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MORGANTE MAGGIORE

DI

MESSER LUIGI PULCI.

ADVERTISEMENT.

The Morgante Maggiore, of the first canto of which this translation is offered, divides with the Orlando Innamorato the honour of having formed and suggested the style and story of Ariosto. The great defects of Boiardo were his treating too seriously the narratives of chivalry, and his harsh style. Ariosto, in his continuation, by a judicious mixture of the gaiety of Pulci, has avoided the one, and Berni, in his reformation of Boiardo's poem, has corrected the other. Pulci may be considered as the precursor and model of Berni altogether, as he has partly been to Ariosto, however inferior to both his copyists. He is no less the founder of a new style of poetry very lately sprung up in England. I allude to that

of the ingenious Whistlecraft. The serious poems on Roncesvalles in the same language, and more particularly the excellent one of Mr. Merivale, are to be traced to the same source. It has never yet been decided entirely, whether Pulci's intention was or was not to deride the religion, which is one of his favourite topics. It appears to me, that such an intention would have been no less hazardous to the poet than to the priest, particularly in that age and country; and the permission to publish the poem, and its reception among the classics of Italy, prove that it neither was nor is so interpreted. That he intended to ridicule the monastic life, and suffered his imagination to play with the simple dulness of his converted giant, seems evident enough; but surely it were as unjust to accuse him of irreligion on this account, as to denounce Fielding for his Parson Adams, Barnabas, Thwackum, Supple, and the Ordinary in Jonathan Wild,—or Scott, for the exquisite use of his Covenanters in the "Tales of my Landlord."

In the following translation I have used the liberty of the original with the proper names; as Pulci uses Gan, Ganellon, or Ganellone; Carlo, Carlomagno, or Carlomano; Rondel, or Rondello, &c. as it suits his convenience, so has the translator. In other respects the version is faithful to the best of the translator's ability in combining his interpretation of the one language with the not very easy task of reducing it to the same versification in the other. The reader, on comparing it with the annexed original, is requested to remember that the antiquated language of Pulci, however pure, is not easy to the generality of Italians themselves, from its great mixture of Tuscan proverbs; and he may therefore be more indulgent to the present attempt. How far the translator has succeeded, and whether or no he shall

continue the work, are questions which the public will decide. He was induced to make the experiment partly by his love for, and partial intercourse with, the Italian language, of which it is so easy to acquire a slight knowledge, and with which it is so nearly impossible for a foreigner to become accurately conversant. The Italian language is like a capricious beauty, who accords her smiles to all, her favours to few, and sometimes least to those who have courted her longest. The translator wished also to present in an English dress a part at least of a poem never yet rendered into a northern language; at the same time that it has been the original of some of the most celebrated productions on this side of the Alps, as well as of those recent experiments in poetry in England, which have been already mentioned.

TRANSLATION.

MORGANTE MAGGIORE.

CANTO I.

I.

In the beginning was the Word next God;
God was the Word, the Word no less was he:
This was in the beginning, to my mode
Of thinking, and without him nought could be:
Therefore, just Lord! from out thy high abode,
Benign and pious, bid an angel flee,
One only, to be my companion, who
Shall help my famous, worthy, old song through.

II.

And thou, oh Virgin! daughter, mother, bride,
Of the same Lord, who gave to you each key
Of heaven, and hell, and every thing beside,
The day thy Gabriel said, "All hail!" to thee,
Since to thy servants pity's ne'er denied,
With flowing rhymes, a pleasant style and free,
Be to my verses then benignly kind,
And to the end illuminate my mind.

III.

'Twas in the season when sad Philomel
Weeps with her sister, who remembers and
Deplores the ancient woes which both befell,
And makes the nymphs enamour'd, to the hand
Of Phæton by Phœbus loved so well
His car (but temper'd by his sire's command)
Was given, and on the horizon's verge just now
Appear'd, so that Tithonus scratched his brow:

IV.

When I prepared my bark first to obey,
As it should still obey, the helm, my mind,
And carry prose or rhyme, and this my lay
Of Charles the Emperor, whom you will find
By several pens already praised; but they
Who to diffuse his glory were inclined,
For all that I can see in prose or verse,
Have understood Charles badly—and wrote worse.

V.

Leonardo Aretino said already,
That if, like Pepin, Charles had had a writer
Of genius quick, and diligently steady,
No hero would in history look brighter;
He in the cabinet being always ready,
And in the field a most victorious fighter,
Who for the church and Christian faith had wrought,
Certes far more than yet is said or thought.

VI.

You still may see at Saint Liberatore,
The abbey no great way from Manopell,
Erected in the Abruzzi to his glory,
Because of the great battle in which fell
A Pagan King, according to the story,
And felon people whom Charles sent to hell:
And there are bones so many, and so many,
Near them Giusaffa's would seem few, if any.

VII.

But the world, blind and ignorant, don't prize
His virtues as I wish to see them: thou,
Florence, by his great bounty don't arise,
And hast, and may have, if thou wilt allow,
All proper customs and true courtesies:
Whate'er thou hast acquired from then till now,
With knightly courage, treasure, or the lance,
Is sprung from out the noble blood of France.

VIII.

Twelve Paladins had Charles in court, of whom
The wisest and most famous was Orlando;
Him traitor Gan conducted to the tomb
In Roncesvalles, as the villain plann'd too,
While the horn rang so loud, and knell'd the doom
Of their sad rout, though he did all knight can do,
And Dante in his comedy has given
To him a happy seat with Charles in heaven.

IX.

'Twas Christmas-day; in Paris all his court
Charles held; the chief, I say, Orlando was,
The Dane; Astolfo there too did resort,
Also Ansuigi, the gay time to pass
In festival and in triumphal sport,
The much renown'd St. Dennis being the cause;
Angiolin of Bayonne, and Oliver,
And gentle Belinghieri too came there:

X.

Avolio, and Arino, and Othone
Of Normandy, and Richard Paladin,
Wise Hamo, and the ancient Salemone,
Walter of Lion's Mount and Baldovin,
Who was the son of the sad Ganellone,
Were there, exciting too much gladness in
The son of Pepin:—when his knights came hither,
He groaned with joy to see them altogether.

XI.

But watchful Fortune lurking, takes good heed
Ever some bar 'gainst our intents to bring.
While Charles reposed him thus, in word and deed,
Orlando ruled court, Charles, and every thing;
Curst Gan, with envy bursting, had such need
To vent his spite, that thus with Charles the king,
One day he openly began to say,
" Orlando must we always then obey?

XII.

" A thousand times I've been about to say,
" Orlando too presumptuously goes on;
" Here are we, counts, kings, dukes, to own thy sway,
" Hamo, and Otho, Ogier, Solomon,
" Each have to honour thee and to obey;
" But he has too much credit near the throne,
" Which we won't suffer, but are quite decided
" By such a boy to be no longer guided.

XIII.

" And even at Aspramont thou didst begin
" To let him know he was a gallant knight,
" And by the fount did much the day to win;
" But I know *who* that day had won the fight
" If it had not for good Gherardo been:
" The victory was Almonte's else; his sight
" He kept upon the standard, and the laurels
" In fact and fairness are his earning, Charles.

XIV.

" If thou rememberest being in Gascony,
" When there advanced the nations out of Spain,
" The Christian cause had suffer'd shamefully,
" Had not his valour driven them back again.
" Best speak the truth when there's a reason why:
" Know then, oh Emperor! that all complain:
" As for myself, I shall repass the mounts
" O'er which I cross'd with two and sixty Counts.

XV.

" 'Tis fit thy grandeur should dispense relief,
" So that each here may have his proper part,
" For the whole court is more or less in grief:
" Perhaps thou deem'st this lad a Mars in heart?"
Orlando one day heard this speech in brief,
As by himself it chanced he sate apart:
Displeased he was with Gan because he said it,
But much more still that Charles should give him credit.

XVI.

And with the sword he would have murder'd Gan,
But Oliver thrust in between the pair,
And from his hand extracted Durlindan,
And thus at length they separated were.
Orlando, angry too with Carloman,
Wanted but little to have slain him there;
Then forth alone from Paris went the chief,
And burst and madden'd with disdain and grief.

XVII.

From Ermellina, consort of the Dane,
He took Cortana, and then took Rondell,
And on towards Brara prick'd him o'er the plain;
And when she saw him coming, Aldabelle
Stretch'd forth her arms to clasp her lord again:
Orlando, in whose brain all was not well,
As "Welcome my Orlando home," she said,
Rais'd up his sword to smite her on the head.

XVIII.

Like him a fury counsels; his revenge
On Gan in that rash act he seem'd to take,
Which Aldabella thought extremely strange,
But soon Orlando found himself awake;
And his spouse took his bridle on this change,
And he dismounted from his horse, and spake
Of every thing which pass'd without demur,
And then reposed himself some days with her.

XIX.

Then full of wrath departed from the place,
And far as Pagan countries roam'd astray,
And while he rode, yet still at every pace
The traitor Gan remember'd by the way;
And wandering on in error a long space
An abbey which in a lone desert lay,
'Midst glens obscure, and distant lands, he found,
Which form'd the Christian's and the Pagan's bound.

XX.

The abbot was call'd Clermont, and by blood
  Descended from Angrante: under cover
Of a great mountain's brow the abbey stood,
  But certain savage giants look'd him over;
One Passamont was foremost of the brood,
  And Alabaster and Morgante hover
Second and third, with certain slings, and throw
In daily jeopardy the place below.

XXI.

The monks could pass the convent gate no more,
  Nor leave their cells for water or for wood;
Orlando knock'd, but none would ope, before
  Unto the prior it at length seem'd good;
Enter'd, he said that he was taught to adore
  Him who was born of Mary's holiest blood,
And was baptized a Christian; and then show'd
How to the abbey he had found his road.

XXII.

Said the abbot, "You are welcome; what is mine
  "We give you freely, since that you believe
"With us in Mary Mother's Son divine;
  "And that you may not, cavalier, conceive
"The cause of our delay to let you in
  "To be rusticity, you shall receive
"The reason why our gate was barr'd to you:
"Thus those who in suspicion live must do.

XXIII.

" When hither to inhabit first we came
" These mountains, albeit that they are obscure,
" As you perceive, yet without fear or blame
" They seem'd to promise an asylum sure:
" From savage brutes alone, too fierce to tame,
" 'Twas fit our quiet dwelling to secure;
" But now, if here we'd stay, we needs must guard
" Against domestic beasts with watch and ward.

XXIV.

" These make us stand, in fact, upon the watch,
" For late there have appear'd three giants rough;
" What nation or what kingdom bore the batch
" I know not, but they are all of savage stuff;
" When force and malice with some genius match,
" You know, they can do all—*we* are not enough:
" And these so much our orisons derange,
" I know not what to do, till matters change.

XXV.

" Our ancient fathers living the desert in,
" For just and holy works were duly fed;
" Think not they lived on locusts sole, 'tis certain
" That manna was rain'd down from heaven instead;
" But here 'tis fit we keep on the alert in
" Our bounds, or taste the stones shower'd down for bread,
" From off yon mountain daily raining faster,
" And flung by Passamont and Alabaster.

XXVI.

" The third, Morgante, 's savagest by far; he
" Plucks up pines, beeches, poplar-trees, and oaks,
" And flings them, our community to bury,
" And all that I can do but more provokes."
While thus they parley in the cemetery,
A stone from one of their gigantic strokes,
Which nearly crush'd Rondell, came tumbling over,
So that he took a long leap under cover.

XXVII.

" For God sake, cavalier, come in with speed,
" The manna's falling now," the abbot cried:
" This fellow does not wish my horse should feed,
" Dear abbot," Roland unto him replied,
" Of restiveness he'd cure him had he need;
" That stone seems with good-will and aim applied."
The holy father said, " I don't deceive;
" They'll one day fling the mountain, I believe."

XXVIII.

Orlando bade them take care of Rondello,
And also made a breakfast of his own:
" Abbot," he said, " I want to find that fellow
" Who flung at my good horse yon corner-stone."
Said the abbot, " Let not my advice seem shallow,
" As to a brother dear I speak alone;
" I would dissuade you, baron, from this strife,
" As knowing sure that you will lose your life.

XXIX.

" That Passamont has in his hand three darts—
" Such slings, clubs, ballast-stones, that yield you must;
" You know that giants have much stouter hearts
" Than us, with reason, in proportion just;
" If go you will, guard well against their arts,
" For these are very barbarous and robust."
Orlando answer'd, " This I'll see, be sure,
" And walk the wild on foot to be secure."

XXX.

The abbot sign'd the great cross on his front,
" Then go you with God's benison and mine:"
Orlando, after he had scaled the mount,
As the abbot had directed, kept the line
Right to the usual haunt of Passamont;
Who, seeing him alone in this design,
Survey'd him fore and aft with eyes observant,
Then asked him, " If he wish'd to stay as servant?"

XXXI.

And promised him an office of great ease.
But, said Orlando, " Saracen insane!
" I come to kill you, if it shall so please
" God, not to serve as footboy in your train;
" You with his monks so oft have broke the peace—
" Vile dog! 'tis past his patience to sustain."
The giant ran to fetch his arms, quite furious,
When he received an answer so injurious.

XXXII.

And being return'd to where Orlando stood,
Who had not moved him from the spot, and swinging
The cord, he hurl'd a stone with strength so rude,
As show'd a sample of his skill in slinging;
It roll'd on Count Orlando's helmet good
And head, and set both head and helmet ringing,
So that he swoon'd with pain as if he died,
But more than dead, he seem'd so stupefied.

XXXIII.

Then Passamont, who thought him slain outright,
Said, "I will go, and while he lies along,
"Disarm me: why such craven did I fight?"
But Christ his servants ne'er abandons long,
Especially Orlando, such a knight,
As to desert would almost be a wrong.
While the giant goes to put off his defences,
Orlando has recall'd his force and senses:

XXXIV.

And loud he shouted, "Giant, where dost go?
"Thou thought'st me doubtless for the bier outlaid;
"To the right about—without wings thou'rt too slow
"To fly my vengeance—currish renegade!
"'Twas but by treachery thou laid'st me low."
The giant his astonishment betray'd,
And turn'd about, and stopp'd his journey on,
And then he stoop'd to pick up a great stone.

XXXV.

Orlando had Cortana bare in hand,
To split the head in twain was what he schem'd:—
Cortana clave the skull like a true brand,
And Pagan Passamont died unredeem'd.
Yet harsh and haughty, as he lay he bann'd,
And most devoutly Macon still blasphemed;
But while his crude, rude blasphemies he heard,
Orlando thank'd the Father and the Word,—

XXXVI.

Saying, "What grace to me thou'st given!
"And I to thee, Oh Lord! am ever bound.
"I know my life was saved by thee from heaven,
"Since by the giant I was fairly down'd.
"All things by thee are measured just and even;
"Our power without thine aid would nought be found:
"I pray thee take heed of me, till I can
"At least return once more to Carloman."

XXXVII.

And having said thus much, he went his way;
And Alabaster he found out below,
Doing the very best that in him lay
To root from out a bank a rock or two.
Orlando, when he reach'd him, loud 'gan say,
"How think'st thou, glutton, such a stone to throw?"
When Alabaster heard his deep voice ring,
He suddenly betook him to his sling,

XXXVIII.

And hurl'd a fragment of a size so large,
That if it had in fact fulfill'd its mission,
And Roland not avail'd him of his targe,
There would have been no need of a physician.
Orlando set himself in turn to charge,
And in his bulky bosom made incision
With all his sword. The lout fell; but, o'erthrown, he
However by no means forgot Macone.

XXXIX.

Morgante had a palace in his mode,
Composed of branches, logs of wood, and earth,
And stretch'd himself at ease in this abode,
And shut himself at night within his birth.
Orlando knock'd, and knock'd, again to goad
The giant from his sleep; and he came forth,
The door to open, like a crazy thing,
For a rough dream had shook him slumbering.

XL.

He thought that a fierce serpent had attack'd him,
And Mahomet he call'd, but Mahomet
Is nothing worth, and not an instant back'd him;
But praying blessed Jesu, he was set
At liberty from all the fears which rack'd him;
And to the gate he came with great regret—
"Who knocks here?" grumbling all the while, said he:
"That," said Orlando, "you will quickly see.

XLI.

" I come to preach to you, as to your brothers,
" Sent by the miserable monks—repentance;
" For Providence divine, in you and others,
" Condemns the evil done my new acquaintance.
" 'Tis writ on high—your wrong must pay another's;
" From heaven itself is issued out this sentence;
" Know then, that colder now than a pilaster
" I left your Passamont and Alabaster."

XLII.

Morgante said, " O gentle cavalier!
" Now by thy God say me no villany;
" The favour of your name I fain would hear,
" And if a Christian, speak for courtesy."
Replied Orlando, " So much to your ear
" I by my faith disclose contentedly;
" Christ I adore, who is the genuine Lord,
" And, if you please, by you may be adored."

XLIII.

The Saracen rejoin'd in humble tone,
" I have had an extraordinary vision;
" A savage serpent fell on me alone,
" And Macon would not pity my condition;
" Hence to thy God, who for ye did atone
" Upon the cross, preferr'd I my petition;
" His timely succour set me safe and free,
" And I a Christian am disposed to be."

XLIV.

Orlando answer'd, " Baron just and pious,
" If this good wish your heart can really move
" To the true God, who will not then deny us
" Eternal honour, you will go above,
" And, if you please, as friends we will ally us,
" And I will love you with a perfect love.
" Your idols are vain liars full of fraud,
" The only true God is the Christian's God.

XLV.

" The Lord descended to the virgin breast
" Of Mary Mother, sinless and divine;
" If you acknowledge the Redeemer blest,
" Without whom neither sun nor star can shine,
" Abjure bad Macon's false and felon test,
" Your renegado God, and worship mine,—
" Baptize yourself with zeal, since you repent."
To which Morgante answer'd, " I'm content."

XLVI.

And then Orlando to embrace him flew,
And made much of his convert, as he cried,
" To the abbey I will gladly marshal you:"
To whom Morgante, " Let us go," replied,
" I to the friars have for peace to sue."
Which thing Orlando heard with inward pride,
Saying, " My brother, so devout and good,
" Ask the abbot pardon, as I wish you would:

XLVII.

" Since God has granted your illumination,
" Accepting you in mercy for his own,
" Humility should be your first oblation."
Morgante said, " For goodness' sake make known—
" Since that your God is to be mine—your station,
" And let your name in verity be shown,
" Then will I every thing at your command do."
On which the other said, he was Orlando.

XLVIII.

" Then," quoth the giant, " blessed be Jesu,
" A thousand times with gratitude and praise!
" Oft, perfect Baron! have I heard of you
" Through all the different periods of my days:
" And, as I said, to be your vassal too
" I wish, for your great gallantry always."
Thus reasoning, they continued much to say,
And onwards to the abbey went their way.

XLIX.

And by the way, about the giants dead
Orlando with Morgante reasoned: " Be,
" For their decease, I pray you, comforted,
" And, since it is God's pleasure, pardon me.
" A thousand wrongs unto the monks they bred,
" And our true Scripture soundeth openly—
" Good is rewarded, and chastised the ill;
" Which the Lord never faileth to fulfil:

L.

" Because his love of justice unto all
" Is such, he wills his judgment should devour
" All who have sin, however great or small;
" But good he well remembers to restore:
" Nor without justice holy could we call
" Him, whom I now require you to adore:
" All men must make his will their wishes sway,
" And quickly and spontaneously obey.

LI.

" And here our doctors are of one accord,
" Coming on this point to the same conclusion,—
" That in their thoughts who praise in heaven the Lord,
" If pity e'er was guilty of intrusion
" For their unfortunate relations stored
" In hell below, and damn'd in great confusion,—
" Their happiness would be reduced to nought,
" And thus unjust the Almighty's self be thought.

LII.

" But they in Christ have firmest hope, and all
" Which seems to him, to them too must appear
" Well done; nor could it otherwise befall;
" He never can in any purpose err:
" If sire or mother suffer endless thrall,
" They don't disturb themselves for him or her;
" What pleases God to them must joy inspire;—
" Such is the observance of the eternal choir."

LIII.

" A word unto the wise," Morgante said,
" Is wont to be enough, and you shall see
" How much I grieve about my brethren dead;
" And if the will of God seem good to me,
" Just, as you tell me, 'tis in heav'n obey'd—
" Ashes to ashes,—merry let us be!
" I will cut off the hands from both their trunks,
" And carry them unto the holy monks.

LIV.

" So that all persons may be sure and certain
" That they are dead, and have no farther fear
" To wander solitary this desert in,
" And that they may perceive my spirit clear
" By the Lord's grace, who hath withdrawn the curtain
" Of darkness, making his bright realm appear."
He cut his brethren's hands off at these words,
And left them to the savage beasts and birds.

LV.

Then to the abbey they went on together,
Where waited them the abbot in great doubt.
The monks, who knew not yet the fact, ran thither
To their superior, all in breathless rout,
Saying, with tremor, " Please to tell us whether
" You wish to have this person in or out ?"
The abbot, looking through upon the giant,
Too greatly fear'd, at first, to be compliant.

LVI.

Orlando, seeing him thus agitated,
Said quickly, " Abbot, be thou of good cheer;
" He Christ believes, as Christian must be rated,
" And hath renounced his Macon false;" which here
Morgante with the hands corroborated,
A proof of both the giants' fate quite clear:
Thence, with due thanks, the abbot God adored,
Saying, " Thou hast contented me, oh Lord!"

LVII.

He gazed; Morgante's height he calculated,
And more than once contemplated his size;
And then he said, " Oh giant celebrated,
" Know, that no more my wonder will arise,
" How you could tear and fling the trees you late did,
" When I behold your form with my own eyes.
" You now a true and perfect friend will show
" Yourself to Christ, as once you were a foe.

LVIII.

" And one of our apostles, Saul once named,
" Long persecuted sore the faith of Christ,
" Till one day by the Spirit being inflamed,
" ' Why dost thou persecute me thus?' said Christ;
" And then from his offence he was reclaimed,
" And went for ever after preaching Christ;
" And of the faith became a trump, whose sounding
" O'er the whole earth is echoing and rebounding.

LIX.

" So, my Morgante, you may do likewise;
" He who repents, thus writes the Evangelist,—
" Occasions more rejoicing in the skies
" Than ninety-nine of the celestial list.
" You may be sure, should each desire arise
" With just zeal for the Lord, that you'll exist
" Among the happy saints for evermore;
" But you were lost and damn'd to hell before!"

LX.

And thus great honour to Morgante paid
The abbot: many days they did repose.
One day, as with Orlando they both stray'd,
And saunter'd here and there, where'er they chose,
The abbot show'd a chamber, where array'd
Much armour was, and hung up certain bows;
And one of these Morgante for a whim
Girt on, though useless, he believ'd, to him.

LXI.

There being a want of water in the place,
Orlando, like a worthy brother, said,
" Morgante, I could wish you in this case
" To go for water." " You shall be obey'd
" In all commands," was the reply, " straightways."
Upon his shoulder a great tub he laid,
And went out on his way unto a fountain,
Where he was wont to drink below the mountain.

LXII.

Arrived there, a prodigious noise he hears,
Which suddenly along the forest spread;
Whereat from out his quiver he prepares
An arrow for his bow, and lifts his head;
And lo! a monstrous herd of swine appears,
And onward rushes with tempestuous tread,
And to the fountain's brink precisely pours,
So that the giant's join'd by all the boars.

LXIII.

Morgante at a venture shot an arrow,
Which pierced a pig precisely in the ear,
And pass'd unto the other side quite thorough,
So that the boar, defunct, lay tripp'd up near.
Another, to revenge his fellow farrow,
Against the giant rush'd in fierce career,
And reach'd the passage with so swift a foot,
Morgante was not now in time to shoot.

LXIV.

Perceiving that the pig was on him close,
He gave him such a punch upon the head *

" * Gli dette in sulla testa un gran punzone." It is strange that Pulci should have literally anticipated the technical terms of my old friend and master Jackson, and the art which he has carried to its highest pitch. " *A punch on the head,*' " or *a punch in the head,*" " un punzone in sulla testa," is the exact and frequent phrase of our best pugilists, who little dream that they are talking the purest Tuscan.

As floor'd him, so that he no more arose—
Smashing the very bone; and he fell dead
Next to the other. Having seen such blows,
The other pigs along the valley fled;
Morgante on his neck the bucket took,
Full from the spring, which neither swerved nor shook.

LXV.

The ton was on one shoulder, and there were
The hogs on t'other, and he brush'd apace
On to the abbey, though by no means near,
Nor spilt one drop of water in his race.
Orlando, seeing him so soon appear
With the dead boars, and with that brimful vase,
Marvell'd to see his strength so very great;—
So did the abbot, and set wide the gate.

LXVI.

The monks, who saw the water fresh and good,
Rejoiced, but much more to perceive the pork;—
All animals are glad at sight of food:
They lay their breviaries to sleep, and work
With greedy pleasure, and in such a mood,
That the flesh needs no salt beneath their fork.
Of rankness and of rot there is no fear,
For all the fasts are now left in arrear.

LXVII.

As though they wish'd to burst at once, they ate;
And gorged so that, as if the bones had been
In water, sorely grieved the dog and cat,
Perceiving that they all were pick'd too clean.
The abbot, who to all did honour great,
A few days after this convivial scene,
Gave to Morgante a fine horse well train'd,
Which he long time had for himself maintain'd.

LXVIII.

The horse Morgante to a meadow led,
To gallop, and to put him to the proof,
Thinking that he a back of iron had,
Or to skim eggs unbroke was light enough;
But the horse, sinking with the pain, fell dead,
And burst, while cold on earth lay head and hoof.
Morgante said, "Get up, thou sulky cur!"
And still continued pricking with the spur.

LXIX.

But finally he thought fit to dismount,
And said, "I am as light as any feather,
"And he has burst—to this what say you, Count?"
Orlando answered, "Like a ship's mast rather
"You seem to me, and with the truck for front:—
"Let him go; Fortune wills that we together
"Should march, but you on foot, Morgante still."
To which the giant answered, "So I will.

LXX.

" When there shall be occasion, you will see
" How I approve my courage in the fight."
Orlando said, "I really think you'll be,
" If it should prove God's will, a goodly knight,
" Nor will you napping there discover me:
" But never mind your horse, though out of sight
" 'Twere best to carry him into some wood,
" If but the means or way I understood."

LXXI.

The giant said, " Then carry him I will,
" Since that to carry me he was so slack—
" To render, as the gods do, good for ill;
" But lend a hand to place him on my back."
Orlando answer'd, " If my counsel still
" May weigh, Morgante, do not undertake
" To lift or carry this dead courser, who,
" As you have done to him, will do to you.

LXXII.

" Take care he don't revenge himself, though dead,
" As Nessus did of old beyond all cure;
" I don't know if the fact you've heard or read,
" But he will make you burst, you may be sure."
" But help him on my back," Morgante said,
" And you shall see what weight I can endure:
" In place, my gentle Roland, of this palfrey,
" With all the bells, I'd carry yonder belfry."

LXXIII.

The abbot said, "The steeple may do well,
"But, for the bells, you've broken them, I wot."
Morgante answered, "Let them pay in hell
"The penalty, who lie dead in yon grot;"
And hoisting up the horse from where he fell,
He said, "Now look if I the gout have got,
"Orlando, in the legs—or if I have force;"—
And then he made two gambols with the horse.

LXXIV.

Morgante was like any mountain framed;
So if he did this, 'tis no prodigy;
But secretly himself Orlando blamed,
Because he was one of his family;
And fearing that he might be hurt or maim'd,
Once more he bade him lay his burthen by:
"Put down, nor bear him further the desert in."
Morgante said, "I'll carry him for certain."

LXXV.

He did; and stow'd him in some nook away,
And to the abbey then return'd with speed.
Orlando said, "Why longer do we stay?
"Morgante, here is nought to do indeed."
The abbot by the hand he took one day,
And said with great respect, he had agreed
To leave his reverence; but for this decision
He wish'd to have his pardon and permission.

LXXVI.

The honours they continued to receive
Perhaps exceeded what his merits claim'd:
He said, "I mean, and quickly, to retreive
"The lost days of time past, which may be blam'd;
"Some days ago I should have ask'd your leave,
"Kind father, but I really was ashamed,
"And know not how to show my sentiment,
"So much I see you with our stay content.

LXXVII.

