of his aristocratic uncle's displeasure, is married clandestinely, in a remote village of Wales, by a quondam college friend to whom he had presented a living — the Rev. Caleb Price. The better to keep the secret, a very old Welshman, certain soon to die, and William Smith, Philip's servant, are the sole witnesses of the ceremony. This performed, Smith is hired to bury himself in Australia until called for, while the deaf man dies as expected. Some time having elapsed, Philip, dreading accident to the register, writes to Caleb for an attested copy of the record. Caleb is too ill to make it, but employs a neighbouring curate, Morgan Jones, to make and attest it ; and despatches it,

just before dying, to Philip who, fearing his wife's impatience of the concealment required, deposits the document, without her knowledge, in a secret drawer of a bureau. The register itself is afterward accidentally destroyed. Catharine has soon two children, — first Philip, the hero of the novel, and then Sydney. For their sakes she bravely endures the stigma upon her character. She continues to live openly with her husband as his mistress, bearing her maiden name of Morton; and the uncle, whose nerves would have been shocked at a misalliance, and would have disinherited its perpetrator, winks at what he considers the venial vice. The old gentleman lives on for sixteen years, and yet no disclosure is made. At last he dies, bequeathing his property to his eldest nephew, as was anticipated. The latter prepares forthwith to own Catharine as his wife; relates to his brother the facts of his clandestine marriage; speaks of the secreted document, without designating the place of its deposit; is disbelieved by that person entirely; mounts his horse to make arrangements for a second wedding, and for proving the first; is thrown, breaks his neck, and expires without uttering a word. Catharine, ignorant of the secret drawer (although aware that a record had been secreted), failing to find William Smith, and trusting her cause to an unskilful lawyer, is unable to prove her marriage, but in the effort to do so makes an enemy of Robert Beaufort, who takes possession of the estate as heir at law. Thus the strict precautions taken by the father to preserve his secret during the uncle's life, frustrate the wife in her attempts to develop it after his death, and the sons are still considered illegitimate. This is the pivot of the story. Its incidents are made up of the struggles of the young men

with their fate, but chiefly of the endeavours of the elder, Philip, to demonstrate the marriage and redeem the good name of his mother. This he finally accomplishes (after her death, and after a host of vicissitudes experienced in his own person), by the accidental return of William Smith, and by the discovery of an additional witness in Morgan Jones, who made the extract from the register, and to whom the rightful heir is guided by this long-sought document itself, obtained from the hands of Robert Beaufort (who had found it in the bureau), through the instrumentality of one Fanny, the heroine, and in the end the wife of the hero.

We do not give this as the plot of "Night and Morning," but as the groundwork of the plot; which latter, woven from the incidents above mentioned, is in itself exceedingly complex. The groundwork, as will be seen, is of no very original character—it is even absurdly commonplace. We are not asserting too much when we say that every second novel since the flood has turned upon some series of hopeless efforts, either to establish legitimacy, or to prove a will, or to get possession of a great sum of money most unjustly withheld, or to find a ragamuffin of a father, who had been much better left unfound. But, saying nothing of the basis upon which this story has been erected, the story itself is, in many respects, worthy its contriver.

The word *plot*, as commonly accepted, conveys but an indefinite meaning. Most persons think of it as a simple *complexity*; and into this error even so fine a critic as Augustus William Schlegel has obviously fallen, when he confounds its idea with that of the mere *intrigue* in which the Spanish dramas of Cervantes and Calderon abound. But the greatest in-

volution of incident will not result in plot ; which, properly defined, is *that in which no part can be displaced without ruin to the whole*. It may be described as a building so dependently constructed, that to change the position of a single brick is to overthrow the entire fabric. In this definition and description, we of course refer only to that infinite perfection which the true artist bears ever in mind — that unattainable goal to which his eyes are always directed, but of the possibility of attaining which he still endeavours, if wise, to cheat himself into the belief. The reading world, however, is satisfied with a less rigid construction of the term. It is content to think that plot a good one, in which none of the *leading* incidents can be *removed* without *detriment* to the mass. Here indeed is a material difference ; and in this view of the case the plot of “Night and Morning” is decidedly excellent. Speaking comparatively, and in regard to stories similarly composed, it is one of the best. This the author has evidently designed to make it. For this purpose he has taxed his powers to the utmost. Every page bears marks of excessive elaboration, all tending to one point — a perfect adaptation of the very numerous atoms of a very unusually involute story. The better to attain his object he has resorted to the expedient of writing his book backwards. This is a simple thing in itself, but may not be generally understood. An example will best convey the idea. Drawing near the *dénouement* of his tale, our novelist had proceeded so far as to render it necessary that means should be devised for the discovery of the missing marriage record. This record is in the old bureau — this bureau is at Fernside, originally the seat of Philip’s father, but now in possession of one Lord Lilburne, a member of

Robert Beaufort's family. Two things now strike the writer — first, that the retrieval of the hero's fortune should be brought about by no less a personage than the heroine — by some lady who should in the end be his bride — and, secondly, that this lady must procure access to Fernside. Up to this period in the narrative, it had been the design to make Camilla Beaufort, Philip's cousin, the heroine; but in such case, the cousin and Lord Lilburne being friends, the document must have been obtained by fair means; whereas foul means are the most dramatic. There would have been no *difficulties* to overcome in introducing Camilla into the house in question. She would have merely rung the bell and walked in. Moreover, in getting the paper, she would have had no chance of getting up a scene. This lady is therefore dropped as the heroine; Mr. Bulwer retraces his steps, creates Fanny, brings Philip to love her, and employs Lilburne (a courtly villain, invented for all the *high* dirty work, as De Burgh Smith for all the *low* dirty work of the story), employs Lilburne to abduct her to Fernside, where the capture of the document is at length (more dramatically than naturally) contrived. In short, the latter incidents were emendations, and their really episodical character is easily traced by the critic. What appears first in the published book, was last in the original Ms. Many of the most striking portions of the novel were *interleaved* in the same manner — thus giving to afterthought that air of premeditation which is so pleasing. Effect seems to follow cause in the most natural and in the most provident manner, but, in the true construction, the cause (and here we commit no bull) is absolutely brought about by effect. The many brief, and seemingly insulated chapters met with in the course of

the narrative are the interposed afterthoughts in question.

So careful has been our author in this working-up of his story—in this nice dovetailing of its constituent parts—that it is difficult to detect a blemish in any portion. What he has intended to do he has done well; and his main intention, as we have before hinted, was *perfection of plot*. A few defects, indeed, we note; and note them chiefly to show the skill with which that narrative is wrought, where such blemishes are the sole ones.

In the first place, there are some descriptive passages, such as the love adventures of Caleb Price, the account of Gawtreys early life, prefaced by that of his grandfather, and the dinner-scene at Love's, which scarcely come within the category of matters tending to develop the main events. These things, in short, might have been omitted with advantage (because without detriment) to the whole.

At page 254, Vol. II., we perceive the first indications of slovenness (arising, no doubt, from the writer's anxiety to conclude his task), in an incident utterly without aim, and composed at random. We mean the relapse of Philip into a second illness when nursed by Fanny through the first, at the house of old Gawtreys.

At page 21, Vol. I., we are told that Caleb Price, having received from his friend Beaufort a certain letter (whose contents would have been important in the subsequent attempts to establish Catharine's claim), held it over the flame of the candle, and that "as the paper dropped on the carpetless floor, Mr. Jones prudently set thereon the broad sole of his boot, and the maid-servant brushed it into the grate."

“Ah, trample it out; hurry it among the ashes. The last as the rest,” said Caleb, hoarsely. “Friendship, fortune, hope, love, life — a little flame — and then — and then —”

“Don’t be uneasy — it’s quite out,” said Mr. Jones.

Now this is related with much emphasis; and, upon reading it, we resolve to hold in memory that this important paper, although torn, was still unburned, and that its fragments had been thrown into a vacant grate. In fact, it was the design of the novelist to reproduce these fragments in the *dénouement* — a design which he has forgotten to carry out.

We have defined the word *plot* in a definition of our own to be sure, but in one which we do not the less consider substantially correct; and we have said that it has been a main point with Mr. Bulwer in his last novel, “Night and Morning,” to work up his plot as near perfection as possible. We have asserted, too, that his design is well accomplished; but we do not the less assert that it has been conceived and executed in error.

The interest of plot, referring, as it does, to cultivated thought in the reader, and appealing to considerations analogous with those which are the essence of sculptural taste, is by no means a popular interest; although it has the peculiarity of being appreciated in its atoms by all, while in its totality of beauty it is comprehended but by the few. The pleasure which the many derive from it is disjointed, ineffective, and evanescent; and even in the case of the critical reader it is a pleasure which may be purchased too dearly. A good tale may be written without it. Some of the finest fictions in the world have neglected it altogether. We see nothing of it in “Gil Blas,” in the “Pil-

grim's Progress," or in "Robinson Crusoe." Thus it is not an essential in story-telling at all; although, well managed, within proper limits, it is a thing to be desired. At best it is but a secondary and rigidly artistical merit, for which no merit of a higher class — no merit founded in nature — should be sacrificed. But in the book before us *much* is sacrificed for its sake, and everything is rendered subservient to its purposes. So excessive is, here, the involution of circumstances, that it has been found impossible to dwell for more than a brief period upon any particular one. The writer seems in a perpetual flurry to accomplish what, in autorial parlance, is called "bringing up one's time." He flounders in the vain attempt to keep all his multitudinous incidents at one and the same moment before the eye. His ability has been sadly taxed in the effort — but more sadly the time and temper of the reader. No sooner do we begin to take some slight degree of interest in some cursorily-sketched event, than we are hurried off to some other, for which a new feeling is to be built up, only to be tumbled down, forthwith, as before. And thus, since there is no sufficiently continuous scene in the whole novel, it results that there is no strongly effective one. Time not being given us in which to become absorbed, we are only permitted to admire, while we are not the less chilled, tantalized, wearied, and displeased. Nature, with natural interest, has been given up a bond-maiden to an elaborate but still to a misconceived, perverted, and most unsatisfactory Art.

Very little reflection might have sufficed to convince Mr. Bulwer that narratives, even one-fourth as long as the one now lying upon our table, are *essentially* in-adapted to that nice and complex adjustment of incident

at which he has made this desperate attempt. In the wire-drawn romances which have been so long fashionable (God only knows how or why) the pleasure we derive (if any) is a composite one, and made up of the respective sums of the various pleasurable sentiments experienced in perusal. Without excessive and fatiguing exertion, inconsistent with legitimate interest, the mind cannot comprehend at one time and in one survey the numerous individual items which go to establish the whole. Thus the high ideal sense of the *unique* is sure to be wanting; for, however absolute in itself be the unity of the novel, it must inevitably fail of appreciation. We speak now of that species of unity which is alone worth the attention of the critic — the unity or totality of *effect*.

But we could never bring ourselves to attach any idea of merit to mere *length* in the abstract. A long story does not appear to us necessarily twice as good as one only half so long. The ordinary talk about “continuous and sustained effort” is pure twaddle and nothing more. Perseverance is one thing and genius is another, — whatever Buffon or Hogarth may assert to the contrary, — and notwithstanding that, in many passages of the dogmatical literature of old Rome, such phrases as “*diligentia maxima*,” “*diligentia mirabilis*” can be construed only as “great talent” or “wonderful ability.” Now if the author of “Ernest Maltravers,” implicitly following authority like *les moutons de Panurge*, will persist in writing long romances because long romances have been written before, — if, in short, he cannot be satisfied with the brief tale (a species of composition which admits of the highest development of artistical power in alliance with the wildest vigour of imagination), — he must then content

himself, perforce, with a more simply and more rigidly narrative form.

And here, could he see these comments upon a work which (estimating it, as is the wont of all artists of his calibre, by the labour which it has cost him) he considers his *chef d'œuvre*, he would assure us, with a smile, that it is precisely because the book is *not* narrative and *is* dramatic that he holds it in so lofty an esteem. Now in regard to its being dramatic, we should reply that, so far as the radical and ineradicable *deficiencies* of the drama go, it is. This continual and vexatious shifting of scene, with a view of bringing up events to the time being, originated at a period when books were not ; and in fact, had the drama not preceded books, it might never have succeeded them — we might, and probably should, never have had a drama at all. By the frequent “bringing up” of his events the dramatist strove to supply, as well as he could, the want of the combining, arranging, and especially of the *commenting* power, now in possession of the narrative author. No doubt it was a deep but vague sense of this want which brought into birth the Greek chorus — a thing altogether apart from the drama itself, *never* upon the stage — and representing or personifying the expression of the sympathy of the audience in the matters transacted.

In brief, while the drama of colloquy, vivacious and breathing of life, is well adapted to narration, the drama of action and passion will always prove, when employed beyond due limits, a source of embarrassment to the narrator, and it can afford him, at best, nothing which he does not already possess in full force. We have spoken upon this head much at length ; for we remember that, in some preface to one of his previous

novels (some preface in which he endeavoured to pre-reason and pre-coax us into admiration of what was to follow — a bad practice), Mr. Bulwer was at great pains to insist upon the peculiar merits of what he even then termed the dramatic conduct of his story. The simple truth was that, then, as now, he had merely concentrated into his book all the *necessary evils* of the stage.

Giving up his attention to the one point upon which we have commented, our novelist has failed to do himself justice in others. The overstrained effort at perfection of plot has seduced him into absurd sacrifices of verisimilitude, as regards the connexion of his *dramatis personæ* each with each and each with the main events. However incidental be the appearance of any personage upon the stage, this personage is sure to be linked in, will I nill I, with the matters in hand. Philip, on the stage coach, for example, converses with but one individual, William Gawtreys; yet this man's fate (not subsequently but previously) is interwoven into that of Philip himself, through the latter's relationship to Lilburne. The hero goes to his mother's grave, and there comes into contact with this Gawtreys's father. He meets Fanny, and Fanny happens to be also involved in his *destiny* (a pet word, conveying a pet idea of the author's) through *her* relationship to Lilburne. The witness in the case of his mother's marriage is missing, and this individual turns up at last in the brother of that very Charles De Burgh Smith, with whom so perfectly accidental an intimacy has already been established. The wronged heir proceeds at random to look for a lawyer, and stumbles at once upon the precise one who had figured before in the story, and who knows all about previous investigations. Setting out in

search of Liancourt, the first person he sees is that gentleman himself. Entering a horse-bazaar in a remote portion of the country, the steed up for sale at the exact moment of his entrance is recognized as the pet of his better days. Now our quarrel with these coincidences is not that they sometimes, but that they everlastingly, occur, and that nothing occurs besides. We find no fault with Philip for chancing, at the identically proper moment, upon the identical men, women, and horses necessary for his own ends and the ends of the story, but we do think it excessively hard that he should *never happen upon anything else*.

In delineation of character our artist has done little worth notice. His highest merit in this respect is, with a solitary exception, the negative one of not having subjected himself to dispraise. Catharine and Camilla are — pretty well in their way. Philip is very much like all other heroes — perhaps a little more stiff, a little more obstinate, and a little more desperately unlucky than the generality of this class. Sydney is drawn with truth. Plaskwith, Plimmins, and the Mortons, just sufficiently caricatured, are very good outline copies of the shaded originals of Dickens. Of Gawtrey — father and son — of De Burgh Smith, of Robert Beaufort, and of Lilburne, what is it possible to say, except that they belong to that extensive firm of Gawtrey, Smith, Beaufort, Lilburne, and company, which has figured in every novel since the days of Charles Grandison, and which is doomed to the same configuration till romance-writing shall be no more?

