

The Herald of Literature

**Or, a review of the most considerable publications that will be made in the
course of the ensuing winter**

William Godwin

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TO THE AUTHORS OF THE MONTHLY AND CRITICAL REVIEWS.

GENTLEMEN,

In presenting the following sheets to the public, I hope I shall not be considered as encroaching upon that province, which long possession has probably taught you to consider as your exclusive right. The labour it has cost me, and the many perils I have encountered to bring it to perfection, will, I trust, effectually plead my pardon with persons of your notorious candour and humanity. Represent to yourselves, Gentlemen, I entreat you, the many false keys, bribes to the lacqueys of authors that can keep them, and collusions with the booksellers of authors that cannot, which were required in the prosecution of this arduous undertaking. Imagine to yourselves how often I have shuddered upon the verge of petty larceny, and how repeatedly my slumbers have been disturbed with visions of the King's-Bench Prison and Clerkenwell Bridewell. You, gentlemen, sit in your easy chair, and with the majesty of a Minos or an Aeacus, summon the trembling culprits to your bar. But though you never knew what fear was, recollect, other men have snuffed a candle with their fingers.

But I would not be misunderstood. Heroical as I trust my undertaking proves me, I fear no man's censure, and court no man's applause. But I look up to you as a respectable body of men, who have long united your efforts to reduce the disproportioned members of an ancient republic to an happy equality, to give wings to the little emmet of Grub-street, and to hew away the excrescences of lawless genius with a hatchet. In this character I honour you. That you have assumed it uncompelled and self-elected, that you have exercised it undazzled by the *ignis fatuus* of genius, is your unfading glory.

Having thus cleared myself from the suspicion of any sinister view, I cannot here refrain from presenting you with a peace-offering. Had it been in my power to procure gums more costly, or incense more fragrant, I would have rendered it more worthy your acceptance.

It has been a subject upon which I have often reflected with mortification, that the world is too apt to lay aside your lucubrations with the occasions that gave birth to them, and that if they are ever opened after, it is only with old magazines by staid matrons over their winter fire. Such persons are totally incapable of comparing your sentences with the maturer verdict of the public; a comparison that would redound so much to your honour. What I design at present, is in some measure to remedy an evil, that can never perhaps be entirely removed. As the field which is thus opened to me is almost unbounded, I will confine myself to two of the most striking examples, in *Tristram Shandy*, and the *Rosciad* of Churchill.

In the *Monthly Review*, vol. 24, p, 103, I find these words:

“But your indiscretion, good Mr. Tristram, is not all we complain of in the volumes before us. We must tax you with what you will dread above the most terrible of all insinuations—nothing less than DULLNESS. Yes, indeed, Mr. Tristram, you are dull, *very dull*. Your jaded fancy seems

to have been exhausted by two pigmy octavos, which scarce contained the substance of a twelve-penny pamphlet, and we now find nothing new to entertain us.”

The following epithets are selected at random. “We are sick—we are quite tired—we can no longer bear corporal Trim’s insipidity—thread-bare—stupid and unassuming—absolutely dull—misapplication of talents—he will unavoidably sink into contempt.”

The Critical Review, vol II, p. 212, has the following account of the Rosciad:

“It is *natural* for young authors to conceive themselves the cleverest fellows in the world, and withal, that there is not the least degree of merit subsisting but in their own works: It is *natural* likewise for them to imagine, that they may conceal themselves by appearing in different shapes, and that they are not to be found out by their stile; but little do these *Connoisseurs* in writing conceive, how easily they are discovered by a veteran in the service. In the title-page to this performance we are told (by way of quaint conceit), that it was written by *the author*; what if it should prove that the Author and the Actor¹ are the same! Certain it is that we meet with the *same* vein of peculiar humour, the same turn of thought, the same *autophilism* (there’s a new word for you to bring into the next poem) which we meet with in the other; insomuch that we are ready to make the conclusion in the author’s own words:

Who is it?—LLOYD.

“We will not pretend however absolutely to assert that Mr. L— wrote this poem; but we may venture to affirm, that it is the production, jointly or separately, of the new triumvirate of wits, who never let an opportunity slip of singing their own praises. *Caw me, caw thee*, as Sawney says, and so to it they go, and *scratch* one another like so many Scotch pedlars.”

In page 339, I find a passage referred to in the Index, under the head of “a notable instance of their candour,” retracting their insinuations against Lloyd and Colman, and ascribing the poem in a particular vein of pleasantry to Mr. Flexney, the bookseller, and Mr. Griffin, the printer. Candour certainly did not require that they should acknowledge Mr. Churchill, whose name was now inserted in the title-page, as the author, or if author of any, at least not of a considerable part of the poem. That this was their sense of the matter, appears from their account of the apology for the Rosciad, p. 409.

“This is another *Brutum Fulinen* launched at the Critical Review by one Churchill, who it seems is a clergyman, and it must be owned has a knack at versification; a bard, who upon the strength of having written a few good lines in a thing called *The Rosciad*, swaggers about as if he were game-keeper of Parnassus.”

P. 410. “This apologist has very little reason to throw out behind against the Critical Reviewers, who in mentioning *The Rosciad*, of which he calls himself author, commended it in the lump, without specifying the bald lines, the false thoughts, and tinsel frippery from which it is not entirely free.” They conclude with contrasting him with Smollet, in comparison of whom he is

¹ *The Actor, a Poem, by Robert Lloyd, Esq.*

“a puny antagonist, who must write many more poems as good as the Rosciad, before he will be considered as a respectable enemy.”

Upon these extracts I will beg leave to make two observations.

1. Abstracted from all consideration of the profundity of criticism that is displayed, no man can avoid being struck with the humour and pleasantry in which they are conceived, or the elegant and gentlemanlike language in which they are couched. What can be more natural or more ingenuous than to suppose that the persons principally commended in a work, were themselves the writers of it? And for that allusion of the Scotch pedlars, for my part, I hold it to be inimitable.
2. But what is most admirable is the independent spirit, with which they stemmed the torrent of fashion, and forestalled the second thoughts of their countrymen. There was a time when Tristram Shandy was applauded, and Churchill thought another Dryden. But who reads Tristram now? There prevails indeed a certain quaintness, and something “like an affectation of being immoderately witty, throughout the whole work.” But for real humour not a grain. So said the Monthly Reviewers, (v. 21. p. 568.) and so says the immortal Knox. Both indeed grant him a slight knack at the pathetic; but, if I may venture a prediction, his pretensions to the latter will one day appear no better founded, than his pretensions to the former.

And then poor Churchill! His satire now appears to be dull and pointless. Through his tedious page no modern student can labour. We look back, and wonder how the rage of party ever swelled this *thing* into a poet. Even the great constellation, from whose tribunal no prudent man ever appealed, has excluded him from a kingdom, where Watts and Blackmore reign. But Johnson and Knox can by no means compare with the Reviewers. These attacked the mountebanks in the very midst of their short-lived empire. Those have only brought up the rear of public opinion, and damned authors already forgotten. They fought the battles a second time, and “again they slew the slain.”

Gentlemen,

It would have been easy to add twenty articles to this list. I might have selected instances from the later volumes of your entertaining works, in which your deviations from the dictates of imaginary taste are still more numerous. But I could not have confronted them with the decisive verdict of time. The rage of fashion has not yet ceased, and the ebullition of blind wonder is not over. I shall therefore leave a plentiful crop for such as come after me, who admire you as much as I do, and will be contented to labour in the same field.

I have the honour to be,

Gentlemen,

With all veneration,

Your indefatigable reader,

And the humblest of your panegyrists.

ARTICLE I. THE HISTORY OF THE DECLINE AND FALL OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE. BY EDWARD GIBBON, ESQ. VOLS. IV, V, VI, VII. 4TO.

We are happy to have it in our power thus early to congratulate the public upon the final accomplishment of a work, that must constitute one of the greatest ornaments of the present age. We have now before us, in one view, and described by the uniform pencil of one historian, the stupendous and instructive object of the gradual decline of the greatest empire; circumscribed by degrees within the narrow walls of a single city; and at length, after the various revolutions of thirteen centuries, totally swallowed up in the empire of the Turks. Of this term, the events of more than nine hundred years are described in that part of our author that now lies before us. It cannot therefore be expected, that in the narrow limits we have prescribed to ourselves, we should enter into a regular synopsis of the performance, chapter by chapter, after the laudable example of our more laborious brother reviewers. We will pay our readers the compliment, however unauthorised by the venerable seal of custom, of supposing them already informed, that Anastasius succeeded Zeno, and Justin Anastasius; that Justinian published the celebrated code that is called by his name; and that his generals, Belisarius and Narses, were almost constantly victorious over the Barbarians, and restored, for a moment, the expiring lustre of the empire. We shall confine ourselves to two extracts, relating to subjects of the greatest importance, and which we presume calculated, at once to gratify and excite the curiosity of the public.