"But in my heart I bear through every clime,
"The abbot, abbey, and this solitude—
"So much I love you in so short a time;
"For me, from heaven reward you with all good,
"The God so true, the eternal Lord sublime!
"Whose kingdom at the last hath open stood:
"Meanwhile we stand expectant of your blessing,
"And recommend us to your prayers with pressing."

LXXVIII.

Now when the abbot Count Orlando heard,
His heart grew soft with inner tenderness,
Such fervour in his bosom bred each word;
And, "Cavalier," he said, "if I have less
"Courteous and kind to your great worth appear'd,
"Than fits me for such gentle blood to express,
"I know I've done too little in this case;
"But blame our ignorance, and this poor place.

LXXIX.

" We can indeed but honour you with masses,
" And sermons, thanksgivings, and pater-nosters
" Hot suppers, dinners (fitting other places
" In verity much rather than the cloisters ;)
" But such a love for you my heart embraces,
" For thousand virtues which your bosom fosters,
" That wheresoe'er you go, I too shall be,
" And, on the other part, you rest with me.

LXXX.

" This may involve a seeming contradiction,
" But you I know are sage, and feel, and taste,
" And understand my speech with full conviction.
" For your just pious deeds may you be graced
" With the Lord's great reward and benediction,
" By whom you were directed to this waste :
" To his high mercy is our freedom due,
" For which we render thanks to him and you.

LXXXI.

" You saved at once our life and soul : such fear
" The giants caused us, that the way was lost
" By which we could pursue a fit career
" In search of Jesus and the saintly host ;
" And your departure breeds such sorrow here,
" That comfortless we all are to our cost ;
" But months and years you could not stay in sloth,
" Nor are you form'd to wear our sober cloth ;

LXXXII.

" But to bear arms and wield the lance; indeed,
" With these as much is done as with this cowl,
" In proof of which the Scripture you may read.
" This giant up to heaven may bear his soul
" By your compassion: now in peace proceed.
" Your state and name I seek not to unroll,
" But, if I'm ask'd, this answer shall be given,
" That here an angel was sent down from heaven.

LXXXIII.

" If you want armour or aught else, go in,
" Look o'er the wardrobe, and take what you choose,
" And cover with it o'er this giant's skin."
Orlando answered, " If there should lie loose
" Some armour, ere our journey we begin,
" Which might be turn'd to my companion's use,
" The gift would be acceptable to me."
The abbot said to him, " Come in and see."

LXXXIV.

And in a certain closet, where the wall
Was cover'd with old armour like a crust,
The abbot said to them, " I give you all."
Morgante rummaged piecemeal from the dust
The whole, which, save one cuirass, was too small,
And that too had the mail inlaid with rust.
They wonder'd how it fitted him exactly,
Which ne'er has suited others so compactly.

LXXXV.

'Twas an immeasurable giant's, who
By the great Milo of Agrante fell
Before the abbey many years ago.
The story on the wall was figured well;
In the last moment of the abbey's foe,
Who long had waged a war implacable:
Precisely as the war occurr'd they drew him,
And there was Milo as he overthrew him.

LXXXVI.

Seeing this history, Count Orlando said
In his own heart, "Oh God! who in the sky
"Know'st all things, how was Milo hither led?
"Who caused the giant in this place to die?"
And certain letters, weeping, then he read,
So that he could not keep his visage dry,—
As I will tell in the ensuing story.
From evil keep you the high King of Glory!

END OF THE FIRST CANTO.

IL MORGANTE MAGGIORE.

CANTO PRIMO.

I.

In principio era il Verbo appresso a Dio,
Ed era Iddio il Verbo, e'l Verbo lui:
Questo era nel principio al parer mio;
E nulla si può far sanza costui:
Però, giusto Signor benigno e pio,
Mandami solo un de gli angeli tui,
Che m'accompagni, e rechimi a memoria
Una famosa antica e degna storia.

II.

E tu Vergine figlia e madre e sposa
Di quel Signor che ti dette le chiave
Del cielo e de l'abisso e d'ogni cosa
Quel dì che Gabriel tuo ti disse ave:
Perchè tu se' de' tuo' servi pietosa,
Con dolce rime e stil grato e soave
Ajuta i versi miei benignamente,
E'nfino al fine illumina la mente.

III.

Era nel tempo quando Filomena
Con la sorella si lamenta e plora,
Che si ricorda di sua antica pena,
E pé boschetti le ninfe innamora;

E Febo il carro temperato mena,
Che 'l suo Fetonte l'ammaestra ancora;
Ed appariva appunto a l'orizzonte,
Tal che Titon si graffiava la fronte.

IV.

Quand'io varai la mia barchetta, prima
Per ubbidir chi sempre ubbidir debbe
La mente, e faticarsi in prosa e in rima,
E del mio Carlo imperador m'increbbe;
Che so quanti la penna ha posto in cima,
Che tutti la sua gloria prevarrebbe:
E stata quella istoria, a quel ch' i' veggio,
Di Carlo male intesa e scritta peggio.

V.

Diceva già Lionardo Aretino,
Che s'egli avesse avuto scrittor degno,
Com'egli ebbe un Ormanno il suo Pipino
Ch'avesse diligenzia avuto e ingegno;
Sarebbe Carlo Magno un uom divino;
Però ch'egli ebbe gran vittoria e regno,
E fece per la chiesa e per la fede
Certo assai più che non si dice o crede.

VI.

Guardasi ancora a san Liberatore
Quella badía là presso a Manoppello,
Giù ne gli Abbruzzi fatta per suo onore,
Dove fu la battaglia e'l gran flaggello
D'un re pagan, che Carlo imperadore
Uccise, e tanto del suo popol fello:
E vedesi tante ossa, e tanto il sanno,
Che tutte in Giusaffà poi si vedranno.

VII.

Ma il mondo cieco e ignorante non prezza
Le sue virtù, com'io vorrei vedere:
E tu, Fiorenza, de la sua grandezza
Possiedi, e sempre potrai possedere
Ogni costume ed ogni gentilezza
Che si potesse aquistare o avere
Col senno col tesoro o con la lancia
Dal nobil sangue e venuto di Francia.

VIII.

Dodici paladini aveva in corte
Carlo; e'l più savio e famoso era Orlando:
Gran traditor lo condusse a la morte
In Roncisvalle un trattato ordinando;
Là dove il corno sonò tanto forte
Dopo la dolorosa rotta, quando
Ne la sua commedia Dante qui dice,
E mettelo con Carlo in ciel felice.

IX

Era per pasqua quella di natale:
Carlo la corte avea tutta in Parigi:
Orlando, com'io dico, il principale
Evvi, il Danese, Astolfo, e Ansuigi
Fannosi feste e cose trionfale,
E molto celebravan San Dionigi;
Angiolin di Bajona, ed Ulivieri
V'era venuto, e'l gentil Berlinghieri.

X.

Eravi Avolio ed Avino ed Ottone,
Di Normandía, Riccardo paladino,
E'l savio Namo, e'l vecchio Salamone,
Gualtier da Monlione, e Baldovino

Ch'era figliuol del tristo Ganellone.
Troppo lieto era il figliuol di Pipino;
Tanto chè spesso d'allegrezza geme
Veggendo tutti i paladini insieme.

XI.

Ma la fortuna attenta sta nascosa,
Per guastar sempre ciascun nostro effetto;
Mentre che Carlo così si riposa,
Orlando governava in fatto e in detto
La corte e Carlo Magno ed ogni cosa:
Gan per invidia scoppia il maladetto,
E cominciava un dì con Carlo a dire:
Abbiam sempre noi Orlando ad ubbidire?

XII.

Io ho creduto mille volte dirti:
Orlando ha in se troppa presunzione:
Noi siam qui conti, re, duchi a servirti,
E Namo, Ottone, Uggieri e Salamone,
Per onorarti ognun, per ubbidirti:
Che costui abbi ogni reputazione
Nol soffrirem; ma siam deliberati
Da un fanciullo non esser governati.

XIII.

Tu cominciasti insino in Aspramonte
A dargli a intender che fusse gagliardo,
E facesse gran cose a quella fonte;
Ma se non fusse stato il buon Gherardo,
Io so che la vittoria era d'Almonte:
Ma egli ebbe sempre l'occhio a lo stendardo:
Che si voleva quel dì coronarlo:
Questo è colui ch'ha meritato, Carlo.

XIV.

Se ti ricorda già sendo in Guascogna,
Quando e' vi venne la gente di Spagna,
Il popol de' cristiani avea vergogna,
Se non mostrava la sua forza magna.
Il ver convien pur dir, quando e'bisogna:
Sappi ch'ognuno imperador si lagna:
Quant'io per me, ripasserò que' monti
Ch'io passai'n qua con sessantaduo conti.

XV.

La tua grandezza dispensar si vuole,
E far che ciascun abbi la sua parte:
La corte tutta quanta se ne duole:
Tu credi che costui sia forse Marte?
Orlando un giorno udì queste parole,
Che si sedeva soletto in disparte:
Dispiacquegli di Gan quel che diceva;
E molto più che Carlo gli credeva.

XVI.

E volle con la spada uccider Gano;
Ma Ulivieri in quel mezzo si mise,
E Durlindana gli trasse di mano,
E così il me' che seppe gli divise.
Orlando si sdegnò con Carlo Mano,
E poco men che quivi non l'uccise;
E dipartissi di Parigi solo,
E scoppia e'mpazza di sdegno e di duolo.

XVII.

Ad Ermellina moglie del Danese
Tolse Cortana, e poi tolse Rondello;
E'n verso Brava il suo cammin poi prese.
Alda la bella come vide quello,

Per abbracciarlo le braccia distese.
Orlando, che ismarrito avea il cervello,
Com'ella disse: ben venga il mio Orlando:
Gli volle in su la testa dar col brando.

XVIII.

Come colui che la furia consiglia,
Egli pareva a Gan dar veramente:
Alda la bella si fè maraviglia:
Orlando si ravvide prestamente:
E la sua sposa pigliava la briglia,
E scese dal caval subitamente:
Ed ogni cosa narrava a costei,
E ripososi alcun giorno con lei.

XIX.

Poi si partì portato dal furore,
E terminò passare in Paganía;
E mentre che cavalca, il traditore
Di Gan sempre ricorda per la via:
E cavalcando d'uno in altro errore,
In un deserto truova una badía
In luoghi oscuri e paesi lontani,
Ch'era a' confin' tra cristiani e pagani.

XX.

L'abate si chiamava Chiaramonte,
Era del sangue disceso d'Anglante:
Di sopra a la badía v'era un gran monte,
Dove abitava alcun fiero gigante,
De'quali uno avea nome Passamonte,
L'altro Alabastro, e'l terzo era Morgante:
Con certe frombe gittavan da alto,
Ed ogni dì facevan qualche assalto.

XXI.

I monachetti non potieno uscire
Del monistero o per legne o per acque:
Orlando picchia, e non volieno aprire,
Fin che a l'abate a la fine pur piacque;
Entrato drento cominciava a dire,
Come colui, che di Maria già nacque,
Adora, ed era cristian battezzato,
E com'egli era a la badía arrivato.

XXII.

Disse l'abate: il ben venuto sia:
Di quel ch'io ho volentier ti daremo,
Poi che tu credi al figliuol di Maria;
E la cagion, cavalier, ti diremo,
Acciò che non l'imputi a villania,
Perchè a l'entrar resistenza facemo,
E non ti volle aprir quel monachetto:
Così intervien chi vive con sospetto.

XXIII.

Quando ci venni al principio abitare
Queste montagne, benchè sieno oscure
Come tu vedi; pur si potea stare
Sanza sospetto, ch' ell' eran sicure:
Sol de le fiere t'avevi a guardare;
Fernoci spesso di brutte paure;
Or ci bisogna, se vogliamo starci,
Da le bestie dimestiche guardarci.

XXIV.

Queste ci fan piuttosto stare a segno:
Sonci appariti tre fieri giganti,
Non so di qual paese o di qual regno,
Ma molto son feroci tutti quanti:

La forza e'l malvoler giunt'a lo'ngegno
Sai che può'l tutto; e noi non siam bastanti;
Questi perturban sì l'orazion nostra,
Che non so più che far, s'altri nol mostra.

XXV.

Gli antichi padri nostri nel deserto,
Se le lor opre sante erano e giuste,
Del ben servir da Dio n'avean buon merto;
Nè creder sol vivessin di locuste:
Piovea dal ciel la manna, questo è certo;
Ma qui convien che spesso assaggi e guste
Sassi che piovon di sopra quel monte,
Che gettano Alabastro e Passamonte.

XXVI.

E'l terzo ch'è Morgante, assai più fiero,
Isveglie e pini e faggi e certi e gli oppi,
E gettagli infin qui: questo è pur vero;
Non posso far che d'ira non iscoppi.
Mentre che parlan così in cimitero,
Un sasso par che Rondel quasi sgroppi;
Che da' giganti giù venne da alto
Tanto, ch'e' prese sotto il tetto un salto.

XXVII.

Tirati drento, cavalier, per Dio,
Disse l'abate, che la manna casca.
Risponde Orlando: caro abate mio,
Costui non vuol che'l mio caval più pasca:
Veggo che lo guarrebbe del restìo;
Quel sasso par che di buon braccio nasca.
Rispose il santo padre: io non t'inganno,
Credo che'l monte un giorno gitteranno.

XXVIII.

Orlando governar fece Rondello,
E ordinar per se la colazione:
Poi disse: abate, io voglio andare a quello
Che dette al mio caval con quel cantone.
Disse l'abate: come car' fratello
Consiglierotti sanza passione?
Io ti sconforto, baron, di tal gita;
Ch'io so che tu vi lascerai la vita.

XXIX.

Quel Passamonte porta in man tre dardi:
Chi frombe, chi baston, chi mazzafrusti;
Sai che giganti più di noi gagliardi
Son per ragion, che son anco più giusti;
E pur se vuoi andar fa che ti guardi,
Che questi son villan' molto e robusti.
Rispose Orlando: io lo vedrò per certo;
Ed avviossi a piè su pel deserto.

XXX.

Disse l'abate col segnarlo in fronte:
Va, che da Dio e me sia benedetto.
Orlando, poi che salito ebbe il monte,
Si dirizzò, come l'abate detto
Gli aveva, dove sta quel Passamonte;
Il quale Orlando veggendo soletto,
Molto lo squadra di dietro e davante;
Poi domandò, se star volea per fante.

XXXI.

E' prometteva di farlo godere.
Orlando disse: pazzo saracino,
Io vengo a te, com'è di Dio volere,
Per darti morte e non per ragazzino;

A'monaci suoi fatto hai dispiacere;
Non può più comportarti can naastino.
Questo gigante armar si corse a furia,
Quando sentì ch'e'gli diceva ingiuria,

XXXII.

E ritornato ove aspettava Orlando,
Il qual non s'era partito da bomba;
Subito venne la cordia girando,
E lascia un sasso andar fuor de la fromba,
Che in su la testa giugnea rotolando
Al conte Orlando, e l'elmetto rimbomba;
E'cadde per la pena tramortito;
Ma più che morto par, tanto è stordito.

XXXIII.

Passamonte pensò che fusse morto,
E disse: io voglio andarmi a disarmare:
Questo poltron per chi m'aveva scorto?
Ma Cristo i suoi non suole abbandonare,
Massime Orlando, ch'egli arebbe il torto.
Mentre il gigante l'arme va a spogliare,
Orlando in questo tempo si risente,
E rivocava e la forza e la mente.

XXXIV.

E gridò forte: gigante, ove vai?
Ben ti pensasti d'avermi ammazzato!
Volgiti a drieto, che, s'ale non hai,
Non puoi da me fuggir, can rinnegato:
A tradimento ingiuriato m'hai.
Donde il gigante allor maravigliato
Si volse a dietro, e riteneva il passo;
Poi si chinò per tor di terra un sasso.

XXXV.

Orlando avea Cortana ignuda in mano;
Trasse a la testa: e Cortana tagliava:
Per mezzo il teschio partì del pagano,
E Passamonte morto rovinava:
E nel cadere il superbo e villano
Divotamente Macon bestemmiava;
Ma mentre che bestemmia il crudo e acerbo,
Orlando ringraziava il Padre e'l Verbo.

XXXVI.

Dicendo: quanta grazia oggi m'hà data!
Sempre ti sono, o signor mio, tenuto;
Per te conosco la vita salvata;
Però che dal gigante era abbattuto:
Ogni cosa a ragion fai misurata;
Non val nostro poter sanza il tuo ajuto.
Priegoti, sopra me tenga la mano,
Tanto che ancor ritorni a Carlo Mano.

XXXVII.

Poi ch'ebbe questo detto s'andóe,
Tanto che trova Alabastro più basso
Che si sforzava, quando e'lo trovóe,
Di sveglier d'una ripa fuori un masso.
Orlando, com'e' giunse a quel, gridóe:
Che pensi tu, ghiotton, gittar quel sasso?
Quando Alabastro questo grido intende,
Subitamente la sua fromba prende.

XXXVIII.

E'trasse d'una pietra molto grossa,
Tanto ch'Orlando bisognò schermisse;
Che se l'avesse giunto la percossa,
Non bisognava il medico venisse.

Orlando adoperò poi la sua possa;
Nel pettignon tutta la spada misse:
E morto cadde questo badalone,
E non dimenticò però Macone.

XXXIX.

Morgante aveva al suo modo un palagio
Fatto di frasche e di schegge e di terra:
Quivi, secondo lui, si posa ad agio;
Quivi la notte si rinchiude e serra.
Orlando picchia, e daragli disagio,
Perchè il gigante dal sonno si sferra;
Vennegli aprir come una cosa matta;
Ch'un' aspra visione aveva fatta.

XL.

E'gli parea ch'un feroce serpente
L'avea assalito, e chiamar Macometto;
Ma Macometto non valea niente:
Ond'e'chiamava Gesù benedetto;
E liberato l'avea finalmente.
Venne a la porta, ed ebbe così detto;
Chi buzza qua? pur sempre borbottando.
Tu il saprai tosto gli rispose Orlando.

XLI.

Vengo per fatti, come a'tuo' fratelli,
Far de' peccati tuoi la penitènzia,
Da' monaci mandato, cattivelli,
Come stato è divina providenzia;
Pel mal ch'avete fatto a torto a quelli,
E dato in ciel così questa sentenzia;
Sappi, che freddo già più ch'un pilastro
Lasciato ho Passamonte e'l tuo Alabastro,

XLII.

Disse Morgante: o gentil cavaliere,
Per lo tuo Dio non mi dir villania:
Di grazia il nome tuo vorrei sapere;
Se se' cristian, deh dillo in cortesia.
Rispose Orlando: di cotal mastiere
Contenterotti per la fede mia:
Adoro Cristo, ch'è Signor verace;
E puoi tu adorarlo, se ti piace.

XLIII.

Rispose il saracin con umil voce:
Io ho fatto una strana visione,
Che m'assaliva un serpente feroce:
Non mi valeva per chiamar Macone;
Onde al tuo Dio che fu confitto in croce
Rivolsi presto la mia intenzione:
E' mi soccorse, e fui libero e sano,
E son disposto al tutto esser cristiano.

XLIV.

Rispose Orlando: baron giusto e pio,
Se questo buon voler terrai nel core,
L'anima tua arà quel vero Dio
Che ci può sol gradir d'eterno onore:
E s'tu vorrai, sarai compagno mio,
E amerotti con perfetto amore:
Gl'idoli vostri son bugiardi e vani:
Il vero Dio è lo Dio de' cristiani

XLV.

Venne questo Signor sanza peccato
Ne la sua madre vergine pulzella:
Se conoscessi quel Signor beato,
Sanza'l qual non risplende sole o stella,

Aresti già Macon tuo rinnegato,
E la sua fede iniqua ingiusta e felia:
Battezzati al mio Dio di buon talento.
Morgante gli rispose: io son contento.

XLVI.

E corse Orlando subito abbracciare:
Orlando gran carezze gli facea,
E disse: a la badía ti vo' menare.
Morgante, andianci presto, rispondea:
Co'monaci la pace si vuol fare.
De la qual cosa Orlando in se godea,
Dicendo; fratel mio divoto e buono,
Io vò che chiegga a l'abate perdono.

XLVII.

Da poi che Dio ralluminato t'ha,
Ed acettato per la sua umiltade;
Vuolsi che tu ancor usi umiltà.
Disse Morgante: per la tua bontade,
Poi che il tuo Dio mio sempre omai sarà,
Dimmi del nome tuo la veritade,
Poi di me dispor puoi al tuo comando;
Ond'e' gli disse, com'egli era Orlando.

XLVIII.

Disse il gigante: Gesù benedetto
Per mille volte ringraziato sia;
Sentito t'ho nomar, baron perfetto,
Per tutti i tempi de la vita mia:
E, com'io dissi, sempremai suggetto
Esser ti vo' per la tua gagliardia.
Insieme molte cose ragionaro,
E'n verso la badía poi s'inviaro.

XLIX.

E per la via de que'giganti morti:
Orlando con Morgante sì ragiona:
De la lor morte vo'che ti conforti;
E poi che piace a Dio, a me perdona;
A' monaci avean fatto mille torti;
E la nostra scrittura aperto suona
Il ben remunerato, e'l mal punito;
E mai non ha questo Signor fallito,

L.

Però ch'egli ama la giustizia tanto,
Che vuol, che sempre il suo giudicio morda
Ognun ch'abbi peccato tanto o quanto;
E così il ben ristorar si ricorda:
E non saria sanza giustizia santo:
Adunque al suo voler presto t'accorda:
Che debbe ognun voler quel che vuol questo,
Ed accordarsi volentieri e presto.

LI.

E sonsi i nostri dottori accordati,
Pigliando tutti una conclusione,
Che que' che son nel ciel glorificati,
S'avessin nel pensier compassione
De' miseri parenti, che dannati
Son ne lo inferno in gran confusione,
La lor felicità nulla sarebbe;
E vedi che qui ingiusto Iddio parrebbe.

LII.

Ma egli anno posto in Gesù ferma spene;
E tanto pare a lor, quanto a lui pare;
Afferman ciò ch'e'fa, che facci bene,
E che non possi in nessun modo errare:

Se padre o madre è ne l'eterne pene,
Di questo non si posson conturbare:
Che quel che piace a Dio, sol piace a loro:
Questo s'osserva ne l'eterno coro.

LIII.

Al savio suol bastar poche parole,
Disse Morgante; tu il potrai vedere,
De' miei fratelli, Orlando, se mi duole,
E s' io m'accorderò di Dio al volere,
Come tu di' che in ciel servar si suole:
Morti co' morti; or pensiam di godere;
Io vo tagliar le mani a tutti quanti,
E porterolle a que' monaci santi,

LIV.

Acciò ch'ognun sia più sicuro e certo,
Com' e' son morti, e non abbin paura
Andar soletti per questo deserto;
E perchè veggan la mia mente pura
A quel Signor che m'ha il suo regno aperto,
E tratto fuor di tenebre sì oscura.
E poi tagliò le mani a' due fratelli,
E lasciagli a le fiere ed agli uccelli.

LV.

A la badía insieme se ne vanno,
Ove l'abate assai dubbioso aspetta:
I monaci che'l fatto ancor non sanno,
Correvano a l'abate tutti in fretta,
Dicendo paurosi e pien' d'affanno:
Volete voi costui drento si metta?
Quando l'abate vedeva il gigante,
Si turbò tutto nel primo sembiante.

LVI.

Orlando che turbato così il vede,
Gli disse presto: abate, dattì pace,
Questo è cristiano, e in Cristo nostro crede,
E rinnegato ha il suo Macon fallace.
Morgante i moncherin' mostrò per fede,
Come i giganti ciascun morto giace;
Donde l'abate ringraziavia Iddio,
Dicendo: or m'hai contento, Signor mio.

LVII.

E risguardava, e squadrava Morgante,
La sua grandezza e una volta e due,
E poi gli disse: O famoso gigante,
Sappi ch'io non mi maraviglio più,
Che tu svegliessi e gittassi le piante,
Quand'io riguardo or le fatteze tue:
Tu sarai or perfetto e vero amico
A Cristo, quanto tu gli eri nimico.

LVIII.

Un nostro apostol, Saul già chiamato,
Perseguì molto la fede di Cristo:
Un giorno poi da lo spirto infiammato,
Perchè pur mi persegui? disse Cristo:
E'si ravvide allor del suo peccato:
Andò poi predicando sempre Cristo;
E fatto è or de la fede una tromba,
La qual per tutto risuona e rimbomba.

LIX.

Così farai tu ancor, Morgante mio:
E chi s'emenda, è scritto nel vangelo,
Che maggior festa fa d'un solo Iddio,
Che di novantanove altri su in cielo:

Io ti conforto ch'ogni tuo disio
Rivolga a quel Signor con giusto zelo:
Che tu sarai felice in sempiterno,
Ch'eri perduto, e dannato a l'inferno.

LX.

E grande onore a Morgante faceva
L'abate, e molti dì si son posati:
Un giorno, come ad Orlando piaceva,
A spasso in qua e in là si sono andati:
L'abate in una camera sua aveva
Molte armadure e certi archi appiccati:
Morgante gliene piacque un che ne vede;
Onde e' sel cinse bench'oprar nol crede.

LXI.

Avea quel luogo d'acqua carestia:
Orlando disse come buon fratello:
Morgante, vo' che di piacer ti sia
Andar per l'acqua; ond'e rispose a quello:
Comanda ciò che vuoi che fatto sia;
E posesi in ispalla un gran tinello,
Ed avviossi là verso una fonte
Dove solea ber sempre appiè del monte.

LXII.

Giunto a la fonte, sente un gran fracasso
Di subito venir per la foresta:
Una saetta cavò del turcasso,
Posela a l'arco, ed alzava la testa:
Ecco appariri un gran gregge al passo
Di porci, e vanno con molta tempesta;
E arrivorno a la fontana appunto
Donde il gigante è da lor sopraggiunto.

LXIII.

Morgante a la ventura a un saetta ;
Appunto ne l'orecchio lo 'ncarnava :
Da l'altro lato passò la verretta ;
Onde il cinghial giù morto gambettava ;
Un altro, quasi per farne vendetta,
Addosso al gran gigante irato andava ;
E perchè e' giunse troppo tosto al varco,
Non fu Morgante a tempo a trar con l'arco.

LXIV.

Vedendosi venuto il porco adosso,
Gli dette in su la testa un gran punzone
Per modo che gl'infranse insino a l'osso,
E morto allato a quell'altro lo pone :
Gli altri porci veggendo quel percosso,
Si misson tutti in fuga pel vallone ;
Morgante si levò il tinello in collo,
Ch'era pien d'acqua, e non si move un crollo.

LXV.

Da l'una spalla il tinello avea posto,
Da l'altra i porci, e specciava il terreno ;
E torna a la badía, ch'è pur discosto,
Ch'una gocciola d'acqua non va in seno.
Orlando che'l vedea tornar sì tosto
Co' porci morti, e con quel vaso pieno ;
Maravigliossi che sia tanto forte ;
Così l'abate ; e spalancan le porte.

LXVI.

I monaci veggendo l'acqua fresca
Si rallegrorno, ma più de' cingiali ;
Ch'ogni animal si rallegra de l'esca ;
E posano a dormire i breviali :

Ognun s'affanna, e non par che gl'incresca,
Acciò che questa carne non s'insali,
E che poi secca sapesse di victo:
E la digiune si restorno a drieto.

LXVII.

E ferno a scoppia corpo per un tratto,
E scuffian, che parien de l'acqua usciti;
Tanto che'l cane sen doleva e'l gatto,
Che gli ossi rimanean troppo puliti.
L'abate, poi che molto onore ha fatto
A tutti, un dì dopo questi conviti
Dette a Morgante un destrier molto bello,
Che lungo tempo tenuto avea quello.

LXVIII.

Morgante in su'n un prato il caval mena,
E vuol che corra, e che facci ogni pruova,
E pensa che di ferro abbi la schiena,
O forse non credeva schiacciar l'uova:
Questo caval s'accoscia per la pena,
E scoppia, e'n su la terra si ritruova.
Dicea Morgante: lieva su, tozzone;
E va pur punzecchiando co lo sprone.

LXIX.

Ma finalmente convien ch' egli smonte,
E disse: io son pur leggier come penna,
Ed è scoppiato; che ne di' tu, conte?
Rispose Orlando: un arbore d'antenna
Mi par piuttosto, e la gaggia la fronte:
Lascialo andar, che la fortuna accenna
Che meco appiede ne venga, Morgante.
Ed io così verrò, disse il gigante.