For Fanny the author distinctly avows a partiality, and he does not err in his preference. We have observed, in some previous review, that *original* characters, so called, can only be critically praised as such,

either when presenting qualities known in real life, but never before depicted (a combination nearly impossible), or when presenting qualities which, although unknown, or even known to be hypothetical, are so skilfully adapted to the circumstances around them that our sense of fitness is not offended, and we find ourselves seeking a reason why those things *might not have been* which we are still satisfied *are not*. Fanny appertains to this latter class of originality, which in itself belongs to the loftier regions of *the Ideal*. Her first movements in the story, before her conception (which we have already characterized as an afterthought) had assumed distinct shape in the brain of the author, are altogether ineffective and frivolous. They consist of the unmeaning affectation and rhodomontade with which it is customary to invest the lunatic in commonplace fiction. But the subsequent effects of love upon her mental development are finely imagined and richly painted; and, although reason teaches us their impossibility, yet it is sufficient for the purposes of the artist that fancy delights in believing them possible.

Mr. Bulwer has been often and justly charged with defects of *style*; but the charges have been sadly deficient in specification, and for the most part have confounded the idea of mere language with that of style itself, although the former is no more the latter, than an oak is a forest, or than a word is a thought. Without pausing to define what a little reflection will enable any reader to define for himself, we may say that the chief constituent of a good style (a constituent which, in the case of Washington Irving, has been mistaken for the thing constituted) is what artists have agreed to denominate *tone*. The writer who, varying this as occasion may require, well adapts it to the fluctuations

of his narrative, accomplishes an important object in style. Mr. Bulwer's tone is always correct ; and so great is the virtue of this quality that he can scarcely be termed, upon the whole, a bad stylist.

His mere English is grossly defective — turgid, involved, and ungrammatical. There is scarcely a page of “Night and Morning” upon which a schoolboy could not detect at least half a dozen instances of faulty construction. Sentences such as this are continually occurring — “And at last silenced, if not convinced, his eyes closed, and the tears yet wet upon their lashes, fell asleep.” Here, strictly speaking, it is the eyes which “fell asleep,” and which were “silent if not convinced.” The pronoun “he” is wanting for the verb “fell.” The whole would read better thus — “And at last, silent, if not convinced, he closed his eyes, and fell asleep with the tears yet on the lashes.” It will be seen that, besides other modifications, we have changed “upon” into “on” and omitted “wet” as superfluous when applied to tear ; who ever heard of a dry one ? The sentence in question, which occurs on page 83, Vol. I., was the first which arrested our attention on opening the book at random ; but its errors are sufficiently illustrative of the *character* of those faults of phraseology in which the work abounds, and which have arisen, not so much through carelessness, as from a peculiar bias in the mind of the writer, leading him, perforce, into *involution*, whether here in style, or elsewhere in plot. The beauty of simplicity is not that which can be appreciated by Mr. Bulwer ; and whatever may be the true merits of his intelligence, the merit of luminous and precise thought is evidently not one of the number.

At page 194, Vol. I., we have this, “I am not

what you seem to suppose — exactly a swindler, certainly not a robber.” Here, to make himself intelligible, the speaker should have repeated the words “I am not” before “exactly.” As it stands, the sentence does not imply that “I am not exactly a swindler,” etc., but (if anything) that the person addressed imagined me to be certainly not a robber but exactly a swindler — an implication which it was not intended to convey. Such awkwardness in a practised writer would be inconceivable did we not refer in memory to that moral bias of which we have just spoken. Our readers will, of course, examine the English of “Night and Morning” for themselves. From the evidence of one or two sentences we cannot expect them to form a judgment in the premises. Dreading, indeed, the suspicion of unfairness, we had pencilled item after item for comment — but we have abandoned the task in despair. It would be an endless labour to proceed with examples. In fact, it is folly to particularize where the blunders would be the rule and grammar the exception.

Sir [Edward Bulwer] Lytton has one desperate mannerism of which we would be glad to see him well rid — a fashion of beginning short sentences, after very long ones, with the phrase “So there” or something equivalent, and this, too, when there is no sequence in the matter to warrant the use of the word “So.” Thus, at page 136, Vol. I., “So there they sat on the cold stone, these two orphans” ; at page 179, “So there by the calm banks of the placid lake, the youngest born of Catharine passed his tranquil days,” and just below, on the same page, “So thus was he severed from both his protectors, Arthur and Philip” ; and at page 241, Vol. II., “So there sat the old man,” etc., etc., — and in innumerable other instances throughout the work.

Among the *niaiseries* of his style we mention the coxcombical use of little French sentences, without a shadow of an excuse for their employment. At page 22, Vol. II., in the scene at the counterfeiter's cellar, what can be more nonsensical than Gawtrey's "*C'est juste ; buvez donc, cher ami,*" "*C'est juste ; buvez donc, vieux renard,*" and "*Ce n'est pas vrai ; buvez donc, Monsieur Favart*" ? Why should these platitudes be alone given in French, when it is obvious that the entire conversation was carried on in that tongue ? And again, when, at page 49, Fanny exclaims, "*Méchant, every one dies to Fanny !*" why could not this heroine as well confined herself to one language ? At page 38 the climax of absurdity, in this respect, is fairly capped ; and it is difficult to keep one's countenance, when we read of a Parisian cobbler breathing his last in a garret, and screaming out, "*Je m'étouffe — air !*"

Whenever a startling incident is recorded, our novelist seems to make it a point of conscience that somebody should "fall insensible." Thus, at page 172, Vol. I., — "'My brother, my brother, they have taken thee from me,' cried Philip, and fell insensible," — and at page 38, Vol. II., "'I was unkind to him at the last,' and with these words she fell upon the corpse insensible," etc., etc. There is a great deal too much of this. An occasional swoon is a thing of no consequence, but "even Stamboul must have an end," and Mr. Bulwer should make an end of his syncope.

Again. That gentlemen and ladies, when called upon to give alms, or to defray some trifling incidental expense, are in the invariable habit of giving the whole contents of their purse without examination, and, moreover, of "throwing" the purse into the bargain, is an

idea most erroneously entertained. At page 55, Vol. I., we are told that Philip, "as he spoke, *slid* his purse into the woman's hand." At page 110, "a hint for money restored Beaufort to his recollection, and he *flung* his purse into the nearest hand outstretched to receive it." At page 87, "Lilburne *tossed* his purse into the hands of his valet, whose face seems to lose its anxious embarrassment at the touch of the gold." It is true that the "anxious embarrassment" of any valet out of a novel would have been rather increased than diminished by having a purse of gold tossed at his head; but what we wish our readers to observe, is that magnificent contempt of filthy lucre with which the characters of Sir Edward Lytton Bulwer "fling," "slide," "toss," and tumble whole purses of money about.

But the predominant and most important failing of the author of "Devereux," in point of style, is an absolute mania of metaphor — metaphor always running into allegory. Pure allegory is at all times an abomination — a remnant of antique barbarism — appealing only to our faculties of comparison, without even a remote interest for our reason, or for our fancy. Metaphor, its softened image, has indisputable force when sparingly and skilfully employed. Vigorous writers use it rarely indeed. Mr. Bulwer is all metaphor or all allegory — mixed metaphor and unsustained allegory — and nothing if neither. He cannot express a dozen consecutive sentences in an honest and manly manner. He is king-coxcomb of figures of speech. His rage for personification is really ludicrous. The simplest noun becomes animate in his hands. Never, by any accident, does he write even so ordinary a word as time, or temper, or talent, without the capital

T. Seldom, indeed, is he content with the dignity and mysticism thus imposed ; for the most part it is TIME, TEMPER, and TALENT. Nor does the commonplace character of anything which he wishes to personify exclude it from the prosopopœia. At page 256, Vol. I., we have some profound rigmarole, seriously urged, about piemen crying “all hot ! all hot !” “in the ear of Infant and Ragged Hunger,” thus written ; and, at page 207, there is something positively transcendental all about LAW — a very little thing in itself, in some cases, but which Mr. Bulwer, in his book, has thought proper to make quite as big as we have printed it above. Who cannot fancy him, in the former instance, saying to himself, as he gnaws the top of his quill, “that is a fine thought !” and exclaiming in the latter, as he puts his finger to the side of his nose, “ah, how *very* fine an idea that is !”

This absurdity, indeed, is chiefly observable in those philosophical discussions with which he is in the wicked habit of interspersing his fictions, and springs only from a rabid anxiety to look wise, — to appear profound, — even when wisdom is quite out of place, and profundity the quintessence of folly. A “still small voice” has whispered in his ear that, as to the real matter of fact, *he is shallow* — a whisper which he does not intend to believe, and which, by dint of loud talking in parables, he hopes to prevent from reaching the ears of the public. Now, in truth, the public, great-gander as it is, is content to swallow his romance without much examination, but cannot help turning up its nose at his logic.

“The men of sense,” says Helvetius, “those idols of the unthinking, are very inferior to the men of passions. It is the strong passions which, rescuing us from Sloth, can alone impart to us that continuous and

earnest attention necessary to great intellectual efforts." Understanding the word "efforts" in its legitimate force, and not confounding it altogether with achievements, we may well apply to Mr. Bulwer the philosopher's remark, thence deducing the secret of his success as a novelist. He is emphatically the man of "passions." With an intellect rather well balanced than lofty, he has not full claim to the title of a man of genius. Urged by the burning desire of doing much, he has certainly done something. Elaborate even to fault, he will never write a bad book, and has once or twice been upon the point of concocting a good one. It is the custom to call him a fine writer, but in doing so we should judge him less by an artistical standard of excellence than by comparison with the drivellers who surround him. To Scott he is altogether inferior, except in that mock and tawdry philosophy which the Caledonian had the discretion to avoid, and the courage to condemn. In pathos, humour, and verisimilitude he is unequal to Dickens, surpassing him only in general knowledge and in the sentiment of Art. Of James he is more than the equal at all points. While he could never fall as low as D'Israeli has occasionally fallen, neither himself nor any of those whom we have mentioned have ever risen nearly so high as that very gifted and very extraordinary man.

In regard to "Night and Morning," we cannot agree with that critical opinion which considers it the best novel of its author. It is only not his worst. It is not as good as "Eugene Aram," nor as "Rienzi"—and is not at all comparable with "Ernest Maltravers." Upon the whole it is a good book. Its merits beyond doubt overbalance its defects; and if we have not dwelt upon the former as much as upon the latter, it is because

the Bulwerian beauties are precisely of that secondary character which never fails of the fullest public appreciation.

SKETCHES OF CONSPICUOUS LIVING CHARACTERS OF FRANCE. TRANSLATED BY R. M. WALSH. LEA AND BLANCHARD.

[Text: *Graham's Magazine*, April, 1841.]

THE public are much indebted to Mr. Walsh for this book, which is one of unusual interest and value. It is a translation from the French, of fifteen biographical and critical sketches, written and originally published in weekly numbers at Paris by some one who styles himself "*un homme de rien*" — the better to conceal the fact, perhaps, that he is really *un homme de beaucoup*. Whatever, unhappily, may be the case with ourselves, or in England, it is clear that in the capital of France, at least, that hot-bed of journalism and Paradise of journalists, nobody has a right to call himself "nobody" while wielding so vigorous and vivacious a pen as the author of these articles.

We are told in the Preface to the present translation that they met with the greatest success, upon their first appearance, and were considered by the Parisians as perfectly authentic in their statement of facts, and "as impartial in their appreciation of the different personages sketched, as could be desired." "As impartial, etc.," means, we presume, entirely so; for in matters of this kind an absolute impartiality, of course, is all, but still the least, "that could be desired."

Mr. Walsh farther assures us that Chateaubriand wrote the author a letter "of a highly complimentary

ter, although still not of the highest, order. They are pathetic and simple, but evince little ideality.

“The Winged Worshippers” is, beyond question, a beautiful little poem, and relieves us from a distressing doubt we had begun to entertain — a doubt whether we should not, after all, be forced to look upon Mr. Sprague as merely a well-educated poetaster, of what is (satirically?) called *classical* taste, of accurate ear, and of sound *negative* judgment.

THE OLD CURIOSITY SHOP, AND OTHER TALES. BY CHARLES DICKENS. WITH NUMEROUS ILLUSTRATIONS BY CATTERMOLLE AND BROWNE. PHILADELPHIA, LEA AND BLANCHARD.

MASTER HUMPHREY'S CLOCK. BY CHARLES DICKENS. (BOZ.) WITH NINETY-ONE ILLUSTRATIONS BY GEORGE CATTERMOLLE AND HABLOT BROWNE. PHILADELPHIA, LEA AND BLANCHARD.

[Text : *Graham's Magazine*, May, 1841.]

WHAT we here give in Italics is the duplicate title, on two separate title-pages, of an octavo volume of three hundred and sixty-two pages. Why this method of nomenclature should have been adopted, is more than we can understand, although it arises, *perhaps*, from a certain confusion and hesitation observable in the whole structure of the book itself. Publishers have an idea, however (and no doubt they are the best judges in such matters), that a complete work obtains a readier sale than one “to be continued”; and we plainly see that it is with the design of intimating the *entireness* of the volume now before us, that “*The Old Curiosity*

Shop, and Other Tales," has been made not only the primary and main title, but the name of the whole publication as indicated by the back. This may be quite fair in trade, but is morally wrong not the less. The volume is only one of a series — only part of a whole ; and the title has no right to *insinuate otherwise*. So obvious is this intention to misguide, that it has led to the absurdity of putting the inclusive, or general, title of the series as a secondary instead of a primary one. Anybody may see that if the wish had been fairly to represent the plan and extent of the volume, something like this would have been given on a single page —

“ *Master Humphrey’s Clock. By Charles Dickens. Part I. Containing The Old Curiosity Shop, and Other Tales, with Numerous Illustrations, &c., &c.* ”

This would have been better for all parties, a good deal more honest, and a vast deal more easily understood. In fact, there is sufficient uncertainty of purpose in the book itself, without resort to mystification in the matter of title. We do not think it altogether impossible that the rumours in respect to the sanity of Mr. Dickens, which were so prevalent during the publication of the first numbers of the work, had some slight, some very slight foundation in truth. By this, we mean merely to say that the mind of the author, at the time, might possibly have been struggling with some of those manifold and multiform *aberrations* by which the nobler order of genius is so frequently beset, but which are still very far removed from disease.

There are some facts in the physical world which have a really wonderful analogy with others in the world of thought, and seem thus to give some colour of truth to the (false) rhetorical dogma, that metaphor or simile may be made to strengthen an argument, as

well as to embellish a description. The principle of the *vis inertiae*, for example, with the amount of *momentum* proportionate with it and consequent upon it, seems to be identical in physics and metaphysics. It is not more true, in the former, that a large body is with more difficulty set in motion than a smaller one, and that its subsequent impetus is commensurate with this difficulty, than it is, in the latter, that intellects of the vaster capacity, while more forcible, more constant, and more extensive in their movements than those of inferior grade, are yet the less readily moved, and are more embarrassed and more full of hesitation in the first new steps of their progress. While, therefore, it is not impossible, as we have just said, that some slight mental aberration might have given rise to the hesitancy and indefinitiveness of purpose which are so very perceptible in the first pages of the volume before us, we are still the more willing to believe these defects the result of the moral facts just stated, since we find the work itself of an unusual order of excellence, even when regarded as the production of the author of *Nicholas Nickleby*. That the evils we complain of are not, and were not, fully perceived by Mr. Dickens himself, cannot be supposed for a moment. Had his book been published in the old way, we should have seen no traces of them whatever.