The reign of the emperor Heraclius is perhaps more crowded with events of the highest consequence, than that of any other prince in the series. It has therefore a proportionable scope allotted it in the plan of Mr. Gibbon; who seems to understand better than almost any historian, what periods to sketch with a light and active pen, and upon what to dwell with minuteness, and dilate his various powers. While we pursue the various adventures of Cosroes II., beginning his reign in a flight from his capital city; suing for the protection and support of the Greek emperor; soon after declaring war against the empire; successively conquering Mesopotamia, Armenia, Syria, Palestine, Egypt, and the greater part of Natolia; then beaten; a fugitive; and at last murdered by his own son; we are unable to conceive of a story more interesting, or more worthy of our attention. But in contemplating the rife of the Saracen khalifate, and the religion of Mahomet, which immediately succeeded these events, we are compelled to acknowledge a more astonishing object.

The following is the character of the impostor, as sketched by the accurate and judicious pencil of our historian. We will leave it to the judgment of our readers, only observing, that Mr. Gibbon has very unnecessarily brought Christianity into the comparison; and has perhaps touched the errors of the false prophet with a lighter hand, that the disparity might be the less apparent.

“But Heraclius had a much more formidable enemy to encounter in the latter part of his reign, than the effeminate and divided Persian. This was the new empire of the Saracens. Ingenious and eloquent, temperate and brave, as had been invariably their national character, they had their exertions concentrated, and their courage animated by a legislator, whose institutions may vie, in the importance of their consequences, with those of Solon, Lycurgus, or Numa. Though an impostor, he propagated a religion, which, like the elevated and divine principles of Christianity, was confined to no one nation or country; but even embraced a larger portion of the human race than Christianity itself.

“Mahomet, the son of Abdallah, was born on the 9th of April, 571, in the city of Mecca. Having been early left an orphan by both parents, he received an hardy and robust education, not tempered by the elegancies of literature, nor much allayed by the indulgencies of natural affection. He was no sooner able to walk, than he was sent naked, with the infant peasantry, to attend the cattle of the village; and was obliged to seek the refreshment of sleep, as well as pursue the occupations of the day, in the open air¹. He even pretended to be a stranger to the art of writing and reading. But though neglected by those who had the care of his infancy, the youth of this extraordinary personage did not pass away without some of those incidents, which might afford a glimpse of the sublimity of his genius; and some of those prodigies, with which superstition is prompt to adorn the story of the founders of nations, and the conquerors of empires. In the mean time, his understanding was enlarged by travel. It is not to be supposed that he frequented the neighbouring countries, without making some of those profound observations upon the decline of the two great empires of the East and of Persia, which were calculated to expand his views, and to mature his projects. The energies of his mind led him to despise the fopperies of idolatry; and he found the Christians, in the most unfavourable situation, torn into innumerable parties, by the sectaries of Athanasius, Arius, Eutyches, Nestorius. In this situation, he extracted that from every system that bordered most nearly upon the dictates of reason, and framed to himself a sublime doctrine, of which the unity of God, the innocence of moderate enjoyment, the obligation of temperance and munificence, were the leading principles. But it would have contributed little to his purpose, if he had stopped here. Enthusiastically devoted to his extensive designs, and guided by the most consummate art, he pretended to divine communications, related a thousand ridiculous and incredible adventures; and though he constantly refused a prodigy to the importunities of his countrymen, laid claim to several frivolous miracles, and a few thinly scattered prophecies. One of his most artful devices was the delivering the system of his religion, not in one entire code, but in detached essays. This enabled him more than once to new mould the very genius of his religion, without glaringly subjecting himself to the charge of inconsistency. From these fragments, soon after his death, was compiled the celebrated Alcoran. The style of this volume is generally turgid, heavy, monotonous. It is disfigured with childish tales and impossible adven-

¹ “Abuleda, Chron. p. 27. Boulainvilliers, Vie de Mahomet, b. ii. p. 175. This latter writer exhibits the singular phenomenon of the native of a Christian country, unreasonably prejudiced in favour of the Arabian impostor. That he did not live, however, to finish his curious performance, is the misfortune of the republic of letters.”

tures. But it is frequently figurative, frequently poetical, sometimes sublime. And amidst all its defects, it will remain the greatest of all monuments of uncultivated and illiterate genius.

“The plan was carefully reserved by Mahomet for the mature age of forty years. Thus digested however, and communicated with the nicest art and the most fervid eloquence, he had the mortification to find his converts, at the end of three years, amount to no more than forty persons. But the ardour of this hero was invincible, and his success was finally adequate to his wishes. Previous to the famous aera of his flight from Mecca, he had taught his followers, that they had no defence against the persecution of their enemies, but invincible patience. But the opposition he encountered obliged him to change his maxims. He now inculcated the duty of extirpating the enemies of God, and held forth the powerful allurements of conquest and plunder. With these he united the theological dogma of predestination, and the infallible promise of paradise to such as met their fate in the field of war. By these methods he trained an intrepid and continually increasing army, inflamed with enthusiasm, and greedy of death. He prepared them for the most arduous undertakings, by continual attacks upon travelling caravans and scattered villages: a pursuit, which, though perfectly consonant with the institutions of his ancestors, painted him to the civilized nations of Europe in the obnoxious character of a robber. By degrees however, he proceeded to the greatest enterprizes; and compelled the whole peninsula of Arabia to confess his authority as a prince, and his mission as a prophet. He died, like the Grecian Philip, in the moment, when having brought his native country to cooperate in one undertaking, he meditated the invasion of distant climates, and the destruction of empires.

“The character of Mahomet however was exceeding different from that of Philip, and far more worthy of the attention of a philosopher. Philip was a mere politician, who employed the cunning of a statesman, and the revenues of a prince, in the corruption of a number of fallen and effeminate republics. But Mahomet, without riches, without rank, without education, by the mere ascendancy of his abilities, subjected by persuasion and force a simple and generous nation that had never been conquered; and laid the foundation of an empire, that extended over half the globe; and a religion, capable of surviving the fate of empires. His schemes were always laid with the truest wisdom. He lived among a people celebrated for subtlety and genius: he never laid himself open to detection. His eloquence was specious, dignified, and persuasive. And he blended with it a lofty enthusiasm, that awed those, whom familiarity might have emboldened, and silenced his enemies. He was simple of demeanour, and ostentatious of munificence. And under these plausible virtues he screened the indulgence of his constitutional propensities. The number of his concubines and his wives has been ambitiously celebrated by Christian writers. He sometimes acquired them by violence and injustice; and he frequently dismissed them without ceremony. His temper does not seem to have been naturally cruel. But we may trace in his conduct the features of a barbarian; and a part of his severity may reasonably be ascribed to the plan of religious conquest that he adopted, and that can never be reconciled with the rights of humanity.”

After the victories of Omar, and the other successors of Mahomet had in a manner stripped the court of Constantinople of all its provinces, the Byzantine history dwindles into an object petty and minute. In order to vary the scene, and enhance the dignity of his subject, the author occasionally takes a prospect of the state of Rome and Italy, under the contending powers of the papacy and the new empire of the West. When the singular and unparalleled object of the Crusades presents itself, the historian embraces the illustrious scene with apparent eagerness, and bestows upon it a greater enlargement than might perhaps have been expected from the nature of his subject; but not greater, we confidently believe, than is calculated to increase the pleasure, that a reader of philosophy and taste may derive from the perusal. As the immortal Saladin is one of the most distinguished personages in this story, we have selected his character, as a specimen of this part of the work.

“No sooner however was the virtuous Nouredin removed by death, than the Christians of the East had their attention still more forcibly alarmed by the progress of the invincible Saladin. He had possessed himself of the government of Egypt; first, under the modest appellation of vizier, and then, with the more august title of soldan. He abolished the dynasty of the Fatemite khalifs. Though Nouredin had been the patron of his family, and the father of his fortunes, yet was that hero no sooner expired, than he invaded the territories of his young and unwarlike successor. He conquered the fertile and populous province of Syria. He compelled the saheb of Mawsel to do him homage. The princes of the Franks already trembled for their possessions, and prepared a new and more solemn embassy, to demand the necessary succours of their European brethren.

“The qualities of Saladin were gilded with the lustre of conquest; and it has been the singular fortune of this Moslem hero, to be painted in fairer colours by the discordant and astonished Christians, than by those of his own courtiers and countrymen, who may reasonably be supposed to have known him best. He has been compared with Alexander; and tho’ he be usually stiled, and with some justice, a barbarian, it does not appear that his character would suffer in the comparison. His conquests were equally splendid; nor did he lead the forces of a brave and generous people, against a nation depressed by slavery, and relaxed with effeminacy. Under his banner Saracen encountered Saracen in equal strife; or the forces of the East were engaged with the firmer and more disciplined armies of the West. Like Alexander, he was liberal to profusion; and while all he possessed seemed the property of his friends, the monarch himself often wanted that, which with unstinted hand he had heaped upon his favourites and dependents. His sentiments were elevated, his manners polite and insinuating, and the affability of his temper was never subdued.