LXX.

Quando serà mestier, tu mi vedrai
Com'io mi proverò ne la battaglia.
Orlando disse: io credo tu farai
Come buon cavalier, se Dio mi vaglia;
Ed anco me dormir non miterai:
Di questo tuo caval non te ne caglia:
Vorrebbesi portarlo in qualche bosco;
Ma il modo nè la via non ci conosco.

LXXI.

Disse il gigante: io il porterò ben'io,
Da poi che portar me non ha voluto,
Per render ben per mal, come fa Dio;
Ma vo' che a porlo addosso mi dia ajuto.
Orlando gli dicea: Morgante mio,
S'al mio consiglio ti sarai attenuto,
Questo caval tu non ve'l porteresti,
Che ti farà come tu a lui facesti,

LXXII.

Guarda che non facesse la vendetta,
Come fece già Nesso così morto:
Non so se la sua istoria hai inteso o letta;
E' ti farà scoppiar; datti conforto.
Disse Morgante: ajuta ch'io me'l metta
Addosso, e poi vedrai s'io ve lo porto:
Io porterei, Orlando mio gentile,
Con le campane là quel campanile.

LXXIII.

Disse l'abate: il campanil v'è bene;
Ma le campane voi l'avete rotte.
Dicea Morgante, e'ne porton le pene
Color che morti son là in quelle grotte;

E levossi il cavallo in su le schiene,
E disse: guarda s'io sento di gotte,
Orlando, nelle gambe, e s' io lo posso;
E fe' duo salti col cavallo addosso.

LXXIV.

Era Morgante come una montagna:
Se facea questo, non è maraviglia
Ma pure Orlando con seco si lagna;
Perchè pur era omai di sua famiglia,
Temenza avea non pigliasse magagna.
Un' altra volta costui riconsiglia:
Posalo ancor, nol portare al deserto.
Disse Morgante: il porterò per certo.

LXXV.

E portollo, e gittollo in luogo strano,
E tornò a la badía subitamente.
Diceva Orlando: or che più dimoriano?
Morgante, qui non faciam noi niente;
E prese un giorno l'abate per mano,
E disse a quel molto discretamente,
Che vuol partir de la sua reverenzia,
E domandava e perdono e licenzia.

LXXVI.

E de gli onor' ricevuti da questi,
Qualche volta potendo, arà buon merito;
E dice: io intendo ristorare e presto
I persi giorni del tempo preterito:
E'son più dì che licenzia arei chiesto,
Benigno padre, se non ch' io mi perito;
Non so mostrarvi quel che drento sento;
Tanto vi veggo del mio star contento.

LXXVII.

Io me ne potto per sempre nel core
L'abate, la badìa, questo deserto;
Tanto v'ho posto in picciol tempo amore:
Rendavi su nel ciel per me buon merto
Quel vero Dio, quello eterno Signore
Che vi serba il suo regno al fine aperto:
Noi aspettiam vostra benedizione,
Raccomandiamci a le vostre orazione.

LXXVIII.

Quando l'abate il conte Orlando intese,
Rintenerì nel cor per la dolcezza,
Tanto fervor nel petto se gli accese;
E disse: cavalier, se a tua prodezza
Non sono stato benigno e cortese,
Come conviensi a la gran gentillezza;
Che so che ciò ch'i'ho fatto è stato poco,
Incolpa la ignoranzia nostra e il loco.

LXXIX.

Noi ti potremo di messe onorare,
Dì prediche di laude e paternostri,
Piuttosto che da cena o desinare,
O d'altri convenevol' che da chiostri:
Tu m'hai di te sì fatto inamorare
Per mille alte eccellenzie che tu mostri;
Ch' io me ne vengo ove tu andrai con teco,
E d'altra parte tu resti qui meco.

LXXX.

Tanto ch'a questo par contraddizione;
Ma so che tu se' savio, e 'ntendi e gusti,
E intendi il mio parlar per discrizione;
De' beneficj tuoi pietosi e giusti

Renda il Signore a te munerazione,
Da cui mandato in queste selve fusti;
Per le virtù del qual liberi siamo,
E grazie a lui e a te noi ne rendiamo.

LXXX.

Tu ci hai salvato l'anima e la vita:
Tanta perturbazion già que' giganti
Ci detton, che la strada era smarrita
Da ritrovar Gesù con gli altri santi:
Però troppo ci duol la tua partita,
E sconsolati restiam tutti quanti;
Nè ritener possiamti i mesi e gli anni:
Che tu non se' da vestir questi panni,

LXXXI.

Ma da portar la lancia e l'armadura:
E puossi meritar con essa, come
Con questa cappa; e leggi la scrittura:
Questo gigante al ciel drizzò le some
Per tua virtù; va in pace a tua ventura
Chi tu ti sia; ch'io non ricerco il nome:
Ma dirò sempre, s'io son demandato,
Ch' un angiol qui da Dio fussi mandato.

LXXXII.

Se c'è armadura o cosa che tu voglia,
Vattene in zambra e pigliane tu stessi,
E cuopri a questo gigante la scoglia.
Rispose Orlando: se armadura avessi
Prima che noi uscissim de la soglia,
Che questo mio compagno difendessi:
Questo accetto io, e sarammi piacere.
Disse l'abate: venite a vedere.

LXXXIII.

E in certa cameretta entrati sono,
Che d'armadure vecchie era copiosa;
Dice l'abate: tutte ve le dono.
Morgante va rovistando ogni cosa;
Ma solo un certo sbergo gli fu buono,
Ch'avea tutta la maglia rugginosa:
Maravigliossi che lo cuopra appunto:
Che mai più gnun forse glien' era aggiunto.

LXXXIV.

Questo fu d'un gigante smisurato,
Ch'a la badía fu morto per antico
Dal gran Milon d'Anglante, ch' arrivato?
V' era, s'appunto questa istoria dico;
Ed era ne le mura istoriato,
Come e'fu morto questo gran nimico
Che fece a la badía già lunga guerra:
E Milon v'è com'e'l'abbatte in terra.

LXXXV.

Veggendo questa istoria il conte Orlando,
Fra suo cor disse: o Dio, che sai sol tutto,
Come venne Milon qui capitando,
Che ha questo gigante qui distrutto
E lesse certe lettre lacrimando,
Che non potè tenir più il viso asciutto,
Com'io dirò ne la seguente istoria.
Di mal vi guardi il Re de l'alta gloria.

FINE DEL CANTO PRIMO.

LETTERS FROM ABROAD.

LETTER IV.

DEAR C——,

I HOPE you have not forgotten the thoughts you entertained of visiting Italy. I set your father longing to accompany you, when I saw him. N.'s holidays are approaching; and I should be glad to know what all three of you could do better than to come arm-in-arm, joking and to joke, and see one who hungers and thirsts after his old friends. I have much to offer you, "though I say it who should not." Imprimis, all that line of French territory which extends from Calais to the Alps, and which, with the help of Mr. Roscoe's famous song, and Mrs. Radcliffe's romances, you will find as gay as the inhabitants:—2ndly, Rousseau and Les Charmettes by the way:—3rdly, the passage of Mont Cenis, which is among the performances of one Bonaparte: 4thly, Turin, where you will have the happiness of seeing your legitimate monarch, the King of Sardinia, unless he is still eating sweatmeats at Genoa, where we have the good fortune to possess him at present:—5thly, the Appenines, though, at the sea-side here, they are but the footstools of the rest:—6thly, Genoa, with its grand palaces, and half the mules in Italy:—7thly, and lastly, a little hill, called Albaro, containing vineyards and olive trees, stone allies, and certain

"Signori Inglesi," large and small, who will shout for joy at the sight of you. Venite, venite. You know how cheaply I can lodge and feed you; and though our house lets at but £20. a year, you can have your choice out of forty rooms to sleep in. There is nothing between this sort of house and the cottages of the peasantry, unless one goes to lodge in town, which would cost a great deal more. For £24. a year, you can hire a palace. Again and again, therefore, I say, come. During the evening and early morning, I will shew you about. The rest of the time we will eat, sleep, lounge, read and converse. It will be hard if we do not have some music. There are pictures by Raphael and Guido in the palaces. The fruits are fine: the colours of things exquisite; every object about you new. You cannot help being pleased: and I myself shall catch a new inspiration from your coming, and will at least warrant my being merry for as long a time as you stay.

You know all that I am at present acquainted with, respecting the city of Genoa; but as a scholar and a lover of the country, especially one who has never been in the South, there are some other points which will not be without their importance in your eyes. The first sight of the olive trees and cypresses will remind you of a hundred things, Greek, Latin, and Italian. Fancy yourself in Virgil's country, seeing the lizards run up the walls, and hearing the *cicada*! Both of them retain almost their identical names, *lucerta*, and *cicala*. Then there are the fire-flies, divine little creatures, which rule the night here, as bees and butterflies rule the day.—But I must lay before you my temptations more slowly. Travellers, hearing so much of olive trees, and accustomed to their piquant fruit, are generally disappointed at sight of them. Whether my enthusiasm bore me out or not, I know not, but I liked it; or rather them, for one by

itself is equivocal. You must see them in a body, or, still better, contrasted with chesnut and cypresses. They have an aspect singularly light and hazy. The leaves are stiff, hard, pointed, willow-like, dark above, and of a light leathern colour underneath; the trunk slight, dry-looking, crooked, and almost always branches off into a double stem at a little distance from the ground.* A wood of them looks like a huge hazy bush, more light than dark, and glimmering with innumerable specks; which are the darker sides of the leaves. When the fruit is on them, they seem powdered with myriads of little black balls. My wife says, that olive trees look as if they only grew by moonlight; which gives a better idea of their light, faded aspect, than a more prosaical description. The cypress is a poplar, grown more sombre, stately, and heavy: not to be moved by every flippant air; it is of a beautiful dark colour, and contrasts admirably with trees of a rounder figure.† Two or three cypress trees by the side of a white or yellow cottage, roofed and windowed like our new cottage-houses near London, the windows often without glass, form alone an Italian picture; and constantly remind you that you are at a distance from home. The consumption of olive oil is immense. It is doubtless no mean exasperator of Italian bile. The author of an Art of Health highly approves a moderate use of it, both in diet and medicine; but says, that as soon as it becomes cooked, fried, or otherwise abused, it inflames the blood, disturbs the humours, irritates the fibres, and produces other effects very superflu-

* "Olea Europœa. Foglie lanciolate, sopra verdi sotto bianche coriacee." *Targioni—Instituzioni Botaniche.—Vol.* 2.

† "Cupressus Pyramidalis. Rami eretti, avvicinati. Foglie giovani acute, scorrenti, adulte ottuse, embriciate per quattro parti. Strobili ovati, piu larghi alla base."—*Id. Vol.* .3.

ous in a stimulating climate. The notoriousness of the abuse makes him cry out, and ask how much better it would be to employ this pernicious quantity of oil in lighting the streets and roads. He thinks it necessary however to apologize to his countrymen for this apparent inattention to their pecuniary profits, adding, that he makes amends by diverting them into another channel. I fear the two ledgers would make a very different show of profit and loss: not to mention, that unless the oil were consecrated, or the lamps hung very high, it would assuredly be devoured. We have a difficulty in keeping the servants from disputing its food with our lamplight. Their lucubrations are of a more internal nature.

The rather thou,
Celestial light, shine inwards.

I am told that the olive trees grow finer and finer as you go southwards. The chesnut trees are very beautiful; the spiky-looking branches of leaves, long, and of a noble green, show gloriously, as you look up against the intense blue of the sky. Am I reminding you of a common place, in saying that the *castanets* used in the dancing, evidently originated in the nuts of this tree, *castagnette*? They are made in general, I believe, of cockle-shells, or an imitation of them; but the name renders their vegetable descent unequivocal. It is pleasant to observe the simple origin of pleasant things. Some loving peasants, time immemorial, fall dancing under the trees: they pick up the nuts, rattle them in their hands; and behold (as the Frenchman says) the birth of the fandango.

As you walk through the lanes in warm weather, you startle the lizards at every step. They run up the walls swiftly, but in a climbing manner, moving their sides alternately. But what is that very loud cricket? The noise ceases; and with a whirr almost as strong as that of a little bird, the

creature comes spinning across the lane. It is a great winged grasshopper,—the cicada,—the τεττιξ,—the grasshopper of Virgil, of Theocritus, of *Anacreon*. When I first saw it, I almost felt as if Anacreon were alive, and all the South was his country. It is undoubtedly of the same species as our grasshopper, though our name does not suit it, for it lives in the trees, δενδριων επ' ακρων. I have not yet heard them in chorus, the hot weather not having set in. They will begin singing, if scratched gently on the breast; and boys catch them to startle people with. A gentleman tells me, that when he was at school, he and a set of his fellows caught a great number, and suddenly opened their music at the schoolmaster, who could not be heard.

All the insect tribes, good and bad, acquire vigour and size as they get southwards. I have seen however but one scorpion yet, and the rascal was young; we were looking upon him with much interest, and speculating upon his turn of mind, when a female servant quietly took out her scissars and cut him in two. Her bile, with eating oil and minestra, was as much exalted as his. Is it true that all poison is nothing but an essential acid, exalted in proportion to its venom? The discovery of the Prussic Acid, which kills instantly, looks like it.—Our antipathies are set up every now and then, by the sight of some new and hideous-looking insect; but we have not seen a twentieth part of what we expected. The flies bite so, that the *zanzaliere* (the bed-net against the gnats) seems quite as necessary against them as the enemy from whom it is named. The gnats have hardly come; yet we have been obliged to take to it. We have not yet seen the *mantis*, which I am told will turn its head round at music, and seem to listen. Of the silk-worms, notice has just been given us in the neighbourhood by a general stripping of the leaves off the mulberry-trees. The beauty of the bees

and butterflies you may imagine. But there is one insect, of so fairy-like a nature and lustre, that it would be almost worth coming in the south to look at, if there were no other attraction. I have already alluded to it,—the *fire-fly*. Imagine thousands of flashing diamonds every night powdering the ground, the trees, and the air; especially in the darkest places, and the corn-fields. They give at once a delicacy and brilliance to Italian darkness, inconceivable. It is the glow-worm, winged, and flying in crowds. In England, you know, the female alone gives light: at least, that of the male, who is the exclusive possessor of the wings, is hardly perceptible. Worm is a wrong word, the creature being a real insect.—The Italian name is *Lucciola*, Little-light,—in Genoa, Cæe-belle (Chiare-belle)—Clear and fine. Its aspect, when held in the hand, is that of a dark-coloured beetle, but without the hardness or sluggish look. The light is contained in the under part of the extremity of the abdomen, exhibiting a dull golden-coloured partition by day, and flashing occasionally by day-light, especially when the hand is shaken. At night, the flashing is that of the purest and most lucid fire, spangling the vineyards and olive-trees, and their dark avenues, with innumerable stars. Its use is not known. In England, and I believe here, the supposition is, that it is a signal of love. It affords no perceptible heat, but is supposed to be phosphoric. In a dark room, a single one is sufficient to flash a light against the wall. I have read of a lady in the West Indies, who could see to read by the help of three under a glass, as long as they chose to accommodate her. A few of them are generally in our rooms all night, going about like little sparkling elves. It is impossible not to think of something spiritual, in seeing the progress of one of them through a dark room. You only know it by the flashing of its lamp, which takes place every

three or four inches apart, sometimes oftener, thus marking its track in and out the apartment, or about it. It is like a little fairy taking its rounds. These insects remind us of the lines in Herrick, inviting his mistress to come to him at night-time; and they suit them still better than his English ones:—

> Their lights the glow-worms lend thee;
> The shooting stars attend thee;
> And the elves also,
> Whose little eyes glow
> Like the sparks of fire, befriend thee.

To me, who pass more of my time even than usual, in the ideal world, these spiritual-looking little creatures are more than commonly interesting. S. used to watch them for hours. I look at them, and wonder whether any of the particles he left upon earth help to animate their loving and lovely light. The last fragment he wrote, which was a welcome to me on my arrival, began with a simile taken from their dusk look and the fire underneath it, in which he found a likeness to his friend. They had then just made their appearance. Do you recollect coming down to Buckinghamshire one summer? Come to Italy now, and help me to bear a thousand recollections full of him and all beautiful things.—There is one circumstance respecting these fire-flies, quite as extraordinary as any. There appears to be no mention of them in the ancient poets. Now of all insects, even southern, they are perhaps the most obvious to poetical notice: it is difficult to see how any poet, much less a pastoral or an amatory one, could *help* speaking of them; and yet they make their appearance neither in the Greek nor Latin poets, neither in Homer (at least I believe not) nor Virgil, nor Ovid, nor Anacreon, nor Theocritus. Per-

haps you can set me right. The earliest mention of them, with which I am acquainted, is in Dante, (Inferno, Canto 26) where he compares the spirits in the eighth circle of hell, who go about swathed in fire, to the "*lucciole*" in a rural valley of an evening. A truly saturnine perversion of a beautiful object! I see, by the dictionary, that Pliny mentions a glow-worm of some sort under the name of *cicindela;* but I have no Pliny to consult. The Greek word is *Lampyris*, which is retained in Entomology. Does nature put forth a new production now and then, like an author? Has the glow-worm been exalted into the fire-fly by the greater heat of the modern Italian soil, which appears indisputable?

I conclude with a specimen or two of the Genoese dialect, which is much disdained by the Tuscans, but which the Genoese say is the next best dialect in Italy to the Venetian. I know not what the Neapolitans and Sicilians would say to this; but it is certainly better then the Mantuan and Bergamasque, specimens of which (together with Venetian, Neapolitan, and Paduan), you will find in Coxe's Picture of Italy. Dante says, in his treatise *De Vulgari Eloquentia*, that if the Genoese were deprived of the letter Z, they would be dumb. But Dante's dislikes did not stand upon ceremony. When written, the dialect has a look of Provençal in it; and doubtless it contains a good deal of old French, and has drawn upon all its neighbours. Z abounds in the shape of S and X, as well as its own; but not any thing to the extent that Dante speaks of. The have the French *u*, which they write *æu;* and their dipthong without the *u* has also a petty effect. The soft *gl* of the Tuscans they convert into a *dg* or *double g*, which often recurs and is very unpleasant. Thus *figlio*, a son, is *figgiæu:* and their words for *pigliare pane*, to get bread, sound as if they said *pigger pang*, the *r* at the

same time being heard very little, if at all, like the final one of Londoners. Indeed, I observe in their books, that they write their infinitive moods without the *r*, putting a circumflex instead, as *piggiâ*, *passâ*, *sparegâ*, *dafâ*. I should suppose they dropt this *r*, which adds so much strength to the softness of the Tuscan, in order to diminish the roughness of their language, if they did not seem to take pains to add to it in other instances. The people, as in all commercial countries, have a tendency to cut their words short for dispatch of business; and their pronunciation is harsh and mean. There is a joke of a Neapolitan's telling a man, in a fine breathing strain, that he had seen an eagle fly; upon which the Genoese asks, whether an eagle has wings. But whether this is to ridicule the boasting of the Neapolitan, or the ignorance of the Genoese, I know not.—Neapolitan. "*Haggio veduta un aquila volare.*"—Genoese. "*A i äeia i -ae?* This brevity sounds still shorter than it looks:—*(A-yea-a-ee-ai.)* The Genoese language seems copious and expressive, and I am told they have good translations of Tasso, and of some of Moliere's comedies. Serassi, Tasso's biographer, speaks highly, I see, of the former. Their principal native poet, Cavalli, lived in the time of Chiabrera, who eulogizes him as a man of original genius. His works, which are now before me, I shall try to spell *pro bono publico*, a good poet being too good a thing to be confined to his native town. The following is a stanza of a poem written in the Genoese dialect upon the passion for religious processions. A gentleman has translated it into Tuscan for me. The author fancies a lover of processions to have risen from the dead, on purpose to indulge himself in his favourite pastime. The whole poem is reckoned very pleasant, and appears so by what I can discern of it. The present stanza is the climax of the sight, the appearance of the *gran cascia* or final

group of figures carried on men's shoulders in honour of the saint concerned, who is St. James. Maragiano was a maker of these wooden figures, whose memory is celebrated in Genoa.

Særa o crocco a gran Cascia. Oh che espresciou!
Maragiano l'à fæto parlâ o legno:
Ogni figûa fà vedde unna pascion;
Ogni testa, ogni gamba a l'é àsso segno;
So i Moi, e i Saraceni in confuxion:
Tutto de l'arte, e de l'Autô l'é degno,
Ma s'oì vedde unna cosa de ciù ardîe,
Miæ o cavallo, e scappæ, co no ve tîe.

Ecco al fin la gran cassa! Oh che espressione!
Ah, Maragiano fe parlare il legno!
Ogni statua veder fa una passione:
Ogni testa, ogni gamba, è al proprio segno:
Son Mori e Saraceni in confusione:
Tutto dell' arte e dell' autore e degno.
Ma se veder vuoi cosa ancor più ardita,
Mira il cavallo, e scappa, O egli ti trita.

See—there's the group at last! Oh, what expression!
How Maragiano brings the blockheads out!
There's not a figure but it's in a passion;
The heads and legs know all what they're about:
The Moors and Saracens—Christ! what a crashing!
All's worthy of the workman, there's no doubt.
But if you want some thing still more to strike you,
Look at that horse there! Scamper, or he'll kick you.

For the prose, I will take an old jest or two out of an Italian grammar, putting the original Italian first, and adding an English translation "for the benefit of the country gentlemen." The ladies require these helps less and less every day.

Un contadino passando sul Ponte Nuovo di Parigi, ed osservando fra molte botteghe piene di mercanzi quella d'un cambista, nella quale eravi soltanto un uomo, e un tavolino con carta e calamaio, volle entrar dentro per curiosità, e domandare che cosa vendevasi: "Delle teste d'asino," rispose il cambista: "Bisogna," soggiunse il contadino, "che abbiano un grande spaccio, perchè non vi è rimasta che la vostra"

Un païsun passando sciù o Ponte Neuvo Parigi, e osservando fra e varie butteghe pinne de mercansiæ quella d'un bancäotto ne-a quale non gh'era che un ômmo con un tavolin, do' papæ, e un caamâ, ghe venne a curiositæ d'intraghæ e de domandâ un po' cose se ghe vendèiva: "Dæ testæ d' âse," ghe rispose, bancäotto: "Bæusæugna," di repigio' o' païsan, "che queste aggian un gran smercio, perche non gh' e resto che a vostra."

A countryman passing over the Pont Neuf at Paris, and seeing, among a heap of shops full of merchandize, that of a banker in which there was nothing but a man sitting at a table with pen and ink, had the curiosity to go in and enquire what it was he sold: "Asses' heads," replied the banker: "They must be in great request," said the countryman, "since you have only your own left."

Un signore cenando a un osteria in una piccola città, quando fu sparecchiato, l'oste gli domandò, come gli era piaciuta la cena. "Moltissimo." rispose quel signore; "posso dire d'aver cenato bene al par di qualunque gran personaggio nel regno." "Eccettuato il Signor Governatore," disse l'oste.— "Io non eccettuo nessuno," rispose egli, "Ma voi dovete sempre eccettuare il Signor Governatore," replico l'oste. "Ma io non voglio," soggiunse il gentiluomo. In breve, la loro disputa si accesse talmente, che l'oste, il quale era un magistrato subalterno, ma non però simile a Solone o a Li-

curgo, fece chiamare il gentiluomo devanti al Governatore. Questo magistrato, la cui capacità era in perfetto equilibrio con quella dell' oste disse con aria grave al gentiluomo, che l'eccettuare il Signor Governatore in ogni cosa era in quella città un inveteratissimo costume; e che a tal costume era obblîgato ciascuno d'uniformarsi; e perciò lo condannava all' amenda d'uno scellino per aver vicusato di farlo. " Benissimo," rispose il gentiluomo: " ecco uno scellino; ma possa io morire se v'è nel modo un più gran pazzo dell' oste, Eccettuato il Signor Governatore."

Cenando un scioú otaïa t'unna piccola çittæ, appenna a to-a fu desbarraççâ, l'oste ghe domandò come gh'era piaxua a çennha. " Moltissimo," ghe rispose quello scioú; " posso assegüave d'avei çenöu ben a-o paro de qualunque gran personaggio do' regno. " Eççettuöu ò Scioú Governo'u," ghe disse l'oste. " Mi non eççettúo nisciun," ghe rispose o' scioú. " Ma vui dovei sempre eççettua ò Scioú Governöu," replicò l'oste. " E mi non veuggio eççettuâ un corno," soggiunse o' gentilommo. In poco tempo a disputa a se aseâdo a tâ segno, che l'oste, u quale u l'era un magistrato subalterno, non però simile a Solon o a Licurgo, o feççe ciammâ o' gentilommo davanti o Governöu. Questo magistrato, che in punto de capacitæ o l'era in perfetto equilibrio con l'oste, o disse con aïa grave a-o gentilommo, che in l'eççettuâ o' Governöu in tutte æ cose l'era un uso antighissimo in quella çittæ; che ciascun era obbligöu d'uniformâse a quest' uso, e che per avei recusöu da fâlo, o lo condannava all'emenda d'un scellin. " Va benissimo," rispose gentilommo, " piggiæ chi un scellin; ma vorrieiva ese ammassöu, se se treuva a-o mondo un ommo cuì matto de l'oste, Eççettuöu ò Scioù Governöu."

A gentleman supping at an inn in a petty city, the landlord, when the things were cleared away, asked him whether

his supper had pleased him. "Very much," said the gentleman: "I may affirm that I have supped as well as the greatest man in the kingdom." "Except the Signor Governor," said the landlord. "I except nobody," returned the other. "But you ought always to except the Signor Governor," replied the host. "But I will not," said the gentleman. In short, the dispute grew so warm, that the host, who was a bit of a magistrate himself, not very like Solon or Lycurgus, summoned his guest before the Governor. This officer, whose capacity was on a perfect level with that of his informer, said with a grave air to the gentleman, that to except the Governor upon every occasion was a custom of the most ancient standing, to which all persons were obliged to conform, and therefore he condemned him to the penalty of a shilling for having refused to do so. "Mighty well," replied the gentleman; "there's your shilling, but hang me if there is a greater fool upon earth than the landlord,—Except the Signor Governor."

This story reminds me of one in a new set of Arabian Tales (genuine) which, whether you have read it or not, you will not be sorry to hear repeated. A schoolmaster (worthy brother of the Scholar in Hierocles) taught his boys, whenever they heard him sneeze, to rise up with solemnity, cross their hands on their bosoms, and ejaculate, "God preserve our venerable tutor!" One day he took them out for a walk; and the weather being hot, it was proposed they should drink at a well. The well was deep, so the master made them join their turbans together for a rope, and descending to the bottom, handed them up their drink one after the other. The refreshment over, he bade them draw him up again, and had nearly reached the top, when the coldness of the well making him sneeze, the whole posse instantly let go the rope, threw themselves into their accus-

tomed attitude, and exclaimed with fervour, "God preserve our venerable tutor!"—who broke his leg.

But the Governor has reminded me of another story, which is new, and which concerns the Governor of our city here; a different sort of man, and popular, notwithstanding his Sardinian office. He is a Savoyard Marquis of the name of D'Yennes, and relates the story himself with much glee. As he was coming to take possession of his appointment, he stopped at a town not far from Genoa, the inhabitants of which were ambitious of doing him honour. They accordingly gave him an entertainment, at which was an allegorical picture containing *a hyæna surrounded wth Cupids.* The hyæna was supposed to be a translation of his name. Upon requesting an explanation of the compliment, he received the following smiling reply:—"*Les Amours, Monsieur, sont nous; et vous etes la bête.*" ("The Loves, Sir, are ourselves,—the beast is you.")

If you do not thump your knee at this story, I shall conclude you have left off discussing the debates in Parliament, and are no longer in need of your usual refreshment.

Your's ever sincerely.

THE CHOICE. *

———Nec vos, dulcissima mundi
Nomina, vos, Musæ, libertas, otia, libri,
Hortique, silvæque, animâ remanente, relinquam

Nor by me e'er shall you,
You, of all names the sweetest and the best,
You, Muses, books, and liberty, and rest,
You, gardens, fields, and woods, forsaken be,
As long as life itself forsakes not me.

COWLEY.