The design of the general work, "*Humphrey's Clock*," is simply the common-place one of putting various tales into the mouths of a social party. The meetings are held at the house of Master Humphrey — an antique building in London, where an old-fashioned clock-case is the place of deposit for the MSS. Why such designs have become common, is obvious. One half the pleasure experienced at a theatre arises from

the spectator's sympathy with the rest of the audience, and, especially, from his belief in their sympathy with him. The eccentric gentleman who not long ago, at the Park, found himself the solitary occupant of box, pit, and gallery, would have derived but little enjoyment from his visit had he been suffered to remain. It was an act of mercy to turn him out. The present absurd rage for lecturing is founded in the feeling in question. Essays which we would not be hired to read — so trite is their subject, so feeble is their execution, so much easier is it to get better information on similar themes out of any Encyclopædia in Christendom — we are brought to tolerate, and, alas, even to applaud, in their tenth and twentieth repetition, through the sole force of our sympathy with the throng. In the same way we listen to a story with greater zest when there are others present at its narration beside ourselves. Aware of this, authors without due reflection have repeatedly attempted, by supposing a circle of listeners, to imbue their narratives with the interest of sympathy. At a cursory glance the idea seems plausible enough. But, in the one case, there is an actual, personal, and palpable sympathy conveyed in looks, gestures, and brief comments — a sympathy of real individuals, all with the matters discussed to be sure, but then especially *each with each*. In the other instance, we, alone in our closet, are required to sympathize *with* the sympathy of fictitious listeners, who, so far from being present in body, are often studiously kept out of sight and out of mind for two or three hundred pages at a time. This is sympathy double-diluted — the shadow of a shade. It is unnecessary to say that the design invariably fails of its effect.

In his preface to the present volume, Mr. Dickens

seems to feel the necessity for an apology in regard to certain portions of his commencement, without seeing clearly what apology he should make, or for what precise thing he should apologize. He makes an effort to get over the difficulty, by saying something about its never being "his intention to have the members of 'Master Humphrey's Clock' active agents in the stories they relate," and about his "picturing to himself the various sensations of his hearers — thinking how Jack Redburn might incline to poor Kit — how the deaf gentleman would have his favourite, and Mr. Miles his," &c., &c. — but we are quite sure that all this is as pure a fiction as "The Curiosity Shop" itself. Our author is deceived. Occupied with little Nell and her grandfather, he had forgotten the very existence of his interlocutors until he found himself, at the end of his book, under the disagreeable necessity of saying a word or two concerning them, by way of winding them up. The simple truth is that, either for one of the two reasons at which we have already hinted, or else because the work was done in a hurry, Mr. Dickens did not precisely know his own plans when he penned the five or six first chapters of the "Clock."

The wish to preserve a certain degree of unity between various narratives naturally unconnected, is a more obvious and a better reason for employing interlocutors. But such unity as may be thus had is scarcely worth having. It may, in some feeble measure, satisfy the judgment by a sense of completeness; but it seldom produces a pleasant effect; and if the speakers are made to take part in their own stories (as has been the case here), they become injurious by creating confusion. Thus, in "The Curiosity Shop," we feel displeased

to find Master Humphrey commencing the tale in the first person, dropping this for the third, and concluding by introducing himself as the "single gentleman" who figures in the story. In spite of all the subsequent explanation we are forced to look upon him as two. All is confusion, and what makes it worse, is that Master Humphrey is painted as a lean and sober personage, while his second self is a fat, bluff, and boisterous old bachelor.

Yet the species of connexion in question, besides preserving the unity desired, *may* be made, if well managed, a source of consistent and agreeable interest. It has been so made by Thomas Moore, — the most skilful literary artist of his day, — perhaps of any day, — a man who stands in the singular and really wonderful predicament of being undervalued on account of the profusion with which he has scattered about him his good things. The brilliancies on any one page of "Lalla Rookh" would have sufficed to establish that very reputation which has been in a great measure self-dimmed by the galaxied lustre of the entire book. It seems that the horrid laws of political economy cannot be evaded even by the inspired, and that a perfect versification, a vigorous style, and a never tiring fancy, may, like the water we drink and die without, yet despise, be so plentifully set forth as to be absolutely of no value at all.

By far the greater portion of the volume now published is occupied with the tale of "The Curiosity Shop," narrated by Master Humphrey himself. The other stories are brief. The "Giant Chronicles" is the title of what appears to be meant for a series within a series, and we think this design doubly objectionable. The narrative of "The Bowyer," as well as of "John

Podgers," is not altogether worthy of Mr. Dickens. They were probably sent to press to supply a demand for copy, while he was occupied with "The Curiosity Shop." But the "Confession Found in a Prison in the Time of Charles the Second" is a paper of remarkable power, truly original in conception, and worked out with great ability.

The story of "The Curiosity Shop" is very simple. Two brothers of England, warmly attached to each other, love the same lady, without each other's knowledge. The younger at length discovers the elder's secret, and, sacrificing himself to fraternal affection, quits the country and resides for many years in a foreign land, where he amasses great wealth. Meantime his brother marries the lady, who soon dies, leaving an infant daughter — her perfect resemblance. In the widower's heart the mother lives again through the child. The latter grows up, marries unhappily, has a son and a daughter, loses her husband, and dies herself shortly afterward. The grandfather takes the orphans to his home. The boy spurns his protection, falls into bad courses, and becomes an outcast. The girl — in whom a third time lives the object of the old man's early choice — dwells with him alone, and is loved by him with a most doting affection. He has now become poor, and at length is reduced to keeping a shop for antiquities and curiosities. Finally, through his dread of involving the child in want, his mind becomes weakened. He thinks to redeem his fortune by gambling, borrows money for this purpose of a dwarf, who, at length, discovering the true state of the old man's affairs, seizes his furniture and turns him out of doors. The girl and himself set out, without further object than to relieve themselves of the sight of the hated city, upon

a weary pilgrimage, whose events form the basis or body of the tale. In fine, just as a peaceful retirement is secured for them, the child, wasted with fatigue and anxiety, dies. The grandfather, through grief, immediately follows her to the tomb. The younger brother, meantime, has received information of the old man's poverty, hastens to England, and arrives only in time to be at the closing scene of the tragedy.

This plot is the best which could have been constructed for the main object of the narrative. This object is the depicting of a fervent and dreamy love for the child on the part of the grandfather — such a love as would induce devotion to himself on the part of the orphan. We have thus a conception of a childhood, educated in utter ignorance of the world, filled with an affection which has been, through its brief existence, the sole source of its pleasures, and which has no part in the passion of a more mature youth for an object of its own age ; we have the idea of this childhood, full of ardent hopes, leading by the hand, forth from the heated and wearying city, into the green fields, to seek for bread, the decrepit imbecility of a doting and confiding old age, whose stern knowledge of man, and of the world it leaves behind, is now merged in the sole consciousness of receiving love and protection from that weakness it has loved and protected.

This conception is indeed most beautiful. It is simply and severely grand. The more fully we survey it, the more thoroughly are we convinced of the lofty character of that genius which gave it birth. That in its present simplicity of form, however, it was first entertained by Mr. Dickens, may well be doubted. That it was *not*, we are assured by the title which the tale bears. When in its commencement he called it

“The Old Curiosity Shop,” his design was far different from what we see it in its completion. It is evident that had he now to name the story, he would not so term it ; for the shop itself is a thing of an altogether collateral interest, and is spoken of merely in the beginning. This is only one among a hundred instances of the disadvantage under which the periodical novelist labours. When his work is done, he never fails to observe a thousand defects which he might have remedied, and a thousand alterations, in regard to the book as a whole, which might be made to its manifest improvement.

But if the conception of this story deserves praise, its execution is beyond all — and here the subject naturally leads us from the generalisation which is the proper province of the critic, into details among which it is scarcely fitting he should venture.

The Art of Mr. Dickens, although elaborate and great, seems only a happy modification of Nature. In this respect he differs remarkably from the author of “Night and Morning.” The latter, by excessive care and patient reflection, aided by much rhetorical knowledge and general information, has arrived at the capability of producing books which might be mistaken by ninety-nine readers out of a hundred for the genuine inspiration of genius. The former, by the promptings of the truest genius itself, has been brought to compose, and evidently without effort, works which have effected a long-sought consummation, which have rendered him the idol of the people, while defying and enchanting the critics. Mr. Bulwer, through art, has almost created a genius. Mr. Dickens, through genius, has perfected a standard from which Art itself will derive its essence, its rules.

When we speak in this manner of "The Old Curiosity Shop," we speak with entire deliberation, and know quite well what it is we assert. We do not mean to say that it is perfect, as a whole — this could not well have been the case under the circumstances of its composition. But we know that, in all the higher elements which go to make up literary greatness, it is supremely excellent. We think, for instance, that the introduction of Nelly's brother (and here we address those who have read the work) is supererogatory; that the character of Quilp would have been more in keeping had he been confined to petty and grotesque acts of malice; that his death should have been made the *immediate* consequence of his attempt at revenge upon Kit; and that after matters had been put fairly in train for this poetical justice, he should not have perished by an accident inconsequential upon his villany. We think, too, that there is an air of *ultra*-accident in the finally discovered relationship between Kit's master and the bachelor of the old church; that the sneering politeness put into the mouth of Quilp, with his manner of commencing a question which he wishes answered in the affirmative, with an affirmative interrogatory, instead of the ordinary negative one, are fashions borrowed from the author's own Fagin; that he has repeated himself in many other instances; that the practical tricks and love of mischief of the dwarf's boy are too nearly consonant with the traits of the master; that so much of the propensities of Swiveller as relate to his inapposite appropriation of odds and ends of verse is stolen from the generic loafer of our fellow-townsmen, Neal; and that the writer has suffered the overflowing kindness of his own bosom to mislead him in a very important point of art, when he endows so many of his *dramatis personæ* with a

warmth of feeling so very rare in reality. Above all, we acknowledge that the death of Nelly is excessively painful ; that it leaves a most distressing oppression of spirit upon the reader, and should, therefore, have been avoided.

But when we come to speak of the excellences of the tale, these defects appear really insignificant. It embodies more *originality* in every point, but in character especially, than any single work within our knowledge. There is the grandfather — a truly profound conception ; the gentle and lovely Nelly — we have discoursed of her before ; Quilp, with mouth like that of the panting dog (a bold idea which the engraver has neglected to embody), with his hilarious antics, his cowardice, and his very petty and spoilt-child-like malevolence ; Dick Swiveller, that prince of good-hearted, good-for-nothing, lazy, luxurious, poetical, brave, romantically generous, gallant, affectionate, and not over-and-above honest, “glorious Apollos” ; the marchioness, his bride ; Tom Codlin and his partner ; Miss Sally Brass, that “fine fellow” ; the pony that had an opinion of its own ; the boy that stood upon his head ; the sexton ; the man at the forge ; not forgetting the dancing dogs and baby Nubbles. There are other, admirably drawn characters ; but we note these for their remarkable originality, as well as their wonderful keeping, and the glowing colours in which they are painted. We have heard some of them called caricatures, but the charge is grossly ill-founded. No critical principle is more firmly based in reason than that a certain amount of exaggeration is essential in the proper depicting of truth itself. We do not paint an object to be true, but to appear true to the beholder. Were we to copy nature with accuracy, the object

copied would seem unnatural. The columns of the Greek temples, which convey the idea of absolute proportion, are very considerably thicker just beneath the capital than at the base. We regret that we have not left ourselves space in which to examine this whole question as it deserves. We must content ourselves with saying that caricature seldom exists (unless in so gross a form as to disgust at once) where the component parts are *in keeping*; and that the laugh excited by it, in any case, is radically distinct from that induced by a properly artistical *incongruity*—the source of all mirth. Were these creations of Mr. Dickens' really caricatures, they would not live in public estimation beyond the hour of their first survey. We regard them as *creations*, (that is to say, as original combinations of character), only not all of the highest order, because the elements employed are not always of the highest. In the instances of Nelly, the grandfather, the Sexton, and the man of the furnace, the force of the creative intellect could scarcely have been engaged with nobler material, and the result is that these personages belong to the most august regions of the *Ideal*.

In truth, the great feature of the "Curiosity Shop" is its chaste, vigorous, and glorious *imagination*. This is the one charm, all potent, which alone would suffice to compensate for a world more of error than Mr. Dickens ever committed. It is not only seen in the conception, and general handling of the story, or in the invention of character; but it pervades every sentence of the book. We recognize its prodigious influence in every inspired word. It is this which induces the reader, who is at all ideal, to pause frequently, to reread the occasionally quaint phrases, to muse in uncontrollable delight over thoughts which, while he

wonders he has never hit upon them before, he yet admits that he never has encountered. In fact, it is the wand of the enchanter.

Had we room to particularize, we would mention as points evincing most distinctly the ideality of the "Curiosity Shop": the picture of the shop itself—the newly born desire of the worldly old man for the peace of green fields—his whole character and conduct, in short—the schoolmaster, with his desolate fortunes, seeking affection in little children—the haunts of Quilp among the wharf-rats—the tinkering of the Punch-men among the tombs—the glorious scene where the man of the forge sits poring, at deep midnight, into that dread fire—again the whole conception of this character; and last and greatest, the stealthy approach of Nell to her death—her gradual sinking away on the journey to the village, so skilfully indicated rather than described—her pensive and prescient meditation—the fit of strange musing which came over her when the house *in which she was to die* first broke upon her sight—the description of this house, of the old church, and of the churchyard—everything in rigid consonance with the one impression to be conveyed—that deep meaningless well—the comments of the Sexton upon death, and upon his own secure life—this whole world of mournful yet peaceful idea merging, at length, into the decease of the child Nelly, and the uncomprehending despair of the grandfather. These concluding scenes are so drawn that human language, urged by human thought, could go no farther in the excitement of human feelings. And the pathos is of that best order which is relieved, in great measure, by ideality. Here the book has never been equalled—never approached except in one in-

stance, and that is in the case of the "Undine" of De La Motte Fouqué. The imagination is perhaps as great in this latter work ; but the pathos, although truly beautiful and deep, fails of much of its effect through the material from which it is wrought. The chief character, being endowed with purely fanciful attributes, cannot command our full sympathies, as can a simple denizen of earth. In saying, a page or so above, that the death of the child left too painful an impression, and should therefore have been avoided, we must, of course, be understood as referring to the work as a whole, and in respect to its general appreciation and popularity. The death, as recorded, is, we repeat, of the highest order of literary excellence ; yet while none can deny this fact, there are few who will be willing to read the concluding passages a second time.

Upon the whole we think the "Curiosity Shop" very much the best of the works of Mr. Dickens. It is scarcely possible to speak of it too well. It is in all respects a tale which will secure for its author the enthusiastic admiration of every man of genius.

The edition before us is handsomely printed, on excellent paper. The designs by Cattermole and Browne are many of them excellent ; some of them outrageously bad. Of course it is difficult for us to say how far the American engraver is in fault. In conclusion, we must enter our solemn protest against the final page full of little angels in small frocks, or dimity chemises.