“But the parallel is exceedingly far from entire. He possessed not the romantic gallantry of the conqueror of Darius; he had none of those ardent and ungovernable passions, through whose medium the victories of Arbela and Issus had transformed the generous hero into the lawless tyrant. It was a maxim to which he uniformly adhered, to accomplish his lofty designs by policy and intrigue, and to leave as little as possible to the unknown caprice of fortune. In his mature age he was temperate, gentle, patient. The passions of his soul, and the necessities of nature were subordinate

to the equanimity of his character². His deportment was grave and thoughtful; his religion sincere and enthusiastic. He was ignorant of letters, and despised all learning, that was not theological. The cultivation, that had obtained under the khalifs, had not entirely civilized the genius of Saladin. His maxims of war were indeed the maxims of the age, and ought not to be adopted as a particular imputation. But the action of his striking off with his own hand the head of a Christian prince, who had attacked the defenceless caravan of the pilgrims of Mecca, exhibits to our view all the features of a fierce and untutored barbarian³.”

As the whole of this excellent work is now before us, it may not be impertinent, before we finally take our leave of it, to attempt an idea of its celebrated author. We are happy in this place to declare our opinion, that no author ever better obeyed the precept of Horace and Boileau, in choosing a subject nicely correspondent to the talents he possessed. The character of this writer, patient yet elegant, accurate in enquiry, acute in reflexion, was peculiarly calculated to trace the flow and imperceptible decline of empire, and to throw light upon a period, darkened by the barbarism of its heroes, and the confused and narrow genius of its authors. In a word, we need not fear to class the performance with those that shall do lasting, perhaps immortal, honour, to the country by which they have been produced.

But like many other works of this elevated description, the time shall certainly come, when the history before us shall no longer be found, but in the libraries of the learned, and the cabinets of the curious. At present it is equally sought by old and young, the learned and unlearned, the macaroni, the peer, and the fine lady, as well as the student and scholar. But this is to be ascribed to the rage of fashion. The performance is not naturally calculated for general acceptance. It is, by the very tenor of the subject, interspersed with a thousand minute and elaborate investigations, which, in spite of perspicuous method, and classical allusion, will deter the idle, and affright the gay.

Nor can we avoid ascribing the undistinguishing and extravagant applause, that has been bestowed upon the style, to the same source of fashion, the rank, the fortune, the connexions of the writer. It is indeed loaded with epithets, and crowded with allusions. But though the style be often raised, the thoughts are always calm, equal, and rigidly classic. The language is full of art, but perfectly exempt from fire. Learning, penetration, accuracy, polish; any thing is rather the characteristic of the historian, than the flow of eloquence, and the flame of genius. Far therefore from classing him in this respect with such writers as the immortal Hume, who have perhaps carried the English language to the highest perfection it is capable of reaching; we are inclined to rank him below Dr. Johnson, though we are by no means insensible to the splendid faults of that admirable writer.

One word perhaps ought to be said respecting Mr. Gibbon's treatment of Christianity. His wit is indeed by no means uniformly happy; as where for instance, he tells us, that the name of *Le Boeuf* is remarkably apposite to the character of that antiquarian; or where, speaking of the indefatigable diligence of Tillemont, he informs us, that “the patient and sure-footed mule of the Alps may be trusted in the most slippery paths.” But allowing every thing for the happiness of his irony, and setting aside our private sentiments respecting the justice of its application, we cannot

² Bohaoddin, p. 71. He was an eye witness, and had a considerable share in many of the transactions of Saladin. He is generally accurate, and tolerably impartial.

³ Ebn Shohnah, Heg. 589. Abulfarai, Renaudot, p. 243. D'Herbelot, biblioth. orient. art. Togrul, &c.

help thinking it absolutely incompatible, with the laws of history. For our own part, we honestly confess, that we have met with more than one passage, that has puzzled us whether it ought to be understood in jest or earnest. The irony of a single word he must be a churl who would condemn; but the continuance of this figure in serious composition, throws truth and falsehood, right and wrong into inextricable perplexity.

ARTICLE II. THE HISTORY OF AMERICA. BY WILLIAM ROBERTSON, D.D.&C. VOLS. III, IV. 4TO.

The expectation of almost all ranks has been as much excited by the present performance, as perhaps by almost any publication in the records of literature. The press has scarcely been able to keep pace with the eagerness of the public, and the third edition is already announced, before we have been able to gratify our readers with an account of this interesting work. For a great historian to adventure an established name upon so recent and arduous a subject, is an instance that has scarcely occurred. Reports were sometime ago industriously propagated that Dr. Robertson had turned his attention to a very different subject, and even when it was generally known that the present work was upon the eve of publication, it was still questioned by many, whether a writer, so celebrated for prudence, had not declined the more recent part of the North American history. The motives of his conduct upon this head as they are stated in the preface, we shall here lay before our readers.

“But neither the history of Portuguese America, nor the early history of our own settlements, have constituted the most arduous part of the present publication. The revolution, which, unfortunately for this country, hath recently taken place in the British colonies, hath excited the most general attention, at the same time that it hath rendered the gratification of public curiosity a matter of as much delicacy as necessity. Could this event have been foreseen by me, I should perhaps have been more cautious of entering into engagements with the public. To embark upon a subject, respecting which the sentiments of my countrymen have been so much divided, and the hand of time hath not yet collected the verdicts of mankind; while the persons, to whose lot it hath fallen to act the principal parts upon the scene, are almost all living; is a task that prudence might perhaps refuse, and modesty decline. But circumstanced as I was, I have chosen rather to consider these peculiarities as pleas for the candour of my readers, than as motives to withdraw myself from so important an undertaking. I should ill deserve the indulgence I have experienced from the public, were I capable of withdrawing from a task by which their curiosity might be gratified, from any private inducements of inconvenience or difficulty.”

We have already said, and the reader will have frequent occasion to recollect it, that we by no means generally intend an analysis of the several works that may come before us. In the present instance, we do not apprehend that we shall lay ourselves open to much blame, by passing over in silence the discoveries of Vesputius, and the conquests of Baretto; and laying before our readers some extracts from the history of the late war. It is impossible not to remark that the subject is treated with much caution, and that, though the sentiments of a royalist be every where conspicuous, they are those of a royalist, moderated by misfortune and defeat.

The following is Dr. Robertson’s account of the declaration of independence.

“It is by this time sufficiently visible, that the men, who took upon themselves to be most active in directing the American counsels, were men of deep design and extensive ambition, who by no means confined their views to the redress of those grievances of which they complained, and which served them for instruments in the pursuit of objects less popular and specious. By degrees they sought to undermine the allegiance, and dissolve the ties, which connected the colonies with the parent country of Britain. Every step that was taken by her ministry to restore tranquility to the empire, was artfully misrepresented by the zealots of faction. Every unguarded expression, or unfortunate measure of irritation was exaggerated by leaders, who considered their own honour and dignity as inseparable from further advances, and predicted treachery and insult as the consequences of retreating. They now imagined they had met with a favourable opportunity for proceeding to extremities. Their influence was greatest in the general congress, and by their means a circular manifesto was issued by that assembly intended to ascertain the disposition of the several colonies respecting a declaration of independence.

“They called their countrymen to witness how real had been their grievances, and how moderate their claims. They said, it was impossible to have proceeded with more temper or greater deliberation, but that their complaints had been constantly superseded, their petitions to the throne rejected. The administration of Great Britain had not hesitated to attempt to starve them into surrender, and having miscarried in this, they were ready to employ the whole force of their country, with all the foreign auxiliaries they could obtain, in prosecution of their unjust and tyrannical purposes. They were precipitated, it was said, by Britain into a state of hostility, and there no longer remained for them a liberty of choice. They must either throw down their arms, and expect the clemency of men who had acted as the enemies of their rights; or they must consider themselves as in a state of warfare, and abide by the consequences of that state. Warfare involved independency. Without this their efforts must be irregular, feeble, and without all prospect of success; they could possess no power to suppress mutinies, or to punish conspiracies; nor could they expect countenance and support from any of the states of Europe, however they might be inclined to favour them, while they acknowledged themselves to be subjects, and it was uncertain how soon they might sacrifice their friends and allies to the hopes of a reunion. To look back, they were told, to the king of England, after all the insults they had experienced, and the hostilities that were begun, would be the height of pusillanimity and weakness. They were bid to think a little for their posterity, who by the irreversible laws of nature and situation, could have no alternative left them but to be slaves or independent. Finally, many subtle reasonings were alledged, to evince the advantages they must derive from intrinsic legislation, and general commerce.

“On the other hand, the middle and temperate party, represented this step as unnecessary, uncertain in its benefits, and irretrievable in its consequences. They expatiated on the advantages that had long been experienced by the colonists from the fostering care of Great Britain, the generosity of the efforts she had made to protect them, and the happiness they had known under her auspicious patronage. They represented their doubt of the ability of the colonies to defend themselves without her alliance.

They stated the necessity of a common superior to balance the separate and discordant interests of the different provinces. They dwelt upon the miseries of an internal and doubtful struggle. Determined never to depart from the assertion of what they considered as their indefeasible right, they would incessantly besiege the throne with their humble remonstrances. They would seek the clemency of England, rather than the alliance of those powers, whom they conceived to be the real enemies of both; nor would they ever be accessory to the shutting up the door of reconciliation.