I HAVE been reading Pomfret's *Choice* this spring,
A pretty kind of-sort-of-kind of thing,
Not much a verse, and poem none at all,
Yet, as they say, extremely natural.
And yet I know not. There's a skill in pies,
In raising crusts as well as galleries;
And he's the poet, more or less, who knows
The charm that hallows the least thing from prose,
And dresses it in its mild singing clothes.
Poetry's that which sets a thought apart,
To worship Nature with a choral heart:
And may be seen where rarely she intrudes,
As birds in cages make us think of woods.

* It is hardly necessary to say, that the mode of life which the author desires for himself in this dreaming speculation, is only such as he could contemplate for his own actual life, and in the present condition of things. If he were speculating for the rest of the world, and upon the possible condition of things, it would be much further modified; and certain personages who make their appearance in it would not be heard of.

Beaux have it in them, when they love the faces
Of country damsels, and their worsted graces.
E'en satire, if of laurelled race, retains
A taste of sweetness in its finer veins;
Or like its friend, the common stocks, may be
Touched with a shadow of the living tree.
The greatest poets please the greatest wits,
But every reader loves the least by fits:
The former lord it in their vast editions;
But t'others' cards still gain them recognitions:
The ladies rise in heaps and give them sweet admissions.

But to the *Choice*. It pleased me as I read,
Walked with me forth, and went with me to bed.
And as, when somebody at dinner glows
In praise of what he likes, soups, harricoes,
Grouse or a carp, the rest as surely join
In praise of that on which they like to dine,—
So Pomfret's likings make me think of mine.
I'll write a *Choice*, said I: and it shall be
Something 'twixt labour and *extempore;*
Not long, yet not too quick on the conclusion,
And for its ease I'll call it an effusion.
All that I vouch for is to shun the crime,
(Death, by all laws) of writing for the rhyme.
I shall not please all tastes, as Pomfret did,
Even though he said he'd "live a man forbid."*

* Videlicet, that he would "have no wife:" which not only threatened to lose him his living, but actually cost him his life: for the obstructions raised by his enemies in the mind of Dr. Compton the bishop, constrained his presence in London, where he caught the small pox and died in 1703, in the thirty-sixth year of his age."—See his life by Johnson.—It is curious, that what would have been hailed as a saintly recommendation in a clergyman at one period of the Church, should become so profane a drawback in another.

Men, in these times, have notions of their own,
And something called a zeal, which makes them known;
Else I would print my fancy by itself,
And be "a love" on every lady's shelf:
Perhaps I shall be so, some day or other;
But I'd at once please every prudent mother;
Not locked in cupboards, like "a losel vilde,"
With sups and sweetmeats that would "hurt the child;"
But bound in lilac, register'd with rose,
I'd smile on tables in the parson's nose;
My lady's woman should approve my lays,
And all the Tomkinses and Critics' praise.

Come then, ye scenes of quiet and content,
Ye goals of life, on which our hearts are spent,—
Meet my worn eyes. I love you, e'en in vales
Of cups and saucers, and such Delfic dales,
Much more in pen and ink, as bard beseems;
Come—take me to your arms in bowery dreams.

First, on a green I'd have a low, broad house,
Just seen by travellers through the garden boughs;
And that my luck might not seem ill bestowed,
A bench and spring should greet them on the road.
My grounds should not be large; I like to go
To Nature for a range, and prospect too,
And cannot fancy she'll comprise for me,
Even in a park, her all-sufficiency.
Besides, my thoughts fly far; and when at rest,
Love, not a watch-tower, but a lulling nest.
But all the ground I had should keep a look
Of Nature still, have birds'-nests and a brook;
One spot for flowers, the rest all turf and trees;

For I'd not grow my own bad lettuces.
And above all, no house should be so near,
That strangers should discern me here and there;
Much less when some fair friend was at my side,
And swear I thought her charming,—which I did.
I am not sure I'd have a rookery;
But sure I am I'd not live near the sea,
To view its great flat face, and have my sleeps
Filled full of shrieking dreams and foundering ships;
Or hear the drunkard, when his slaughter's o'er,
Like Sinbad's monster scratching on the shore.
I'd live far inland, in a world of glades,
Yet not so desart as to fright the maids:
A batch of cottages should smoke beside;
And there should be a town within a morning's ride.

My house of brick should not be great or mean,
Much less built formally, outside or in.
I hate the trouble of a mighty house,
That worst of mountains labouring with a mouse;
And should dislike as much to fill a niche in
A Grecian temple opening to a kitchen.
The frogs in Homer should have had such boxes,
Or Æsop's frog, whose heart was like the ox's.
Such puff about high-roads, so grand, so small,
With wings and what not, portico and all,
And poor drenched pillars, which it seems a sin
Not to mat up at night-time, or take in.
I'd live in none of these. Nor would I have
Veranda'd windows to forestall my grave;
Veranda'd truly, from the northern heat!
And cut down to the floor to comfort one's cold feet!
I like a thing to please the traveller's eye,

But more a house to live in, not to die.
Older than new I'd have it; dressed with blooms
Of honied green, and quaint with straggling rooms,
A few of which, white-bedded and well swept,
Should bear the name of friends for whom they're kept.
And yet to show I had a taste withal,
I'd have some casts of statues in the hall,
Or rather entrance, whose sweet steady eyes
Should touch the comers with a mild surprise,
And so conduct them, hushing to my door,
Where, if a friend, the house should hear a roar.
The grateful beggar should peep in at these,
And wonder what I did with Popish images.

My study should not be, as Pomfret's was,
Down in the garden; 'tis an awkward place
In winter; and in summer I prefer
To write my verses in the open air,
Stretched on the grass, under the yellow trees,
With a few books about me, and the bees.
My study should conclude the upper floor,
The stillest corner, with a double door:
The window (one) should just peep down between
The break of tree-tops on a sylvan scene;
And on the table, bending a bland eye,
I'd have, I think, a bust of Mercury.
The walls should be all books. No—here and there
I'd set a favourite head within a square,—
A square within the books, and so enclosed
With such as it loved dearest, or composed.
My dearest friend should show me his kind face,
Among the best, over the fire-place;
So that when winter came, and I could please

My sight no longer with the nestling trees,
I should turn wholly round, and warm my heart
And feet alike with facing that best part;
Still feeling round about me all my books,
Those for love's arms, the fire-side for its looks.
You'll say, perhaps, there'd be a want of grace
In putting pictures in this kind of case:
There might in many rooms, but not in this;
For grace is greatest where affection is,
And merges, like a wife, her name in sympathy's.

Here would I write and read, till it was time
To ride or walk, or on the grass go rhyme;
For every day I'd be my friend enough
To spin my blood and whirl its humours off,
And take my draught of generous exercise,
The youth of age, and medicine of the wise.
And this reminds me, that behind some screen
About my grounds, I'd have a bowling-green;
Such as in wits' and merry women's days
Suckling preferred before his walk of bays.
You may still see them, dead as haunts of fairies,
By the old seats of Killigrew and Carews,
Where all, alas, is vanished from the ring,
Wits and black eyes, the skittles and the king!*

* Bowls are now thought vulgar: that is to say, a certain number of fine vulgar people agree to call them so. The fashion was once otherwise. Suckling prefers

A pair of black eyes, or a lucky hit
At bowls, above all the trophies of wit.

Piccadilly, in Clarendon's time, "was a fair house of entertainment and gaming, with handsome gravel walks for shade, and where were an upper and a lower bowling green, whither very many of the nobility and gentry of

I'd never hunt, except the fox, and then
Not much, for fear I should fall hunting men,
And take each rogue I met for a stray soul,
That hadn't rights, and might not eat his fowl;
A thing, that by degrees might bring me round
To trespass on the squire's and lawyer's ground.
Fishing I hate, because I think about it,
Which makes it right that I should do without it.
A dinner, or a death might not be much;
But cruelty's a rod I dare not touch.
I own I cannot see my right to feel
For my own jaws, and tear a carp's with steel;
To troll him here and there, and spike, and strain,
And let him loose to jerk him back again.
Suppose a parson at this sort of work,
Not with his carp or salmon, but his clerk:
The clerk he snatches at a tempting bit,
And hah! an ear-ache with a knife in it!
That there is pain and evil is no rule
Why I should make it greater, like a fool;
Or rid me of my rest so vile a way,
As long as there's a single manly play.
The next conclusion to be drawn, might be,
That higher beings made a carp of me;
Which I would rather should not be the case;

the best quality resorted, both for exercise and conversation."—*Hist. of the Rebellion, Vol.* 2.—It seems to have been to the members of Parliament what Brooks's is now, and was a much better place for them to refresh their faculties in. The robust intellects of the Commonwealth grew there, and the airy wits that succeeded them. The modern gambling-houses are fit to produce nothing better than their name bespeaks. There grow our sottish financiers and timid intriguers. It is the same with the difference of the hours they keep.

Though " Izaak" were the saint to tear my face,
And stooping from his heaven with rod and line,
Made the damn'd sport, with his old dreams divine,
As pleasant to his taste as roug'ı to mine.
Such sophistry, no doubt, saves half the hell,
And fish would have preferred his reasoning well;
And if my gills concerned him, so should I.
The dog, I grant, is in that " equal sky:"
But, Heaven be praised, he's not my deity!

All manly games I'd play at: golf, and quoits,
And cricket, to set all my limbs to rights,
And make me conscious, with a due respect,
Of muscles one forgets by long neglect.
But as for prize-fights, with their butchering shows,
And crowds of blacklegs, I'd have none of those;—
I am not bold in other people's blows.
Besides, I should reside so far from town,
Those human waves could never bear me down—
Which would endear my solitude, I own.
But if a neighbour, fond of his antiques,
Tried to renew a bout or two at sticks,
I'd do my best to force a handsome laugh
Under a ruddy crack from quarter staff
Nor think I had a right to walk my woods,
Coy of a science that was Robin Hood's.
'Tis healthy, and a man's; and would assist
To make me wield a falchion in my fist,
Should foes arise who'd rather not be taught,
And war against the course of truth-exploring thought.

Thus would I study when alone, and thus
With friends and villagers a game discuss;

And gather all the health and peace I could,
Man's honey from the wilds and flowery wood.
For in this picture, with its happy frame,
I would not be the shaken thing I am.
I'd write, because I could not help it; read
Much more, but nothing to oppress my head;
For heads are very different things at ease,
And forced to bear huge loads for families.
Still I would think of others; use my pen,
As fits a man and lettered citizen,
And so discharge my duty to the state;
But as to fame and glory, fame might wait
Nevertheless, I'd write a work in verse,
Full of fine dreams and natural characters;
Eastern perhaps, and gathered from a shore
Whence never poet took his world before.
To this sweet sphere I would retire at will,
To sow it with delight, and shape with skill;
And should it please me, and be roundly done,
I'd launch it into light, to sparkle round the sun.

I'd have two friends live near me, perhaps three:
Time was, when in one happy house——But he
Has gone to his great home, over the dreadful sea.
Oh Nature, we both loved thee! Pardon one
To whom thine ocean, even in the sun,
Has grown a monstrous and a morbid sight:—
See how I try to love thee still, and dream of thy delight.

Come—let me go on with my builded bower:
I should be nearer him, by many a weary hour.

In pleasure and in pain, alike I find
My face turn tenderly to womankind:

But then they must be truly women,—not
Shes by the courtesy of a petticoat,
And left without enquiry to their claims,
Like haunted houses with their devil's dams.
I'd mend the worst of women, if I could,
But for a constancy, give me the good;—
I do not mean the formal or severe,
Much less the sly, who's all for character;
But such as, in all nations and all times,
Would be good creatures, fit for loving rhymes;
Kind, candid, simple, yet of sterling sense,
And of a golden age for innocence.
Of these my neighbours should have choice relations;
And I (though under certain alterations)
I too would bring—(though I dislike the name;
The Reverend Mr. Pomfret did the same;
Let its wild flavour pass a line so tame;)—
A wife,—or whatsoever better word
The times, grown wiser, might by law afford
To the chief friend and partner of my board.
The dear, good she, by every habit then,—
Ties e'en when pleasant, very strong with men;
Though your wise heads first make one's systems wrong,
And then insist that only their's last long,—
Would finish, and make round in every part,
The natural harmony of her own wise heart;
And by the loss of something of her right
Of being jealous, consummate delight.
Gods! how I'd love her morning, noon, and night!
I'd only know the women she approved,
But then she'd love all those who should be loved:
So that our fair friends, better still than good,
Should crown, like doves, our gentle neighbourhood;

And bring us back the peace the world has lost,
All fav'rites and beloved, though one the most.
Should doubts arise, and want of explanations,
We'd settle all by little gifts and patience;
But there could not be much 'twixt real friends,
Taught to consult each other's common ends:
And as for passions of a graver sort,
Kisses and shakes of hand should cut them short.
Should any one incur the common grief,
By moods that asked and yet repelled relief,
Long tears and the remorseless handkerchief,
One pain well borne for friendship's and love's sake
Should gather to our arms the wanderer back:—
It should be our fixed law, no loving heart should ache.

I'd have my mornings to myself. Ev'n ladies
Should not prevent me this, except on May-days:
Unless we fairly struck our tents awhile,
To stroll, like gypsies, round about the isle;
A plan I might be bent on, I confess,
Provided colds would give us leave, and dress,
And twenty other inconveniences.
I'd give up even my house to live like them,
And have a health in every look and limb,
To which our best perceptions must be dim.
A gypsy's body, and a poet's mind,
Clear blood, quick foot, free spirit, and thought refined,
Perpetual airs to breathe, and loves to bind,—
Such were the last perfection of mankind.

I'd have my mornings to myself then; calm,
Clear, useful, busy, like distilling balm.
The spirit of the genial text I own;

But yet 'tis sometimes "for man to be alone."
It makes him feel his own free powers; put forth
All the glad fruitage that his heart is worth;
And should his fellows fall to their green tombs,
Enables him to take the storm that comes,
And sternly rouse his locks, and stand the driving glooms.
Alas! too late have I learnt this.—Be strong,
Be strong, my boughs, and still allure a tranquillizing song!

These mornings, with their work, should earn for me
My afternoon's content and liberty.
I'd have an early dinner, and a plain,
Not tempting much to "cut and come again;"
A little wine, or not, as health allowed,
But for my friends, a stock to make me proud;
Bottles of something delicate and rare,
Which I should draw, and hold up with an air,
And set them on the table, and say, "There!"
My friend the doctor (not the apothecary,
For they and doctors eminently vary;
Doctors, I mean, such as the Muses love,
And with the liberal more than hand and glove,*)
Should draw on these for med'cines for the poor,
And our delicious fee should be the cure.
Perhaps I'd make him give me a degree
Myself, and practise out of jealousy.
Oh Garth! Oh Goldsmith! Oh ye sons of theirs,
In wit, or in wise heart, your real heirs,
And you the most, ever yourself, and true

* I am told by a surgeon's kinswoman, that I ought to include surgeons; which I do with a great deal of pleasure. I mean, in short, all medical men, who are not ignorant and rapacious; not excepting the mere apothecary, if he happens to be one of them.

To your old patients and new duties too,
Whom my soul thanks, and, if it might, would bless,
To all the world with trembling tenderness,—
How meanly do I rate your brethren's arts,
How highly your's, and how like gems your hearts!
Gems deeply cut with Phœbus and the Nine:
May never sorrow shatter them like mine!

See—I'm at least a promising beginner,
And, out of pure good will, have left my dinner.

My dining-room should have some shelves of books,
If only for their grace and social looks—
Horace and Plutarch, Plato, and some more,
Who knew how to refine the tables' roar,
And sprinkled sweet philosophy between,
As meats are reconciled with slips of green.
I read infallibly, if left alone;
But after meat, an author may step down
To settle a dispute, or talk himself:—
I seem to twitch him now with finger from his shelf.

I would not sit in the same room to dine
And pass the evening; much less booze till nine,
And then, with a white waistcoat and red face,
Rise, with some stupid, mumbling, common place,
And "join the ladies," bowing, for some tea,
With nauseous looks, half lust, half irony.
I'd have two rooms, in one of which, as weather
Or fancy chose, we all might come together,
With liberty for each one nevertheless
To wander in and out, and taste the lawns and trees.
One of the rooms should face a spot of spots,

Such as would please a squirrel with his nuts;
I mean a slope, looking upon a slope,
Wood-crowned, and delled with turf, a sylvan cup.
Here, when our moods were quietest, we'd praise
The scenic shades, and watch the doves and jays,
And so receive the twilight with low talk,
And moon, slow issuing to her maiden walk.
The other sitting-room, a story higher,
Should look out towards the road and village spire;
And here we'd have our music and our mirth,
And seem as if we laughed with the whole rolling earth.

Next there, and looking out on either side,
I'd have " a little chapel edified,"
Informed with heads of those who, heavenly wise,
Through patient thought or many sympathies,
Lived betwixt heaven and earth, and bore for us
Dire thirsty deaths, or drank the deadly juice.
Greek beauty should be there, and Gothic shade;
And brave as anger, gentle as a maid,
The name on whose dear heart my hope's worn cheek was laid.
Here, with a more immediate consciousness,
Would we feel all that blesses us, and bless;
And lean on one another's heart, and make
Sweet resolutions, ever, for love's sake;
And recognise the eternal Good and Fair,
Atoms of whose vast active spirit we are;
And try by what great yearnings we could force
The globe on which we live to take a more harmonious course.

And when I died, 'twould please me to be laid
In my own ground's most solitary shade;
Not for the gloom, much less to be alone,

But solely as a room that still might seem my own.
There should my friends come still, as to a place
That held me yet, and bring me a kind face:
There should they bring me still their griefs and joys,
And hear in the swell'd breeze a little answering noise.
Had I renown enough, I'd choose to lie,
As Hafiz did, bright in the public eye,
With marble grace enclosed, and a green shade,
And young and old should read me, and be glad.
This for mankind, and one who loves them all:
But should my own pure pleasure guide the pall,
Then to the bed of my affections, where
My best friends lay, should its calm steps repair;
And two such vistas to my travail's end
Before me now with gathering looks attend:
One, in a gentle village, my old home;
The other, by the softened walls of Rome.

GIOVANNI VILLANI.

Among the many accusations that have been made against modern writers by the exclusive lovers of ancient literature, none has been more frequently repeated than the want of art manifested in the conception of their works, and of unity in the execution. They compare the Greek temples to Gothic churches, and bidding us remark the sublime simplicity of the one, and the overcharged ornament of the other, they tell us, that such is the perfection of antiquity compared with the monstrous distortions of modern times. These arguments and views, followed up in all their details, have given rise to volumes concerning the Classic and the Romantic, a difference much dwelt on by German writers, and treated at length by Madame de Staël in her "L'Allemagne." All readers, who happen at the same time to be thinkers, must have formed their own opinion of this question; but assuredly the most reasonable is that which would lead us to admire the beauties of all, referring those beauties to the standard of excellence that must decide on all merit in the highest resort, without reference to narrow systems and arbitrary rules. Methinks it is both presumptuous and sacrilegious to pretend to give the law to genius. We are too far removed from the point of perfection to judge with accuracy of what ought to be, and it is sufficient if we understand and feel what is. The fixed stars appear to abberate; but it is we that move, not they. The regular planets make various

excursions into the heavens, and we are told that some among them never return to the point whence they departed, and by no chance ever retrace the same path in the pathless sky. Let us, applying the rules which appertain to the sublimest objects in nature, to the sublimest work of God, a Man of Genius,—let us, I say, conclude, that though one of this species appear to err, the failure is in our understandings, not in his course; and though lines and rules, "centric and eccentric scribbled o'er," have been marked out for the wise to pursue, that these in fact have generally been the leading-strings and go-carts of mediocrity, and have never been constituted the guides of those superior minds which are themselves the law, and whose innate impulses are the fiats, of intellectual creation.

But zeal for the cause of genius has carried me further than I intended. Let us again recur to the charges brought against modern writers, and instead of cavilling at their demerits, let me be pardoned if I endeavour to discover that which is beautiful even in their defects, and to point out the benefits we may reap in the study of the human mind from this capital one—the want of unity and system.

It is a frequent fault among modern authors, and peculiarly among those of the present day, to introduce themselves, their failings and opinions, into the midst of works dedicated to objects sufficiently removed, as one might think, from any danger of such an incursion. This has sometimes the effect of a play-house anecdote I once heard, of a man missing his way behind the scenes, in passing from one part of the house to the other, and suddenly appearing in his hat and unpicturesque costume, stalking amidst the waves of a frightful storm, much to the annoyance of the highly-wrought feelings of the spectators of the impending catastrophe of a disastrous melodrame. Thus the Poet, in propriâ personâ,

will elbow his way between the despairing fair one and her agitated lover; he will cause a murderer's arm to be uplifted till it ought to ache, and his own hobby will sometimes displace the more majestic quadruped that just before occupied the scene.

These are the glaring defects of the intrusion of self in a work of art. But well-managed, there are few subjects, especially in poetry, that excite stronger interest or elicit more beautiful lines. To sit down for the purpose of talking of oneself, will sometimes freeze the warmth of inspiration; but, when elevated and carried away by the subject in hand, some similitude or contrast may awaken a chord which else had slept, and the whole mind will pour itself into the sound; and he must be a critic such as Sterne describes, his stop-watch in his hand, who would arrest the lengthened echo of the deepest music of the soul. Let each man lay his hand on his heart and say, if Milton's reference to his own blindness and personal circumstances does not throw an interest over Paradise Lost, which they would not lose to render the work as much no man's or any man's production as the Æneid—supposing *Ille ego* to be an interpolation, which I fondly trust it is not.

This habit of self-analysation and display has also caused many men of genius to undertake works where the individual feeling of the author embues the whole subject with a peculiar hue. I have frequently remarked, that these books are often the peculiar favourites among men of imagination and sensibility. Such persons turn to the human heart as the undiscovered country. They visit and revisit their own; endeavour to understand its workings, to fathom its depths, and to leave no lurking thought or disguised feeling in the hiding places where so many thoughts and feelings, for fear

of shocking the tender consciences of those inexpert in the task of self-examination, delight to seclude themselves. As a help to the science of self-knowledge, and also as a continuance of it, they wish to study the minds of others, and particularly of those of the greatest merit. The sight of land was not more welcome to Columbus, than are these traces of individual feeling, chequering their more formal works of art, to the voyagers in the noblest of terræ incognitæ, the soul of man. Sometimes, despairing to attain to a knowledge of the secrets of the best and wisest, they are pleased to trace human feeling wherever it is artlessly and truly pourtrayed. No book perhaps has been oftener the vade-mecum of men of wit and sensibility than Burton's Anatomy of Melancholy; the zest with which it is read being heightened by the proof the author gave in his death of his entire initiation into the arcana of his science. The essential attributes of such a book must be truth; for else the fiction is more tame than any other; and thus Sterne may become this friend to the reading man, but his imitators never can; for affectation is easily detected and deservedly despised. Montaigne is another great favourite; his pages are referred to as his conversation would be, if indeed his conversation was half so instructive, half so amusing, or contained half so vivid a picture of his internal spirit as his essays. Rousseau's Confessions, written in a more liberal and even prodigal spirit of intellectual candour, is to be ranked as an inestimable acquisition to this class of production. Boswell's Life of Johnson has the merit of carrying light into the recesses not of his own, but another's peculiar mind. Spence's Anecdotes is a book of the same nature, but less perfect in its kind. Half the beauty of Lady Mary Montague's Letters consists in the *I* that adorns them; and this *I*, this sensitive, imagi-

native, suffering, enthusiastic pronoun, spreads an inexpressible charm over Mary Wollstonecraft's Letters from Norway. *

An historian is perhaps to be held least excusable, if he intrude personally on his readers. Yet they might well follow the example of Gibbon, who, while he left the pages of his Decline and Fall unstained by any thing that is not applicable to the times of which he treated, has yet, through the medium of his Life and Letters, given a double interest to his history and opinions. Yet an author of Memoirs, or a History of his own Times, must necessarily appear sometimes upon the scene. Mr. Hyde gives greater interest to Lord Clarendon's History of the Rebellion, though I have often regretted that a quiet *I* had not been inserted in its room.

And now drawing the lines of this reasoning together, it may be conjectured why I like, and how I would excuse, the dear, rambling, old fashioned pages of Giovanni Villani, the author of the Croniche Fiorentine; the writer who makes the persons of Dante's Spirits familiar to us; who guides us through the unfinished streets and growing edifices of Firenze la bella, and who in short transports us back to the superstitions, party spirit, companionship, and wars of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Dante's commentators had made me familiar with the name of Villani, and I became desirous of obtaining what appeared to be the key of the mysterious allusions of the Divina Comedia. There is something venerable and endearing in the very appearance of this folio of the sixteenth century. The Italian is old and delightfully ill-spelt: I say delightfully, for it is spelt for

* I cannot help here alluding to the papers of "Elia," which have lately appeared in a periodical publication. When collected together, they must rank among the most beautiful and highly valued specimens of the kind of writing spoken of in the text.

Italian ears, and the mistakes let one into the secret of the pronunciation of Dante and Petrarch better than the regular orthography of the present day. The abbreviations are many, and the stops in every instance misplaced; the ink is black, the words thickly set, so that the most seems to have been made of every page. It requires a little habit to read it with the same fluency as another book, but when this difficulty is vanquished, it acquires additional charms from the very labour that has been bestowed.

I know that in describing the outward appearance of my friend, I perform a thankless office, since few will sympathise in an affection which arises from a number of associations in which they cannot participate. But in developing the spirit that animates him, I undertake a more grateful task, although, by stripping him of his original garb and dressing him in a foreign habiliment, I divest him of one of his greatest beauties. Though in some respects rather old fashioned, his Italian is still received as a model of style; and those Italians who wish to purify their language from Gallicisms, and restore to it some of its pristine strength and simplicity, recur with delight to his pages. All this is lost in the English; but even thus I trust that his facts will interest, his simplicity charm, and his real talent be appreciated.

In the course of his work, Villani thus recounts the motives that induced him to commence his history:—

"In the year 1300, according to the nativity of Christ, on account of its having been said by many, that in former times, every hundred years after the nativity of Christ, he that was pope at that period gave great indulgencies, Pope Boniface VIII, who then held the Apostolic office, through reverence for the same, gave a great and high indulgence in this manner: that whatsoever believer visited during all that

year continuously for thirty days (and fifteen days for strangers who were not Romans) the churches of the blessed Apostles, Peter and Paul, to all these he gave full and entire pardon, both of sin and punishment, for all their sins confessed or to be confessed; and for the consolation of Christian pilgrims, every Friday and holiday, the Veronicia del Sudario of Christ was exhibited at St. Peter's. On this account a great part of the then existing Christians performed this said journey, both men and women, from distant and diverse countries, both far and near. And it was the most wonderful thing that ever was, that, during a whole year there were in Rome, besides the people of the city, two hundred thousand pilgrims, without including those on the road going and coming; and all were well furnished and satisfied with all manner of food, as well the houses as the persons; and this I can witness, who was there present, and saw much accrued to the Church from the offerings of the pilgrims, and all the Roman people became rich through the commerce occasioned by them. I, being at the Holy City of Rome, on account of this blessed pilgrimage, observing the magnificent and ancient things there, and knowing the great achievements and history of the Romans, written by Sallust, Lucan, Titus Livius, Valerius, Paul Orosius, and other masters of history, who narrated small occurrences as well as great, and even those that happened at the extremities of the universal world, to give note and example to those to come after them; and although, with regard to their style and order, I was not a disciple worthy the doing so great a work, yet, considering our city of Florence, the daughter and creature of Rome, which had achieved high things in her ascent, and was now, like Rome, on her decline, it appeared to me to be right to collect in this volume a new Chronicle of all the deeds and ordinances of

that city; and as much as was in me to seek, find, and narrate past, present, and future times, while it shall please God. So that I shall recount at large the deeds of the Florentines, and all other famous events of the universal world, as far as I can learn, God giving me grace, in hope of which I began this enterprize, considering the poverty of my talent, on which I should not have dared rely. And thus, through the grace of Christ, having returned from Rome in his year 1300, I began to compile this book, in reverence to God and the blessed Messer Santo John, in commendation of the city of Florence."—(Book VIII. Cap. 36.)