“ And shall I never see thee more,
 My native lake, my much-loved shore,
 And must I bid a long adieu,
 My dear, my infant home, to you ?
 Shall I not see thee once again,
 My own, my beautiful Champlain ? ”

In the way of criticism upon these extraordinary compositions, Mr. Irving has attempted little, and, in general, he seems more affected by the loveliness and the purity of the child than even by the genius she has evinced, however highly he may have estimated this latter. In respect, however, to a poem entitled “ My Sister Lucretia,” he thus speaks, “ We have said that the example of her sister Lucretia was incessantly before her, and no better proof can be given of it than in the following lines, which breathe the heavenly aspirations of her pure young spirit, *in strains to us quite unearthly. We may have read poetry more artificially perfect in its structure, but never any more truly divine in its inspiration.* ” The nature of inspiration is disputable, and we will not pretend to assert that Mr. Irving is in the wrong. His words, however, in their hyperbole, do wrong to his subject, and would be hyperbole still, if applied to the most exalted poets of all time.

INCIDENTS OF TRAVEL IN CENTRAL AMERICA, ETC.
 BY JOHN L. STEPHENS. TWO VOLUMES. NEW
 YORK, HARPER AND BROTHERS.

[Text : *Grabam's Magazine*, August, 1841.]

MR. STEPHENS' former book, “ Incidents of Travel in Egypt, Arabia Petræa, and Palestine,” was everywhere well received, and gained him high reputation

—reputation not altogether well deserved. No one can deny his personal merits as a traveller, his enthusiasm, boldness, acuteness, courage in danger, and perseverance under difficulty. His manner of narration is also exceedingly pleasing—frank, unembarrassed, and direct, without pretension or attempt at effect. But neither were his reflections characterized by profundity, nor had he that degree of education which would have enabled him to travel, with benefit to himself or to others, through regions involving so much of historical importance as Egypt, and especially Arabia Petræa. Through a deficiency of previous information in regard to the moot points of this classical ground, he suffered many things to pass unexamined, whose examination would have thrown light upon history and lustre upon his own name. Our remarks here apply more particularly to the southern regions of Arabia. In regard to Arabia Petræa, he committed some errors of magnitude. Before entering upon his travels, he had been much interested in Keith's book upon the literal fulfilment of the Biblical prophecies. In this work the predictions of Isaiah, respecting the ancient Idumæa, are especially insisted upon, and the sentence, "*None shall pass through thee forever and ever,*" quoted as a remarkable instance of literal fulfilment. Dr. Keith states roundly that all attempts at passing through Idumæa have actually failed, and expressed his belief that such will always be the case. Mr. Stephens resolved to test this point, and congratulates himself and his readers upon the success of his attempt at traversing the disputed region from one end to the other. The truth is, however, that Arabia Petræa, through which he unquestionably did pass, *is not at all the Idumæa alluded to in the prophecies*, this latter lying much farther to

the eastward. The traveller had contented himself with the usual understanding upon this subject. In the matter of the prophecy both he and Dr. Keith might have spared themselves much trouble by an examination of the Biblical text in the original before founding a question upon it. In an article on this head, which appeared in the *New York Review*, we pointed out an obvious mistranslation in the Hebrew words of the prediction — a mistranslation which proves Mr. Stephens to have thrown away his courage and labour. The passage in Isaiah xxxiv. 10, which is rendered in our Bibles by the sentence, “And none shall pass through thee forever and ever,” runs in the original Hebrew thus : —

Lenetsach netsachim ein over bab.

Literally — *Lenetsach*, for an eternity; *netsachim*, of eternities; *ein*, not; *over*, moving about; *bab*, in it. For an eternity of eternities (there shall) not (be any one) moving about in it. The literal meaning of *bab* is “in it,” and not “through it.” The participle *over* refers to one moving to and fro, or up and down, and is the same phrase which is rendered “current,” as an epithet applied to money, in Genesis xxiii. 16. The prophet only intends to say that there shall be no marks of life in the land, no living being there, no one moving up and down in it. A similar mistranslation exists in regard to the prophecy in Ezekiel xxxv. 7, where death is threatened (according to the usual construction) to any traveller who shall *pass through*. The words are : —

*Wenatbati etb-bar Seir leshbimemiah ushemamah,
webickratti mimmennu over wasabbh.*

Literally, “And I will give the mountain Seir for a

desolation and a desolation, and I will cut off from it him that goeth and him that returneth." By "him that goeth and him that returneth" reference is had to the passers to and fro, to the inhabitants. The prophet speaks only of the general abandonment and desolation of the land.

We are not prepared to say that misunderstandings of this character will be found in the present "Incidents of Travel." Of Central America and her antiquities Mr. Stephens may know, and no doubt does know, as much as the most learned antiquarian. Here all is darkness. We have not yet received from the Messieurs Harper a copy of the book, and can only speak of its merits from general report and from the cursory perusal which has been afforded us by the politeness of a friend. The work is certainly a magnificent one—perhaps the most interesting book of travel ever published. An idea has gone abroad that the narrative is confined to descriptions and drawings of Palenque; but this is very far from the case. Mr. S. explored no less than six ruined cities. The "incidents," moreover, are numerous and highly amusing. The traveller visited these regions at a momentous time, during the civil war, in which Carrera and Morazan were participants. He encountered many dangers, and his hair-breadth escapes are particularly exciting.

NOTE. — For the accurate form of this scrap of Hebrew learning, see Professor Anthon's letter, Vol. XVII. — Ed.

THE MONTICELLO EDITION

THE COMPLETE WORKS OF
EDGAR ALLAN POE

Edited by JAMES A. HARRISON

PROFESSOR IN THE UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA



LITERARY CRITICISM

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bring our notice of the poem to a close. We feel grieved that our observations have been so much at random : — but at random, after all, is it alone possible to convey either the letter or the spirit of that, which, a mere jumble of incongruous nonsense, has neither beginning, middle, nor end. We should be delighted to proceed — but how ? to applaud — but what ? Surely not this trumpery declamation, this maudlin sentiment, this metaphor run-mad, this twaddling verbiage, this halting and doggrel rhythm, this unintelligible rant and cant ! “ Slid, if these be your passados and montantes, we’ll have none of them.” Mr. Mathews, you have clearly mistaken your vocation, and your effusion as little deserves the title of *poem*, (oh sacred name !) as did the rocks of the royal forest of Fontainebleau that of “ *mes déserts* ” bestowed upon them by Francis the First. In bidding you adieu we commend to your careful consideration the remark of M. Timon, “ *que le Ministre de l’ Instruction Publique doit lui-même savoir parler Français.* ”

BARNABY RUDGE. BY CHARLES DICKENS, (BOZ)
 AUTHOR OF “ THE OLD CURIOSITY SHOP,” “ PICK-
 WICK,” “ OLIVER TWIST,” &c., &c. WITH NU-
 MEROUS ILLUSTRATIONS, BY CATTERMOLÉ, BROWNE
 & SIBSON. LEA & BLANCHARD : PHILADELPHIA.

[Text : *Graham’s Magazine*, February, 1842 ; cf. *Philadelphia Saturday Evening Post*, May 1, 1841.]

WE often hear it said, of this or of that proposition, that it may be good in theory, but will not answer in

practice ; and in such assertions we find the substance of all the sneers at Critical Art which so gracefully curl the upper lips of a tribe which is beneath it. We mean the small geniuses — the literary Titmice — animalculæ which judge of merit solely by *result*, and boast of the solidity, tangibility and infallibility of the test which they employ. The worth of a work is most accurately estimated, they assure us, by the number of those who peruse it ; and “ does a book sell ? ” is a query embodying, in their opinion, all that need be said or sung on the topic of its fitness for sale. We should as soon think of maintaining, in the presence of these creatures, the *dictum* of Anaxagoras, that snow is black, as of disputing, for example, the profundity of that genius which, in a run of five hundred nights, has rendered itself evident in “ London Assurance.” “ What,” cry they, “ are critical precepts to us, or to anybody ? Were we to observe all the critical rules in creation we should still be unable to write a good book ” — a point, by the way, which we shall not now pause to deny. “ Give us *results*,” they vociferate, “ for we are plain men of common sense. We contend for fact instead of fancy — for practice in opposition to theory.”

The mistake into which the Titmice have been innocently led, however, is precisely that of dividing the practice which they would uphold, from the theory to which they would object. They should have been told in infancy, and thus prevented from exposing themselves in old age, that theory and practice are in so much *one*, that the former implies or includes the latter. A theory is only good as such, in proportion to its reducibility to practice. If the practice fail, it is because the theory is imperfect. To say what they

are in the daily habit of saying — that such or such a matter may be good in theory but is false in practice, — is to perpetrate a bull — to commit a paradox — to state a contradiction in terms — in plain words, to tell a lie *which is a lie at sight* to the understanding of anything bigger than a Titmouse.

But we have no idea, just now, of persecuting the Tittlebats by too close a scrutiny into their little opinions. It is not our purpose, for example, to press them with so grave a weapon as the *argumentum ad absurdum*, or to ask them why, if the popularity of a book be in fact the measure of its worth, we should not be at once in condition to admit the inferiority of “Newton’s Principia” to “Hoyle’s Games;” of “Earnest Maltravers” to “Jack-the-Giant-Killer,” or “Jack Sheppard,” or “Jack Brag;” and of “Dick’s Christian Philosopher” to “Charlotte Temple,” or the “Memoirs of de Grammont,” or to one or two dozen other works which must be nameless. Our present design is but to speak, at some length, of a book which in so much concerns the Titmice, that it affords them the very kind of demonstration which they chiefly affect — *practical* demonstration — of the fallacy of one of their favorite dogmas; we mean the dogma that no work of fiction can fully suit, at the same time, the critical and the popular taste; in fact, that the disregarding or contravening of Critical Rule is absolutely essential to success, beyond a certain and very limited extent, with the public at large. And if, in the course of our random observations — for we have no space for systematic review — it should appear, incidentally, that the vast popularity of “Barnaby Rudge” must be regarded less as the measure of its value, than as the legitimate and inevitable result

of certain well-understood critical propositions reduced by genius into practice, there will appear nothing more than what has before become apparent in the "Vicar of Wakefield" of Goldsmith, or in the "Robinson Crusoe" of De Foe — nothing more, in fact, than what is a truism to all but the Titmice.

Those who know us will not, from what is here premised, suppose it our intention, to enter into any wholesale *laudation* of "Barnaby Rudge." In truth, our design may appear, at a cursory glance, to be very different indeed. Boccalini, in his "Advertisements from Parnassus," tells us that a critic once presented Apollo with a severe censure upon an excellent poem. The God asked him for the beauties of the work. He replied that he only troubled himself about the errors. Apollo presented him with a sack of unwinnowed wheat, and bade him pick out all the chaff for his pains. Now we have not fully made up our minds that the God was in the right. We are not sure that the limit of critical duty is not very generally misapprehended. *Excellence* may be considered an axiom, or a proposition which becomes self-evident just in proportion to the clearness or precision with which it is *put*. If it fairly exists, in this sense, it requires no farther elucidation. It is not excellence if it need to be demonstrated as such. To point out too particularly the beauties of a work, is to admit, tacitly, that these beauties are not wholly admirable. Regarding, then, excellence as that which is capable of self-manifestation, it but remains for the critic to show when, where, and how it fails in becoming manifest; and, in this showing, it will be the fault of the book itself if what of beauty it contains be not, at least, placed in the fairest light. In a word, we may assume, notwithstanding a

vast deal of pitiable cant upon this topic, that in pointing out frankly the errors of a work, we do nearly all that is critically necessary in displaying its merits. In teaching what perfection *is*, how, in fact, shall we more rationally proceed than in specifying what it *is not*?

The plot of “Barnaby Rudge” runs thus: About a hundred years ago, Geoffrey Haredale and John Chester were schoolmates in England—the former being the scape-goat and drudge of the latter. Leaving school, the boys become friends, with much of the old understanding. Haredale loves; Chester deprives him of his mistress. The one cherishes the most deadly hatred; the other merely contemns and avoids. By routes widely different both attain mature age. Haredale, remembering his old love, and still cherishing his old hatred, remains a bachelor and is poor. Chester, among other crimes, is guilty of the seduction and heartless abandonment of a gipsy-girl, who, after the desertion of her lover, gives birth to a son, and, falling into evil courses, is finally hung at Tyburn. The son is received and taken charge of, at an inn called the Maypole, upon the borders of Epping forest, and about twelve miles from London. This inn is kept by one John Willet, a burley-headed and very obtuse little man, who has a son, Joe, and who employs his *protégé*, under the single name of Hugh, as perpetual hostler at the inn. Hugh’s father marries, in the meantime, a rich *parvenue*, who soon dies, but not before having presented Mr. Chester with a boy, Edward. The father, (a thoroughly selfish man-of-the-world, whose model is Chesterfield,) educates this son at a distance, seeing him rarely, and calling him to the paternal residence, at London, only when he

has attained the age of twenty-four or five. He, the father, has, long ere this time, spent the fortune brought him by his wife, having been living upon his wits and a small annuity for some eighteen years. The son is recalled chiefly that by marrying an heiress, on the strength of his own personal merit and the reputed wealth of old Chester, he may enable the latter to continue his gayeties in old age. But of this design, as well as of his poverty, Edward is kept in ignorance for some three or four years after his recall; when the father's discovery of what he considers an inexpedient love-entanglement on the part of the son, induces him to disclose the true state of his affairs, as well as the real tenor of his intentions.

Now, the love-entanglement of which we speak, is considered inexpedient by Mr. Chester for two reasons — the first of which is, that the lady beloved is the orphan niece of his old enemy, Haredale, and the second is, that Haredale (although in circumstances which have been much and very unexpectedly improved during the preceding twenty-two years) is still insufficiently wealthy to meet the views of Mr. Chester.

We say that, about twenty-two years before the period in question, there came an unlooked-for change in the worldly circumstances of Haredale. This gentleman has an elder brother, Reuben, who has long possessed the family inheritance of the Haredales, residing at a mansion called "The Warren," not far from the Maypole-Inn, which is itself a portion of the estate. Reuben is a widower, with one child, a daughter, Emma. Besides this daughter, there are living with him a gardener, a steward (whose name is Rudge) and *two* women servants, one of whom is the wife of

Rudge. On the night of the nineteenth of March, 1733, Rudge murders his master for the sake of a large sum of money which he is known to have in possession. During the struggle, Mr. Haredale grasps the cord of an alarm-bell which hangs within his reach, but succeeds in sounding it only once or twice, when it is severed by the knife of the ruffian, who then, completing his bloody business, and securing the money, proceeds to quit the chamber. While doing this, however, he is disconcerted by meeting the gardener, whose pallid countenance evinces suspicion of the deed committed. The murderer is thus forced to kill his fellow servant. Having done so, the idea strikes him of transferring the burden of the crime from himself. He dresses the corpse of the gardener in his own clothes, puts upon its finger his own ring and in its pocket his own watch — then drags it to a pond in the grounds, and throws it in. He now returns to the house, and, disclosing all to his wife, requests her to become a partner in his flight. Horror-stricken, she falls to the ground. He attempts to raise her. She seizes his wrist, *staining her hand with blood in the attempt*. She renounces him forever; yet promises to conceal the crime. Alone, he flees the country. The next morning, Mr. Haredale being found murdered, and the steward and gardener being both missing, both are suspected. Mrs. Rudge leaves The Warren, and retires to an obscure lodging in London (where she lives upon an annuity allowed her by Haredale) having given birth, *on the very day after the murder*, to a son, Barnaby Rudge, who proves an idiot, who bears upon his wrist a red mark, and who is born possessed with a maniacal horror of blood.