“But the voice of moderation is seldom heard amidst the turbulence of civil dissention. Violent counsels prevailed. The decisive and irrevocable step was made on the 4th of July 1776. It remains with posterity to decide upon its merits. Since that time it has indeed received the sanction of military success; but whatever consequences it may produce to America, the fatal day must ever be regretted by every sincere friend to the British empire.”

The other extract we shall select is from the story of Lord Cornwallis’s surrender in Virginia, and the consequent termination of the American war.

“The loss of these redoubts may be considered as deciding the fate of the British troops. The post was indeed originally so weak and insufficient to resist the force that attacked it, that nothing but the assured expectation of relief from the garrison of New York, could have induced the commander to undertake its defence, and calmly to wait the approaches of the enemy. An officer of so unquestionable gallantry would, rather have hazarded an encounter in the field, and trusted his adventure to the decision of fortune, than by cooping his army in so inadequate a fortress, to have prepared for them inevitable misfortune and disgrace. But with the expectations he had been induced to form, he did not think himself justified in having recourse to desperate expedients.

“These hopes were now at an end. The enemy had already silenced his batteries. Nothing remained to hinder them from completing their second parallel, three hundred yards nearer to the besieged than the first. His lordship had received no intelligence of the approach of succours, and a probability did not remain that he could defend his station till such time as he could expect their arrival. Thus circumstanced, with the magnanimity peculiar to him, he wrote to Sir Henry Clinton, to acquaint him with the posture of his affairs, and to recommend to the fleet and the army that they should not make any great risk in endeavouring to extricate them.

“But although he regarded his situation as hopeless, he did not neglect any effort becoming a general, to lengthen the siege, and procrastinate the necessity of a surrender, if it was impossible finally to prevent it. The number of his troops seemed scarcely sufficient to countenance a considerable sally, but the emergency was so critical, that he ordered about three hundred and fifty men, on the morning of the 16th, to attack the batteries that appeared to be in the greatest forwardness, and to spike their guns. The assault was impetuous and successful. But either from their having executed the business upon which they were sent in a hasty and imperfect manner, or from the activity and industry of the enemy, the damage was repaired, and the batteries completed before evening.

“One choice only remained. To carry the troops across to Gloucester Point, and make one last effort to escape. Boats were accordingly prepared, and at ten o’clock at night the army began to embark. The first embarkation arrived in safety. The greater part of the troops were already landed. At this critical moment of hope and apprehension, of expectation and danger, the weather, which had hitherto been moderate and calm, suddenly changed; the sky was clouded, the wind rose and a violent storm ensued. The boats with the remaining troops were borne down the stream. To complete the anxiety and danger, the batteries of the enemy were opened, the day dawned, and their efforts were directed against the northern shore of the river. Nothing could be hoped, but the escape of the boats, and the safety of the troops. They were brought back without much loss, and every thing was replaced in its former situation.

“Every thing now verged to the dreaded crisis. The fire of the besiegers was heavy and unintermitted. The British could not return a gun, and the shells, their last resource, were nearly exhausted. They were themselves worn down with sickness and continual watching. A few hours it appeared must infallibly decide their fate. And if any thing were still wanting, the French ships which had entered the mouth of the river, seemed prepared to second the general assault on their side. In this situation, lord Cornwallis, not less calm and humane, than he was intrepid, chose not to sacrifice the lives of so many brave men to a point of honour, but the same day proposed to general Washington a cessation of twenty four hours, in order mutually to adjust the terms of capitulation.

“The troops which surrendered in the posts of York and Gloucester amounted to between five and six thousand men, but there were not above three thousand eight hundred of these in a capacity for actual service. They were all obliged to become prisoners of war. Fifteen hundred seamen were included in the capitulation. The commander, unable to obtain terms for the loyal Americans, was obliged to have recourse to a sloop, appointed to carry his dispatches, and which he stipulated should pass unsearched, to convey them to New York. The British fleet and army arrived off the Chesapeak five days after the surrender. Having learned the melancholy fate of their countrymen, they were obliged to return, without effecting any thing, to their former station.

“Such was the catastrophe of an army, that in intrepidity of exertion, and the patient endurance of the most mortifying reverses, are scarcely to be equalled by any thing that is to be met with in history. The applause they have received undiminished by their subsequent misfortunes, should teach us to exclaim less upon the precariousness of fame, and animate us with the assurance that heroism and constancy can never be wholly disappointed of their reward.”

The publication before us is written with that laudable industry, which ought ever to distinguish a great historian. The author appears to have had access to some of the best sources of information; and has frequently thrown that light upon a recent story, which is seldom to be expected, but from the developements of time, and the researches of progressive generations.

We cannot bestow equal praise upon his impartiality. Conscious however and reserved upon general questions, the historian has restricted himself almost entirely to the narrative form, and

has seldom indulged us with, what we esteem the principal ornament of elegant history, reflexion and character. The situation of Dr. Robertson may suggest to us an obvious, though incompetent, motive in the present instance. Writing for his contemporaries and countrymen, he could not treat the resistance of America, as the respectable struggle of an emerging nation. Writing for posterity, he could not denominate treason and rebellion, that which success, at least, had stamped with the signatures of gallantry and applause. But such could not have been the motives of the writer in that part of the history of America, which was given to the world some years ago. Perhaps Dr. Robertson was willing to try, how far his abilities could render the most naked story agreeable and interesting. We will allow him to have succeeded. But we could well have spared the experiment.

The style of this performance is sweet and eloquent. We hope however that we shall not expose ourselves to the charge of fastidiousness, when we complain that it is rather too uniformly so. The narrative is indeed occasionally enlivened, and the language picturesque. But in general we search in vain for some roughness to relieve the eye, and some sharpness to provoke the palate. One full and sweeping period succeeds another, and though pleased and gratified at first, the attention gradually becomes languid.

It would not perhaps be an unentertaining employment to compare the style of Dr. Robertson's present work with that of his first publication, the admired History of Scotland. The language of that performance is indeed interspersed with provincial and inelegant modes of expression, and the periods are often unskillfully divided. But it has a vigour and spirit, to which such faults are easily pardoned. We can say of it, what we can scarcely say of any of the author's later publications, that he has thrown his whole strength into it.

In that instance however he entered the lists with almost the only historian, with whom Dr. Robertson must appear to disadvantage, the incomparable Hume. In the comparison, we cannot but acknowledge that the eloquence of the former speaks the professor, not the man of the world. He reasons indeed, but it is with the reasons of logic; and not with the acuteness of philosophy, and the intuition of genius. Let not the living historian be offended. To be second to Hume, in our opinion might satisfy the ambition of a Livy or a Tacitus.

ARTICLE III. SECRET HISTORY OF THEODORE ALBERT MAXIMILIAN, PRINCE OF HOHENZOLLERN SIGMARINGEN. 12MO.

This agreeable tale appears to be the production of the noble author of the Modern Anecdote. It is told with the same humour and careless vivacity. The design is to ridicule the cold pedantry that judges of youth, without making any allowance for the warmth of inexperience, and the charms of beauty. Such readers as take up a book merely for entertainment, and do not quarrel with an author that does not scrupulously confine himself within the limits of moral instruction, will infallibly find their account in it.

The following specimen will give some idea of the manner in which the story is told.

“The learned Bertram was much scandalized at the dissipation that prevailed in the court of Hohenzollern. He was credibly informed that the lord treasurer of the principality, who had no less than a revenue of 109l. 7s. 10-3/4d. committed to his management, sometimes forgot the cares of an exchequer in the arms of a mistress. Nay, fame had even whispered in his ear, that the reverend confessor himself had an intrigue with a certain cook-maid. But that which beyond all things, afflicted him was the amour of Theodore with the beautiful Wilhelmina. What, cried he, when he ruminated upon the subject, can it be excusable in the learned Bertram, whose reputation has filled a fourth part of the circle of Swabia, who twice bore away the prize in the university of Otweiler, to pass these crying sins in silence? It shall not be said. Thus animated, he strided away to the antichamber of Theodore. Theodore, who was all graciousness, venerated the reputation of Bertram, and ordered him to be instantly admitted. The eyes of the philosopher flashed with anger. Most noble prince, cried he, I am come to inform you, that you must immediately break with the beautiful Wilhelmina. Theodore stared, but made no answer. The vices of your highness, said Bertram, awake my indignation. While you toy away your hours in the lap of a w—e, the vast principality of Hohenzollern Sigmaringen hastens to its fall. Reflect, my lord; three villages, seven hamlets, and near eleven grange houses and cottages, depend upon you for their political prosperity. Alas, thought Theodore, what are grange houses and cottages compared with the charms of Wilhelmina? Shall the lewd tricks of a wanton make you forget the jealous projects of the prince of Hohenzollern Hechingen, the elder branch of your illustrious house? Theodore pulled out his watch, that he might not outstay his appointment. My lord, continued Bertram, ruin impends over you. Two peasants of the district of Etwingen have already been seduced from their loyalty, a nail that supported the chart of your principality has fallen upon the ground, and your father confessor is in bed with a cook-maid. Theodore held forth his hand for Bertram to kiss, and flew upon the wings of desire to the habitation of Wilhelmina.”