Villani begins his history with the Tower of Babel and the confusion of tongues; and then relates how king Atalante, the fifth in descent from Japhet, the son of Noah, colonized in Italy and built the town of Fiesole. He commemorates the siege of Troy, and how Antenor and the younger Priam came over to Italy, and severally built the towns of Padua and Venice; and that the descendants of the latter became kings of Germany and France. The history of Rome is slightly skimmed over, and he mentions that, after the discovery of Catiline's plot, several of the conspirators entrenched themselves in Fiesole, which was accordingly besieged by the following leaders: "Count Rainaldo, Cicero, Tiberinus, Machrimus, Albinus, Cn. Pompeius, Cæsar Camertinus, Count Seggio, Tudertino, that is of the Soli, who was with Julius Cæsar and his army." Under such an assemblage of generals Fiesole fell, and Florence arose from its ruins.

But these strange anachronisms and unfounded fables, though made amusing by the gravity and minuteness of Villani, are not the qualities which constitute his principal merit. He grows more interesting and more authentic as he advances from the creation of the world to his own times;

and nine-tenths of his book are occupied by the narration of events which occurred during the course of his own life. He describes characters in the style of one well read in human nature, and who, by living at a period when civil discord awakened the most violent passions and disclosed the workings of the heart carefully veiled for our politer eyes, and by mingling in the game where each the smallest individual risked fortune, family and life,—had penetrated into every diversity of character. His anecdotes make us familiarly acquainted with the private habits and ways of thinking of those times; his accounts of civil commotions and wars are worthy of that which he was—an eye-witness. It is true, that in the midst of grave matter of fact, the strangest stories will force their way. I own that these digressions are to me by no means the least pleasant part of his work, and as they are disjoined from the rest of his history, they by no means injure his character of an exact historian, which stands high on all matters appertaining to Italy and his immediate times. I confess that while reading a spirited narration of the Battle of the Arbia, or the murder of Buondelmonti and the rise of parties in Florence, or any other historic fact of the kind, I come with pleasure to a chapter entitled—"How the Tartars first left the mountains where Alexander the Great had confined them," and read under that head the following wild and poetic story:—

"In the year of Christ 1202, the people called Tartars came out from the mountains of Gog and Magog, called in Latin the mountains of Belgen. This people are said to have descended from that tribe of Israel which the great Alexander, king of Greece, who conquered all the world, shut up in these mountains, on account of their wicked life *(per loro brutta vita)* that they might not mix with the other gene-

rations. And through their cowardice and vain credulity, they remained shut up from the time of Alexander until this period, believing that the army of this king still surrounded them. For he, with wonderful mechanism, commanded immense trumpets to be made, and placed on the mountains, which every wind caused to sound and trumpet forth with a great noise. Afterwards, it is said, that owls built their nests in the mouths of those trumpets, which put an end to the artifice by stopping the sound: and on this account the Tartars have owls in great reverence, and their principal lords wear the feathers of owls, by way of ornament, in their caps, in memory that they caused to cease the sound of these trumpets. For this circumstance reassured the people, who lived in the manner of animals, and were of innumerable numbers; so certain among them passed the mountains and finding no enemy on their summits, but only this vain sound of these tower-exalted trumpets, they descended to the plains of India, which were fertile, fruitful, and of a mild climate; and returning and reporting this news to their families and the rest of the people, they assembled together, and made, through divine intervention, a poor blacksmith called Cangius their general and lord. And when he was made lord, he received the name of "Cane," that is the emperor in their language. He was a valourous and wise man; and through his wisdom and valour he divided the people into tens, hundreds, and thousands, under captains fitted to the command. And first, he ordered all his principal subjects to kill their first-born sons, and when he found himself obeyed in this, he issued his command to his people, entered India, vanquished Prester John, and conquered all his country." (Book V. Cap. 27.)

Villani was a Guelph, that is, an adherent to the papal and republican party. He repeats all the calumnies that

had been invented to prejudice the Italians against the house of Swabia, and he appears to believe the miracles and dreams of various pontiffs with catholic credulity. One of his principal heroes is Charles d'Anjou, a cruel, faithless, but heroic tyrant; and it is thus that he paints his character with the partiality of a partizan, and the lively touches of one personally acquainted with the character whom he hands down to posterity:—

"Charles was wise and prudent, brave in arms, severe, and much feared and redoubted by all the kings in the world; magnanimous, and of high spirit to carry on any great enterprize, firm in adversity, secure and veracious in keeping his promises, speaking little and doing much. He seldom laughed, if ever; chaste as a monk, and catholicly religious. As a judge he was merciless, and of ferocious aspect. He was tall and strongly made, of an olive complexion, with a large nose; and he appeared far more majestic than any other lord. He watched much, and slept little; using to say, that sleeping was so much time lost. He was generous as a knight of arms, but desirous of acquiring lands, dominion, and wealth, whence he might provide for his enterprizes and wars. He never took delight in *uomini di corte*, courtiers and games." (Book VII. Cap 1.)

History does not present in any of her pages so strong a contrast as that between the characters of the rivals for the crown of Naples. Manfred was the natural son of Frederic, the last Emperor of the house of Swabia. Refusing to bow the neck to the yoke of papal tyranny, three successive Pontiffs pursued him with unbending malignity and hatred; they at length bestowed his kingdom upon Charles d'Anjou, and invited him over to conquer it. It is hardly fair to give the character of the intrepid, noble, and unfortunate Manfred in the words of his enemy, for such Villani was.' But the

actions of these two princes are a comment upon the words of the historian, and enable us to form an impartial opinion. "This same king Manfred," says Villani, "was the son of a beautiful woman belonging to the Marquess Lancia of Lombardy, to whom the Emperor was attached. He was a handsome man like his father, but dissolute and luxurious in the extreme; he was a musician, a singer, and was pleased to see buffoons and *uomini di corte;* he kept mistresses, and always dressed in green. He was generous and courteous, and of noble demeanour, so that he was much beloved and followed; but his life was epicurean; scarcely believing in God *(for God read the Pope)* or his saints; he was an enemy of holy church and of priests; was a greater confiscator of church riches than his father: he was rich, through the treasure left by the Emperor and by king Conrad, and because his kingdom was fruitful and abundant. And while he lived at war with the church, he rendered his kingdom prosperous, and so rose to great dominion and riches by sea and land. He had for wife the daughter of the despot of Romania (the Emperor of Constantinople) by whom he had several children."—(Book VIth, Cap. 47.)

The great crime of Manfred consisted in his forming a small army of Saracens, whom he used to defend himself against his papal enemies, who were devotedly attached to him, and by whose means he had risen to dominion again, after he had been reduced to flight and impotence. Even in the above garbled account of the noblest king and the most accomplished cavalier that ever existed, we may trace his excellencies. His kingdom prosperous, himself adored by his subjects, we may excuse his love for courtly amusements; and beloved by his wife, we may doubt the excess of less pardonable faults. The actions of Charles are a long list of crimes. He involved Naples in a bloody war, and shewed no mercy to the van-

quished. After the death of Manfred, who happily for himself died on the field of battle, his wife Sibilla, whose high birth Villani has commemorated, and her children, were imprisoned in Calabria, and there, as this partial historian shortly narrates *(da Carlo fatto morire)* put to death by Charles. Every noble partisan of Manfred lost his life on the scaffold, and the line of unfortunate victims was closed by the young and gallant Coradino. His newly conquered kingdom was driven to desperation by his extortions and cruelties, and the Sicilian vespers at length delivered that miserable island from his merciless gripe. Such was the catholicly religious Charles.

But to return to Villani: although a violent party-man, he dwells with fond regret on the time when there was neither Guelph nor Ghibeline in Florence. "It is from these names," he says "that great evil and ruin fell upon our city, as mention will hereafter be made: and we may well believe, that it will never have an end, if God does not terminate it." This (as it were) figure of speech, of recurring to the good old times, is common to all recorders of the past, from Homer downwards. But it is more natural in Villani, since he himself beheld the festive meetings of his countrymen changed into murderous brawls, and after having seen all that claimed the common name of Florentines live in brotherly amity, he witnessed the irremediable rent which divided them into Guelph and Ghibeline, the palaces of Florence razed through the violence of party, and the estates of the vanquished confiscated. Examples of the rich and happy becoming poor and wretched were familiar to him, and the further sting was added, that these calamities were not occasioned by what may be called the natural evils of life—neither by pestilence, war, nor famine—but by civil discord, originating in words only, and where the wisest and best, branded by a

name, became the victims of the new-born hatred of former friends.

After the manner of Livy, Villani delights to tell of monsters, of comets, of meteors, and portents. In one place he tells us how "Philip le Bel, king of France, caused to be made prisoners all the Italians in that kingdom, under pretence of taking usurers; but at the same time he caused to be taken, and liberated only upon ransom, many honest merchants as usurers; for this he was much blamed and hated, and henceforward the kingdom of France went declining, falling, and coming from bad to worse."

Perhaps the best idea that I can present of the general nature of this book, will be in giving some of the heads of the chapters in the order they occur. As for instance:—(Book VIII. Cap. 12.) "How the nobles of the city of Florence took arms to destroy and oppress the popular government." (Cap. 13.) "How Pope Boniface made peace between king Charles, and the Florentines, and Don Giamo of Arragon, king of Sicily." (Cap. 14.) "How the Guelph party was driven out of Genoa." (Cap. 15.) "Of certain novelties and changes that arrived among the lords of Tartary." (Book IX. Cap. 291.) "How a new small money was coined at Florence." (Cap. 292.) "Of a miraculous fall of snow in Tuscany." (Cap. 293.) "How Castruccio endeavoured to betray Florence." (Cap. 294.) "How there was accord between some of the elected lords in Germany." (Cap. 295.) "How Castruccio, lord of Lucca, possessed himself of the city of Pistria, by means of treason." (Cap. 296.) "How Messer Raimondo of Cardona came to Florence, as Captain of War." (Cap. 297.) "How the Duke of Calabria, with a great army, made a descent upon the Island of Sicily." (Cap. 298.) "Of signs that appeared in the air, which," as Villani says, "made all who saw them, dread future danger and troubles in the city."

I will conclude my extracts and remarks by his chapter upon the death, character, and writings of Dante.

Book IX. Of the Poet Dante, and how he died. (Cap. 135.)

"In this same year (1321) in the month of July, Dante died at the city of Ravenna, in Romagna, having returned from an embassy to Venice in the service of the lords of Polenta, with whom he lived. He was buried with great honour, in the guise of poet and great philosopher, at Ravenna, before the gate of the principal church. He died, an exile from the commune of Florence, at the age of about fifty-six years. This Dante was an antient and honourable citizen of Florence, of the divison of the gate of San Piero. His exile from Florence was thus occasioned. When Messer Carlo di Valois, of the house of France, came to Florence in the year 1301, and exiled the *Bianchi (a party so called)* as we have before related, this same Dante was the highest governor of our city, and of that party, though a Guelph.* And thus, free from guilt, he was driven out with the *Bianchi*, and exiled from Florence, whence he retired to study at Bologna, and afterwards to Paris, and other parts of the world. He was very learned in almost every science, though a layman; he was a great poet, a philosopher, and a perfect rhetorician, as well in writing, either prose or verse, as in speaking. He was

* Villani, who was townsman and contemporary of Dante, appears to have also been his friend, and to wish to reinstate him in the good graces of the Florentines, by saying that he was a Guelph. Dante, as a reasonable man, endeavoured to reconcile the absurd differences of all parties, but he was not a Guelph. His discrepancy of opinion from Villani may be gathered from the opposite judgments that they pass on the same persons. The poet prepares a choice place of torture for Boniface VIII in his dreary hell, while Villani exalts him as a saint. Dante rails at all the Popes; Villani respects them all. Dante sweetly and pathetically dwells on the wrongs and virtues of Manfred, and places him on the high road to heaven. Villani vituperates him, and consigns him as a *scomunicato* to the devil.

the noblest maker of verses, with the finest style, that had ever been in our language until hi, own time and later. He wrote in his youth the beautiful book of the " New Life of Love," and afterwards, when in exile, he wrote twenty excellent moral and amatory *canzoni*. Among other things he wrote three noble epistles; one of which he sent to the government of Florence, mourning his banishment as an innocent man; the other he sent to the Emperor Henry (of Luxembourg) when he was at the siege of Brescia, reprehending his abiding there, with almost the foreknowledge of a prophet: the third was to the Italian Cardinals during the vacancy after Pope Clement, advising them to accord in the election of an Italian Pope, all in Latin, in magnificent language, with excellent sentences and authorities, the which were much praised by the holy men who understood them. He wrote also the *Comedia*, where, in elegant verse, with great and subtle questions of morality, natural philosophy, astrology, philosophy and theology, and with beautiful and new metaphors and similes, he composed an hundred chapters or cantos, of having been in Hell, Purgatory, and Paradise, in as noble a manner as it is possible to have done. But in this discourse, whoever is of a penetrating understanding may well see and comprehend that he greatly loves in that drama to dispute and vituperate, after the manner of poets, perhaps in some places more than is decent. Probably his exile also made him write his Treatise on Monarchy,* where in excellent Latin he treats of the offices of Pope and Emperor. He

* I must again remark, that Dante and Villani must have been personal friends, or that reverence for the poet's talent made the latter seek for every circumstance that might excuse the opinions of Dante to the Florentines, who were then all Guelphs, and to whom the Treatise on Monarchy was peculiarly obnoxious.

began a comment upon fourteen of his before-mentioned moral *canzoni*, which, on account of his death, he did not finish; and only three were found, the which, from what we see, would have been a great, beautiful, subtle, and eminent work. He also wrote a book entitled, "of Vulgar Eloquence"—which, he says, was to consist of four books, but only two are found, probably on account of his unexpected death, where, in strong and elegant Latin, he reprobates all vernacular Italian. This Dante, on account of his knowledge, was somewhat presumptuous, satirical, and contemptuous. He was uncourteous, as it were, after the manner of philosophers; nor did he well know how to converse with laymen. But on account of his other virtues, his science, and his merit as a citizen, it appeared just to give him perpetual memo- in this our Chronicle, although his great works left in writing bestow on him a true testimony, and an honourable fame on our city."

PULPIT ORATORY.

DR. CHALMERS AND MR. IRVING.

The Scotch at present seem to bear the bell, and to have "got the start of the majestic world." They boast of the greatest novelists, the greatest preachers, the greatest philanthropists, and the greatest blackguards in the world. Sir Walter Scott stands at the head of these for Scotch humour, Dr. Chalmers for Scotch logic, Mr. Owen for Scotch Utopianism, and Mr. Blackwood for Scotch impudence. Unrivalled four! Nay, here is Mr. Irving, who threatens to make a fifth, and *stultify* all our London orators, from "kingly Kensington" to Blackwall! Who has not heard of him? Who does not go to hear him? You can scarcely move along for the coronet-coaches that besiege the entrance to the Caledonian chapel in Hatton-garden; and when, after a prodigious squeeze, you get in so as to have standing-room, you see in the same undistinguished crowd Brougham and Mackintosh, Mr. Peel and Lord Liverpool, Lord Landsdown and Mr. Coleridge. Mr. Canning and Mr. Hone are pew fellows, Mr. Waithman frowns stern applause, and Mr. Alderman Wood does the honours of the Meeting! The lamb lies down with the lion, and the Millennium seems to be anticipated in the Caledonian chapel, under the new Scotch preacher. Lords, ladies, sceptics, fanatics, join in approbation,—some admire the doctrine, others the sound, some the picturesque appearance of the

orator, others the grace of action, some the ingenuity of the argument, others the beauty of the style or the bursts of passion, some even go so far as to patronize a certain *brackish* infusion of the Scottish dialect, and a slight defect of vision. Lady Bluemount declares it to be only inferior to the EXCURSION in imagination, and Mr. Botherby cries—"Good, good!" The "Talking Potato"* and Mr. Theodore Flash have not yet been.

Mr. Irving appears to us the most accomplished barbarian, and the least offensive and most dashing clerical holder-forth we remember to have seen. He puts us in

* Some years ago, a periodical paper was published in London, under the title of the PIC-NIC. It was got up under the auspices of a Mr. Fulke Greville, and several writers of that day contributed to it, among whom were Mr. Horace Smith, Mr. Dubois, Mr. Prince Hoare, Mr. Cumberland, and others. On some dispute arising between the proprietor and the gentlemen-contributors on the subject of an advance in the remuneration for articles, Mr. Fulke Greville grew heroic, and said, "I have got a young fellow just come from Ireland, who will undertake to do the whole, verse and prose, politics and scandal, for two guineas a week, and if you will come and sup with me to-morrow night, you shall see him, and judge whether I am not right in closing with him." Accordingly, they met the next evening, and the WRITER OF ALL WORK was introduced. He began to make a display of his native ignorance and impudence on all subjects immediately, and no one else had occasion to say any thing. When he was gone, Mr. Cumberland exclaimed, "A talking potato, by God!" The talking potato was Mr. Croker, of the Admiralty. Our adventurer shortly, however, returned to his own country, and passing accidentally through a town where they were in want of a ministerial candidate at an Election, the gentleman of modest assurance offered himself, and succeeded. "They wanted a Jack-pudding," said the father of the hopeful youth, "and so they chose my son." The case of the Duke of York and Mrs. Clarke soon after came on, and Mr. Croker, who is a dabbler in dirt, and an adept in love-letters, rose from the affair Secretary to the Admiralty, and the very "rose and expectancy of the fair State."

mind of the first man, Adam, if Adam had but been a Scotchman, and had had coal black hair. He seems to stand up in the integrity of his composition, to begin a new race of practising believers, to give a new impulse to the Christian religion, to regenerate the fallen and degenerate race of man. You would say he had been turned out of the hands of Nature and the Schools a perfect piece of workmanship. See him in the street, he has the air, the free-swing, the *bolt upright* figure of an Indian savage, or a northern borderer dressed in canonicals: set him in the pulpit, and he is armed with all the topics, a master of fence, the pupil of Dr. Chalmers! In action he has been compared to Kean; in the union of external and intellectual advantages, we might start a parallel for him in the admirable Chrichton. He stands before Haydon's picture of Lazarus, and says, "Look at me!" He crosses Piccadilly, and clears Bond-street of its beaux! Rob Roy, Macbriar is come again. We saw him stretched on a bench at the Black Bull in Edinburgh,—we met him again at a thirteen-penny ordinary in London, in the same attitude, and said, without knowing his calling, or his ghostly parts, "That is the man for a fair saint." We swear it by

> "His foot mercurial; his martial thigh;
> The brawns of Hercules, but his jovial face!"

Aye, there we stop like Imogen—there is a want of expression in it. "The iron has not entered his soul." He has not dared to feel but in trammels and in dread. He has read Werter but to criticise him; Rousseau, but to steel himself against him; Shakespear, but to quote him; Milton, but to round his periods. Pleasure, fancy, humanity, are syrens that he repels and keeps at arms-length; and hence his features are hardened, and have a barbaric crust upon them. They are

not steeped in the expression of Titian or Raphael; but they would do for Spagnoletti to paint, and his dark profile and matted locks have something of the grave commanding appearance of Leonardo da Vinci's massive portraits.

Dr. Chalmers is not so good-looking a man as Mr. Irving; he wants the same vigour and spirit. His face is dead and clammy, cold, pale, bloodless, passionless, and there is a glazed look of insincerity about the eyes, uninformed, uninspired from within. His voice is broken, harsh, and creaking, while Mr. Irving's is flowing and silvery: his Scotch accent and pronunciation are a terrible infliction on the *uncultivated* ear. His "Whech observation I *oo*rge upon you my frinds and bre*e*thren" desolates and lays waste all the humanities. He grinds out his sentences between his teeth, and catches at truth with his fists, as a monkey catches an apple or a stick thrown at him with his paws. He seems by his action and his utterance to say to difficulties, "Come, let me clutch thee," and having got them in his grasp, tears and rends them in pieces as a dog tears an old rag to tatters or mumbles a stone that is flung in his way. Dr. Chalmers engages attention and secures sympathy solely by the intensity of his own purpose: there is neither eloquence nor wisdom, neither imagination nor feeling, neither the pomp of sound nor grace nor solemnity of manner about him, but he is in earnest, and eager in pursuit of his argument, and arrests the eye and ear of his congregation by this alone. He dashes headforemost into the briars and thorns of controversy, and drags you along with him whether you will or no, and your only chance is to push on and get out of them as well as you can, though dreadfully scratched and almost blinded. He involves you in a labyrinth, and you are anxious to escape from it: you have to pass through many a dark, subterranean cavern with him in his theological ferry-boat, and

are glad enough to get out on the other side, with the help of Scotch logic for oars, and Scotch rhetoric for sails! You hear no *home* truths, nothing that touches the heart, or swells or expands the soul; there is no tide of eloquence lifting you to Heaven, or wafting you from Indus to the Pole.—No, you are detained in a canal, with a great number of *locks* in it.—You make way by virtue of standing still, your will is irritated, and impelled forward by stoppages—you are puzzled into sympathy, pulled into admiration, tired into patience! The preacher starts a difficulty, of which you had no notion before, and you stare to see how he will answer it. He first makes you uneasy, sceptical, sensible of your helplessness and dependence upon his superior sagacity and recondite learning, and proportionably thankful for the relief he affords you in the unpleasant dilemma to which you have been reduced. It is like proposing a riddle, and then, after playing with the curiosity and impatience of the company for some time, giving the solution, which nobody else has the wit to find out. We never saw fuller attendances or more profound attention than at the Tron Church in Glasgow—it was like a sea of eyes, a swarm of heads, gaping for mysteries, and staring for elucidations—it was not the sublime or beautiful; the secret was that which has been here explained, a desire to get rid of the difficult, the disagreeable, the dry, and the discordant matter that had been conjured up in the imagination. Dr. Chalmers, then, succeeds by the force of sophistry and casuistry, in our humble judgment. Riddles (of which we spoke just now) are generally traditional: those that Dr. Chalmers unfolds from the pulpit, are of his own invention, or at least promulgation. He started an objection to the Christian religion (founded on its supposed inconsistency with the Newtonian philosophy) which objection had never been noticed in books, on pur-

pose that he might answer it. "Well," said a Scotchman, "and if the answer was a good one, was he not right?" "No, assuredly," we should answer, "for there is no faith so firm as that which has never been called in question." The answer could only satisfy those who had been unsettled by the question; and there would be many who would not be convinced by the Doctor's reasoning, however he might plume himself on his success. We suspect that this is looking after a reputation for literary ingenuity and philosophical depth, rather than the peace of consciences or the salvation of souls; which, in a Christian minister, is unbecoming, and savours of the Mammon of unrighteousness. We ourselves were staggered by the blow (either then or long before) and still gasp for a reply, notwithstanding Dr. Chalmers's nostrum. Let the reader briefly judge:—The Doctor tells us, it may be said, that the Christian Dispensation supposes that the counsels of God turn upon this world as its center; that there is a heaven above and an earth beneath; and that man is the lord of the universe, the only creature made in the divine likeness, and over whom Providence watches, and to whom revelations are given, and an inheritance everlasting. This agrees with the cosmogony of Moses, which makes the earth the center of all things, and the sun, moon, and stars, little shining spots like silver sixpences, moving round it. But it does not so well agree with Newton's *Principia* (we state Dr. Chalmers's objection) which supposes the globe we inhabit to be but a point in the immensity of the universe; that ours is but one, and that the most insignificant (perhaps) among innumerable worlds, filled, probably, with created intelligences, rational and fallen souls, that share the eye of God with us, and who require to know that their Redeemer liveth. We alone (it would appear) cannot pretend to monopolize heaven or hell: there are other contin-

gent candidates besides us. Jacob's dream was poetical and natural, while the earth was supposed to be a flat surface and the blue sky hung over it, to which angels might ascend by a ladder, and the face of God be seen at the top, as his lofty and unchangeable abode; but this beautiful episode hardly accords with the Antipodes. Sir Isaac turned the world upon its back, and divided heaven from itself, and removed it far from every one of us. As we thought the universe turned round the earth as its pivot, so religion turned round man as its center, as the sole, important, moral and accountable agent in existence. But there are other worlds revolving in infinite space, to which this is a speck. Are they all desert, worthless? Were they made for us? Have they no especial dispensations of life and light? Have we alone a God, a Saviour, revealed to us? Is religion triumphant only here, or is it itinerant through each? It can hardly seem that we alone have occupied the thoughts or been the sole objects of the plans of infinite wisdom from eternity—that our life, resurrection, and judgment to come, are the whole history of a wide-seeing Providence, or the loftiest events in the grand drama of the universe, which was got up as a theatre only for us to perform our petty parts in, and then to be cast, most of us, into hell fire? Dr. Chalmers's Astronomical Discourses indeed may be said to dwarf his mighty subject, and make mankind a very Lilliputian race of beings, which this Gulliver in vain dandles in the hard, broad, brawny hand of school divinity, and tries to lift into their bigotted self-sufficiency and exclusive importance again. How does he answer his own objection, and turn the tables on himself—how reverse this pitiful, diminished perspective, and aggrandise us in our own estimation once more as undoubted heirs of heaven or of hell—the sole favoured or reprobated sons of God? Why, his answer is this—that the

microscope has done as much to lift man in the scale of being, and to enlarge the bounds of this atom the earth, as the telescope has done to circumscribe and lessen it; that there are infinite gradations BELOW man, worlds within worlds, as there are degrees of being above, and stars and suns blazing round each other; that, for what we know, a speck, a lucid drop circulating in a flea's back, may be another habitable globe like this!—And has that, too, a revelation of its own, an avenging God, and a Christ crucified? Does every particle in a flea's back contain a Mosaic dispensation, a Popish and a Protestant religion? Has it its Tron church and its Caledonian chapel, and Dr. Chalmers's Discourses and Mr. Irving's Orations in little? This does not seem to obviate the difficulty, but to increase it a million-fold. It is his objection and his answer to it, not ours: if blasphemy, it is his; and, if orthodoxy, he is entitled to all the credit of it. But his whole scheme shows how impossible it is to reconcile the faith delivered to the saints with the subtleties and intricacies of metaphysics. It displays more pride of intellect than simplicity of heart, is an insult equally on the understandings or prejudices of men, and could only have been hit upon by that personification and abstraction of cross-purposes, a Scotch metaphysical divine. In his general preaching, Dr. Chalmers is a great casuist, and a very indifferent moralist. He states the *pros* and *cons* of every question with extreme pertinacity, and often "spins the thread of his verbosity finer than the staple of his argument." He assigns possible reasons, not practical motives, for conduct; and vindicates the ways of God, and his own interpretation of the Scriptures, to the head, not to the heart. The old school-divines set this practice afoot; for being accustomed to hear the secrets of confession, and to salve the tender consciences of the great and powerful, they had to bandy all sorts of questions about;

and if they could find out "a loop or peg to hang a doubt on," were well rewarded for their trouble; they were constantly reduced to their shifts, and forced to go on the forlorn hope of morality by the ticklish cases referred to them for arbitration; and when they had exhausted the resources of humanity and natural sentiment, endeavoured to find new topics within the range of abstract reason and possibility. Dr. Chalmers's reasoning is as unlike as possible to a chapter in the Gospels: but he may do very well to comment on the Apocalypse or an Epistle of St. Paul's. We do not approve of this method of carving out excuses or defences of doctrinal points from the dry parchment of the understanding or the cobwebs of the brain. Whatever sets or leaves the dogmas of religion at variance with the dictates of the heart, hardens the last, and lends no advantage to the first.