Some months since the assassination having elapsed,

what appears to be the corpse of Rudge is discovered, and the outrage is attributed to the gardener. Yet not universally : — for, as Geoffrey Haredale comes into possession of the estate, there are not wanting suspicions (fomented by Chester) of his own participation in the deed. This taint of suspicion, acting upon his hereditary gloom, together with the natural grief and horror of the atrocity, embitters the whole life of Haredale. He secludes himself at The Warren, and acquires a monomaniac acerbity of temper relieved only by love of his beautiful niece.

Time wears away. Twenty-two years pass by. The niece has ripened in womanhood, and loves young Chester without the knowledge of her uncle or the youth's father. Hugh has grown a stalwart man — the type of man *the animal*, as his father is of man the ultra-civilized. Rudge, the murderer, returns, urged to his undoing by Fate. He appears at the Maypole and inquires stealthily of the circumstances which have occurred at The Warren in his absence. He proceeds to London, discovers the dwelling of his wife, threatens her with the betrayal of her idiot son into vice and extorts from her the bounty of Haredale. Revolting at such appropriation of such means, the widow, with Barnaby, again seeks The Warren, renounces the annuity, and, refusing to assign any reason for her conduct, states her intention of quitting London forever, and of burying herself in some obscure retreat — a retreat which she begs Haredale not to attempt discovering. When he seeks her in London the next day, she is gone ; and there are no tidings, either of herself or of Barnaby ; *until the expiration of five years* — which bring the time up to that of the celebrated “ No Popery ” Riots of Lord George Gordon.

In the meanwhile, and immediately subsequent to the reappearance of Rudge; Haredale and the elder Chester, each heartily desirous of preventing the union of Edward and Emma, have entered into a covenant, the result of which is that, by means of treachery on the part of Chester, permitted on that of Haredale, the lovers misunderstand each other and are estranged. Joe, also, the son of the inn-keeper, Willet, having been coquetted with, to too great an extent, by Dolly Varden, (the pretty daughter of one Gabriel Varden, a locksmith of Clerkenwell, London) and having been otherwise maltreated at home, enlists in his Majesty's army and is carried beyond seas, to America; not returning until towards the close of the riots. Just before their commencement, Rudge, in a midnight prowling about the scene of his atrocity, is encountered by an individual who had been familiar with him in earlier life, while living at The Warren. This individual, terrified at what he supposes, very naturally, to be the ghost of the murdered Rudge, relates his adventure to his companions at the Maypole, and John Willet conveys the intelligence, forthwith, to Mr. Haredale. Connecting the apparition, in his own mind, with the peculiar conduct of Mrs. Rudge, this gentleman imbibes a suspicion, at once, of the true state of affairs. This suspicion (which he mentions to no one) is, moreover, very strongly confirmed by an occurrence happening to Varden, the locksmith, who, visiting the woman late one night, finds her in communion of a nature apparently most confidential, with a ruffian whom the locksmith knows to be such, without knowing the man himself. Upon an attempt, on the part of Varden, to seize this ruffian, he is thwarted by Mrs. R.; and upon Haredale's inquiring minutely

into the personal appearance of the man, he is found to accord with Rudge. We have already shown that the ruffian was in fact Rudge himself. Acting upon the suspicion thus aroused, Haredale watches, by night, alone, in the deserted house formerly occupied by Mrs. R. in hope of here coming upon the murderer, and makes other exertions with the view of arresting him ; but all in vain.

It is, also, at the conclusion of *the five years*, that the hitherto uninvaded retreat of Mrs. Rudge is disturbed by a message from her husband, demanding money. He has discovered her abode by accident. Giving him what she has at the time, she afterwards eludes him, and hastens, with Barnaby, to bury herself in the crowd of London, until she can find opportunity again to seek retreat in some more distant region of England. But the riots have now begun. The idiot is beguiled into joining the mob, and, becoming separated from his mother (who, growing ill through grief, is borne to a hospital) meets with his old playmate Hugh, and becomes with him a ringleader in the rebellion.

The riots proceed. A conspicuous part is borne in them by one Simon Tappertit, a fantastic and conceited little apprentice of Varden's, and a sworn enemy to Joe Willet, who has rivalled him in the affection of Dolly. A hangman, Dennis, is also very busy amid the mob. Lord George Gordon, and his secretary, Gashford, with John Grueby, his servant, appear, of course, upon the scene. Old Chester, who, during the five years, has become Sir John, instigates Gashford, who has received personal insult from Haredale, (a catholic and consequently obnoxious to the mob) instigates Gashford to procure the burning of The Warren, and to abduct Emma during the excitement

ensuing. The mansion is burned, (Hugh, who also fancies himself wronged by Haredale, being chief actor in the outrage) and Miss H. carried off, in company with Dolly, who had long lived with her, and whom Tappertit abducts upon his own responsibility. Rudge, in the meantime, finding the eye of Haredale upon him, (since he has become aware of the watch kept nightly at his wife's,) goaded by the dread of solitude, and fancying that his sole chance of safety lies in joining the rioters, hurries upon their track to the doomed Warren. He arrives too late—the mob have departed. Skulking about the ruins, he is discovered by Haredale, and finally captured without a struggle, within the glowing walls of the very chamber in which the deed was committed. He is conveyed to prison, where he meets and recognises Barnaby, who had been captured as a rioter. The mob assail and burn the jail. The father and son escape. Betrayed by Dennis, both are again retaken, and Hugh shares their fate. In Newgate, Dennis, through accident, discovers the parentage of Hugh, and an effort is made in vain to interest Chester in behalf of his son. Finally, Varden procures the pardon of Barnaby; but Hugh, Rudge and Dennis, are hung. At the eleventh hour, Joe returns from abroad with one arm. In company with Edward Chester, he performs prodigies of valor (during the last riots) on behalf of the government. The two, with Haredale and Varden, rescue Emma and Dolly. A double marriage, of course, takes place; for Dolly has repented her fine airs, and the prejudices of Haredale are overcome. Having killed Chester in a duel, he quits England forever, and ends his days in the seclusion of an Italian convent. Thus, after summary disposal of the understrappers, ends the drama of “Barnaby Rudge.”

We have given, as may well be supposed, but a very meagre outline of the story, and we have given it in the simple or natural sequence. That is to say, we have related the events, as nearly as might be, in the order of their occurrence. But this order would by no means have suited the purpose of the novelist, whose design has been to maintain the secret of the murder, and the consequent mystery which encircles Rudge, and the actions of his wife, until the catastrophe of his discovery by Haredale. The *thesis* of the novel may thus be regarded as based upon curiosity. Every point is so arranged as to perplex the reader, and whet his desire for elucidation : — for example, the first appearance of Rudge at the Maypole ; his questions ; his persecution of Mrs. R. ; the ghost seen by the frequenter of the Maypole ; and Haredale's impressive conduct in consequence. What *we* have told, in the very beginning of our digest, in regard to the shifting of the gardener's dress, is sedulously kept from the reader's knowledge until he learns it from Rudge's own confession in jail. We say sedulously ; for, *the intention once known*, the *traces* of the design can be found upon every page. There is an amusing and exceedingly ingenious instance at page 145, where Solomon Daisy describes his adventure with the ghost.

“ It was a ghost — a spirit,” cried Daisy.

“ Whose ? ” they all three asked together.

In the excess of his emotion (for he fell back trembling in his chair, and waved his hand as if entreating them to question him no farther) *his answer was lost upon all* but old John Willet, who happened to be seated close beside him.

“ Who ! ” cried Parkes and Tom Cobb — “ Who was it ? ”

"Gentlemen," said Mr. Willet, after a long pause, "you need n't ask. The likeness of a murdered man. This is the nineteenth of March."

A profound silence ensued.

The impression here skilfully conveyed is, that the ghost seen is that of Reuben Haredale; and the mind of the not-too-acute reader is at once averted from the true state of the case — from the murderer, Rudge, living in the body.

Now there can be no question that, by such means as these, many points which are comparatively insipid in the natural sequence of our digest, and which would have been comparatively insipid even if given in full detail in a natural sequence, are endued with the interest of mystery; but neither can it be denied that a vast many more points are at the same time deprived of all effect, and become null, through the impossibility of comprehending them without the key. The author, who, cognizant of his plot, writes with this cognizance continually operating upon him, and thus *writes to himself* in spite of himself, does not, of course, feel that much of what is effective to his own informed perception, must necessarily be lost upon his uninformed readers; and he himself is never in condition, as regards his own work, to bring the matter to test. But the reader may easily satisfy himself of the validity of our objection. Let him *re-peruse* "Barnaby Rudge," and with a pre-comprehension of the mystery, these points of which we speak break out in all directions like stars, and throw quadruple brilliance over the narrative — a brilliance which a correct taste will at once declare unprofitably sacrificed at the shrine of the keenest interest of mere mystery.

The design of *mystery*, however, being once determined upon by an author, it becomes imperative, first, that no undue or inartistical means be employed to conceal the secret of the plot ; and, secondly, that the secret be well kept. Now, when, at page 16, we read that “the body of *poor Mr. Rudge, the steward, was found*” months after the outrage, &c., we see that Mr. Dickens has been guilty of no misdemeanor against Art in stating what was not the fact ; since the falsehood is put into the mouth of Solomon Daisy, and given merely as the impression of this individual and of the public. The writer has not asserted it in his own person, but ingeniously conveyed an idea (false in itself, yet a belief in which is necessary for the effect of the tale) by the mouth of one of his characters. The case is different, however, when Mrs. Rudge is repeatedly denominated “the widow.” It is the author who, himself, frequently so terms her. This is disingenuous and inartistical : accidentally so, of course. We speak of the matter merely by way of illustrating our point, and as an oversight on the part of Mr. Dickens.

That the secret be well kept is obviously necessary. A failure to preserve it until the proper moment of *dénouement*, throws all into confusion, so far as regards the *effect* intended. If the mystery leak out, against the author’s will, his purposes are immediately at odds and ends ; for he proceeds upon the supposition that certain impressions *do* exist, which do *not* exist, in the mind of his readers. We are not prepared to say, so positively as we could wish, whether, by the public at large, the whole *mystery* of the murder committed by Rudge, with the identity of the Maypole ruffian with Rudge himself, was fathomed at any period previous

to the period intended, or, if so, whether at a period so early as materially to interfere with the interest designed; but we are forced, through sheer modesty, to suppose this the case; since, by ourselves individually, the secret was distinctly understood immediately upon the perusal of the story of Solomon Daisy, which occurs at the seventh page of this volume of three hundred and twenty-three. In the number of the "Philadelphia Saturday Evening Post," for May the 1st, 1841, (the tale having then only begun) will be found a *prospective notice* of some length, in which we made use of the following words:

"That Barnaby is the son of the murderer may not appear evident to our readers—but we will explain. The person murdered is Mr. Reuben Haredale. He was found assassinated in his bed-chamber. His steward, (Mr. Rudge, senior,) and his gardener (name not mentioned) are missing. At first both are suspected. 'Some months afterward'—here we use the words of the story—'the steward's body, scarcely to be recognised but by his clothes, and the watch and ring he wore—was found at the bottom of a piece of water in the grounds, with a deep gash in the breast where he had been stabbed by a knife. He was only partly dressed; and all people agreed that he had been sitting up reading in his own room, where there were many traces of blood, and was suddenly fallen upon and killed, before his master.'

"Now, be it observed, it is not the author himself who asserts that *the steward's body was found*; he has put the words in the mouth of one of his characters. His design is to make it appear, in the *dénouement*, that the steward, Rudge, first murdered the gardener, then went to his master's chamber, murdered *him*, was interrupted by his (Rudge's) wife, whom he seized and held *by the wrist*, to prevent her giving the alarm—that he then, after possessing himself of the booty desired, returned to the gar-

dener's room, exchanged clothes with him, put upon the corpse his own watch and ring, and secreted it where it was afterwards discovered at so late a period that the features could not be identified."

The differences between our pre-conceived ideas, as here stated, and the actual facts of the story, will be found immaterial. The gardener was murdered, not before but after his master; and that Rudge's wife seized *him* by the wrist, instead of his seizing *her*, has so much the air of a mistake on the part of Mr. Dickens, that we can scarcely speak of our own version as erroneous. The grasp of a murderer's bloody hand on the wrist of a woman *enceinte*, would have been more likely to produce the effect described (and this every one will allow) than the grasp of the hand of the woman, upon the wrist of the assassin. We may therefore say of our supposition as Talleyrand said of some cockney's bad French — *que s'il n'est¹ pas Français, assurément donc il le doit être* — that if we did not rightly prophesy, yet, at least, our prophecy *should have been* right.

We are informed in the Preface to "Barnaby Rudge" that "no account of the Gordon Riots having been introduced into any work of fiction, and the subject presenting very extraordinary and remarkable features," our author "was led to project this tale." But for this distinct announcement (for Mr. Dickens can scarcely have deceived himself) we should have looked upon the Riots as altogether an afterthought. It is evident that they have no necessary connexion with the story. In our digest, which carefully includes all *essentials* of the plot, we have dismissed the

¹ Poe wrote *soit*, which is incorrect. — Ed.

doings of the mob in a paragraph. The whole event of the drama would have proceeded as well without as with them. They have even the appearance of being *forcibly* introduced. In our compendium above, it will be seen that we emphasised several allusions to an interval of *five years*. The action is brought up to a certain point. The train of events is, so far, uninterrupted — nor is there any apparent need of interruption — yet all the characters are now thrown forward for a period of *five years*. And why? We ask in vain. It is not to bestow upon the lovers a more decorous maturity of age — for this is the only possible idea which suggests itself — Edward Chester is already eight-and-twenty, and Emma Haredale would, in America at least, be upon the list of old maids. No — there is no such reason; nor does there appear to be any one more plausible than that, as it is now the year of our Lord 1775, an advance of five years will bring the *dramatis personæ* up to a very remarkable period, affording an admirable opportunity for their display — the period, in short, of the “No Popery” riots. This was the idea with which we were forcibly impressed in perusal, and which nothing less than Mr. Dickens’ positive assurance to the contrary would have been sufficient to eradicate.

It is, perhaps, but one of a thousand instances of the disadvantages, both to the author and the public, of the present absurd fashion of periodical novel-writing, that our author had not sufficiently considered or determined upon *any* particular plot when he began the story now under review. In fact, we see, or fancy that we see, numerous traces of indecision — traces which a dexterous supervision of the complete work might have enabled him to erase. We have already

spoken of the intermission of a lustrum. The opening speeches of old Chester are by far too *truly* gentlemanly for his subsequent character. The wife of Varden, also, is too wholesale a shrew to be converted into the quiet wife — the original design was to punish her. At page 16, we read thus — Solomon Daisy is telling his story :

“ I put as good a face upon it as I could, and muffling myself up, started out with a lighted lantern in one hand and the key of the church in the other ” — at this point of the narrative, the dress of the strange man rustled as if he had turned to hear more distinctly.

Here the design is to call the reader's attention to a *point* in the tale ; but no subsequent explanation is made. Again, a few lines below —

The houses were all shut up, and the folks in doors, and perhaps there is only one man in the world who knows how dark it really was.