ARTICLE IV. LOUISA, OR MEMOIRS OF A LADY OF QUALITY. BY THE AUTHOR OF EVELINA AND CECILIA. 3 VOLS. 12MO.

There scarcely seems to exist a more original genius in the present age than this celebrated writer. In the performances with which she has already entertained the public, we cannot so much as trace a feature of her illustrious predecessors; the fable, the characters, the incidents are all her own. In the mean time they are not less happy, than they are new. A Belfield, a Monckton, a Morrice, and several other personages of the admired Cecilia, will scarcely yield to the most finished draughts of the greatest writers. In comedy, in tragedy, Miss Burney alike excels. And the union of them both in the Vauxhall scene of the death of Harrel ranks among the first efforts of human genius. Of consequence we may safely pronounce that the reputation of this lady is by no means dependent upon fashion or caprice, but will last as long as there is understanding to discern, and taste to relish the beauties of fiction.

It must be acknowledged that her defects are scarcely less conspicuous than her excellencies. In her underplots she generally miscarries. We can trace nothing of Miss Burney in the stories of Macartney, Albany, and the Hills. Her comedy sometimes deviates into farce. The character of Briggs in particular, though it very successfully excites our laughter, certainly deforms a work, which in its principal constituents ranks in the very highest species of composition. Her style is often affected, and in the serious is sometimes so laboured and figurative, as to cost the reader a very strict attention to discover the meaning, without perfectly repaying his trouble. These faults are most conspicuous in Cecilia, which upon the whole we esteem by much her greatest performance. In Evelina she wrote more from inartificial nature. And we are happy to observe in the present publication, that the masculine sense, by which Miss Burney is distinguished, has raised her almost wholly above these little errors. The style of Louisa is more polished than that of Evelina, and more consonant to true taste than that of Cecilia.

The principal story of Louisa, like that of Cecilia, is very simple, but adorned with a thousand beautiful episodes. As the great action of the latter is Cecilia's sacrifice of fortune to a virtuous and laudable attachment, so that of the former is the sacrifice of rank, in the marriage of the heroine to a young man of the most distinguished merit, but neither conspicuous by birth, nor favoured by fortune. The event, romantic and inconsistent with the manners of polished society as it may appear, is introduced by such a train of incidents, that it is impossible not to commend and admire the conduct of the heroine.

Her character is that of inflexible vivacity and wit, accompanied with a spice of coquetry and affectation. And though this line of portrait seemed exhausted by Congreve and Richardson, we will venture to pronounce Louisa a perfect original. It is impossible to describe such a character in the abstract without recollecting Millamant and Lady G. But in reading this most agreeable novel, you scarcely think of either. As there is no imitation, so there are not two expressions in

the work, that can lead from one to the other. Louisa is more amiable than the former, and more delicate and feminine than the latter.

Mr. Burchel, the happy lover, is an author, a young man of infinite genius, of romantic honour, of unbounded generosity. Lord Raymond, the brother of Louisa, becomes acquainted with him in his travels, by an incident in which Mr. Burchel does him the most essential service. Being afterwards introduced to his sister, and being deeply smitten with her beauty and accomplishments, he quits the house of lord Raymond abruptly, with a determination entirely to drop his connexion. Sometime after, in a casual and unexpected meeting, he saves the life of his mistress. In the conclusion, his unparalleled merit, and his repeated services surmount every obstacle to an union.

Besides these two there are many other characters happily imagined. Louisa is involved in considerable distress previous to the final catastrophe. The manner in which her gay and sportive character is supported in these scenes is beyond all commendation. But the extract we shall give, as most singular in its nature, relates to another considerable female personage, Olivia. As the humour of Louisa is lively and fashionable, that of Olivia is serious and romantic. Educated in perfect solitude, she is completely ignorant of modern manners, and entertains the most sovereign contempt for them. Full of sentiment and sensibility, she is strongly susceptible to every impression, and her conduct is wholly governed by her feelings. Trembling at every leaf, and agonized at the smallest accident, she is yet capable, from singularity of thinking, of enterprises the most bold and unaccountable. Conformably to this temper, struck with the character of Burchel, and ravished with his address and behaviour, she plans the most extraordinary attempt upon his person. By her orders he is surprised in a solitary excursion, after some resistance actually seized, and conducted blindfold to the house of his fair admirer. Olivia now appears, professes her attachment, and lays her fortune, which is very considerable, at his feet. Unwilling however to take him by surprise, she allows him a day for deliberation, and insists upon his delivering at the expiration of it, an honest and impartial answer. His entertainment is sumptuous.

In the mean time, a peasant, who at a distance was witness to the violence committed upon Burchel, and had traced him to the house of Olivia, carries the account of what he had seen to Raymond Place. The company, which, in the absence of lord Raymond, consisted of Louisa, Mr. Bromley, an uncle, Sir Charles Somerville, a suitor, and Mr. Townshend, a sarcastic wit, determine to set off the next morning for the house of the ravisher. This is the scene which follows.

“Alarmed at the bustle upon the stairs, Olivia, more dead than alive, pressed the hand of Burchel with a look of inexpressible astonishment and mortification, and withdrew to the adjoining apartment.

“The door instantly flew open. Burchel advanced irresolutely a few steps towards the company, bowed, and was silent.

“The person that first entered was Mr. Bromley. He instantly seized hold of Burchel, and shook him very heartily by the hand.

“Ha, my boy, said he, have we found you? Well, and how? safe and sound? Eh? clapping him upon the shoulder.

“At your service, sir, answered Burchel, with an air of embarrassment and hesitation.

“It was not altogether the right thing, methinks, to leave us all without saying why, or wherefore, and stay out all night. Why we thought you had been murdered. My niece here has been in hysterics.

“Pon honour, cried sir Charles, you are very facetious. But we heard, Mr. Burchel, you were ran away with. It must have been very alarming. I vow, I should have been quite fluttered. Pray, sir, how was it?

“Why, indeed, interposed Mr. Townshend, the very relation seemed to disturb sir Charles. For my part, I was more alarmed for him than for Miss Bromley.

“Well, but, returned Bromley, impatiently, it is a queer affair. I hope as the lady went so far, you were not shy. You have not spoiled all, and affronted her.

“Oh, surely not, exclaimed Townshend, you do not suspect him of being such a boor. Doubtless every thing is settled by this time. The lady has a fine fortune, Burchel; poets do not meet with such every day; Miss Bromley, you look pale.

“Ha! Ha! Ha! you do me infinite honour, cried Louisa, making him a droll curtesy; what think you, sir Charles?

“Pon my soul, I never saw you look so bewitchingly.

“Well, but my lad, cried Bromley, you say nothing, don’t answer a single question. What, mum’s the word, eh?

“Indeed, sir, I do not know,—I do not understand—the affair is entirely a mystery to myself—it is in the power of no one but Miss Seymour to explain it.

“Well, and where is she? where is she?

“O I will go and look her, cried Louisa; will you come, Sir Charles; and immediately tripped out of the room. Sir Charles followed.

“Olivia had remained in too much confusion to withdraw farther than the next room; and upon this new intrusion, she threw herself upon a sofa, and covered her face with her hands.

“O here is the stray bird, exclaimed Louisa, fluttering in the meshes.

“Mr. Bromley immediately entered; Mr. Townshend followed; Burchel brought up the rear.

“My dearest creature, cried Louisa, do not be alarmed. We are come to wish you joy; and seized one of her hands.

“Well, but where’s the parson? exclaimed Bromley—What, has grace been said, the collation served, and the cloth removed? Upon my word, you have been very expeditious, Miss.

“My God, Bromley, said Townshend, do not reflect so much upon the ladies modesty. I will stake my life they were not to have been married these three days.

“Olivia now rose from the sofa in unspeakable agitation, and endeavoured to defend herself. Gentlemen, assure yourselves,—give me leave to protest to you,—indeed you will be sorry—you are mistaken———Oh Miss Bromley, added she, in a piercing voice, and threw her arms eagerly about the neck of Louisa.

“Mind them not, my dear, said Louisa; you know, gentlemen, Miss Seymour is studious; it was a point in philosophy she wished to settle; that’s all, Olivia; and kissed her cheek.

“Or perhaps, added Townshend,—the lady is young and inexperienced—she wanted a comment upon the bower scene in Cleopatra.

“Olivia suddenly raised her head and came forward, still leaning one arm upon Louisa. Hear me, cried she; I will be heard. What have I done that would expose me to the lash of each unlicensed tongue? What has there been in any hour of my life, upon which for calumny to fix her stain? Of what loose word, of what act of levity and dissipation can I be convicted? Have I not lived in the solitude of a recluse? Oh, fortune, hard and unexampled!

“Deuce take me, cried sir Charles, whispering Townshend, if I ever saw any thing so handsome.

“Olivia stood in a posture firm and collected, her bosom heaving with resentment; but her face was covered with blushes, and her eyes were languishing and sorrowful.