Mr. Irving is a more amiable moralist, and a more practical reasoner. He throws a glancing, pleasing light over the gloomy ground of Calvinism. There is something humane in his appeals, striking in his apostrophes, graceful in his action, soothing in the tones of his voice. He is not affected and theatrical; neither is he deeply impassioned or overpowering from the simple majesty of his subject. He is above common-place both in fancy and argument; yet he can hardly rank as a poet or philosopher. He is a modernised covenanter, a sceptical fanatic. We do not feel exactly on sure ground with him—we scarcely know whether he preaches Christ crucified, or himself. His pulpit style has a resemblance to the *florid gothic*. We are a little *mystified* when a man with one hand brings us all the nice distinctions and air-drawn speculations of modern unbelievers, and arms the other with "fire hot from Hell," —when St. Paul and Jeremy Bentham, the Evangelists and the Sorrows of Werter, Seneca, Shakespear, the author of

Caleb Williams and the Political Justice, are mingled together in the same passage, and quoted in the same breath, however eloquent that breath may be. We see Mr. Irving smile with decent scorn at this remark, and launch one more thunderbolt at the critics. He is quite welcome, and we should be proud of his notice. In the discourses he has lately delivered, and which have drawn crowds to admire them, he has laboured to describe the Sensual Man, the Intellectual Man, the Moral Man, and the Spiritual Man; and has sacrificed the three first at the shrine of the last. He gave certainly a terrific picture of the death-bed of the Sensual Man—a scene where few shine—but it is a good subject for oratory, and he made the most of it. He described the Poet well, walking by the mountain side, in the eye of nature—yet oppressed, panting rather than satisfied, with beauty and sublimity. Neither Fame nor Genius, it is most true, are all-sufficient to the mind of man! He made a fair hit at the Philosophers; first, at the Political Economist, who draws a circle round man, gives him so many feet of earth to stand upon, and there leaves him to starve in all his nobler parts and faculties: next, at the Great Jurisconsult, who carves out a mosaic work of motives for him, cold, hard, and dry, and expects him to move mechanically in right lines, squares, and parallelograms, drills him into perfection, and screws him into utility. He then fell foul of the Moralist and Sentimentalist, weighed him in the balance and found him wanting—deficient in clearness of sight to discern good, in strength of hand and purpose to seize upon it when discerned. But Religion comes at last to the aid of the Spiritual Man, couches the blind sight, and braces the paralytic limb; the Lord of Hosts is in the field, and the battle is won, his countenance pours light into our souls,

and his hand stretched out imparts strength to us, by which we tower to our native skies! In treating of this subject, Mr. Irving introduced several powerful images and reflections, to show how feeble moral and intellectual motives are to contend with the allurements of sense and the example of the world. Reason alone, he said, was no more able to stem the tide of prejudice and fashion, than the swimmer with his single arm (here he used an appropriate and spirited gesture, which reminded us of the description of the heroic action of the swimmer in Sir Philip Sidney's Arcadia) is able to oppose the raging torrent, as the voice of conscience was only heard in the tumultuous scenes of life like the faint cry of the sea-bird in the wide world of waters. He drew an animated but mortifying sketch of the progress of the Patriot and Politician, weaned by degrees from his attachment to young Liberty to hug old Corruption; and showed (strikingly enough) that this change from youthful ardour to a hoary, heartless old age of selfishness and ridicule (there were several Members of the Honourable House present) was not owing to increased wisdom or strength of sight, but to faltering resolution and weakness of hand, that could no longer hold out against the bribes, the snares, and gilded chains prepared for it. The romantic Tyro was right and free, the callous Courtier was a slave and self-conceited. All this was true; it was honest, downright, and well put. There was no cant in it, as far as regards the unequal odds and the hard battle that reason has to fight with pleasure, or ambition, or interest, or other antagonist motives. But does the objection apply to morality solely, or has not religion its share in it? Man is not what he ought to be—Granted; but is he not different from this ideal standard, in spite of religion as well as of morality? Is not the religious man often a slave to power,

the victim of pleasure, the thrall of avarice, hard of heart, a sensual hypocrite, cunning, mercenary, miserable? If it be said that the really religious man is none of these, neither is the truly moral man. Real morality, as well as vital christianity, implies right conduct and consistent principle. But the question simply at issue is, whether the profession or the belief of sound moral opinions implies these; and it certainly does it no more than the profession or belief of orthodox religious opinions does. The conviction of the good or ill consequences of our actions in this life does not absolutely conform the will of the desires to good; neither does the apprehension of future rewards or punishments produce this effect completely or necessarily. The candidate for Heaven is a back-slider; the dread of eternal torments makes but a temporary impression on the mind. This is not a reason, in our judgment, for neglecting or giving up in despair the motives of religion or morality, but for strengthening and cultivating both. With Mr. Irving, it is a triumphant and unanswerable ground for discarding and denouncing morality, and for exalting religion, as the sovereign cure for all wounds, as the *thaumaturgos*, or wonder-worker, in the reform of mankind! We are at a loss to understand how this exclusive and somewhat intolerant view of the subject is reconcileable with sound reason or with history. Religion is no new experiment now first making on mankind; we live in the nineteenth century of the Christian æra; it is not as if we lived in the age of apostles, when we might (from novelty and inexperience of the intended dispensations of Providence) expect the earth to wear a new face, and darkness suddenly to flee away before the light of the gospel: nor do we apprehend that Mr. Irving is one of those who believe with Mr. Croly, that the millennium actually commenced with the battle of

Waterloo; that event seems as far off, to all outward appearance, as it was two thousand years ago. What does this make against the doctrines of christianity? Nothing; if, as far as they are implanted and take root, they bear fruit accordingly, notwithstanding the repugnance and thanklessness of the soil. Why then is Mr. Irving so hard upon the labours of philosophers, moralists, and men of letters, because they do not do all their work at once? Bishop Butler indeed wrote a most able and learned quarto volume, to prove that the slow growth and imperfect influence of christianity was a proof of its divine origin, and that in this respect we had a right to look for a direct *analogy* between the operations of the world of grace and nature, both proceeding as they did from the same Almighty hands! Our deservedly popular preacher has, however, an answer to what we have here stated: he says, "the time MUST and WILL shortly come!" We never contradict prophecies; we only speak to facts. In addressing himself to this point, Mr. Irving made a spirited digression to the Missionary Societies, and the impending propagation of the Gospel at home and abroad—all obstacles to it would speedily be surmounted:—"The Negro slave was not so enchained but that the Gospel would set him free; the Hottentot was not so benighted but that its light would penetrate to him; the South Sea Islander was not so indolent and voluptuous but that he would rouse himself at its call; neither the cunning of the Italian, nor the superstition of the Spaniard, nor the tameness of the German, nor the levity of the French, nor the buoyancy of the Irish, nor the indomitable pride of the English, nor the *fiery manhood* of the Scotch, would be long able to withstand its all-pervading influence!" We confess, when our Caledonian pastor launched his canoe from the South Sea Isles and landed on European *terra firma*,

taking measure of the vices of each nation that were opposed to the spirit of christianity, we did *prick up* our ears to know what fault he would, in due course of argument, find with his native country—it would go against the grain, no doubt, but still he had undertaken it, and he must speak out—When lo! for some sneaking vice or sordid pettifogging disposition, we have our own "best virtue" palmed upon us as the only failing of the most magnanimous natives of the North—*fiery manhood*, quotha! The cold sweat of rankling malice, hypocrisy, and servility, would be nearer the mark—Eh! Sir Walter? Nay, good Mr. Blackwood, we meant no offence to you! "Fiery manhood" is the Anti-Christian vice or virtue of the Scotch that meets true religion on the borders, and beats her back with suffocating breath! Is Christianity still then to be planted like oak timber in Scotland? What will Dr. Chalmers and the other labourers in the vineyard say to this?—"We pause for a reply!" The best and most impressive part of Mr. Irving's discourse (Sunday, the 22nd June) was that, in which he gave a very beautiful account of what Christianity had done, or rather might do, in aid of morality and the regeneration of the spirit of man. It had made "corruption blossom," "annihilated time in the prospect of eternity," and "changed all nature, from a veil hiding the face of God, into a mirror reflecting his power and beneficence." We do not, however, see why in the fervour of his enthusiasm he should affirm "that Jesus Christ had destroyed melody," nor why, by any allowed licence of speech, he should talk of "the mouth of God being muzzled by man." We might not perhaps have noticed this last expression, considering it as a slip of the tongue; but Mr. Irving preaches from written notes, and his style is, on the whole, polished and ambitious. We can conceive of a deeper strain of argument, of a more

powerful and overwhelming flood of eloquence; but altogether we deem him an able and attractive expounder of Holy Writ; and farther, we believe him to be an honest man. We suspect there is a radical "taint in him," and that Mr. Canning will be advised to withdraw himself from the congregation. His strokes aimed at iniquity in high places are bold, unsparing, and repeated. We would however suggest to him the propriety of containing his indignation at the advancement of the secular priesthood by "the powers that be;" it is a thing of course, and his impatience of their elevation may be invidiously construed into a jealousy of the spoil. When we compare Mr. Irving with some other preachers that we have heard, and particularly with that crawling sycophant Daniel Wilson (who tendered his gratuitous submission to Nero the other day in the excess of his loyalty to George IV.) we are sorry that we have not been able to make our tribute of approbation unqualified as it is cordial, and to stifle *their* venal breath with the applauses bestowed upon *him*. "Oh! for an *eulogy* to kill" all such with!

[*The following has also* lost *its way to us. We take it in as a foundling, but without adopting all its sentiments.*]

MR. IRVING, THE QUACK-PREACHER.

We have always set our faces against cant, quackery, and imposture, in every shape; but we think, of all places, the pulpit should be sacred from these. It ought to be the chosen retreat of simplicity, gravity, and decorum. What then must be the feelings of every well-wisher to religion and good order, who witnesses the disgraceful scenes that

are weekly acting at the Caledonian Chapel—the place itself resembling a booth at a fair, and the pulpit made into a stage for a tall, raw-boned, hard-featured, impudent Scotch quack to play off his ambiguous person and obscene antics upon? It is difficult to analyze Mr. Irving's figure. His hair is black and matted like a mane, his beard blue and *singed*; and he verges in his general appearance to the *simious* tribe, but of the largest species. To hear this person, so qualified, bandy Scotch dialectics, and "sweet religion make a rhapsody of words," the great, the learned, and the fair, leering dowagers, and faded (or fading) blue stockings, throng twice every Lord's Day—for what?—to admire indecency, blasphemy, and sedition, twanged through the nose, and to be told that he (Mr. Irving) has come up from the banks of the Esk with huge, hasty strides to *introduce God Almighty in London*, and to prop the falling throne of Heaven with his raised right arm! This is too much, though Mr. Irving is six feet three inches high, and a Scotchman. One would think that the Christian and Protestant religion was of too old a standing to be put into leading-strings now, and that the fashionable and the fair will hardly consent to be baptised by this new St. John in the kennels of Saffron-hill and the mud of Fleet-ditch. Yet, when one looks at the half-saint, half-savage, it *does* seem as if society was to begin again; and all our pre-established notions were confounded by the cross-fire of his double vision. A portentous cast in the right eye is one of the engines with which the orator supports his quackery—it is not a mote, but a beam—which he levels like a battering-ram at my Lord Liverpool *(proh pudor!)* accompanied with a taunt on his Majesty's Ministers and Government—which glances off from the gentle skull of Hone the parodist to Canning's polished forehead, and falls plump on the

shaven crown of Mr. B—— M——, who sits on the steps of the pulpit, with a forlorn attitude and expression, like one of Cibber's celebrated figures. What did Mr. Irving mean, last Sunday, by issuing a Proclamation in the name of the King of Heaven, appointing himself Crier of the Court, beginning with a TO WIT, TO WIT, and ending with damnation to all those who do not go to hear him? He ought to have been hissed like a bad player who leaves his part to foist in fustian of his own. It would not have been borne but in the Scotch accent; and the outrage was carried off by the oddity of the thing. What did he mean by saying, the Sunday before last, that the God of natural religion was like the Great Desert—dry, disagreeable, comfortless, deadly—where no one wished to dwell? No one, we will be bold to say, would venture upon this gross insult to the God of Nature (whom we apprehend to be also the God of Christians) without that strong obliquity of mental vision that can keep natural religion in one eye and revealed religion in the other, look grave on the parent and fulsome on the daughter. Why does Mr. Irving cut and carve and make minced-meat of the attributes of the Almighty, to shock the pious and make the ignorant stare? Why did he, on last Lord's day assert, by an impudent figure, that the God of Mercy was like Alsatia, where the scum of mankind took refuge? Does not this brawny bravo of the Caledonian Kirk want an asylum for himself? Would it not be thought indecent and profane in us to retort such a metaphor, and ask this insane reviler whether, on his theory, the God of Justice is not the God of Newgate, and he himself a volunteer Jack Ketch? We say the indecency, the profaneness would not be in us, but in the original allusion. Mr. Irving will find before long that he cannot play with religion as with cups and balls; that he cannot insult the feelings, the prejudices,

and common sense of mankind with impunity; and that, instead of taking implicit faith and established opinions in pieces, he had better let them remain in their original integrity. With respect to that last figure of his about Alsatia, we beg to say, that the founder of the Christian religion has left a parable behind him about the Prodigal Son, but perhaps this authority may not weigh with the *modern* Saviour of the polite world! In a word, this favourite of the frail votaries of religious theatricals should beware, with his tricks, his finery, and his goodly proportions, of the fate of Apuleius's Golden Ass. Still he might do in America.

THE FIRST CANTO OF THE SQUIRE'S TALE OF CHAUCER, MODERNIZED.

Of Cambus, the great Tartar King,
And his fair flower blossoming;
And what came riding in the hall,
When he held his festival.

At Sarra, in the land of Tartary,
There dwelt a king, the best beneath the sky:
In prime of life he was a valiant man,
And Cambus was he called, the noble Khan.
No where, in all that region, had a crown
Been ever worn with such entire renown.
Hardy he was and wise, true to his word,
He kept his oath as stoutly as his sword.
His presence marked so well the soul within,
Men trembled when they heard his pomp begin;
And yet his ways were gentle and benign;
But there seemed something in his star, divine;
For not more fresh was he for arms anew,
Than sure to beat where'er his trumpets blew;
And therewithal he ever kept a state
So fit to uphold a throne so fortunate,
That there was no where such another man.

This noble king, this Tartar, Cambus Khan,*
Had by the late Queen Elfeta, his wife,
Two sons, named Cambalu and Algarsife,
And a dear daughter, Canace by name,
Whose perfect beauty puts my pen to shame.
If you could see my heart, it were a glass
To show perhaps how fair a thing she was;
But when I speak of her, my tongue appears
To fail me, looking in that face of hers.
'Tis well for me that I regard not those,
Who love what I do, as my natural foes;
Or when I think how dear she is to be
To one that will adorn this history,
And how her heart will love him in return,
My paper, sooner than be touched, should burn:
But she knows nothing of all this at present,
She's only young, and innocent, and pleasant;
And sometimes by her father sits and sighs,
On which he stoops to kiss her gentle-lidded eyes.

And so befel, that when this Khan supreme
Had twenty winters borne his diadem,
He had the feast of his nativity
Cried throughout Sarra, as it was wont to be.
It was in March; and the young lusty year
Came in with such a flood of golden cheer,
That the quick birds, against the sunny sheen,
What for the season and the thickening green,

* This commencement of a fresh paragraph with the second line of a couplet (together with the couplet itself) is retained from the original. It has a fine air of resumption with it, at least to my ear; and is the only good thing which the French have had taste enough to retain from their old poetry.

Sung their affections loudly o'er the fields:
They seemed to feel that they had got them shields
Against the sword of winter, keen and cold.

High is the feast in Sarra, that they hold;
And Cambus, with his royal vestments on,
Sits at a separate table on a throne;
His sons a little lower on the right;
His daughter on the left, a gentle sight;
And then his peers apart from either wall,
Ranged in majestic drapery down the hall.
The galleries on two sides have crowded slants
Of ladies leaning over and gallants;
And o'er the doorway, opposite the king,
The proud musicians blow their shawms and sing.
But to relate the whole of their array
Would keep me from my tale a summer's day;
And so I pass the service and the cost,
The often-silenced noise, the lofty toast,
And the glad symphonies, that leaped to thank
The lustre-giving Lord, whene'er he drank.
Suffice to say that, after the third course,
His vassals, while the sprightly wine's in force,
And the warm music mingles over all,
Bring forth their gifts and set them in the hall;
And so befel, that when the last was set,
And while the king sat thus in his estate,
Hearing his minstrels playing from on high
Before him at his board deliciously,
All on a sudden, ere he was aware,
Through the hall door and the mute wonder there,
There came a stranger on a steed of brass,
And in his hand he held a looking-glass;

Some sparkling ring he wore; and by his side
Without a sheath a cutting sword was tied.
And up he rides unto the royal board:
In all the hall there was not spoke a word:
All wait with busy looks, both young and old,
To hear what wonderous thing they shall be told.

The stranger, who appeared a noble page,
High-bred, and of some twenty years of age,
Dismounted from his horse; and kneeling down,
Bowed low before the face that wore the crown;
Then rose, and reverenced lady, lords, and all,
In order as they sat within the hall,
With such observance, both in speech and air,
That certainly had Roustan's self been there,
Or Hatem Tai with his old courtesy,
Returned to earth to shew what men should be,
He could not have improved a single thing:
Then turning lastly to address the king
Once more, but lightlier than at first, he bowed,
And in a manly voice thus spoke aloud:—

"May the great Cambus to his slave be kind!
My lord, the king of Araby and Ind,
In honour of your feast, this solemn day,
Salutes you in the manner he best may,
And sends you, by a page whom he holds dear,
(His happy but his humble messenger)
This steed of brass; which, in a day and night,
Through the dark half as safely as the light,
O'er sea and land, and with your perfect ease,
Can bear your body wheresoe'er you please.
It matters not if it be foul or fair:
The thing is like a thought, and cuts the air

So smoothly, and so well observes the track,
The man that will may sleep upon his back.
All that the rider needs when he would turn,
Or rise, or take him downwards, you may learn,
If it so please you, when we speak within,
And does but take the writhing of a pin.

"This glass too, which I hold, such is its power,
That if by any chance, an evil hour
Befel your empire or yourself, 'twould show
What men you ought to know of, friend and foe;
And more than this, if any lady's heart
Be set on one that plays her an ill part,
Or is in aught beneath her love and her,
Here she may see his real character,
All his new loves, and all his old pursuits:
His heart shall all be shown her, to the roots.
Therefore, my lord, with your good leave, this glass,
And this green ring, the greenest ever was,
My master, with his greeting, hopes may be
Your excellent daughter's here, my lady Canace.
The virtues of the ring, my lord, are these—
That if a lady loves the flowers and trees,
And birds, and all fair Nature's ministers;
And if she bear this gem within her purse,
Or on her hand, like any other ring,
There's not a fowl that goes upon the wing,
But she shall understand his speech or strain,
And in his own tongue answer him again.
All plants that gardens or that fields produce,
She shall be also skilled in, and their use,
Whether for sweetness or for stanching wounds:
No secret shall she miss, that smiles in balmy grounds.

"Lastly, my lord, this sword has such a might,
That let it meet the veriest fiend in fight,
'Twill carve throughout his armour the first stroke,
Were it as thick as any branched oak:
Nor could the wound be better for the care
Of all the hands and skills that ever were;
And yet, should it so please you, of your grace,
To pass the flat side on the wounded place,
Though it were ready to let out his soul,
The flesh should close again, the man be whole.
Oh heart of hearts! that nobody shall break!
Pardon me, Sir, that thus my leave I take
Even of a sword, and like a lover grieve,
But its own self, unbidden, will not leave
The hand that wields it, though it smote a block
The dullest in the land, or dashed a rock:
And this my master hopes may also be
Acceptable to Tartary's majesty,
With favour for himself, and pardon, Sir, for me."

The Khan, who listened with a gracious eye,
Smiled as he stopp'd, and made a due reply,
Thanking the king, his brother, for the great,
Not gifts, but glories, added to his state,
And saying how it pleased him to have known
So young an honour to his neighbour's throne.
The youth then gave the proper officers
The gifts; who, 'midst the music's bursting airs,
Laid them before the king and Canace,
There as they sate, each in their high degree:
But nothing that they did could move the horse;
Boys might as well have tried their little force
Upon a giant with his armour on:

The brazen thing stood still as any stone.
The stranger hastened to relieve their doubt,
And touched his neck, and led him softly out;
And 'twas a wonder and a joy to see
How well he went, he stept so tenderly.

Great was the press that from all quarters came
To gaze upon this horse of sudden fame;
And many were the struggles to get close,
And touch the mane to try if it hung loose,
Or pat it on the shining flanks, or feel
The muscles in the neck that sternly swell;
But the Khan's officers forbade, and fear
E'en of the horse conspired to keep the circle clear.
High was the creature built, both broad and long,
And with a true proportion to be strong;
And yet so "horsely" and so quick of eye,
As if it were a steed of Araby;
So that from tail to ear there was no part
Nature herself could better, much less art;
Only the people dreaded to perceive
How cold it was, although it seemed alive;
And on all sides the constant wonder was
How it could move, and yet was plainly brass.
Of magic some discours'd, and some of powers
By planets countenanced in kindly hours,
Through which wise men had compassed mighty things
Of natural wit to please illustrious kings;
And some fell talking of the iron chain
That fell from heaven in old king Argoun's reign.
And then they spoke of visions in the air,
And how this creature might have been made there,
Of white lights heard at work, and fiery fights,

Seen in the north on coldest winter nights,
And pale traditions of Pre-Adamites.
Much did the talk run also on the sword,
That harmed and healed, fit gift for sovereign lord.
One said that he had heard or read somewhere,
Of a great southern king, with such a spear;
A chief, who had for mother a sea-fairy,
And slew a terror called the Sagittary.
As to the glass, some thought that it might be
Made by a certain clear congruity
Of angles and reflections, as a pond
Shows not its sides alone, but things beyond;
Iskander set one, like a sleepless eye,
O'er a sea-town, its twin security,
In which the merchant read of storms to come,
Or saw his sunny ships blown softly home.
But most the ring was talked of: every one
Quoting that other ring of Solomon,
Which, wheresoe'er it married, brought a dower
Of wisdom, and upon the hand put power.
A knowledge of the speech of birds was known
To be a gift especially its own,
Which made them certain that this ring of green
Was part of it, perhaps a sort of skin
Shed for some reason as a serpent's is;
And here their reasoning was not much amiss.
The wiser sort pondered and doubted; folly
Determined every thing, or swallowed wholly;
The close and cunning, foolishest of all,
Feared that the whole was diabolical,
And wished the stranger might not prove a knave
Come to find out what liberal monarchs gave,
And ruin with his very dangerous horses

People's eternal safety, and their purses.
For what surpasses vice to comprehend,
It gladly construes to the baser end.
Some wits there were began at last to doubt
Whether the horse could really move about,
And on their fingers' ends were arguing,
When lo! their subject vanished from the ring;
Vanished like lightning; an impatient beast!
But, hark! I hear them rising from the feast.

The dinner done, Cambus arose; and all
Stood up, prepared to follow from the hall:
On either side they bend beneath his eye:
"Before him goeth the loud minstrelsy;"
And thus they pace into a noble room,
Where dance and song were waiting till they come
With throng of waxen lights that shed a thin perfume.
But first the king and his young visitor
Go where the horse was put, and close the door;
And there the Khan learns all about the pin,
And how the horse is hastened or held in,
And turned, and made to rise or to descend,
And all by a mere thumb and finger's end.
The stranger further tells him of a word,
By which the horse, the instant it is heard,
Vanishes with his sparkling shape, like light,
And comes again, whether it be day or night.
"And, Sir," said he, "my master bade me say
The first time I was honoured in this way,
(For on the throne you might prefer, he said,
To wave such speeches from a crowned head)
That one like you were fitter far than he
To ride the elements like a deity,

And with a speed proportioned to your will,
Shine on the good, and fall upon the ill;
For he, too sensual and too satisfied
With what small good lay near him, like a bride,
Was ever but a common king; but you
A king, and a reforming conqueror too." *

Glad is great Cambus, both at this discourse,
And to be master of so strange a horse,
And longs to mount at once, and go and see
His highest mountain tops in Tartary,
Or look upon the Caspian, or appear
Suddenly in Cathay, a sparkling fear.
And any other time he would have gone,
So much he longed to put his pinions on,
But on his birth-day 'twas not to be done;
And so they have returned and joined the guests
Who wait the finish of this feast of feasts.

But how shall I describe the high delight,
And all the joys that danced into the night?
Imagine all that should conclude a feast
Given by a mighty prince, and in the east,
And all was here, from song to supper stand,
As though it had arisen from fairy-land.
The feast before it was a thing of state;
But this the flowery top, and finish delicate.
Here were the cushioned sophas, the perfumes,
The heavenly mirrors making endless rooms;

* In making these additions to the original, the author had an eye to a continuation of the story, which he would willingly conclude, if he had health and leisure.

The last quintessences of drinks, the trays
Of coloured relishes dressed a thousand ways;
The dancing girls, that bending here and there,
With asking beauty lay along the air;
And lighter instruments, guitars and lutes,
Sprinkling their silver graces on the flutes;
And all the sounds, and all the sweets of show,
Feeling victorious while the harpings go.
Not all the lords were there, only the best
And greatest, all in change of garments drest;
And with them were the wives they thought the loveliest.
You must not judge, my Tartars, by the tales
Of nations merely eastern and serails:
The eastern manners were in due degree,
But mixed and raised with northern liberty;
And women came with their impetuous lords,
To pitch the talk and humanize the boards,
And shed a gentle pleasure in the place,—
The smooth alternate with the bearded face,
As summer airs divide the blustering trees,
And sway them into smiles and whispering gentleness.

Our young Ambassador conversed with all,
But still attendant on the sovereign's call,
Who, like the rest, whatever the discourse,
Was sure to turn it to the gifts and horse;
Till to the terror of some lovers, word
Was given to fetch the mirror and the sword;
The ring meanwhile being handed round, and tried
Upon fair fingers with a fluttering pride.
Some longed to have the birds awake, and some
Were glad enough the tattling things were dumb.

Good God! thought one, and seemed to faint away,
" What (ah! my Togral!) would the parrot say?"
" And what," conceived another, " would the jay?
" I've often thought the wretch was going to speak,
" He trolls the shocking words so in his beak:
" I'm sure the very first would make me shriek."
Cambus, as sage as he was valiant, thought
There was no need to have the creatures brought;
Nor, when the mirror came, would he permit
That any but himself should read in it;
For which, as he perceived, but mentioned not,
Full thirty ladies loved him on the spot.
As to the sword, he thought it best to try
So masculine a thing in open sky;
Which made him also chuse to take a course
Over the towers of Sarra on his horse.
So issuing forth, he led into the air,
Saluting the sweet moon which met them there,
And forth the steed was brought; you would have said,
It knew for what, so easily 'twas led,
And leant with such an air its lively head.
But when at rest, still as before it stood,
As though its legs had to the ground been glued.
Some urged it on, some dragged, and some would fain
Have made it lift a foot, but all in vain.
And yet when Cambus whispered it, a thrill
Flashed through it's limbs, nor could it's feet be still,
But rocked the body with a sprightly grace,
As though it yearned aloft, and weighed it for the race.

The youth had talked of armour like an oak,
And how the sword would joint it with a stroke.
The Khan had no convenient foe at hand,

To see what sort of carving he would stand:
But in the moon there stood some oaken trees,
And suddenly, he struck at one of these:
Back, like a giant, fell its towering size,
And let the light on his victorious eyes.
The blow was clearly the sword's own, and yet
The Khan, as if inspired, felt proud of it,
And leaping on the horse as suddenly,
He touched the pin, and bade the fair good bye,
And, 'midst their pretty shrieks, went mounting to the sky.

Cambus ascended such a height so soon,
It seemed as if he meant to reach the moon;
And you might know by a tremendous shout,
That not a soul in Sarra but looked out;
But the fierce noise made some of them afraid,
That it might startle even a brazen head,
And threatening looks were turned upon the youth,
Who glowed and said, "By all the faith and truth
That is, or can be in the heart of man,
Nothing can happen to the noble Khan:
See, he returns!" And at the word, indeed,
They saw returning the descending steed;
Not round and round, careering; but at once,
Oblique and to the point, a fervid pounce.
For to say truth, the noble Khan himself,
Though he had fought on many a mountain shelf,
And drooped through desarts, and been drenched in seas,
Felt somewhat strange in that great emptiness,
And was not sorry to relieve his court,
By cutting his return some fathom short:
Such awful looks has utter novelty
To dash and to confuse the boldest eye.

The Khan returned, they all go back again
To their warm room, but do not long remain:
For late, and long, and highly-wrought delight
Cannot, at will, resume its giddy height;
And so his story told, and flatteries paid,
He kindly waved his gaping court to bed;
For that they did gape, ladies e'en and lords,
Our bard, a courtier, specially records;
By which we must suppose that courtiers then,
In some respect, resembled natural men.
Yet still in bed, and dozing oft between,
Their fading words recalled what they had seen:
Still of the ring they mumbled, and the glass,
And what amazing things might come to pass:
And when they slept, a thousand souls that night
Were riding on the horse with all their might;
They skim, they dive, they shoot about, they soar,
And wonder that they never rode before.