Here the intention is still more evident, but there is no result. Again, at page 54, the idiot draws Mr. Chester to the window, and directs his attention to the clothes hanging upon the lines in the yard —

“ Look down,” he said softly ; “ do you mark how they whisper in each other's ears, then dance and leap to make believe they are in sport ? Do you see how they stop for a moment, when they think there is no one looking, and mutter among themselves again ; and then how they roll and gambol, delighted with the mischief they've been plotting ? Look at 'em now ! See how they whirl and plunge. And now they stop again, and whisper cautiously together — little thinking, mind, how often I have lain upon the ground and watched them. I say — what is it that they plot and hatch ? Do you know ? ”

Upon perusal of these ravings, we at once supposed them to have allusion to some *real* plotting; and even now we cannot force ourselves to believe them not so intended. They suggested the opinion that Haredale himself would be implicated in the murder, and that the counsellings alluded to might be those of that gentleman with Rudge. It is by no means impossible that some such conception wavered in the mind of the author. At page 32 we have a confirmation of our idea, when Varden endeavors to arrest the murderer in the house of his wife —

“Come back — come back !” exclaimed the woman, wrestling with and clasping him. “Do not touch him on your life. *He carries other lives beside his own.*”

The *dénouement* fails to account for this exclamation.

In the beginning of the story much emphasis is placed upon the *two* female servants of Haredale, and upon his journey to and from London, as well as upon his wife. We have merely said, in our digest, that he was a widower, italicizing the remark. All these other points are, in fact, singularly irrelevant, in the supposition that the original design has not undergone modification.

Again, at page 57, when Haredale talks of “his dismantled and beggared hearth,” we cannot help fancying that the author had in view some different wrong, or series of wrongs, perpetrated by Chester, than any which appear in the end. This gentleman, too, takes extreme and frequent pains to acquire dominion over the rough Hugh — this matter is particularly insisted upon by the novelist — we look, of course, for some important result — but the filching of

a letter is nearly all that is accomplished. That Barnaby's delight in the desperate scenes of the rebellion, is inconsistent with his horror of blood, will strike every reader; and this inconsistency seems to be the consequence of the *afterthought* upon which we have already commented. In fact the title of the work, the elaborate and pointed manner of the commencement, the impressive description of The Warren, and especially of Mrs. Rudge, go far to show that Mr. Dickens has really deceived himself — that the soul of the plot, as originally conceived, was the murder of Haredale, with the subsequent discovery of the murderer in Rudge — but that this idea was afterwards abandoned, or rather suffered to be merged in that of the Popish Riots. The result has been most unfavorable. That which, of itself, would have proved highly effective, has been rendered nearly null by its situation. In the multitudinous outrage and horror of the Rebellion, the *one* atrocity is utterly whelmed and extinguished.

The reasons of this deflection from the first purpose appear to us self-evident. One of them we have already mentioned. The other is that our author discovered, when too late, that *he had anticipated, and thus rendered valueless, his chief effect*. This will be readily understood. The particulars of the assassination being withheld, the strength of the narrator is put forth, in the beginning of the story, to *whet curiosity* in respect to these particulars; and, so far, he is but in proper pursuance of his main design. But from this intention he unwittingly passes into the error of *exaggerating anticipation*. And error though it be, it is an error wrought with consummate skill. What, for example, could more vividly enhance our impres-

sion of the unknown horror enacted, than the deep and enduring gloom of Haredale — than the Pilot's inborn awe of blood — or, especially, than the expression of countenance so imaginatively attributed to Mrs. Rudge — “the capacity for expressing terror — something only dimly seen, but never absent for a moment — the shadow of some look to which an instant of intense and most unutterable horror only could have given rise ?” But it is a condition of the human fancy that the promises of such words are irredeemable. In the notice before mentioned we thus spoke upon this topic : —

This is a conception admirably adapted to whet curiosity in respect to the character of that event which is hinted at as forming the basis of the story. But this observation should not fail to be made — that the anticipation must surpass the reality ; that no matter how terrific be the circumstances which, in the *dénouement* shall appear to have occasioned the expression of countenance worn habitually by Mrs. Rudge, still they will not be able to satisfy the mind of the reader. He will surely be disappointed. The skilful intimation of horror held out by the artist, produces an effect which will deprive his conclusion of all. These intimations — these dark hints of some uncertain evil — are often rhetorically praised as effective — but are only justly so praised where there is *no dénouement* whatever — where the reader's imagination is left to clear up the mystery for itself — and this is not the design of Mr. Dickens.

And, in fact, our author was not long in seeing his precipitancy. He had placed himself in a dilemma from which even his high genius could not extricate him. He at once shifts the main interest — and in truth we do not see what better he could have done. The reader's attention becomes absorbed in the riots,

and he fails to observe that what should have been the true catastrophe of the novel, is exceedingly feeble and ineffective.

A few cursory remarks : — Mr. Dickens fails peculiarly in *pure* narration. See, for example, page 296, where the connexion of Hugh and Chester is detailed by Varden. See also in “The Curiosity-Shop,” where, when the result is fully known, so many words are occupied in explaining the relationship of the brothers.

The effect of the present narrative might have been materially increased by confining the action within the limits of London. The “Notre Dame” of Hugo affords a fine example of the force which can be gained by concentration, or unity of place. The unity of time is also sadly neglected, to no purpose, in “Barnaby Rudge.”

That Rudge should so long and so deeply feel the sting of conscience is inconsistent with his brutality.

On page 15, the interval elapsing between the murder and Rudge’s return, is variously stated at twenty-two and twenty-four years. It may be asked why the inmates of “The Warren” failed to hear the alarm-bell which was heard by Solomon Daisy.

The idea of persecution by being tracked, as by blood-hounds, from one spot of quietude to another, is a favorite one with Mr. Dickens. Its effect cannot be denied.

The stain upon Barnaby’s wrist, caused by fright in the mother at so late a period of gestation as one day before mature parturition, is shockingly at war with all medical experience.

When Rudge, escaped from prison, unshackled, with money at command, is in agony at his wife’s

refusal to perjure herself for his salvation — is it not *queer* that he should demand any other salvation than lay in his heels?

Some of the conclusions of chapters — see pages 40 and 100 — seem to have been written for the mere purpose of illustrating tail-pieces.

The leading idiosyncrasy of Mr. Dickens' remarkable humor, is to be found in his *translating the language of gesture, or action, or tone*. For example —

“The cronies nodded to each other, and Mr. Parkes remarked in an undertone, shaking his head meanwhile, *as who should say* ‘let no man contradict me, for I won't believe him,’ that Willet was in amazing force to-night.”

The riots form a series of vivid pictures never surpassed. At page 17, the road between London and the Maypole is described as a horribly rough and dangerous, and at page 97, as an uncommonly smooth and convenient one. At page 116, how comes Chester in possession of the key of Mrs. Rudge's vacated house?

Mr. Dickens' English is usually pure. His most remarkable error is that of employing the adverb “directly” in the sense of “as soon as.” For example — “Directly he arrived, Rudge said,” &c. Bulwer is uniformly guilty of the same blunder.

It is observable that so original a stylist as our author should occasionally lapse into a gross imitation of what, itself, is a gross imitation. We mean the manner of Lamb — a manner based in the Latin construction. For example —

In summer time its pumps suggest to thirsty idlers springs cooler and more sparkling and deeper than other wells; and as they trace the spillings of full pitchers on

the heated ground, they snuff the freshness, and, sighing, cast sad looks towards the Thames, and think of baths and boats, and saunter on, despondent.

The wood-cut *designs* which accompany the edition before us are occasionally good. The copper engravings are pitifully ill-conceived and ill-drawn; and not only this, but are in broad contradiction of the wood-designs and text.

There are many *coincidences* wrought into the narrative — those, for example, which relate to the nineteenth of March; the dream of Barnaby, respecting his father, at the very period when his father is actually in the house; and the dream of Haredale previous to his final meeting with Chester. These things are meant to *insinuate* a fatality which, very properly, is not expressed in plain terms — but it is questionable whether the story derives more in ideality from their introduction, than it might have gained of verisimilitude from their omission.

The *dramatis personæ* sustain the high fame of Mr. Dickens as a delineator of character. Miggs, the disconsolate handmaiden of Varden; Tappertit, his chivalrous apprentice; Mrs. Varden, herself; and Dennis, a hangman — may be regarded as original caricatures, of the highest merit as such. Their traits are founded in acute observation of nature, but are exaggerated to the utmost admissible extent. Miss Haredale and Edward Chester are commonplaces — no effort has been made in their behalf. Joe Willet is a naturally drawn country youth. Stagg is a mere make-weight. Gashford and Gordon are truthfully copied. Dolly Varden is truth itself. Haredale, Rudge and Mrs. Rudge, are impressive only through the circumstances which surround them. Sir John Chester, is, of course, not

original, but is a vast improvement upon all his predecessors — his heartlessness is rendered somewhat too amusing, and his end too much that of a man of honor. Hugh is a noble conception. His fierce exultation in his animal powers ; his subserviency to the smooth Chester ; his mirthful contempt and patronage of Tappetit, and his *brutal* yet firm courage in the hour of death — form a picture to be set in diamonds. Old Willet is not surpassed by any character even among those of Dickens. He is nature itself — yet a step farther would have placed him in the class of caricatures. His combined conceit and obtuseness are indescribably droll, and his peculiar misdirected energy when aroused, is one of the most exquisite touches in all humorous painting. We shall never forget how heartily we laughed at his shaking Solomon Daisy and threatening to put him behind the fire, because the unfortunate little man was too much frightened to articulate. Varden is one of those free, jovial, honest fellows at charity with all mankind, whom our author is so fond of depicting. And lastly, Barnaby, the hero of the tale — in him we have been somewhat disappointed. We have already said that his delight in the atrocities of the Rebellion is at variance with his horror of blood. But this horror of blood is *inconsequential* ; and of this we complain. Strongly insisted upon in the beginning of the narrative, it produces no adequate result. And here how fine an opportunity has Mr. Dickens missed ! The conviction of the assassin, after the lapse of twenty-two years, might easily have been brought about through his son's mysterious awe of blood — *an awe created in the unborn by the assassination itself* — and this would have been one of the finest possible embodiments of the idea which

we are accustomed to attach to "poetical justice." The raven, too, intensely amusing as it is, might have been made, more than we now see it, a portion of the conception of the fantastic Barnaby. Its croakings might have been *prophetically* heard in the course of the drama. Its character might have performed, in regard to that of the idiot, much the same part as does, in music, the accompaniment in respect to the air. Each might have been distinct. Each might have differed remarkably from the other. Yet between them there might have been wrought an analogical resemblance, and although each might have existed apart, they might have formed together a whole which would have been imperfect in the absence of either.

From what we have here said — and, perhaps, said without due deliberation — (for alas! the hurried duties of the journalist preclude it) there will not be wanting those who will accuse us of a mad design to detract from the pure fame of the novelist. But to such we merely say in the language of heraldry "ye should wear a plain point sanguine in your arms." If this be understood, well; if not, well again. There lives no man feeling a deeper reverence for genius than ourself. If we have not dwelt so especially upon the high merits as upon the trivial defects of "Barnaby Rudge" we have already given our reasons for the omission, and these reasons will be sufficiently understood by all whom we care to understand them. The work before us is not, we think, equal to the tale which immediately preceded it; but there are few — very few others to which we consider it inferior. Our chief objection has, not, perhaps, been so distinctly stated as we could wish. That this fiction, or indeed that any fiction written by Mr. Dickens, should be

based in the excitement and maintenance of curiosity we look upon as a misconception, on the part of the writer, of his own very great yet very peculiar powers. He has done this thing well, to be sure — he would do anything well in comparison with the herd of his contemporaries — but he has not done it so thoroughly well as his high and just reputation would demand. We think that the whole book has been an effort to him — solely through the nature of its design. He has been smitten with an untimely desire for a novel path. The idiosyncrasy of his intellect would lead him, naturally, into the most fluent and simple style of narration. In tales of ordinary sequence he may and will long reign triumphant. He has a *talent* for all things, but no positive *genius* for *adaptation*, and still less for that metaphysical art in which the souls of all *mysteries* lie. “Caleb Williams” is a far less noble work than “The Old Curiosity-Shop;” but Mr. Dickens could no more have constructed the one than Mr. Godwin could have dreamed of the other.

BALLADS AND OTHER POEMS. BY HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW, AUTHOR OF “VOICES OF THE NIGHT,” “HYPERION,” &c. SECOND EDITION. JOHN OWEN, CAMBRIDGE.

[Text: *Graham's Magazine*, March, 1842.]

“*Il y a à parier,*” says Chamfort, “*que toute idée publique, toute convention reçue, est une sottise, car elle a convenu au plus grand nombre.*” — One would be safe in wagering that any given public idea is erro-

WYANDOTTÉ, OR THE HUTTED KNOLL. A TALE, BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE PATHFINDER," "DEER-SLAYER," "LAST OF THE MOHICANS," "PIONEERS," "PRAIRIE," &C., &C. LEA & BLANCHARD: PHILADELPHIA.

[Text: *Graham's Magazine*, November, 1843.]

"WYANDOTTÉ, or The Huttred Knoll," is, in its general features, precisely similar to the novels enumerated in the title. It is a forest subject; and, when we say this, we give assurance that the story is a good one; for Mr. Cooper has never been known to fail, either in the forest or upon the sea. The interest, as usual, has no reference to *plot*, of which, indeed, our novelist seems altogether regardless, or incapable, but depends, first upon the nature of the theme; secondly, upon a Robinson-Crusoe-like detail in its management; and thirdly, upon the frequently repeated portraiture of the half-civilized Indian. In saying that the interest depends, *first*, upon the nature of the theme, we mean to suggest that this theme — life in the Wilderness — is one of intrinsic and universal interest, appealing to the heart of man in all phases; a theme, like that of life upon the ocean, so unfailingly omniprevalent in its power of arresting and absorbing attention, that while success or popularity is, with such a subject, expected as a matter of course, a failure might be properly regarded as conclusive evidence of imbecility on the part of the author. The two theses in question have been handled *usque ad nauseam* — and this through the instinctive perception of the universal

interest which appertains to them. A writer, distrustful of his powers, can scarcely do better than discuss either one or the other. A man of genius will rarely, and should never, undertake either ; first, because both are excessively hackneyed ; and, secondly, because the reader never fails, in forming his opinion of a book, to make discount, either wittingly or unwittingly, for that intrinsic interest which is inseparable from the subject and independent of the manner in which it is treated. Very few and very dull indeed are those who do not instantaneously perceive the distinction ; and thus there are two great classes of factions, — a popular and widely circulated class, read with pleasure but without admiration — in which the author is lost or forgotten ; or remembered, if at all, with something very nearly akin to contempt ; and then, a class not so popular, nor so widely diffused, in which, at every paragraph, arises a distinctive and highly pleasurable interest, springing from our perception and appreciation of the skill employed, or the genius evinced in the composition. After perusal of the one class, we think solely of the book — after reading the other, chiefly of the author. The former class leads to popularity — the latter to fame. In the former case, the books sometimes live, while the authors usually die ; in the latter, even when the works perish, the man survives. Among American writers of the less generally circulated, but more worthy and more artistical fictions, we may mention Mr. Brockden Brown, Mr. John Neal, Mr. Simms, Mr. Hawthorne ; at the head of the more popular division we may place Mr. Cooper.