“For the present unfortunate affair I will acknowledge the truth. Mr. Burchel to me appeared endowed with every esteemable accomplishment, brave, generous, learned, imaginative, and tender. By what nobler qualities could a female heart be won? Fashion, I am told, requires that we should not make the advances. I reckon not fashion, and have never been her slave. Fortune has thrown him at a distance from me. It should have been my boast to trample upon her imaginary distinctions. I would never have forced an unwilling hand. But if constancy, simplicity and regard could have won a heart, his heart had been mine. I know that the succession of external objects would have made the artless virtues of Olivia pass unheeded. It was for that I formed my little plan. I will not blush for a scheme that no bad passion prompted. But it is over, and I will return to my beloved solitude with what unconcern I may. God bless you, Mr. Burchel; I never meant you any harm: and in saying this, she advanced two steps forward, and laid her hand on his.

“Burchel, without knowing what he did, fell on one knee and kissed it.

“This action revived the confusion of Olivia; she retreated, and Louisa took hold of her arm. Will you retire, said Louisa? You are a sweet good creature. Olivia assented, advanced a few steps forward, and then with her head half averted, took a parting glance at Burchel, and hurried away.

“A strange girl this, said Bromley! Devil take me, if I know what to make of her.

“I vow, cried sir Charles, I am acquainted with all the coteries in town, and never met with any thing like her.

“Why, she is as coming, rejoined the squire, as a milk-maid, and yet I do not know how she has something that dashes one too.

“Ah, cried sir Charles, shaking his head, she has nothing of the manners of the *grand monde*.

“That I can say nothing to, said Bromley, but, in my mind, her behaviour is gracious and agreeable enough, if her conduct were not so out of the way.

“What think you, Burchel, said Townshend, she is handsome, innocent, good tempered and rich; excellent qualities, let me tell you, for a wife.

“I think her, said Burchel, more than you say. Her disposition is amiable, and her character exquisitely sweet and feminine. She is capable of every thing generous and admirable. A false education, and visionary sentiments, to which she will probably one day be superior, have rendered her for the present an object of pity. But, though I loved her, I should despise my own heart, if it were capable of taking advantage of her inexperience, to seduce her to a match so unequal.

“At this instant Louisa re-entered, and making the excuses of Olivia, the company returned to the carriage, sir Charles mounted on horseback as he came, and they carried off the hero in triumph.”

ARTICLE V. THE PEASANT OF BILIDELGERID, A TALE.

2 VOLS. SHANDEAN.

This is the only instance in which we shall take the liberty to announce to the public an author hitherto unknown. Thus situated, we shall not presume to prejudice our readers either ways concerning him, but shall simply relate the general plan of the work.

It attempts a combination, which has so happily succeeded with the preceding writer, of the comic and the pathetic. The latter however is the principal object. The hero is intended for a personage in the highest degree lovely and interesting, who in his earliest bloom of youth is subjected to the most grievous calamities, and terminates them not but by an untimely death. The writer seems to have apprehended that a dash of humour was requisite to render his story in the highest degree interesting. And he has spared no exertion of any kind of which he was capable, for accomplishing this purpose.

The scene is laid in Egypt and the adjacent countries. The peasant is the son of the celebrated Saladin. The author has exercised his imagination in painting the manners of the times and climates of which he writes.

ARTICLE VI. AN ESSAY ON NOVEL, IN THREE EPISTLES INSCRIBED TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE LADY CRAVEN, BY WILL. HAYLEY, ESQ. 4TO.

The public has been for some time agreed that Mr. Hayley is the first of English poets. Envy herself scarcely dares utter a dissentient murmur, and even generous emulation turns pale at the mention of his name. His productions, allowing for the very recent period in which he commenced author, are rather numerous. A saturnine critic might be apt to suspect that they were also hasty, were not the loftiness of their conceptions, the majesty of their style, the richness of their imagination, and above all, the energy both of their thoughts and language so conspicuous, that we may defy any man of taste to rise from the perusal, and say, that all the study and consideration in the world could possibly have made them better. After a course however of unremitting industry, Mr. Hayley seemed to have relaxed, and to the eternal mortification of the literary world, last winter could not boast a single production of the prince of song. The muses have now paid us another visit. We are very sensible of our incapacity to speak, or even think of this writer with prosaic phlegm; we cannot however avoid pronouncing, that, in our humble opinion, Mr. Hayley has now outdone all his former outdoings, and greatly repaid us for the absence we so dearly mourned.

We are sensible that it is unbecoming the character of a critic to lay himself out in general and vague declamation. It is also within the laws of possibility, that an incurious or unpoetical humour in some of our readers, and (ah me, the luckless day!) penury in others, may have occasioned their turning over the drowsy pages of the review, before they have perused the original work. Some account of the plan, and a specimen of the execution may therefore be expected.

The first may be dispatched in two words. The design is almost exactly analogous to that of the Essay on History, which has been so much celebrated. The author triumphs in the novelty of his subject, and pays a very elegant compliment to modern times, as having been in a manner the sole inventors of this admirable species of composition, of which he has undertaken to deliver the precepts. He deduces the pedigree of novel through several generations from Homer and Calliope. He then undertakes to characterise the most considerable writers in this line. He discusses with much learning, and all the logical subtlety so proper to the didactic muse, the pretensions of the Cyropedia of Xenophon; but at length rejects it as containing nothing but what was literally true, and therefore belonging to the class of history. He is very eloquent upon the Shepherd of Hermas, Theagenes and Chariclea, and the Ethiopics of Heliodorus. Turpin, Scudery, Cotterel, Sidney, the countess D'Anois, and "all such writers as were never read," next pass in review. Boccace and Cervantes occupy a very principal place. The modern French writers of fictitious history from

Fenelon to Voltaire, close the first epistle. The second is devoted to English authors. The third to the laws of novel writing.

We shall present our readers, as a specimen, with the character of that accomplished writer, John Bunyan, whom the poet has generously rescued from that contempt which fashionable manners, and fashionable licentiousness had cast upon him.

“See in the front of Britain’s honour’d band,
The author of the Pilgrim’s Progress stand.
Though, sunk in shades of intellectual night,
He boasted but the simplest arts, to read and write;
Though false religion hold him in her chains,
His judgment weakens and his heart restrains:
Yet fancy’s richest beams illum’d his mind,
And honest virtue his mistakes refin’d.
The poor and the illiterate he address’d;
The poor and the illiterate call him blest.
Blest he the man that taught the poor to pray,
That shed on adverse fate religion’s day,
That wash’d the clotted tear from sorrow’s face,
Recall’d the rambler to the heavenly race,
Dispell’d the murky clouds of discontent,
And read the lore of patience wheresoe’er he went.”

Amidst the spirited beauties of this passage, it is impossible not to consider some as particularly conspicuous. How strong and nervous the second and fourth lines! How happily expressive the two Alexandrines! What a luminous idea does the epithet “murky” present to us! How original and picturesque that of the “clotted tear!” If the same expression be found in the Ode to Howard, let it however be considered, that the exact propriety of that image to wash it from the face (for how else, candid reader, could a tear already clotted be removed) is a clear improvement, and certainly entitles the author to a repetition. Lastly, how consistent the assemblage, how admirable the climax in the last six lines! Incomparable they might appear, but we recollect a passage nearly equal in the Essay on History,

“*Wild* as thy *feeble* Metaphysic page,
Thy History *rambles* into *Steptic* rage;
Whose giddy and fantastic *dreams* abuse,
A Hampden’s Virtue and a Shakespeare’s Muse.”

How elevated the turn of this passage! To be at once luxuriant and feeble, and to lose one’s way till we get into a passion, (with our guide, I suppose) is peculiar to a poetic subject. It is impossible to mistake this for prose. Then how pathetic the conclusion! What hard heart can refuse its compassion to personages *abused* by a *dream*, and that dream the *dream of a History!*

Oh, wonderful poet, thou shalt be immortal, if my eulogiums can make thee so! To thee thine own rhyme shall never be applied, (*Dii, avertite omen*).

“Already, pierc’d by freedom’s searching rays,
The waxen fabric of his fame decays!”

ARTICLE VII. INKLE AND YARICO, A POEM, BY JAMES BEATTIE, L.L.D. 4TO.

This author cannot certainly be compared with Mr. Hayley.

We know not by what fatality Dr. Beattie has acquired the highest reputation as a philosopher, while his poetry, though acknowledged to be pleasing, is comparatively little thought on. It must always be with regret and diffidence, that we dissent from the general verdict. We should however be somewhat apprehensive of sacrificing the character we have assumed, did we fail to confess that his philosophy has always appeared to us at once superficial and confused, feeble and presumptuous. We do not know any thing it has to recommend it, but the good intention, and we wish we could add the candid spirit, with which it is written.