Aye: such, quoth the wise wit, is human life:
We dream of joy, and wake, and find one's wife:
Nay: quoth the wiser wit, the best way then
Is to wake little, and go sleep again.
Wake much, if life go right: if it go wrong,
Learn how to dream with Chaucer all day long:
Or learn still better, if you can, to make
Your world at all times, sleeping or awake;
The true receipt, whether by days or nights,
To charm your griefs, and double your delights.
Fancy and fact differ in this alone;
One strikes us like a thought, one like a stone;
But both alike can bring into our eyes
The tears, and make a thousand feelings rise

Of smarting wrongs, or pleasant sympathies.
E'en Fact, the little, worldly gentleman,
Must get from poor starv'd Fancy all he can;
Talks, dresses, dines, has notions, makes a stir,
Endures himself, nay loves himself, through her;
And cannot clothe even his ungrateful scorn,
But in the web she weaves from night till morn.

See—like the others, whom I've sent to bed,
The horse itself is put out of my head:
Ring, sword, and mirror, all of them depart,
While the dear kind one clasps me to her heart;
And I intend to have a dream divine,
With arm across her, and her hand in mine.
Like all, however, when we've rested well,
We'll meet again; and talk of what befel
The lady of the ring within a warbling dell.

LETTER-WRITING.

"The polite Letter-writer," and "Every man his own Correspondent," I have never read. They are doubtless two bewitching books, able to transform any stick of a gentleman into at least a three-penny post. I am the more particular in disclaiming all knowledge of these Letterary authors, as I would not my reading public should imagine me guilty of plagiarism. Believe me, I am quite virtuous.

Something I have to say touching most sorts of letters—not all. For instance, I have nothing to say of Lawyers' letters, those peremptory "how don't you do's," Charons of Fleet-ditch, purveyors of bread and water, whose words run through the heart cork-screw-wise, outraging a tit-bit at the table, and mixing aloes in our wine:—they cannot reach me,—I am off, away from the land of credit—no dun can knock at my door,—we deal for ready money only. For the same reason I am silent about Tailors' cross-legged scrawls, coming like a needle at the wind-up of one's Christmas merriment, telling us, modest hurrying rogues, they have "a small bill to make up by Saturday next," and "hoping for future favours." I wear my own coat! A man, out of Britain, may live as happy as Job; for recollect Job had no debts. Nor will I speak of the letters of great men deceased, golden authors, or tinselled authorities; they speak for themselves. Nor of mercantile letters—yes, they must have their due; for they uphold our commerce,

and commerce upholds our brave old England, and all her old incumbrances—Alas! poor England! By the head of Hermes, though most interesting compositions to pursy exchangers and young ledger-students, they are unworthy of his votaries! His other votaries, thieves and pick-pockets, can surely write better—though not to my knowledge; fortunately for society at large, and perhaps for myself, I have no correspondence with these "gentlemen of the shade, minions of the moon." But look at their every day, or rather their every night language; is it not fanciful? While they decorate their theft of linen from a hedge with the cant expression of "nimming the snow," with many other similar snatches at poetry, I cannot forbear, in an imaginative point of view, placing them far above Mercury's humbler servants. To make short work, I divide merchants into two classes—the laconic and the flummery. Here is a specimen of the first :—

"Gentlemen. Your's 9th received. Contents noted. Arrived, Jenny, Saunders. She cleared the Custom-house yesterday. Her hams not yet landed. Hope they are in good condition. Enclosed last price-current. Since which a spirit in the rum market. Wines, best, run off quickly. Lead heavy. Copper very dull. Tin plates look lively. Much done in tallow. Wax sticks on hand. Feathers, goose, are down. Skins do not get off. Great demand for hemp by the Government. Coffee, very good, this morning, with sundry parcels of sugar, eagerly sought after. Our Exchange, one half, has fallen. Money scarce, and therefore great difficulty with bills. Bristles rising. We are, Gentlemen, &c."

The other style is "tedious as a King," and I cannot "find in my heart to bestow it all on your Worships." It generally contains advice of a bill being drawn, and rings

a bob-major, as thus:—"Honour to acknowledge your esteemed favour—have the honour to transmit—valued on your respected house in favour of our esteemed and valuable friend—not doubting but your respected house will favour us by duly honouring—and, with the most perfect esteem and respect, we have the honour to be, &c."

What a relief to turn from such perpetrations! Come, let us talk of servant-maids. Their letters are always worth something, to themselves or others, as they have neither time nor postage to throw away. They write only when a passion becomes too restless to stay within doors. I take great interest in their unskilful attempts to throw a veil over their impatience. Bad grammar, and worse spelling, a clumsy folding up, eccentric splashings of thimble sealing, and an upside down direction, are, to many persons, their chief recommendations; though, to my mind, these are no more than the scenery and dresses to a good comedy. "They hold, as it were, a mirror up to nature,"—a crooked one, I grant. Here I see many follies, mixed with their share of goodness, and sometimes without, making odd faces as they peep through our language in rags. The purchase of a new bonnet, with Mrs. Mansby's assurance "it is the prettiest thing she ever made, and, besides that, she has not a bit more of the stuff," is followed by challenging, per post, her former fellow servant to make holiday some day next week; and thus, at a trifling expense, vent is given to the exuberance of that vanity, without a becoming share of which neither a scullion nor a princess would look half so charming. In an affair of jealousy, when she writes to the crony friend of a rival, that she intends for evermore to have done with Mr. Jemmy, because she knows he keeps low and disagreeable acquaintances,—how innocent is her revenge compared to the cruel and ignorant Roxana's!

When I read Molly's wrathful story of some vail or perquisite being unjustly withheld from her share of the kitchen spoils, and observe her anger exhausting itself as her fingers become weary of the pen, I cannot but lament that Thetis did not teach her son to read and write, and thus have saved a whole Iliad of fury and slaughter, though it were pity to lose the poem. What a blessed invention is the post, whether two-penny, general, or foreign! It carries off, by a thousand invisible channels, like the system of underground draining, half the disorders of the human heart. Let every one write down his worst, instead of putting it into practice. A spiteful scrawl cannot well do much harm in the world; while, on the other hand, a sheet of paper full of kindness does infinite good to all parties. One of this last description lately fell into my hands, from a cook at Canterbury to her old uncle. She enclosed, kind soul! a two pound note, saved from her quarter's wages; said a thousand affectionate things, and, after wishing him many happy days, she—what think you?—she quoted Shakespear! —"May gudness and you feel up one moniment." Thomson's Seasons lying in the window-seat of a cottage has been pronounced sufficient evidence of the poet's fame; but what is that compared to being quoted by a Canterbury cook? There is another species of kind-hearted writing, where servant-maids almost equal their too susceptible mistresses; but this falls into the next division of my subject, and indeed I am ashamed of having neglected it so long.

Love-letters—here's a theme! In the first place, let every one beware of counterfeits, for such are abroad. Few genuine ones are to be had for love, and none for money. Finely wrought compliments, an epigrammatic style, or any thing that looks like great care and study, is a sure proof of

heresy—that rogue is thinking of the girl's money. Raptures and complaints, sprinkled with something stolen from Ovid or Moore, and crow-quilled on the best gilt-edge, are enough to startle the virtue of any considerate young lady. Folks cannot be too cautious. There is another sort of love writing, much in vogue in this our philosophic age, down-right profanation, taking upon itself to prove that Cupid has found out a new cut to the heart; namely, by sending his arrows first through the brain—it makes me wince to think of it. Such letters are treatises on præternatural history. These sedate persons, who generally wear flannel night-caps because the head should be kept warm, and Angola socks for winter wear because the damp is so bad for the feet—these mock-heroic gentry, I say, absolutely assert there can be no true love except what is founded on the qualities of the mind. At first, as they argue, it must be no more than simple esteem, till ripened into a softer feeling, by a similarity of taste, and a congeniality of sentiment in matters of religion and morality, it haply attains to something of the value of—a plain gold ring and the parson's blessing. A very comfortable doctrine for those with whom it is impossible to fall in love. Just as if Romeo and Juliet ever thought of more than one sentiment in each other's breast; and their love was truer than metaphysics. I must quit such a subject; flesh and blood can't bear it. Now for a hint at what is more to the purpose. It is no such difficult matter to distinguish between truth and hypocrisy in these affairs, as some old people imagine. For the benefit of the rising generation, here are a few infallible signs of an unfeigned passion. Let them always bear in mind that obscurity is the grand point. There ought to be so restless a confusion in the lover, that far from its being necessary his mistress should find his letter intelligible, he

should be, after an hour's respite, incapable of explaining his own meaning; it is quite sufficient if he thought he understood himself at the time. If thou art guilty of a pretence to the drowsiness of reason, "there is no more faith in thee than in a stewed prune." This is a general rule, and as the style is inimitable, there can be no fear of deception. Any attempt, though a flurried one, at sense or connection of sentences, is fatal. Again, a constant interchange of the sublime and the bathos is indispensable; together with certain usual epithets of endearment, in endless repetition; and, here and there, a lively idea of dying. To uninterested persons such effusions may appear insipid, and probably silly, but their opinion is of no importance. In fact, to the parties themselves, if they ever happen to fall out of love, they will certainly be as little amusing as a physician's prescriptions to his patient just happily recovered from a fever. Let not my readers, fair ones I mean, imagine I entertain any disrespectful notions of love, or that my temper is soured by a parcel of billets-doux returned on my hands. All my intention is to show that the young blooming God ought not to expose himself in black and white.

Hate-letters ought not to come next; yet, for the sake of variety, they are welcome. These, whether expressed in reproaches or threats, contempt or indignation, are wonderfully energetic. Of all passions, anger is the most eloquent. It is easier to say a cruel thing than a kind one. Milton's devils talk better than his angels. It is more difficult for love to express itself in words, because it has so much to say; while hatred can utter its heart-full in a breath, and afterwards expatiate on the strength of its own inspiration. An angry man, and a good one at the same time, always writes more bitterly than he would have spoken; this, at first sight, seems unaccountable, as the comparatively slow

motions of the pen must give him the more time for reflection; but I am convinced the cause of this excess arises from having a blank piece of paper before him instead of a human countenance, which latter must be very bad indeed not to awaken some remorse. The greatest provocation to write a hate-letter is in answer to a treacherous friend, who still addresses you throughout in the kindest manner, with a "My dear Sir" at the beginning, and ends with a "Yours, most sincerely." In this case, it may be excusable to dip your pen in gall; but will that do any good? On the contrary, it is more noble, more manly, to pay respect even to the ashes of friendship.

Now are a swarm of notes, like gnats, buzzing about me, all claiming attention to their several merits. One, without a seal, yet pretending to the title of "a letter," boasts of introducing strange gentlemen to one another. A second makes wary inquiries about the "cleanliness, sobriety, and honesty," of a housemaid, footman, or cook. Then a crowd of borrowers perplex me, by requesting the loan of a fish-kettle, or the last Canto of Don Juan, or a trifle to be repaid in a fortnight. And lastly, a very agreeable one offers to bribe me with an invitation to dinner.—I cannot possibly accept it.

At length I arrive at what my fingers have been aching to come at,—letters from a friend; or, if the world will allow it, from many friends. In my opinion, friendship can best express itself by the pen; from which alone the closest friendships have sometimes originated. "The pleasure of society among friends," La Bruyere tells us, "is cultivated by a resemblance of opinion on points of morality, and by some difference of taste in the sciences." Yet this pleasure may exist in parties who can separate for ever without much regret. While that honest, glowing sentiment, of all others

the least selfish, never so thrills in our hearts as when our friend writes to us; and it must be often, and in all his moods, in his hopes and fears, in his joys and sorrows. Not the careless correspondence between two worthy gentlemen in adjoining counties, when a day's ride, or haply a walk, can bring them face to face. No; the letter must have been long on the road, must be stamped with a foreign post-mark, to make it precious; or with an English stamp, to him who is called the "foreigner," wherever he travels away from his endeared associates. It is enough to make sweet the pain of actual banishment. Let those who live out of their own country describe, if they can, the emotion they feel as they burst the seal of such a letter.

It is a frequent complaint with those at home that the one abroad does not write so often as he ought. I suspect there is little justice in it. The one abroad will hardly fail, until wearied out by neglect. He will be wise enough to bait his hook. The fact is—and why conceal it?—there is manual labour, time occupied, and no small resolution requisite, to fill a sheet of paper in a minute character, which, every one knows, is expected between friends; and these are the sole reasons of their deferring it from day to day, with an evil worrying conscience, till at last they are often ashamed of writing. I never have put faith in the phrase of "the pleasure of writing to you;" as I invariably find it used by the worst correspondents; it is a lying bit of civility. Nothing indeed can be more delightful than to stroll about the fields, filling up an imaginary letter; but when we sit at our desks to turn it into a reality, it becomes downright work, and is cheerfully performed solely because it is the means of getting another in return. Besides, an absentee, if he happens to be remiss, should be treated with charity. He requires evidently more attention than those

left behind. They have their ordinary occupations and associations; they miss but a single link in the chain; a traveller has torn himself from all. Again, this feeling must not be omitted in the balance; he who is at a distance has better grounds for the suspicion of being forgotten, while his friends have an assurance that he cannot possibly forget his home.

Some there are whose labours might be spared. I have long ceased to encourage them. They fill the first page with apologies for not having answered me earlier—this is worse than their silence. The next thing is, to echo every circumstance I have related for their amusement; and their sentences, one after the other, set out with—"Your account of"—"How delighted you must have been when"—"I envy the journey you had from"—"As you observe, the climate must be"—and so on to the end of the chapter; and this they call answering me. Then follow loving remembrances from all the family, severally and collectively. And they finish with another apology, far more reasonable than the first, for having "troubled me with so much nonsense." There are others who fly off into the opposite extreme. To execute something worthy of being sent across the channel, and of the postage, is to them a serious matter; quite an undertaking. They tease their brains for a fit subject, ponder on the best things that may be said upon it, and send you, not a letter, but an intolerable essay. A few general rules may be of use. The principal one is, as in conversation, to keep in mind the taste and character of the person to whom you are writing. It is always folly to assert you have "really nothing to say," unless it is your belief you would remain dumb in his company. Never touch on politics to one who cares not for a newspaper; indeed it is well to omit them on every occasion, as they read better in

print. With a matter-of-fact man, you must imagine yourself in a witness-box; no exaggeration, nothing figurative—I would not trust a metaphor; he may be confused, or misled, or, what is worse, suspect you intend to impose upon him. You have no small advantage in addressing a literary man; with him every thing is interesting that is worth telling; however, news of new books, or of a very old one, ought to occupy a considerable space. To a lady, young or old, a story is acceptable; and let it be spiced with love. By the bye, I have to beg pardon of the ladies for not having yet said a word about them. Perhaps, as they have so constantly been praised for their skill in letter-writing, it appeared to me a work of supererogation. I assure them, that, were the world entirely composed of ladies, a gentleman, and then he must be the man in the moon, would know better than to drop any instructions on this point. It is said the reason of their excelling is, that they write as they talk. I insist upon it their writing is superior; at least that their pens run on like their tongues in their pleasantest and happiest moods. Then, a great recommendation to a traveller, they have the art of bringing to one's mind, home, more than can any master of a house; every word breathes of their own atmosphere, till it is difficult to believe you can be at so great a distance—surely I am only next door! After what I have thus said publicly, I trust I shall be rewarded—secretly, if they prefer it; and no doubt this will increase the number of my fair-handed correspondents. Men's letters are, for the most part, of too stubborn a nature. They will not bend to petty circumstances; or, if they do, it is but a kind of Dutch painting. They either omit them altogether, or paint them with an awkward minuteness, leaving nothing to the imagination. "In your next describe your present sitting-room"—were

the few words which made me feel the force of the writer's friendship, and the interest he took in all that concerned me, far more than a very long sentence which preceded it, where he expressed his regret at our being separated. Of all letters the most magical in their effect are those written in a state of pure enjoyment, full of high animal spirits. Sorrows will have their way, and it is fit they should; but if we are happy, why not make it appear? The gravest philosopher can, if he chooses, clap on his wig with the hind part before; and his profoundest thoughts will lose nothing in being uttered with a laugh. So great an epicure in this science as I am could give as many receipts as that kitchen-favourite, Dr. Kitchener. But at this moment I am all impatience. The post arrived an hour ago, and the treasures of the leathern bag must by this time be sorted.

ARGUING IN A CIRCLE.

THERE was an account in the newspapers the other day of a fracas in the street, in which a Lord and one or two Members of Parliament were concerned. It availed them nought to plead the privilege of Peerage, or to have made speeches in the House—they were held to bail, like the vilest of the rabble, and the circumstance was not considered a very creditable one to come before the public. Ah! it is that public that is the sad thing. It is the most tremendous ring that ever was formed to see fair play between man and man; it puts people on their good behaviour immediately; and wherever it exists, there is an end of the airs and graces which individuals, high in rank, and low in understanding and morals, may chuse to give themselves. While the affair is private and can be kept in a corner, personal fear and favour are the ruling principles, *might* prevails over *right:* but bring it before the world, and truth and justice stand some chance. The public is too large a body to be bribed or browbeat. Its voice, deep and loud, quails the hearts of princes: its breath would make the feather in a lord's cap bend and cower before it, if its glance, measuring the real magnitude of such persons with their lofty, tiptoe, flaunting pretensions, had not long since taken the feathers out of their caps. A lord is now dressed (oh! degenerate world) like any other man; and a watchman will no sooner let go his grasp of his plain collar than he will that of a

Commoner or any other man, who has his "fancies and good-nights." What a falling off is here from the time when if a "base cullionly fellow" had dared to lay hands on a nobleman, on "one of quality," he would have whipped his sword out of its scabbard and run him through the body; the "beggarly, unmannered corse" would have been thrown into the Thames or the next ditch; and woe to any person that should have attempted to make a stir in the matter! "The age of chivalry is gone, that of constables, legislators, and Grub-street writers, has succeeded, and the glory of heraldry is extinguished for ever."

"The melancholy Jacques grieves at that."

Poor Sir Walter! the times are changed indeed, since a Duke of Buckingham could send a couple of bullies, equipped in his livery, with swords and ribbons, to carry off a young lady from a Peveril of the Peak, by main force, in the face of day, and yet the bye-standers not dare to interfere, from a dread of the Duke's livery and the High Court of Star Chamber! It is no wonder that the present Duke of Buckingham (the old title new revived) makes speeches in the Upper House to prove that legitimate monarchs have a right, whenever they please, to run their swords through the heart of a nation and *pink* the liberties of mankind, thinking if this doctrine were once fully restored, the old times of his predecessor might come again,—

"New manners and the pomp of elder days!"

It is in tracing the history of private manners that we see (more than by any thing else) the progress that has been made in public opinion and political liberty, and that may be still farther made. No one individual now sets up his will as higher than the law: no noble Duke or Baron bold

acts the professed bully or glories in the character of a lawless ruffian, as a part of the etiquette and privileges of high rank: no gay, gaudy minion of the court takes the wall of the passengers, sword in hand, cuts a throat, washes his white, crimson-spotted hands, and then to dinner with the king and the ladies.—*That* is over with us at present; and while that is the case, Hampden will not have bled in the field, nor Sydney on the scaffold, in vain! Even the monarch in this country, though he is above the law, is subject to opinion; "submits," as Mr. Burke has it, both from choice and necessity, "to the soft collar of social esteem, and gives a domination, vanquisher of laws, to be subdued by manners!"

It is this which drives the Despots of the Continent mad, and makes their nobles and chief vassals league together, like a herd of tygers, to destroy the example of liberty which we (the people of England) have set to the rest of the world. They are afraid that if this example should spread and things go on much farther in the road they have taken, they will no longer be able to give their subjects and dependants the *knout*, to send them to the galleys or a dungeon without any warrant but their own unbridled will, and that a lord or a king will be no more above the law than any other man. Mankind, in short, till lately and except in this country, were considered as a herd of deer which the privileged classes were to use for their pleasure, or which they were to hunt down for spite or sport, as liked them best. That they should combine together with a knot of obscure philosophers and hair-brained philanthropists, to set up a plea not to be used at any man's pleasure, or hunted down like vermin for any man's sport, was an insult to be avenged with seas of blood, an attack upon the foundations of social order, and the very existence of all law, religion, and morality. In all

the legitimate governments of Europe there existed, and there still exist, a number of individuals who were exempted (by birth and title) from the law, who could offer every affront to religion, and commit every outrage upon morality with impunity, with insolence and loud laughter, and who pretended that in asserting this monstrous privilege of theirs to the very letter, the essence of all law, religion, and morality consisted. This was the case in France till the year 1789. The only law was the will of the rich to insult and harass the poor, the only religion a superstitious mummery, the only morality subserviency to the pleasures of the great. In the mild reign of Louis XV. only, there were fifteen thousand *lettres de cachet* issued for a number of private, nameless offences, such as the withholding a wife or daughter from the embraces of some man of rank, for having formerly received favours from a king's mistress, or writing an epigram on a Minister of State. It was on the ruins of this flagitious system (no less despicable than detestable) that the French Revolution rose; and the towers of the Bastille, as they fell, announced the proud truth in welcome thunder to the human race—to all but those who thought they were born, and who only wished to live, to exercise their sweeping, wholesale, ruthless tyranny, or to vent the workings of their petty, rankling spleen, pride, bigotry, and malice, in endless, tormenting details on their fellow-creatures.

It will, I conceive, hereafter be considered as the greatest enormity in history, the stupidest and the most barefaced insult that ever was practised on the understandings or the rights of men, that we should interfere in this quarrel between liberty and slavery, take the wrong side, and endeavour to suppress the natural consequences of that very example of freedom we had set. That we should do this, we who had "long insulted the slavery of Europe by the

loudness of our boasts of freedom," who had laughed at the *Grand Monarque* for the last hundred and fifty years, and treated his subjects with every indignity, as belonging to an inferior species to ourselves, for submitting to his cruel and enervated sway; that the instant they took us at our word and were willing to break the chains of Popery and Slavery that we never ceased to taunt them with, we should turn against them, stand passive by " with jealous leer malign," witnessing the machinations of despots to extinguish the rising liberties of the world, and with the first plausible pretext, the first watch-word given (the blow aimed at the head of a king confederate with the enemies of his country against its freedom) should join the warwhoop, and continue it loudest and longest, and never rest, under one hollow, dastard, loathsome pretence or other, till we had put down " the last example of democratic rebellion" (we, who are nothing but rebellion all over, from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot!) and had restored the doctrine of Divine Right, that had fallen headless from its throne of Ignorance and Superstition with the First Charles, long before it was condemned to the same fate in the person of the French king; that we should do this, and be led, urged on to the unhallowed task by a descendant of the House of Brunswick, who held his crown in contempt of the Stuarts, and grew old, blind, and crazed in the unsated, undiverted, sacred thirst of Legitimacy, is a thing that posterity will wonder at. We pretend to have interfered to put down the horrors of the French Revolution, when it was our interference (with that of others) that produced those horrors, of which we were glad as an excuse to justify our crooked policy and to screen the insidious, deadly, fatal blow aimed at liberty. No; the " cause was hearted" in the breasts of those who reign, or who would reign, in contempt of the people, and with whom

it rests to make peace or war. Is not the same principle at work still? What horrors have the *Holy* ALLIANCE to plead in vindication of their interference with Spain? They have not a rag, a thread of all their hideous tissue of sophistry and lies to cover "the open and apparent shame" of this sequel and consistent comment on their former conduct. It is a naked, barefaced, undisguised attack upon the rights and liberties of the world: it is putting the thing upon its true and proper footing—the claim of Kings to hold mankind as a property in perpetuity. There are no horrors, real or pretended, to warrant this new outrage on common sense and human nature. It stands on its own proud basis of injustice—it towers and mocks the skies in all the majesty of regal wrong. "The shame, the blood be upon their heads." If there are no horrors ready-made to their hands, they stand upon their privilege to commit wanton outrage and unqualified aggression; and if by these means they can provoke horrors, then the last are put first as the most plausible plea, as a handsome mask and soft lining to the hard gripe and features of Legitimacy—Religion consecrates, and Loyalty sanctions the fraud! But, should the scheme fail in spite of every art and effort, and the wrong they have meditated be retorted on their own heads, then we shall have, as before, an appeal made to Liberty and Humanity—the motto of despots will once more be *peace on earth and good-will to men*—and we too shall join in the yell of blood and the whine of humanity. We are only waiting for an excuse now—till the threats and insults and cruelties of insolent invaders call forth reprisals, and lead to some act of popular fury or national justice that shall serve as a signal to rouse the torpid spirit of trade in the city, or to inflame the loyalty of country gentlemen, deaf for the present to all other sounds but that appaling one of RENT! We must remain neuter while a

grievous wrong is acting, unless we can get something by the change, or pick a quarrel with the right. We are peaceable, politic, when a nation's liberty only is at stake, but were it a monarch's crown that hung tottering in the air, oh! how soon would a patriot senate and people start out to avenge the idle cause: a single speech from the throne would metamorphose us into martyrs of self-interest, saviours of the world, deliverers of Europe from lawless violence and unexampled wrong. But here we have no heart to stir, because the name of liberty alone (without the cant of loyalty) has lost its magic charm on the ears of Englishmen—impotent to save, powerful only to betray and destroy themselves and others!

We want a Burke to give the thing a legitimate turn at present. I am afraid the Editor of the *New Times* can hardly supply his place. They could hardly have done before, without that eloquent apostate, that brilliant sophist, to throw his pen into the scale against truth and liberty. He varnished over a bad cause with smooth words, and had power to "make the worse appear the better reason"—the devil's boast! The madness of genius was necessary to second the madness of a court; his flaming imagination was the torch that kindled the smouldering fire in the inmost sanctuary of pride and power, and spread havoc, dismay, and desolation through the world. The light of his imagination, sportive, dazzling, beauteous as it seemed, was followed by the stroke of death. It so happens that I myself have played all my life with his forked shafts unhurt, because I had a metaphysical clue to carry off the noxious particles, and let them sink into the earth, like drops of water. But the English nation are not a nation of metaphysicians, or they would have detected, and smiled or wept over the glittering fallacies of this half-bred reasoner, but,

at the same time, most accomplished rhetorician that the world ever saw. But they are perplexed by sophistry, stupified by prejudice, staggered by authority. In the way of common sense and practical inquiry, they do well enough; but start a paradox, and they know not what to make of it. They either turn from it altogether, or, if interest or fear give them motives to attend to it, are fascinated by it. They cannot analyze or separate the true from the *seeming* good. Mr. Pitt, with his deep-mouthed *common-places*, was able to follow in the same track, and fill up the cry; but he could not have given the tone to political feeling, or led on the chase with "so musical a discord, such sweet thunder." Burke strewed the flowers of his style over the rotten carcase of corruption, and embalmed it in immortal prose: he contrived, by the force of artful invective and misapplied epithets, to persuade the people of England that Liberty was an illiberal, hollow sound; that humanity was a barbarous modern invention, that prejudices were the test of truth, that reason was a strumpet, and right a fiction. Every other view of the subject but his ("so well the tempter glozed") seemed to be without attraction, elegance, or refinement. Politics became poetry in his hands, his sayings passed like proverbs from mouth to mouth, and his descriptions and similes were admired and repeated by the fashionable and the fair. Liberty from thenceforward became a low thing: philosophy was a spring-nailed, velvet-pawed tyger-cat, with green eyes, watching its opportunity to dart upon its prey: humanity was a lurking assassin. The emblems of our cardinal and favourite virtues were overturned: the whole vocabulary of national watch-words was inverted or displaced. This was a change indeed in our style of thinking, more alarming than that in our calendar formerly: and this change was brought about by Mr. Burke,

who softened down hard reasons in the crucible of his fancy, and who gave to his epithets the force of nick-names. Half the business was done by his description of the Queen of France. It was an appeal to all women of quality; to all who were, or would be thought, cavaliers or men of honour; to all who were admirers of beauty, or rank, or sex. Yet what it had to do with the question, it would be difficult to say. If a woman is handsome, it is well: but it is no reason why she should poison her husband, or betray a country. If, instead of being young, beautiful, and free of manners, Marie Antoinette had been old, ugly, and chaste, all this mischief had been prevented. The author of the Reflections had seen or dreamt he saw a most delightful vision sixteen years before, which had thrown his brain into a ferment; and he was determined to throw his readers and the world into one too. It was a theme for a copy of verses, or a romance; not for a work in which the destinies of mankind were to be weighed. Yet she was the Helen that opened another Iliad of woes; and the world has paid for that accursed glance at youthful beauty with rivers of blood. If there was any one of sufficient genius now to deck out some Castilian maid, or village girl in the Army of the Faith, in all the colours of fancy, to reflect her image in a thousand ages and hearts, making a saint and a martyr of her; turning loyalty into religion, and the rights and liberties of the Spanish nation, and of all other nations, into a mockery, a bye-word, and a bugbear, how soon would an end be put to Mr. Canning's present *bizarre* (almost afraid to know itself) situation! How gladly he would turn round on the pivot of his forced neutrality, and put all his drooping tropes and figures on their splendid war-establishment again!