“The Huttred Knoll,” without pretending to detail facts, gives a narrative of fictitious events, similar, in nearly all respects, to occurrences which actually hap-

pened during the opening scenes of the Revolution, and at other epochs of our history. It pictures the dangers, difficulties, and distresses of a large family, living, completely insulated, in the forest. The tale commences with a description of the "region which lies in the angle formed by the junction of the Mohawk with the Hudson, extending as far south as the line of Pennsylvania, and west to the verge of that vast rolling plain which composes Western New York" — a region of which the novelist has already frequently written, and the whole of which, with a trivial exception, was a wilderness before the Revolution. Within this district, and on a creek running into the Unadilla, a certain Captain Willoughby purchases an estate, or "patent" and there retires, with his family and dependents, to pass the close of his life in agricultural pursuits. He has been an officer in the British army, but, after serving many years, has sold his commission, and purchased one for his only son, Robert, who alone does not accompany the party into the forest. This party consists of the captain himself; his wife; his daughter, Beulah; an adopted daughter, Maud Meredith; an invalid sergeant, Joyce, who had served under the captain; a Presbyterian preacher, Mr. Woods; a Scotch mason, Jamie Allen; an Irish laborer, Michael O'Hearn: a Connecticut man, Joel Strides; four negroes, Old Plin and Young Plin, Big Smash and little Smash; eight axe-men; a house-carpenter; a millwright, &c., &c. Besides these, a Tuscarora Indian called Nick, or *Wyandotté*, accompanies the expedition. This Indian, who figures largely in the story, and gives it its title, may be considered as the principal character — the one chiefly elaborated. He is an outcast from his tribe, has been known to Captain Willoughby

for thirty years, and is a compound of all the good and bad qualities which make up the character of the half-civilized Indian. He does not remain with the settlers ; but appears and re-appears at intervals upon the scene.

Nearly the whole of the first volume is occupied with a detailed account of the estate purchased, (which is termed "The Hutted Knoll" from a natural mound upon which the principal house is built) and of the progressive arrangements and improvements. Toward the close of the volume the Revolution commences ; and the party at the "Knoll" are besieged by a band of savages and "rebels," with whom an understanding exists, on the part of Joel Strides, the Yankee. This traitor, instigated by the hope of possessing Captain Willoughby's estate, should it be confiscated, brings about a series of defections from the party of the settlers, and finally, deserting himself, reduces the whole number to six or seven, capable of bearing arms. Captain Willoughby resolves, however, to defend his post. His son, at this juncture, pays him a clandestine visit, and, endeavoring to reconnoitre the position of the Indians, is made captive. The captain, in an attempt at rescue, is murdered by Wyandotté, whose vindictive passions had been aroused by ill-timed allusions, on the part of Willoughby, to floggings previously inflicted, by his orders, upon the Indian. Wyandotté, however, having satisfied his personal vengeance, is still the ally of the settlers. He guides Maud, who is beloved by Robert, to the hut in which the latter is confined, and effects his escape. Aroused by this escape, the Indians precipitate their attack upon the Knoll, which, through the previous treachery of Strides in ill-hanging a gate, is immediately carried. Mrs.

Willoughby, Beulah, and others of the party, are killed. Maud is secreted and thus saved by Wyandotté. At the last moment, when all is apparently lost, a reinforcement appears, under command of Evert Beekman, the husband of Beulah ; and the completion of the massacre is prevented. Woods, the preacher, had left the Knoll, and made his way through the enemy, to inform Beekman of the dilemma of his friends. Maud and Robert Willoughby are, of course, happily married. The concluding scene of the novel shows us Wyandotté repenting the murder of Willoughby, and converted to Christianity through the agency of Woods.

It will be at once seen that there is nothing *original* in this story. On the contrary, it is even excessively commonplace. The lover, for example, rescued from captivity by the mistress ; the Knoll carried through the treachery of an inmate ; and the salvation of the besieged, at the very last moment, by a reinforcement arriving, in consequence of a message borne to a friend by one of the besieged, without the cognizance of the others ; these, we say, are incidents which have been the common property of every novelist since the invention of letters. And as for *plot*, there has been no attempt at anything of the kind. The tale is a mere succession of events, scarcely any one of which has any necessary dependence upon any one other. Plot, however, is at best, an artificial effect, requiring, like music, not only a natural bias, but long cultivation of taste for its full appreciation ; some of the finest narratives in the world — “ Gil-Blas ” and “ Robinson Crusoe,” for example — have been written without its employment ; and “ The Huttred Knoll,” like all the sea and forest novels of Cooper, has been made deeply interesting,

although depending upon this peculiar source of interest not at all. Thus the absence of plot can never be critically regarded as a *defect*; although its judicious use, in all cases aiding and in no case injuring other effects, must be regarded as of a very high order of merit.

There are one or two points, however, in the mere *conduct* of the story now before us, which may, perhaps, be considered as defective. For instance, there is too much *obviousness* in all that appertains to the hanging of the large gate. In more than a dozen instances Mrs. Willoughby is made to allude to the delay in the hanging; so that the reader is too positively and pointedly forced to perceive that this delay is to result in the capture of the Knoll. As we are never in doubt of the fact, we feel diminished interest when it actually happens. A single vague allusion, well managed, would have been in the true artistical spirit.

Again we see too plainly, from the first, that Beekman is to marry Beulah, and that Robert Willoughby is to marry Maud. The killing of Beulah, of Mrs. Willoughby, and Jamie Allen, produces, too, a painful impression, which does not properly appertain to the right fiction. Their deaths affect us as revolting and supererogatory; since the purposes of the story are not thereby furthered in any regard. To Willoughby's murder, however distressing, the reader makes no similar objection; merely because in his decease is fulfilled a species of poetical justice. We may observe here, nevertheless, that his repeated references to his flogging the Indian seem unnatural, because we have otherwise no reason to think him a fool, or a madman, and these references, under the circumstances, are absolutely insensate. We object, also, to the manner in

which the general interest is dragged out, or suspended. The besieging party are kept before the Knoll so long, while so little is done, and so many opportunities of action are lost, that the reader takes it for granted that nothing of consequence will occur — that the besieged will be finally delivered. He gets so accustomed to the presence of danger that its excitement, at length, departs. The action is not sufficiently rapid. There is too much procrastination. There is too much mere talk for talk's sake. The interminable discussions between Woods and Captain Willoughby are, perhaps, the worst feature of the book, for they have not even the merit of referring to the matters on hand. In general, there is quite too much colloquy for the purpose of manifesting character, and too little for the explanation of motive. The characters of the drama would have been better made out by action ; while the motives to action, the reasons for the different courses of conduct adopted by the *dramatis personæ*, might have been made to proceed more satisfactorily from their own mouths, in casual conversations, than from that of the author in person. To conclude our remarks upon the head of ill-conduct in the story, we may mention occasional incidents of the merest melodramatic absurdity ; as, for example, at page 156, of the second volume, where “ Willoughby had an arm round the waist of Maud, and bore her forward with a rapidity to which her own strength was entirely unequal.” We may be permitted to doubt whether a young lady of sound health and limbs, exists, within the limits of Christendom, who could not run faster, on her own proper feet, for any considerable distance, than she could be carried upon *one arm* of either the Cretan Milo or of the Hercules Farnese.

On the other hand, it would be easy to designate many particulars which are admirably handled. The love of Maud Meredith for Robert Willoughby is painted with exquisite skill and truth. The incident of the tress of hair and box is naturally and effectively conceived. A fine collateral interest is thrown over the whole narrative by the connexion of the theme with that of the Revolution ; and, especially, there is an excellent dramatic point, at page 124 of the second volume, where Wyandotté, remembering the stripes inflicted upon him by Captain Willoughby, is about to betray him to his foes, when his purpose is arrested by a casual glimpse, through the forest, of the hut which contains Mrs. Willoughby, who had preserved the life of the Indian, by inoculation for the small-pox.

In the depicting of character, Mr. Cooper has been unusually successful in "Wyandotté." One or two of his personages, to be sure, must be regarded as little worth. Robert Willoughby, like most novel heroes, is a nobody ; that is to say, there is nothing about him which may be looked upon as distinctive. Perhaps he is rather silly than otherwise ; as, for instance, when he confuses all his father's arrangements for his concealment, and bursts into the room before Strides — afterward insisting upon accompanying that person to the Indian encampment, without any possible or impossible object. Woods, the parson, is a sad bore, upon the Dominie Sampson plan, and is, moreover, caricatured. Of Captain Willoughby we have already spoken — he is too often on stilts. Evert Beekman and Beulah are merely episodic. Joyce is nothing in the world but Corporal Trim — or, rather, Corporal Trim and water. Jamie Allen, with his prate about Catholicism, is insufferable. But Mrs. Willoughby.

the humble, shrinking, womanly wife, whose whole existence centres in her affections, is worthy of Mr. Cooper. Maud Meredith is still better. In fact, we know no female portraiture, even in Scott, which surpasses her; and yet the world has been given to understand, by the enemies of the novelist, that he is incapable of depicting a woman. Joel Strides will be recognised by all who are conversant with his general prototypes of Connecticut. Michael O'Hearn, the County Leitrim man, is an Irishman all over, and his portraiture abounds in humor; as, for example, at page 31, of the first volume, where he has a difficulty with a skiff, not being able to account for its revolving upon its own axis, instead of moving forward! or, at page 132, where, during divine service, to exclude at least a portion of the heretical doctrine, he stops *one* of his ears with his thumb; or, at page 195, where a passage occurs so much to our purpose that we will be pardoned for quoting it in full. Captain Willoughby is drawing his son up through a window, from his enemies below. The assistants, placed at a distance from this window to avoid observation from without, are ignorant of what burthen is at the end of the rope:

The men did as ordered, raising their load from the ground a foot or two at a time. In this manner the burthen approached, yard after yard, until it was evidently drawing near the window.

"It's the captain hoisting up the big baste of a hog, for provisioning the hoose again a saige," whispered Mike to the negroes, who grinned as they tugged; "and, when the craitur squails, see to it, that ye do not squail yourselves." At that moment the head and shoulders of a man appeared at the window. Mike let go the rope, seized a chair, and was about to knock the intruder upon the head; but the captain arrested the blow.

"It's one o' the vagabone Injins that has undermined the hog and come up in its stead," roared Mike.

"It's my son," said the captain; "see that you are silent and secret."

The negroes are, without exception, admirably drawn. The Indian, Wyandotté, however, is the great feature of the book, and is, in every respect, equal to the previous Indian creations of the author of "The Pioneer." Indeed, we think this "forest gentleman" superior to the other noted heroes of his kind — the heroes which have been immortalized by our novelist. His keen sense of the distinction, in his own character, between the chief Wyandotté, and the drunken vagabond, Sassy Nick; his chivalrous delicacy toward Maud, in never disclosing to her that knowledge of her real feelings toward Robert Willoughby, which his own Indian intuition had discovered; his enduring animosity toward Captain Willoughby, softened, and for thirty years delayed, through his gratitude to the wife; and then, the vengeance consummated, his pity for that wife conflicting with his exultation at the deed — these, we say, are all traits of a lofty excellence indeed. Perhaps the most effective passage in the book, and that which, most distinctively, brings out the character of the Tuscarora, is to be found at pages 50, 51, 52 and 53 of the second volume, where, for some trivial misdemeanor, the captain threatens to make use of the whip. The manner in which the Indian *harps* upon the threat, returning to it again and again, in every variety of phrase, forms one of the finest pieces of mere character-painting with which we have any acquaintance.

The most obvious and most unaccountable faults of "The Huttet Knoll," are those which appertain to

the *style* — to the mere grammatical construction ; — for, in other and more important particulars of style, Mr. Cooper, of late days, has made a very manifest improvement. His sentences, however, are arranged with an awkwardness so remarkable as to be matter of absolute astonishment, when we consider the education of the author, and his long and continual practice with the pen. In minute descriptions of localities, any verbal inaccuracy, or confusion, becomes a source of vexation and misunderstanding, detracting very much from the pleasure of perusal ; and in these inaccuracies “Wyandotté” abounds. Although, for instance, we carefully read and re-read that portion of the narrative which details the situation of the Knoll, and the construction of the buildings and walls about it, we were forced to proceed with the story without any exact or definite impressions upon the subject. Similar difficulties, from similar causes, occur *passim* throughout the book. For example, at page 31, vol. I. :

“The Indian gazed at the house, with that fierce intentness which sometimes glared, in a manner that had got to be, in its ordinary aspects, dull and besotted.” This it is utterly impossible to comprehend. We presume, however, the intention is to say that although the Indian’s ordinary manner (of gazing) had “got to be” dull and besotted, he occasionally gazed with an intentness that glared, and that he did so in the instance in question. The “got to be” is atrocious — the whole sentence no less so.

Here at page 9, vol. I., is something excessively vague : “Of the latter character is the face of most of that region which lies in the angle formed by the junction of the Mohawk with the Hudson,” &c., &c. The Mohawk, joining the Hudson, forms *two* angles,

of course, — an acute and an obtuse one ; and, without farther explanation, it is difficult to say which it intended.

At page 55, vol. I., we read : — “ The captain, owing to his English education, had avoided straight lines, and formal paths ; giving to the little spot the improvement on nature which is a consequence of embellishing her works without destroying them. On each side of this lawn was an orchard, thrifty and young, and which *were* already beginning to show signs of putting forth their blossoms.” Here we are tautologically informed that improvement is a consequence of embellishment, and supererogatorily told that the rule holds good only where the embellishment is not accompanied by destruction. Upon the “ each orchard *were* ” it is needless to comment.

At page 30, vol. I., is something similar, where Strides is represented as “ never doing anything that required a particle more than the exertion and strength that were absolutely necessary to affect his object.” Did Mr. C. ever hear of any labor that *required* more exertion than was *necessary* ? He means to say that Strides exerted himself no farther than was necessary — that’s all.

At page 59, vol. I., we find this sentence — “ He was advancing by the only road that was ever travelled by the stranger as he approached the Hut ; or, he came up the valley.” This is merely a vagueness of speech. “ Or ” is intended to imply “ that is to say.” The whole would be clearer thus — “ He was advancing by the valley — the only road travelled by a stranger approaching the Hut.” We have here sixteen words, instead of Mr. Cooper’s twenty-five.

At page 8, vol. II., is an unpardonable awkward-

ness, although an awkwardness strictly grammatical. "I was a favorite, I believe, with, certainly was much petted by, both." Upon this we need make no farther observation. It speaks for itself.

We are aware, however, that there is a certain air of unfairness, in thus quoting detached passages, for animadversion of this kind ; for, however strictly at random our quotations may really be, we have, of course, no means of proving the fact to our readers ; and there are *no* authors, from whose works individual inaccurate sentences may not be culled. But we mean to say that Mr. Cooper, no doubt through haste or neglect, is *remarkably* and *especially* inaccurate, as a general rule ; and, by way of demonstrating this assertion, we will dismiss our extracts at random, and discuss some entire page of his composition. More than this : we will endeavor to select that particular page upon which it might naturally be supposed he would bestow the most careful attention. The reader will say at once — " Let this be his *first* page — the first page of his Preface." This page, then, shall be taken of course.

The history of the borders is filled with legends of the sufferings of isolated families, during the troubled scenes of colonial warfare. Those which we now offer to the reader, are distinctive in many of their leading facts, if not rigidly true in the details. The first alone is necessary to the legitimate objects of fiction.