Of his poetry however we think very differently. Though deficient in nerve, it is at once sweet and flowing, simple and amiable. We are happy to find the author returning to a line in which he appears so truly respectable. The present performance is by no means capable to detract from his character as a poet. This well known tale is related in a manner highly pathetic and interesting. As we are not at all desirous of palling the curiosity of the reader for the poem itself, we shall make our extract at random. The following stanzas, as they are taken from a part perfectly cool and introductory, are by no means the best in this agreeable piece. They are prefaced by some general reflexions on the mischiefs occasioned by the *sacra fames auri*. The reader will perceive that Dr. Beattie, according to the precept of Horace, has rushed into the midst of things, and not taken up the narrative in chronological order.

“Where genial Phoebus darts his fiercest rays,
Parching with heat intense the torrid zone:
No fanning western breeze his rage allays;
No passing cloud, with kindly shade o’erthrown,
His place usurps; but Phoebus reigns alone,
In this unfriendly clime a woodland shade,
Gloomy and dark with woven boughs o’ergrown,
Shed chearful verdure on the neighbouring glade,
And to th’ o’er-labour’d hind a cool retreat display’d.

Along the margin of th' Atlantic main,
Rocks pil'd on rocks yterminate the scene;
Save here and there th' incroaching surges gain
An op'ning grateful to the daisied green;
Save where, ywinding cross the vale is seen
A bubbling creek, that spreads on all sides round
Its breezy freshness, gladding, well I ween,
The op'ning flow'rets that adorn the ground,
From her green margin to the ocean's utmost bound.

The distant waters hoarse resounding roar,
And fill the list'ning ear. The neighb'ring grove
Protects, i'th'midst that rose, a fragrant bow'r,
With nicest art compos'd. All nature strove,
With all her powers, this favour'd spot to prove
A dwelling fit for innocence and joy,
Or temple worthy of the god of love.
All objects round to mirth and joy invite,
Nor aught appears among that could the pleasure blight.

Within there sat, all beauteous to behold!
Adorn'd with ev'ry grace, a gentle maid.
Her limbs were form'd in nature's choicest mould,
Her lovely eyes the coldest bosoms sway'd,
And on her breast ten thousand Cupids play'd.
What though her skin were not as lilies fair?
What though her face confest a darker shade?
Let not a paler European dare
With glowing Yarico's her beauty to compare.

And if thus perfect were her outward form,
What tongue can tell the graces of her mind,
Constant in love and in its friendships warm?
There blushing modesty with virtue join'd
There tenderness and innocence combin'd.
Nor fraudulent wiles, nor dark deceit she knew,
Nor arts to catch the inexperienc'd hind;
No swain's attention from a rival drew,
For she was simple all, and she was ever true.

There was not one so lovely or so good,
Among the num'rous daughters of the plain;
'Twas Yarico each Indian shepherd woo'd;
But Yarico each shepherd woo'd in vain;
Their arts she view'd not but with cold disdain.
For British Inkle's charms her soul confest,
His paler charms had caus'd her am'rous pain;
Nor could her heart admit another guest,
Or time efface his image in her constant breast,

Her generous love remain'd not unreturn'd,
Nor was the youthful swain as marble cold,
But soon with equal flame his bosom burn'd;
His passion soon in love's soft language told,
Her spirits cheer'd and bad her heart be bold.
Each other dearer than the world beside,
Each other dearer than themselves they hold.
Together knit in firmest bonds they bide,
While days and months with joy replete unnotic'd glide.

Ev'n now beside her sat the British boy,
Who ev'ry mark of youth and beauty bore,
All that allure the soul to love and joy.
Ev'n now her eyes ten thousand charms explore,
Ten thousand charms she never knew before.
His blooming cheeks confest a lovely glow,
His jetty eyes unusual brightness wore,
His auburn locks adown his Shoulders flow,
And manly dignity is seated on his brow."

ARTICLE VIII THE ALCHEMIST, A COMEDY, ALTERED FROM BEN JONSON, BY RICHARD BRINSLEY SHERIDAN, ESQ.

There are few characters, that have risen into higher favour with the English nation, than Mr. Sheridan. He was known and admired, as a man of successful gallantry, both with the fair sex and his own, before he appeared, emphatically speaking, upon the public stage. Since that time, his performances, of the *Duenna*, and the *School for Scandal*, have been distinguished with the public favour beyond any dramatical productions in the language. His compositions, in gaiety of humour and spriteliness of wit, are without an equal.

Satiated, it should seem, with the applauses of the theatre, he turned his attention to public and parliamentary speaking. The vulgar prejudice, that genius cannot expect to succeed in two different walks, for some time operated against him. But he possessed merit, and he compelled applause. He now ranks, by universal consent, as an orator and a statesman, with the very first names of an age, that will not perhaps be accounted unproductive in genius and abilities.

It was now generally supposed that he had done with the theatre. For our own part, we must confess; we entertain all possible veneration for parliamentary and ministerial abilities; we should be mortified to rank second to any man in our enthusiasm for the official talents of Mr. Sheridan: But as the guardians of literature, we regretted the loss of his comic powers. We wished to preserve the poet, without losing the statesman. Greatly as we admired the opera and the comedy, we conceived his unbounded talents capable of something higher still. To say all in a word, we looked at his hands for the MISANTHROPE of the British muse.

It is unnecessary to say then, that we congratulate the public upon the present essay. It is meant only as a *jeu d'esprit*. But we consider it as the earnest of that perseverance, which we wished to prove, and feared to lose. The scene we have extracted, and which, with another, that may be considered as a kind of praxis upon the rules, constitutes the chief part of the alteration, is apparently personal. How far personal satire is commendable in general, and how far it is just in the present instance, are problems that we shall leave with our readers.—As much as belongs to Jonson we have put in italics.

ACT IV

SCENE 4

Enter *Captain Face*, disguised as *Lungs*, and *Kastril*.

FACE.

Who would you speak with?

KASTRIL.

Where is the captain?

FACE.

Gone, sir, about some business.

KASTRIL.

Gone?

FACE.

He will return immediately. But master doctor, his lieutenant is here.

KASTRIL.

Say, I would speak with him.

[Exit Face.

Enter Subtle.

SUBTLE.

Come near, sir.—I know you well.—You are my terrae fili—that is—my boy of land—same three thousand pounds a year.

KASTRIL.

How know you that, old boy?

SUBTLE.

I know the subject of your visit, and I'll satisfy you. Let us see now what notion you have of the matter. It is a nice point to broach a quarrel right.

KASTRIL.

You lie.

SUBTLE.

How now?—give me the lie?—for what, my boy?

KASTRIL.

Nay look you to that.—I am beforehand—that's my business.

SUBTLE.

Oh, this is not the art of quarrelling—'tis poor and pitiful!—What, sir, would you restrict the noble science of debate to the mere lie?—Phaw, that's a paltry trick, that every fool could hit.—A mere Vandal could throw his gantlet, and an Iroquois knock his antagonist down.—No, sir, the art of quarrel is vast and complicated.—Months may worthily be employed in the attainment,—and the exercise affords range for the largest abilities.—To quarrel after the newest and most approved method, is the first of sciences,—the surest test of genius, and the last perfection of civil society.

KASTRIL.

You amaze me. I thought to dash the lie in another's face was the most respectable kind of anger.

SUBTLE.

O lud, sir, you are very ignorant. A man that can only give the lie is not worth the name of quarrelsome—quite tame and spiritless!—No, sir, the angry boy must understand, beside the QUARREL DIRECT—in which I own you have some proficiency—a variety of other modes of attack;—such as, the QUARREL PREVENTIVE—the QUARREL OBSTREPEROUS—the QUARREL SENSITIVE—the QUARREL OBLIQUE—and the QUARREL PERSONAL.

KASTRIL.

O Mr. doctor, that I did but understand half so much of the art of brangling as you do!—What would I give!—Harkee—I'll settle an hundred a year upon you.—But come, go on, go on—

SUBTLE.

O sir! you quite overpower me—why, if you use me thus, you will draw all my secrets from me at once.—I shall almost kick you down stairs the first lecture.

KASTRIL.

How!—Kick me down stairs?—Ware that—Blood and oons, sir!

SUBTLE.

Well, well,—be patient—be patient—Consider, it is impossible to communicate the last touches of the art of petulance, but by fist and toe,—by sword and pistol.

KASTRIL.

Sir, I don't understand you!

SUBTLE.

Enough. We'll talk of that another time.—What I have now to explain is the cool and quiet art of debate—fit to be introduced into the most elegant societies—or the most august assemblies.—You, my angry boy, are in parliament?

KASTRIL.

No, doctor.—I had indeed some thoughts of it.—But imagining that the accomplishments of petulance and choler would be of no use there—I gave it up.

SUBTLE.

Good heavens!—Of no use?—Why, sir, they can be no where so properly.—Only conceive how august a little petulance—and what a graceful variety snarling and snapping would introduce!—True, they are rather new in that connexion.—Believe me, sir, there is nothing for which I have so ardently longed as to meet them there.—I should die contented.—And you, sir,—if you would introduce them—Eh?

KASTRIL.

Doctor, you shall be satisfied—I'll be in parliament in a month—I'll be prime minister—LORD HIGH TREASURER of ENGLAND—or, CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER!

SUBTLE.

Oh, by all means CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER! You are somewhat young indeed—but that's no objection.—Damn me, if the office can ever be so respectably filled as by an angry boy.