Mr. Burke was much of a theatrical man. I do not mean that his high-wrought enthusiasm or vehemence was not natural to him; but the direction that he gave to it was exceedingly capricious and arbitrary. It was for some time a doubtful question which way he should turn with respect to the French Revolution, whether for or against it. His pride took the alarm, that so much had been done with which he had nothing to do, and that a great empire had been overturned with his favourite engines, wit and eloquence, while he had been reforming the "turn-spit of the king's kitchen," in set speeches far superior to the occasion. Rousseau and the Encyclopædists had lamentably got the start of him; and he was resolved to drag them back somehow by the heels, and bring what they had effected to an untimely end,—

> "Undoing all, as all had never been."

The "Reflections on the French Revolution" was a spiteful and dastard but too successful attempt to *put a spoke in the wheels* of knowledge and progressive civilization, and throw them back for a century and a half at least. In viewing the change in the prospects of society, in producing which he had only a slight and indirect hand by his efforts in the cause of American freedom, he seemed to say, with Iago in the play,—

> "Though that their joy be joy,
> Yet will I contrive
> To throw such changes of vexations on it,
> As it may lose some colour."

He went beyond his own most sanguine hopes, but did not live to witness their final accomplishment, by seeing France literally "blotted out of the map of Europe." He died in the most brilliant part of Buonaparte's victorious and

captain-like campaigns in Italy. If it could have been foreseen what an "ugly customer" he was likely to prove, the way would have been to have bribed his vanity (a great deal stronger than his interest) over to the other side, by asking his opinion; and, indeed, he has thrown out pretty broad hints in the early stage of his hostility, and before the unexpected success of the French arms, and the whizzing arrows flung at him by his old friends and new antagonists had stung him to madness, that the great error of the National Assembly was in not having consulted able and experienced heads on this side the water, as to demolishing the old, and constructing the new edifice. If he had been employed to lay the first stone, or to assist, by an inaugural dissertation, at the baptism of the new French Constitution, the fabric of the Revolution would thenceforth have risen,—

"Like an exhalation of rich distilled perfumery,"

without let or molestation from his tongue or pen. But he was overlooked. He was not called from his closet, or from his place in the House (where, it must be confessed, he was out of his place) to "ride in the whirlwind and direct the storm;" and therefore he tried, like some malicious hag, to urge the veering gale into a hurricane; to dash the labouring vessel of the state in pieces, and make shipwreck of the eternal jewel of man's happiness, which it had on board—Liberty. The stores of practical and speculative knowledge which he had been for years collecting and digesting, and for which he had no use at home, were not called into play abroad. His genius had hitherto been always too mighty for the occasion; but here his utmost grasp of intellect would hardly have been sufficient to grapple with it. What an opportunity was lost! Something, therefore, was to be done, to relieve the galling sense of disappointed ambition

and mortified self-consequence. Our political *Busy-body* turned *Marplot;* and maliciously, and like a felon, strangled the babe that he was not professionally called in to swaddle, and dandle, and bring to maturity. He had his revenge: but so must others have their's on his memory.

Burke was not an honest man. There was always a *dash* of insincerity, a sinister bias in his disposition. We see, from the Letters that passed between him and his two brothers, and Barry the painter, that there was constantly a balancing of self-interest and principle in his mind; a thanking of God that he was in no danger of yielding to temptation, yet as if it were a doubtful or ticklish point; and a patient, pensive expectation of place and emolument, till he could reconcile it with integrity and fidelity to his party; which might easily be construed into a querulous hankering after it, and an opinion that this temporary self-denial implied a considerable sacrifice on his part, or that he displayed no small share of virtue in not immediately turning knave. All this, if narrowly looked into, has a very suspicious appearance. Burke, with all his capricious wildness and flighty impulses, was a self-seeker and more constant in his enmities than in his friendships. He bore malice, and did not forgive to the last. His cold, sullen behaviour to Fox, who shed tears when they had a quarrel in the House, and his refusal to see him afterwards, when the latter came to visit him on his death-bed, will for ever remain a stigma on his memory. He was, however, punished for his fault. In his latter writings, he complains bitterly of the solitariness of his old age, and of the absence of the friends of his youth—whom he had deserted. This is natural justice, and the tribute due to apostacy. A man may carry over his own conscience to the side of his vanity or interest, but he cannot expect, at the same time, to carry

over along with him all those with whom he has been connected in thought and action, and whose society he will miss, sooner or later. Mr. Burke could hardly hope to find, in his casual, awkward, unaccountable intercourse with such men as Pitt or Dundas, amends for the loss of his old friends, Fox and Sheridan, to whom he was knit not only by political ties, but by old habitudes, lengthened recollections, and a variety of common studies and pursuits. Pitt was a mere politician; Dundas, a mere worldling. What would they care about him, and his "winged words"? *No more of talk* about the meetings at Sir Joshua's—the *Noctes cœnæque Deûm*; about the fine portraits of that great colourist; about Johnson or Goldsmith, or Dunning or Barrè; or their early speeches; or the trying times in the beginning of the American war; or the classic taste and free-born spirit of Greece and Rome;—

"The beautiful was vanish'd, and return'd not."

Perhaps, indeed, he would wish to forget most of these, as ungrateful topics; but when a man seeks for repose in oblivion of himself, he had better seek it, where he will soonest find it,—in the grave! Whatever the talents, or the momentary coincidence of opinion of his new allies, there would be a want of previous sympathy between them. Their notions would not amalgamate, or they would not be sure that they did. Every thing would require to be explained, to be reconciled. There would be none of the freedom of habitual intimacy. Friendship, like the clothes we wear, becomes the easier from custom. New friendships do not sit well on old or middle age. Affection is a science, to which it is too late to serve an apprenticeship after a certain period of life. This is the case with all patched-up, conventional intimacies; but it is worse when they are built on

inveterate hostility and desertion from an opposite party, where their naturally crude taste is embittered by jealousy and rankling wounds. We think to exchange old friends and connections for new ones, and to be received with an additional welcome for the sacrifice we have made; but we gain nothing by it but the contempt of those whom we have left, and the suspicions of those whom we have joined. By betraying a cause, and turning our backs on a principle, we forfeit the esteem of the honest, and do not inspire one particle of confidence or respect in those who may profit by and pay us for our treachery.

Deserters are never implicitly trusted. There is, besides the sentiment or general principle of the thing, a practical reason for this. Their zeal, their eagerness to distinguish themselves in their new career, makes them rash and extravagant; and not only so, but there is always a leaven of their old principles remaining behind, which breaks out in spite of themselves, and which it is difficult for their encouragers and patrons to guard against. This was remarkably the case with the late Mr. Windham. He was constantly *running a-muck* at some question or other, and committing the Ministers. His old, free-thinking, Opposition habits returned upon him before he was aware of it; and he was sure to hazard some paradox, or stickle for some objectionable point, contrary to the forms of office. The cabinet had contemplated no such thing. He was accordingly kept in check, and alarmed the treasury-bench whenever he rose. He was like a dog that gives mouth before the time, or is continually running on a stray scent: he was chid and fed! The same thing is observable in the present Poet-Laureat, whose jacobinical principles have taken such deep root in him *(intus et in cute)* that they break out even in his Court poems, like "a thick scurf" on loyalty; and he presents

them unconsciously, as an offering of "sweet-smelling gums," at the very foot of the throne. He at present retains his place apparently on condition of holding his tongue He writes such Odes on kings, that it is next to impossible not to travestie them into lampoons!

The remarks I have made above apply strongly to him and some of his associates of the *Lake School*. I fancy he has felt, as much as any one, the inconvenience of drawing off from a cause, and that by so doing we leave our oldest and our best friends behind. There are those among the favourers and admirers of his youth, whom his dim eyes discover not, and who do not count his grey hairs. Not one or two, but more;—men of character and understanding, who had pledged mutual faith, and drank the cup of freedom with him, warm from the wine-press, as well as the "dews of Castilie." He gave up a principle, and one left him;—he insulted a feeling, and another fled;—he accepted a place, and received the congratulations of no one but Mr. Croker. He looks round for them in vain, with throbbing heart, (the heart of a poet can never lie still; he should take the more care what it is that agitates it!)—sees only the shadows or the carcases of old friendships; or stretches out his hand to grasp some new patron, and finds that also cold. If our friends are sometimes accused of short memories, our enemies make it up by having long ones. We had better adhere to the first; for we must despair of making cordial converts of the last. This double desolation is cheerless, and makes a man bethink himself. We may make a shift (a shabby one) without our self-respect; but it will never do to have it followed by the loss of the respect of those whose opinion we once valued most. We may tamper with our own consciences; but we feel at a loss without the testimony of others in our favour, which is

seldom paid, except to integrity of purpose and principle. Perhaps, however, Mr. Southey consoles himself for a certain void without and within, by receiving the compliments of some Under-graduate of either of our Universities, on his last article in defence of Rotten Boroughs, in the Quarterly Review; or of a Dignitary of the Church, on his share in the Six Acts, and for suggesting to Lord Sidmouth the propriety of punishing the second conviction for libel with banishment. We do not know how this may be: but with us, it would barb the dart.

It would not matter, if these turn-coats were not in such violent extremes. Between the two, they must be strangely perplexed in their own minds, and scarcely know what to make of themselves. They must have singular qualms come over them at times—the apparitions of former acquaintance and opinions. If they were contented to correct, to qualify their youthful extravagancies, and to be taught by experience to steer a middle course, and pay some deference to the conclusions of others, it would be mighty well; but this is not their humour. They must be conspicuous, dogmatical, exclusive, intolerant, on whichever side they are: the mode may be different, the principle is the same. A man's nature does not change, though he may profess different sentiments. A Socinian may become a Calvinist, or a Whig a Tory; but a bigot is always a bigot; an egotist never becomes humble. Besides, what excuse has a man, after thirty, to change about all of a sudden to the very opposite side? If he is an uneducated man, he may indeed plead ignorance yesterday of what he has learnt to-day: but a man of study and reading can't pretend that a whole host of arguments has suddenly burst upon him, of which he never heard before, and that they have upset all his earlier notions: he must have known them long before, and

if they made no impression on him then to modify his violent zeal (supposing them to be right now) it is a sign either of a disinclination, or of an incapacity, on his part, to give truth a fair hearing—a bad ground to build his present dogmatical and infallible tone upon! It is certain, that the common sense of the world condemns these violent changes of opinion; and if they do not prove that a man prefers his convenience to his virtue, they at least show that he prefers it to his reputation; for he loses his character by them. An apostate is a name that all men abhor, that no man ever willingly acknowledges; and the tergiversation which it denotes is not likely to come into much greater request, till it is no longer observed that a man seldom changes his principles except for his interest! Those who go over from the winning to the losing side, do not incur this appellation; and however we may count them fools, they can't be called knaves into the bargain.

MINOR PIECES.

MAHMOUD.

I have just read a most amazing thing,
A true and noble story of a king:
And to show all men, by these presents, how
Good kings can please a Liberal, even now
I'll vent the warmth it gave me in a verse:
But recollect—these kings and emperors
Are very scarce; and when they do appear,
Had better not have graced that drunken sphere,
Which hurts the few whose brains can bear it best,
And turns the unhappy heads of all the rest.
This prince was worthy to have ruled a state
Plain as his heart, and by its freedom great:
But stripped of their gilt stuff, at what would t'others rate?

There came a man, making his hasty moan,
Before the Sultan Mahmoud on his throne,
And crying out—"My sorrow is my right,
And I *will* see the Sultan, and to-night."
"Sorrow," said Mahmoud, "is a reverend thing:
I recognize its right, as king with king;
Speak on." "A fiend has got into my house,"
Exclaimed the staring man, "and tortures us:
One of thine officers—he comes, the abhorr'd,
And takes possession of my house, my board,

My bed :—I have two daughters and a wife,
And the wild villain comes and makes me mad with life."
" Is he there now?" said Mahmoud:—" No;—he left
The house when I did, of my wits bereft;
And laugh'd me down the street, because I vowed
I'd bring the prince himself to lay him in his shroud.
I'm mad with want—I'm mad with misery,
And, oh thou Sultan Mahmoud, God cries out for thee!"

The Sultan comforted the man, and said,
" Go home, and I will send thee wine and bread,"
(For he was poor) " and other comforts. Go;
And, should the wretch return, let Sultan Mahmoud know."

In three days' time, with haggard eyes and beard,
And shaken voice, the suitor re-appeared,
And said " He's come."—Mahmoud said not a word,
But rose and took four slaves, each with a sword,
And went with the vexed man. They reach the place,
And hear a voice, and see a female face,
That to the window fluttered in affright:
" Go in," said Mahmoud, " and put out the light;
But tell the females first to leave the room;
And, when the drunkard follows them, we come."

The man went in. There was a cry, and hark!
A table falls, the window is struck dark:
Forth rush the breathless women; and behind
With curses comes the fiend in desperate mind.
In vain: the sabres soon cut short the strife,
And chop the shrieking wretch, and drink his bloody life.

" Now *light* the light," the Sultan cried aloud.

'Twas done, he took it in his hand, and bowed
Over the corpse, and looked upon the face;
Then turned and knelt beside it in the place,
And said a prayer, and from his lips there crept
Some gentle words of pleasure, and he wept.
In reverend silence the spectators wait,
Then bring him at his call both wine and meat;
And when he had refreshed his noble heart,
He bade his host be blest, and rose up to depart.

The man amazed, all mildness now, and tears,
Fell at the Sultan's feet, with many prayers,
And begged him to vouchsafe to tell his slave,
The reason first of that command he gave
About the light; then, when he saw the face,
Why he knelt down; and lastly, how it was,
That fare so poor as his detained him in the place.

The Sultan said, with much humanity,
"Since first I saw thee come, and heard thy cry,
I could not get it from my head, that one
By whom such daring villanies were done,
Must be some lord of mine, perhaps a lawless son.
Whoe'er he was, I knew my task, but feared
A father's heart, in case the worst appeared:
For this I had the light put out; but when
I saw the face, and found a stranger slain,
I knelt and thanked the sovereign arbiter,
Whose work I had performed through pain and fear;
And then I rose, and was refreshed with food,
The first time since thou cam'st, and marr'dst my solitude."

THE VENETIAN FISHERMAN.

[*The burden, "With your gallant going vessel," is repeated at the end of every two lines.*]

Oh, fisher of the waters, Fidelin,
Come fish for me, I pray,
With your gallant going vessel,
With your gallant pull away.
La ra lo, la ra lay.

And what am I to fish for?
Oh, a ring I've lost to day;
A hundred crowns I'll give thee,
And a purse both rich and gay.

Oh, a hundred crowns I'll have not,
Nor a purse both rich and gay;
Lady, I'll have a kiss of love,
And that shall be my pay.

O pescator dell' onda, Fidelin,
Vieni pescar in quà,
Colla bella sua barca,
Colla bella se ne va,
Fidelin, lin, la.

Che cosa vuoi ch'io peschi?
L'anel che m'è casca;
Ti daro cento scudi,
Sta borsa ricamà.

Non voglio cento scudi,
Nè borsa ricamà;
Voglio un bazin d'amore,
Con quel mi pagherà, &c.

DIALOGUE FROM ALFIERI;

BETWEEN A CHAIR IN ITALY AND A GENTLEMAN FROM ENGLAND.

CHAIR.

What is the reason, Sir, that every day
You load me thus for nothing, hours and hours?
Is this the manner, pray,
Of making love in that cold clime of yours?
You may be heavy for a century,
And get no further with the lovely she.

GENTLEMAN.

And hast thou too conspired against me, chair?
I love, tis true—too true—and dare not say it:
But surely my whole air,
My looks, my very silence, all display it:
Every one, doubtless, must perceive the fire,
That gnaws and eats me up with fierce desire.

CHAIR.

For God's sake, speak then, or you'll never do:
What you do now by the fair lady's side,
I boast of doing too:—
It makes her mad to find you thus tongue-tied,
To see you sit and stare, like a stuck pig:
You make me speak myself, who am but fig.

SEGGIOLA.

Signor, perchè del tuo disutil peso
Ogni giorno mi vuoi gravar tant'ore?
Si fa così all' amore
Tra i gelati Britanni?
Me premerai mill' anni,
E mai non ti avverrà d'essere inteso.

IL SEDUTO.

Sedia e tu pur congiuri a danno mio?
Amo pur troppo è vero, e dir non l'oso:
Ma l'amor sì nascoso
Non ho, che nel mio, sguardo
Non legga ognun, ch'io ardo,
Che mi consuma e rode un fier desio.

SEGGIOLA.

Non di parlar, bensì d'an dartene osa:
Ciò che tu fai della Sandrina accanto
Di farlo anch'io mi vento.
A lei l'anima e il senso
Toglie il tuo starti intenso:
Me fai parlare inanimata cosa.

DIALOGUE

BETWEEN ALFIERI AND HIS FLORENTINE LAUNDRESS, NERA COLOMBOLI.*

A. Why, Mistress Nera, what the devil's here?
To bring my stockings home at last undone?
N. Undone! ah! God knows if I've sewn and sewn;
But they so *spider-web*, it's a despair.

A. So *spider-web*, school-mistress! Why, that's queer.
N. How? Any thing that we put off and on,
And wear and wear, till all the stuff is gone,
Does'nt it *spider-web?* I think it's clear.

A. *Spider-web?* I don't take it: what d'ye mean?
N. Lord bless me, Sir, break me a spider's web,
And see if I can sew it up again.
A. Ah! It is I that am the unlick'd cub.
I grow grey writing Tuscan, but in vain:
A sorry graft, fit only for the grub.

A. Che diavol fate voi, Madonna Nera?
Darmi per sin co'buchi le calzette?
N. Co'buchi, eh? Dio 'l sa, s'i'l'ho rassette;
Ma elle ragnano sì, ch'è una dispéra.
A. *Ragnar*, cos'è, Monna vocaboliera?—

* Alfieri, a Piedmontese, writes this sonnet (which is doubtless a true recital) to shew the difficulty he found in acquiring the niceties of the Tuscan tongue, and how well they are felt and understood by the common people.

N. Ch! la roba, che l'uom mette e rimette,
Che vien via per tropp'uso a fette a fette,
Non ragna ella e mattina e giorno e sera?

A. *Ragnar*? non l'ho più udito, e non l'intendo.
N. Pur gli è chiaro: la rompa un ragnatélo;
Poi vedrem, se con l'ago i'lo rammendo.
A. Ah! son pur io la bestia! imbianco il pelo
Questa lingua scrivendo, e non sapendo:
Tosco innesto son io su immondo stelo.

A BLESSED SPOT.

FROM AN EPIGRAM OF ABULFADHEL AHMED, SURNAMED AL HAMADANI, RECORDED IN D'HERBELOT.

HAMADAN is my native place;
And I must say, in praise of it,
It merits, for its ugly face,
What every body says of it.

It's children equal it's old men
In vices and avidity;
And they reflect the babes again
In exquisite stupidity.

MOUTH VERSUS EYES.

FROM THE FRENCH OF LA FONTAINE.

CYPRUS to wit: Sweet Mouth *versus* Fine Eyes,
Before the Chamber of Precedencies.
The case was opened by Sweet Mouth, who said,
"I summon Hearts. Let their reports be read.
Let them decide, my Lords, which of us two
Has most to say, to charm with, and to do.
Do, did I say? I'm ready to take oath,
I've more than I can do, though nothing loth:
Only it seems, I've not the happy art,
Of shedding tears, like Eyes! With all my heart:
My glory centers not in sight alone:
I satisfy three senses, they but one.
Odours and sounds to my sweet state belong,
And to delightful words I join a charming song.
My very sighs exhale a world of sweets,
Like zephyrs in the time of violets:
I have such ways to make a lover blest,
Such heaps—your Lordships will excuse the list:
And then, if Fine Eyes lay a wager with us,
To see who first can strike some heart beneath us,
Lord! how Fine Eyes go toiling round and round,
While, speak we but a word—the man's on ground:
We want no tricks, not we, to give the rosy wound.
Let Fine Eyes shut, they're no such wonder, they:
Sweet Mouth has always treasures to display:
Coral without, and precious pearl within;
Who, when I deign to play, can hope to win?

Let presents fall in oriental showers,
The favours I bestow beat all their dowers.
Thirty-two pearls I wear about me here,
Of which the least in beauty and least clear,
Surpasses all with which the East is lit;
As many millions should not purchase it."

Thus spoke Sweet Mouth: on which was seen to rise
A lover, who was counsel for Fine Eyes.
He said, as you may guess, that for their part,
Love, without them, could never find the heart:
That as to tears, he felt, he must own, shocked,
To hear their very tenderness rebuked.
What could sighs do, he should be glad to know,
Unless their warrants stood prepared to flow?
The fact was, both were good, and Sweet Mouth there
Wronged her own cause, and hurt her character.
There are delicious tears; and there are sighs,
On t' other hand, not over good or wise;
And Mouth had better, as she says she can,
Have gained the cause by silence than this plan.
"What are the silent charms, the godlike powers,
To shew for her cause, when compared with our's?
We charm an hundred and a thousand ways,
By sweetness, by a stealth, by sparkling rays,
And by what Sweet Mouth blames—but is the part
We glory in the most—the gentle art
Of melting with a tear the manliest heart.
Where Sweet Mouth gains a single conquest, we
Roll in a round of ceaseless victory:
And for one song in which she bears the prize,
A hundred thousand sparkle with Fine Eyes.
In courts, and cities, in the poet's groves,

What is there heard of but our darts and loves?
Such sudden strokes we deal, such deeds we vaunt,
That those do well, who say that we enchant:
We come, and all surrender up their arms:
Though often in the whirl of those alarms,
Fine Mouth comes following in, and then pretends her charms.
Heaven grant the people ask not who she is,
Or she may speak, and "thank the Gods amiss."
'Tis true, she has two words of magic touch,
"I love;" but cannot Fine Eyes say as much?
We have a tongue that with no words at all
Can ask, and hint, and tell a tale, and call,
And ravish more than all the pearls and songs,
Which Sweet Mouth musters round her tongue of tongues."

The Counsel started here, and took occasion
To make a very happy peroration.
He caught a lady's eye, just coming in,
With an approach the sweetest ever seen:
He changed his tone, and with a gravity,
Seconded well by a reposing eye,
Said—"I've been taking up your Lordship's time
With trifling matters fitter for a rhyme;
Look there: my Lords, I think 'twould be absurd,
After that sight, to add another word.
Pray give the sentence:—we are quite secure:
My client would not tire the court, I'm sure."

The lady, with a pretty shame, looked round
With speaking eyes, which dealt so wide a wound,
That all hands dropt their papers for surprise,
And not a heart but gave it for Fine Eyes.
Sweet Mouth at this, seeing how matters went,

And forced to raise some new astonishment,
Resumed, and said—" To what has just been dropt,
(Which, by the way, is shockingly corrupt)
There is one word alone I wish to say:
My Lords, Fine Eyes do little but by day:
That silent tongue of theirs, when in the dark
Makes but a sorry sort of frigid spark:
What I can do, needs surely no remark."

This reason settled the dispute *instanter:*
Fine Eyes were much, but Sweet Mouth the Enchanter.
Fine Eyes, however, took it in good part,
And Sweet Mouth gave the Judge a kiss with all her heart.

Belle Bouche et Beaux Yeux plaidaient pour les honneurs,
Devant le juge d'Amathonte.
Belle Bouche disait—" Je m'en rapporte aux cœurs,
Et leur demande s'ils font compte
Des Beaux Yeux ainsi que de moi.
Qu'on examine notre emploi,
Nos traits, nos beautés, et nos charmes.
Que dis-je, notre emploi? J'ai bien plus d'un metier,
Mais j'ignore celui de rèpandre des larmes:
De bon cœur, je le laisse aux Beaux Yeux tout entier.
Je satisfais trois sens, eux seulement la vue.
Ma gloire a bien plus d'étendue.
L'ouie et l'odorat ont part à mes plaisirs,
Outre qu'aux doux propos je joins les chansonettes.
Belle Bouche fait des soupirs,
Tels à peu près que les zephirs
Dans la saison des violettes.

Je sais par cent moyens rendre heureux un amant—
Vous me dispenserez de vous dire, comment.
S'il s'agit entre nous d'une conquête à faire,
On voit Beaux Yeux se tourmenter;
Belle Bouche n'a qu'à parler:
Sans artifice elle sait plaire.
Quand Beaux Yeux sont fermés, ce n'est pas grande affaire—
Belle Bouche à toute heure étale ses tresors;
Le nacre est en dedans, le corail en dehors.
Quand je daigne m'ouvrir, il n'est richesse egale:
Les présens que nous fait la rive orientale
N'approchent pas les dons que je prètends avoir.
Trente-deux perles se font voir,
Dont la moins belle et la moins claire
Passe celle que l'Inde a dans ses regions;
Pour plus de trente-deux millions,
Je ne m'en voudrais pas defaire."

Belle Bouche ainsi harangua.
Un amant pour Beaux Yeux parla;
Et, comme on peut penser, ne manqua pas de dire,
Que c'est par eux qu'amour s'introduit dans les cœurs.
Pourquoi les reprocher les pleurs?
Il ne faut donc pas qu'on soupire?
Mais tous les deux sont bons; Belle Bouche a grand tort.
Il est des larmes de transport,
Il est des soupirs, au contraire,
Qui fort souvent ne disent rien.
Belle Bouche n'entend pas bien
Pour cette fois-là son affaire.
Qu'elle se taise, au nom des dieux!
Des appas qui lui sont rèpartis par les cieux,
Qu'a t'-elle sur ce point qui nous soit comparable?

Nous savons plaire en cent façons,
Par l'éclat, la douceur, et cet art admirable
De tendre aux cœurs des hameçons.
Belle Bouche le blâme, et nous en faisons gloire:
Si l'on tient d'elle une victoire,
On en tient cent de nous; et pour un chanson,
Ou Belle Bouche est en renom,
Beaux Yeux le sont en plus de mille.
La cour, le parnasse, et la ville,
Ne retentissent tout le jour
Que du mot de Beaux Yeux et de celui d'Amour.
Dès que nous paraissons, chacun nous rend les armes.
Quiconque nous appellerait
Enchanteurs, il ne mentirait,
Tant est prompt l'effêt de nos charmes.
Sous une masque trompeur leur éclat fait si bien,
Que maint objet tel quel, en plus d'une rencontre,
Par ce moyen passe à la montre:
On demande qui c'est, et souvent ce n'est rien.
Cependant Beaux Yeux sont la cause
Qu'on prend ce rien pour quelque chose.
Belle Bouche dit "J'aime," et le disons nous pas?
Sans autre bruit notre language,
Muet qu'il est, plaît davantage
Que ces perles, ces chants, et ces autres appas
Avec quoi Belle Bouche engage."

L'avocat de Beaux Yeux fit sa péroraison
Des regards d'un intervenante.
Cette belle approcha d'un façon charmante;
Puis il dit, en changeant le ton,
" J'amuse ici la cour par des discours frivoles:
Ai-je besoin d'autres paroles
Que les yeux de Phillis? Juge—regardez les;

Puis prononcez votre sentence :
Nous gagnerons notre procès."

Phillis eut quelque honte ; et puis sur l'assistance
Repandit des regards si remplis d'éloquence,
Que les papiers tombaient des mains.
Frappé de ses charmes soudains,
L'auditoire inclinait pour Beaux Yeux dans son âme.
Belle Bouche, en faveur des regards de la dame
Voyant que les esprits s'allaient préoccupant,
Prit la parole, et dit—" A votre rhétorique,
Dont Beaux Yeux vont ainsi les juges corrompant,
Je ne veux opposer qu'un seul mot en replique.
La nuit mon emploi dure encore—
Beaux Yeux sont lors de peu d'usage.
On les laisse en repos, et leur muet langage
Fait un assez froid personage."

Chacun en demeura d'accord.
Cette raison regla la chose :
On préféra Belle Bouche à Beaux Yeux;
En quelques chefs pourtant ils eurent gain de cause.
Belle Bouche baisa le juge de son mieux.

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