" *Abounds* with legends," would be better than " is filled with legends ;" for it is clear that if the history were *filled* with legends, it would be all legend and no history. The word " off," too, occurs, in the first sentence, with an unpleasant frequency. The

“*those*” commencing the second sentence, grammatically refers to the noun “scenes,” immediately preceding, but is intended for “legends.” The adjective “*distinctive*” is vaguely and altogether improperly employed. Mr. C. we believe means to say, merely, that although the details of his legends may not be strictly true, facts similar to his leading ones have actually occurred. By use of the word “*distinctive*,” however, he has contrived to convey a meaning nearly converse. In saying that his legend is “*distinctive*” in many of the leading facts, he has said what he, clearly, did not wish to say — viz. : that his legend contained facts which distinguished it from all other legends — in other words, facts never before discussed in other legends, and belonging peculiarly to his own. That Mr. C. *did* mean what we suppose, is rendered evident by the third sentence — “The first alone is necessary to the legitimate objects of fiction.” This third sentence itself, however, is very badly constructed. “The first” can refer, grammatically, only to “facts ;” but no such reference is intended. If we ask the question — what is meant by “the first ?” — *what* “alone is necessary to the legitimate objects of fiction ?” — the natural reply is “that facts similar to the leading ones have actually happened.” The circumstance is alone to be cared for — this consideration “alone is necessary to the legitimate objects of fiction.”

“One of the misfortunes of a nation is to hear nothing besides its own praises.” This is the fourth sentence, and is by no means lucid. The design is to say that individuals composing a nation, and living altogether within the national bounds, hear from each other only praises of the nation, and that this is a mis-

fortune to the individuals, since it misleads them in regard to the actual condition of the nation. Here it will be seen that, to convey the intended idea, we have been forced to make distinction between the nation and its individual members ; for it is evident that a nation is considered as such only in reference to other nations ; and thus *as a nation*, it hears *very* much “besides its own praises ;” that is to say, it hears the detractions of other rival nations. In endeavoring to compel his meaning within the compass of a brief sentence, Mr. Cooper has completely sacrificed its intelligibility.

The fifth sentence runs thus : — “ Although the American Revolution was probably as just an effort as was ever made by a people to resist the first inroads of oppression, the cause had its evil aspects, as well as all other human struggles.”

The American Revolution is here improperly called an “ effort.” The effort was the cause, of which the Revolution was the result. A rebellion is an “ effort ” to effect a revolution. An “ inroad of oppression ” involves an untrue metaphor ; for “ inroad ” appertains to aggression, to attack, to active assault. “ The cause had its evil aspects as well as all other human struggles,” implies that the cause had not only its evil aspects, but had, also, all other human struggles. If the words must be retained at all, they should be thus arranged — “ The cause like [or as well as] all other human struggles, had its evil aspects ; ” or better thus — “ The cause had its evil aspect, as have all human struggles.” “ Other ” is superfluous.

The sixth sentence is thus written : — “ We have been so much accustomed to hear everything extolled, of late years, that could be dragged into the remotest

connexion with that great event, and the principles which led to it, that there is danger of overlooking truth in a pseudo patriotism." The "of late years," here, should follow the "accustomed," or precede the "We have been;" and the Greek "pseudo" is objectionable, since its exact equivalent is to be found in the English "false." "Spurious" would have been better, perhaps, than either.

Inadvertences such as these sadly disfigure the style of "The Hutted Knoll;" and every true friend of its author must regret his inattention to the minor morals of the Muse. But these "minor morals," it may be said, are trifles at best. Perhaps so. At all events, we should never have thought of dwelling so pertinaciously upon the unessential demerits of "Wyandotté," could we have discovered any more momentous upon which to comment.

THE POETS AND POETRY OF AMERICA. WITH AN HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION. BY RUFUS W. GRISWOLD. THIRD EDITION. REVISED, WITH ILLUSTRATIONS. CAREY & HART: PHILADELPHIA.

[Text: *Philadelphia Saturday Museum*, ———, 1843.]

Here the free spirit of mankind at length
 Throws its last fetters off; and who shall place
 A limit to the giant's unchained strength,
 Or curb his swiftness in the forward race? — *Bryant*.

Ere long thine every stream shall find a tongue,
 Land of the many waters. — *Huffman*.

THE MONTICELLO EDITION

THE COMPLETE WORKS OF
EDGAR ALLAN POE

Edited by JAMES A. HARRISON
PROFESSOR IN THE UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA



LITERARY CRITICISM
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echoes and wild beasts agree better with a mountain than does a pair of stairs with the *sowing* of seeds — even admitting that these seeds be seeds of fire, and be sown broadcast “among the hills” by a steep generation while in the act of tumbling down the stairs — that is to say, of coming down the stairs in too great a hurry to be capable of sowing the seeds as accurately as all seeds should be sown : — nor is the matter rendered any better for Mrs. Browning, even if the construction of her sentence be understood as implying that the fiery seeds were sown, not immediately by the steep generations that tumbled down the stairs, but mediately, through the intervention of the “supernatural thunders” that were *occasioned* by the steep generations that were so unlucky as to tumble down the stairs.

THE SACRED MOUNTAINS : BY J. T. HEADLEY, —
 AUTHOR OF “NAPOLEON AND HIS MARSHALS,”
 “WASHINGTON AND HIS GENERALS, ETC.”¹

[Text : *Southern Literary Messenger*, October, 1850.]

THE *Reverend* MR. HEADLEY — (why *will* he not put his full title in his title-pages ?) has in his “Sacred

¹ The *Southern Literary Messenger* for October, 1850, p. 608, contained a paper entitled “Poe on Headley and Channing,” in which it is announced, “From advance sheets of ‘The Literati,’ a work in press, by the late Edgar A. Poe, we take the following sketches of Headley and Channing — as good specimens of that tomahawk-style of criticism of which the author was so great a master. In the present instances the satire is well-deserved. Neither of these sketches we believe have [sic] been in print before.”

Then follow the two sketches headed “Joel T. Headley” (reviewing “The Sacred Mountains”) and “William Ellery Channing” (a general discussion), reproduced, the one here, the other as “Our Amateur Poets, No. 3,” Vol. XI. Ed.

Mountains" been reversing the facts of the old fable about the mountains that brought forth the mouse — *parturiunt montes, nascitur ridiculus mus* — for in this instance it appears to be the mouse — the little *ridiculus mus* — that has been bringing forth the "Mountains," and a great litter of them, too. The epithet, funny, however, is perhaps the only one which can be considered as thoroughly applicable to the book. We say that a book is a "funny" book, and nothing else, when it spreads over two hundred pages an amount of matter which could be conveniently presented in twenty of a magazine : that a book is a "funny" book — "only this and nothing more" — when it is written in that kind of phraseology, in which John Philpot Curran, when drunk, would have made a speech at a public dinner : and, moreover, we do say, emphatically, that a book is a "funny" book, and nothing but a funny book, whenever it happens to be penned by Mr. Headley.

We should like to give some account of "The Sacred Mountains," if the thing were only possible — but we cannot conceive that it is. Mr. Headley belongs to that numerous class of authors, who must be read to be understood, and who, for that reason, very seldom are as thoroughly comprehended as they should be. Let us endeavor, however, to give some general idea of the work. "The design," says the author, in his preface, "is to render more familiar and life-like, some of the scenes of the Bible." Here, in the very first sentence of his preface, we suspect the Reverend Mr. Headley of fibbing : for his design, as it appears to ordinary apprehension, is merely that of making a little money by selling a little book.

The mountains described are Ararat, Moriah, Sinai,

Hor, Pisgah, Horeb, Carmel, Lebanon, Zion, Tabor, Olivet, and Calvary. Taking up these, one by one, the author proceeds in his own very peculiar way, to *elocutionize* about them : we really do not know how else to express what it is that Mr. Headley does with these eminences. Perhaps if we were to say that he stood up before the reader and “made a speech” about them, one after the other, we should come still nearer the truth. By way of carrying out his design, as announced in the preface, that of rendering “more familiar and life-like some of the scenes” and so-forth, he tells not only how each mountain is, and was, but how it might have been and ought to be in his own opinion. To hear him talk, anybody would suppose that he had been at the laying of the corner-stone of Solomon’s Temple — to say nothing of being born and brought up in the ark with Noah, and hail-fellow-well-met, with every one of the beasts that went into it. If any person really desires to know how and why it was that the deluge took place — but especially *how* — if any person wishes to get minute and accurate information on the topic — let him read “The Sacred Mountains” — let him only listen to the Reverend Mr. Headley. He explains to us precisely how it all took place — what Noah said, and thought, while the ark was building, and what the people, who saw him building the ark, said and thought about his undertaking such a work ; and how the beasts, birds, and fishes looked, as they came in arm in arm ; and what the dove did, and what the raven did not — in short, all the rest of it : nothing could be more beautifully posted up. What *can* Mr. Headley mean, at page 17, by the remark that “there is no one who does not lament that there is not a fuller antediluvian history?” We are quite sure that

nothing that ever happened before the flood, has been omitted in the scrupulous researches of the author of "The Sacred Mountains."

He might, perhaps, wrap up the fruits of these researches in rather better English than that which he employs :

Yet *still* the water rose around them till all through the valleys nothing but little black islands of human beings *were* seen on the surface. . . . The more fixed the irrevocable decree, *the heavier* he leaned on the Omnipotent arm. . . . And lo ! a solitary cloud comes drifting along the morning sky and *catches* against the top of the mountain. . . . At length emboldened by their own numbers they *assembled* tumultuously *together*. . . . Aaron never appears *so perfect* a character as Moses. . . . As he advanced from rock to rock the sobbing of the multitude that *followed after*, tore his heart-strings. . . . Friends were *following after* whose sick Christ had healed. . . . The steady mountain threatened *to lift* from its base and be carried away. . . . Sometimes God's hatred of sin, sometimes his care for his children, sometimes the discipline of his church, *were* the motives. . . . Surely it was his mighty hand that *laid* on that trembling tottering mountain, &c. &c. &c.

These things are not exactly as we could wish them, perhaps : — but that a gentleman should know so much about Noah's ark and know anything about anything else, is scarcely to be expected. We have no right to require English grammar and accurate information about Moses and Aaron at the hands of one and the same author. For our parts, now we come to think of it, if we only understood as much about Mount Sinai and other matters as Mr. Headley does, we

should make a point of always writing bad English upon principle, whether we knew better or not.

It may well be made a question moreover, how far a man of genius is justified in discussing topics so serious as those handled by Mr. Headley, in any ordinary kind of *style*. One should not talk about Scriptural subjects as one would talk about the rise and fall of stocks or the proceedings of Congress. Mr. Headley has seemed to feel this and has therefore elevated his manner — a little. For example :

The fields were smiling in verdure before his eyes ; the perfumed breezes *floated by* . . . The sun is *sailing* over the encampment . . . That cloud was God's pavilion ; the thunder was its sentinels ; and the lightning the lances' points as they moved round the sacred trust . . . And how could he part with his children whom he had *borne on his brave heart* for more than forty years ? . . . Thus everything conspired to render Zion the spell-word of the nation and on its summit the *heart of Israel seemed to lie and throb* . . . The sun died in the heavens ; *an earthquake thundered* on to complete the dismay, &c. &c.

Here no one can fail to perceive the beauty (in an antediluvian, or at least in a Pickwickian sense) of these expressions in general, about the floating of the breeze, the sailing of the sun, the thundering of the earthquake and the throbbing of the heart as it lay on the top of the mountain.

The true artist, however, always rises as he proceeds, and in his last page or so brings all his elocution to a climax. Only hear Mr. Headley's *finale*. He has been describing the crucifixion and now soars into the sublime :

How Heaven regarded this disaster, and the Universe felt at the sight, I cannot tell. I know not but tears fell like rain-drops from angelic eyes when they saw Christ spit upon and struck. I know not but there was silence on high for *more* than "half an hour" when the scene of the crucifixion was transpiring, — [a scene, as well as an event, always "transpires" with Mr. Headley] — a silence unbroken save by the solitary sound of some harp-string on which unconsciously fell the agitated, trembling fingers of a seraph. I know not but all the radiant ranks on high, and even Gabriel himself, turned with the deepest solicitude to the Father's face, to see if he was calm and untroubled amid it all. I know not but his composed brow and serene majesty were all that restrained Heaven from one universal shriek of horror when they heard groans on Calvary — *dying* groans. I know not but they thought God had given his glory to another, but one thing I *do* know, [Ah, there *is* really one thing Mr. Headley knows !] — that when they saw through the vast design, comprehended the stupendous scene, the hills of God shook to a shout that never before rung over their bright tops, and the crystal sea trembled to a song that had never before stirred its bright depths, and the "Glory to God in the Highest," was a sevenfold chorus of hallelujahs and harping symphonies.

Here we have direct evidence of Mr. Headley's accuracy not less than of his eloquence. "I know not but that" one is as vast as the other. The one thing that he does know he knows to perfection : — he knows not only what the chorus was (it was one of "hallelujahs and harping symphonies") but also how much of it there was — it was a "sevenfold chorus." Mr. Headley is a mathematical man. Moreover he is a modest man ; for he confesses (no doubt with tears in his eyes) that really there is one thing that he does not

know. "How Heaven regarded this disaster, and the Universe felt at the sight, I cannot tell." Only think of that ! *I* cannot ! — *I*, Headley, really cannot tell how the Universe "felt" once upon a time ! This is downright bashfulness on the part of Mr. Headley. He *could* tell if he would only try. Why did he not inquire ? Had he demanded of the Universe how it felt, can any one doubt that the answer would have been — "Pretty well, I thank you, my dear Headley ; how do you feel yourself ?"

"Quack" is a word that sounds well only in the mouth of a duck ; and upon our honor we feel a scruple in using it : — nevertheless the truth should be told ; and the simple fact is, that the author of the "Sacred Mountains" is the Autocrat of all the Quacks. In saying this, we beg not to be misunderstood. We mean no disparagement to Mr. Headley. We admire that gentleman as much as any individual ever did except that gentleman himself. He looks remarkably well at all points — although perhaps best, *ἐκὰς* — at a distance — as the lying Pindar says he saw Archilochus, who died ages before the vagabond was born : — the reader will excuse the digression ; but talking of one great man is very apt to put us in mind of another. We were saying — were we not ? — that Mr. Headley is by no means to be sneered at as a quack. This might be justifiable, indeed, were he only a quack in a small way — a quack doing business by retail. But the wholesale dealer is entitled to respect. Besides, the Reverend author of "Napoleon and his Marshals" was a quack to some purpose. He knows what he is about. We know perfection whenever we see it. We readily forgive a man for being a fool if he only be a *perfect* fool — and this is a particular in which we

cannot put our hands upon our hearts and say that Mr. Headley is deficient. He acts upon the principle that if a thing is worth doing at all it is worth doing well : — and the thing that he “ does ” especially well is the public.

HENRY B. HIRST.

[Text : Griswold ; cf. *Broadway Journal*, ii. 1.]

MR. HENRY B. HIRST, of Philadelphia, has, undoubtedly, some merit as a poet. His sense of beauty is keen, although indiscriminative ; and his versification would be unusually effective but for the spirit of hyperism, or exaggeration, which seems to be the ruling feature of the man. He is always sure to overdo a good thing ; and, in especial, he insists upon rhythmical effects until they cease to have any effect at all — or until they give to his compositions an air of mere oddity. His principal *defect*, however, is a want of constructive ability ; — he can never put together a story intelligibly. His chief *sin* is imitativeness. He never writes anything which does not immediately put us in mind of something that we have seen better written before. Not to do him injustice, however, I here quote two stanzas from a little poem of his, called “ The Owl.” The passages italicized are highly imaginative :

When twilight fades and evening falls
 Alike on tree and tower,
And Silence, like a pensive maid,
Walks around each slumbering bower :