KASTRIL.

True, true.—But, doctor, we forget your instructions all this time.—Let me see—Ay—first was the QUARREL PREVENTIVE.

SUBTLE.

Well thought of!—Why, sir, in your new office you will be liable to all sorts of attacks—Ministers always are, and an angry boy cannot hope to escape.—Now nothing, you know, is so much to the purpose as to have the first blow—Blunders are very natural.—Your friends tell one story in the upper house, and you another in the lower—You shall give up a territory to the enemy that you ought to have kept, and when charged with it, shall unluckily drop that you and your colleagues were ignorant of the geography of the country—You foresee an attack—you immediately open—Plans so extensively beneficial—accounts so perfectly consistent—measures so judicious and accurate—no man can question—no man can object to—but a rascal and a knave.—Let him come forward!

KASTRIL.

Very good! very good!—For the QUARREL OPSTREPEROUS, that I easily conceive.—An antagonist objects shrewdly—I cannot invent an answer.—In that case, there is nothing to be done but to drown his reasons in noise—nonsense—and vociferation.

SUBTLE.

Come to my arms, my dear Kastril! O thou art an apt scholar—thou wilt be nonpareil in the art of brawling!—But for the QUARREL SENSITIVE—

KASTRIL.

Ay, that I confess I don't understand.

SUBTLE.

Why, it is thus, my dear boy—A minister is apt to be sore.—Every man cannot have the phlegm of Burleigh.—And an angry boy is sorest of all.—In that case—an objection is made that would dumbfound any other man—he parries it with—my honour—and my integrity—and the rectitude of my intentions—my spotless fame—my unvaried truth—and the greatness of my abilities—And so gives no answer at all.

KASTRIL.

Excellent! excellent!

SUBTLE.

The QUARREL OBLIQUE is easy enough.—It is only to talk in general terms of places and pensions—the loaves and the fishes—a struggle for power—a struggle for power—And it will do excellent well, if at a critical moment—you can throw in a hint of some forty or fifty millions unaccounted for by some people's grandfathers and uncles dead fifty years ago.

KASTRIL.

Ha! ha! ha!

SUBTLE.

Lastly, for the QUARREL PERSONAL—It may be infinitely diversified.—I have other instances in my eye,—but I will mention only one.—Minds capable of the widest comprehension, when held back from their proper field, may turn to lesser employments, that fools may wonder at, and canting hypocrites accuse—A CATO might indulge to the pleasures of the bottle, and a CAESAR might play—Unfortunately you may have a CAESAR to oppose you—Let him discuss a matter of finance—that subject is always open—there you have an easy answer. In the former case you parried, here you thrust.—You must admire at his presumption—tell him roundly he is not capable of the subject—and dam his strongest reasons by calling them the reasons of a gambler.

KASTRIL.

Admirable!—Oh doctor!—I will thank you for ever.—I will do any thing for you!

[Face enters at the corner of the stage, winks at Subtle, and exit.]

SUBTLE.

“Come, Sir, the captain will come to us presently—I will have you to my chamber of demonstrations, and show my instrument for quarrelling, with all the points of the compass marked upon it. It will make you able to quarrel to a straw's breadth at moonlight.

Exeunt.”

ARTICLE IX. REFLEXIONS UPON THE PRESENT STATE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA. BY THOMAS PAINE, M.A. &c. 8vo.

The revolution of America is the most important event of the present century. Other revolutions have originated in immediate personal feeling, have pointed only at a few partial grievances, or, preserving the tyranny entire, have consisted only in a struggle about the persons in whom it should be vested. This only has commenced in an accurate and extensive view of things, and at a time when the subject of government was perfectly understood. The persons, who have had the principal share in conducting it, exhibit a combination of wisdom, spirit and genius, that can never be sufficiently admired.

In this honourable list, the name of Mr. Paine by no means occupies the lowest place. He is the best of all their political writers. His celebrated pamphlet of Common Sense appeared at a most critical period, and certainly did important service to the cause of independency. His style is exactly that of popular oratory. Rough, negligent and perspicuous, it presents us occasionally with the boldest figures and the most animated language. It is perfectly intelligible to persons of all ranks, and it speaks with energy to the sturdy feelings of uncultivated nature. The sentiments of the writer are stern, and we think even rancorous to the mother country. They may be the sentiments of a patriot, they are not certainly those of a philosopher.

Mr. Paine has thought fit to offer some advice to his countrymen in the present juncture, in which, according to some, they stand in considerable need of it. The performance is not unworthy of the other productions of this author. It has the same virtues and the same defects. We have extracted the following passage, as one of the most singular and interesting.

“America has but one enemy, and that is England. Of the English it behoves us always to be jealous. We ought to cultivate harmony and good understanding with every other power upon earth. The necessity of this caution will be easily shewn. For

1. The united states of America were subject to the government of England. True, they have acknowledged our independence. But pride first struggled as much as she could, and sullenness held off as long as she dare. They have withdrawn their claim upon our obedience, but do you think they have forgot it? To this hour their very newspapers talk daily of dissensions between colony and colony, and the disaffection of this and of that to the continental interest. They hold up one another in absurdity, and look with affirmative impatience, when we shall fall together by the ears, that they may run away with the prize we have so dearly won. It is not in man to submit to a defalcation of empire without reluctance. But in England, where every cobbler, slave as he is, hath been taught to think himself a king, never.

2. The resemblance, of language, customs, will give them the most ready access to us. The king of England will have emissaries in every corner. They will try to light up discord among us. They will give intelligence of all our weaknesses. Though we have struggled bravely, and conquered like men, we are not without imperfection. Ambition and hope will be for ever burning in the breast of our former tyrant. Dogmatical confidence is the worst enemy America can have. We need not fear the Punic sword. But let us be upon our guard against the arts of Carthage.

3. England is the only European state that still possesses an important province upon our continent. The Indian tribes are all that stand between us. We know with what art they lately sought their detested alliance. What they did then was the work of a day. Hereafter if they act against us, the steps they will proceed with will be slower and surer. Canada will be their place of arms. From Canada they will pour down their Indians. A dispute about the boundaries will always be an easy quarrel. And if their cunning can inveigle us into a false security, twenty or thirty years hence we may have neither generals nor soldiers to stop them.”

ARTICLE X. SPEECH OF THE RIGHT HONOURABLE EDMUND BURKE, ON A MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS OF THANKS TO HIS MAJESTY (ON THE 28TH OF NOVEMBER, 1783) FOR HIS GRACIOUS COMMUNICATION OF A TREATY OF COMMERCE CONCLUDED BETWEEN GEORGE THE THIRD, KING, &C. AND THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

We were very apprehensive upon Mr. Burke's coming into administration, that this circumstance might have proved a bar to any further additions to the valuable collection of his speeches already in the hands of the public. If we imagined that our verdict could make any addition to the very great and deserved reputation in which they are held, we should not scruple to say that were Cicero our contemporary, and Mr. Burke the ancient, we are persuaded that there would not be a second opinion upon the comparative merits of their orations. In the same degree as the principles of the latter are unquestionably more unsullied, and his spirit more independent; do we esteem him to excel in originality of genius, and sublimity of conception.

We will give two extracts; one animadverting upon the preliminaries of peace concluded by the earl of Shelburne; the other a character of David Hartley, Esq.

“I know that it has been given out, that by the ability and industry of their predecessors we found peace and order established to our hands; and that the present ministers had nothing to inherit, but emolument and indolence, *otium cum dignitate*. Sir, I will inform you what kind of peace and leisure the late ministers had provided. They were indeed assiduous in their devotion; they erected a temple to the goddess of peace. But it was so hasty and incorrect a structure, the foundation was so imperfect, the materials so gross and unwrought, and the parts so disjointed, that it would have been much easier to have raised an entire edifice from the ground, than to have reduced the injudicious sketch that was made to any regularity of form. Where you looked for a shrine, you found only a vestibule; instead of the chapel of the goddess, there was a wide and dreary lobby; and neither altar nor treasury were to be found. There was neither greatness of design, nor accuracy of finishing. The walls were

full of gaps and flaws, the winds whistled through the spacious halls, and the whole building tottered over our heads.

Mr. Hartley, sir, is a character, that must do honour to his country and to human nature. With a strong and independent judgment, with a capacious and unbounded benevolence, he devoted himself from earliest youth for his brethren and fellow creatures. He has united a character highly simple and inartificial, with the wisdom of a true politician. Not by the mean subterfuges of a professed negociator; not by the dark, fathomless cunning of a mere statesman; but by an extensive knowledge of the interest and character of nations; by an undisguised constancy in what is fit and reasonable; by a clear and vigorous spirit that disdains imposition. He has met the accommodating ingenuity of France; he has met the haughty inflexibility of Spain upon their own ground, and has completely routed them. He loosened them from all their holdings and reserves; he left them not a hole, nor a corner to shelter themselves. He has taught the world a lesson we had long wanted, that simple and unaided virtue is more than a match for the unbending armour of pride, and the exhaustless evolutions of political artifice.”

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William Godwin
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