Prometheus of Æschylus

Thus groping after our own center's near
And proper substance, we grew dark, contract,
Swallow'd up of earthly life! Ne what we were
Of old, thro' ignorance can we detect.
Like noble babe, by fate or friends' neglect
Left to the care of sorry salvage wight,
Grown up to manly years cannot conjuct
His own true parentage, nor read aright
What father him begot, what womb he brought to light.

So we, as stranger infants elsewhere born,
Cannot diving from what spring we did flow;
Ne dare these base alliances to scorn,
Nor lift ourselves a whit from hence below;
Ne strive our parentage again to know,
Ne dream we once of any other stock,
Since foster'd upon Rhea's knees we grow.
In Satyr's arms with many a mow and mock
Oft danced; and hairy Pan our cradle oft hath rock'd!

But Pan nor Rhea be our parent as
We been the offspring of the all seeing Nous, &c.

To express the supersensual character of the reason, its abstraction from sensation, we find the Prometheus ἄτερπη,
—while in the yearnings accompanied with the remorse incident to, and only possible in consequence of the Nous being, the rational, self-conscious, and therefore responsible will, he is γυνὶ διακανομένος.

If to these contemplations we add the control and despotism exercised on the free reason by Jupiter in his symbolical character, as νόμος πολιτικὸς;—by custom (Iermeres); by necessity, βία καὶ κρατος;—by the mechanic arts and powers, συγγενὴς τῷ Νόοθ, though they are, and which are symbolized in Hephaistos,—we shall see at once the propriety of the title, Prometheus, διαμωτης.

9. Nature, or Ζεὺς as the νόμος ἐν νομικόμενοις, knows herself only, can only come to a knowledge of herself, in man! And even in man, only as man is supernatural, above nature, noetic. But this knowledge man refuses to communicate; that is, the human understanding alone is at once self-conscious and conscious of nature. And this high prerogative it owes exclusively to its being an assessor of the

*Rhea (from ἰδω, &c, that is, the earth as the transitory, the ever-flowing nature, the flux and sum of phenomena, or objects of the outward sense, in contradistinction from the earth as Vesta, as the firmamental law that sustains and disposes the apparent world! The Satyrs represent the spirt, and appetences of the sensuous nature (φρονήμα σαρκί) —Pan, or the total life of the earth, the presence of all in each, the universal organismus of bodies and bodily energy.
Idea of the Prometheus of Aeschylus

reason. Yet even the human understanding in its height of place seeks vainly to appropriate the ideas of the pure reason, which it can only represent by idol. Here, then, the Nous stands as Prometheus ἀντιπαλος, renuens—in hostile opposition to Jupiter Inquisitor.

10. Yet finally, against the obstacles and even under the fostering influences of the Nomos, τοῦ νομίμου, a son of Jove himself, but a descendant from Io, the mundane religion, as contra-distincted from the sacerdotal cultus, or religion of the state, an Alcides Liberator will arise, and the Nous or divine principle in man, will be Prometheus ἔλευθερώμενος.

Did my limits or time permit me to trace the persecutions, wanderings, and migrations of the Io, the mundane religion, through the whole map marked out by the tragic poet, the coincidences would bring the truth, the unarbitrariness, of the preceding exposition as near to demonstration as can rationally be required on a question of history, that must, for the greater part, be answered by combination of scattered facts. But this part of my subject, together with a particular exemplification of the light which my theory throws both on the sense and the beauty of numerous passages of this stupendous poem, I must reserve for a future communication.

NOTES.¹

v. 15. πάραγγει:—‘in a coomb, or combe.’

v. 17.

ἐξωρίάζειν γὰρ πατρὸς λγούσ βαρὸς.

ἐξωρίαζειν, as the editor confesses, is a word introduced into the text against the authority of all editions and manuscripts. I should prefer ἐξωρίαζειν, notwithstanding its being a ἀπαξ λεγόμενον. The εὖ—seems to my tact too free and easy a word;—and yet our ‘to trifle with’ appears the exact meaning.

SUMMARY OF AN ESSAY

ON THE FUNDAMENTAL POSITION OF THE MYSTERIES IN RELATION TO GREEK TRAGEDY.

The position, to the establishment of which Mr. Coleridge regards his essay as the Prolegomena, is: that the Greek Tragedy stood in the same relation to the Mysteries, as the Epic Song, and the Fine Arts to the Temple Worship, or the Religion of the State; that the proper function of the Tragic Poet was under the disguise of popular superstitions, and using the popular Mythology as his stuff and drapery to communicate so much and no more of the doctrines preserved in the Mysteries as should counteract the demoralizing influence of the State religion, without disturbing the public tranquillity, or weakening the reverence for the laws, or bringing into contempt the ancestral and local usages and traditions on which the patriotism of the citizens mainly rested, or that nationality in its intensest form which was little less than essential in the constitution of a Greek republic. To establish this position it was necessary to explain the nature of these secret doctrines, or at least the fundamental principles of the faith and philosophy of Elensis and Samothrace. The Samothracian Mysteries Mr. Coleridge supposes to have been of Phœnician origin, and both these and the Elensian to have retained the religious belief of the more ancient inhabitants of the Peloponnesus, prior to their union with the Hellenes and the Egyptian colonies: that it comprised sundry relics and fragments of the Patriarchal Faith, the traditions historical and prophetic of the Noetic Family, though corrupted and depraved by their combination with the system of Pantheism, or the Worship of the Universe as God (Jupiter est quodcunque vides) which Mr. Coleridge contends to have been the first great Apostacy of the Ancient World. But a religion founded on Pantheism, is of necessity a religion founded on philosophy, i.e., an attempt to determine the origin of nature by the unaided strength of the human intellect, however unsound and false that philosophy may have been. And of this the sacred books of the Indian Priests afford at once proof and instance. Again: the earlier the date of any philo-
Mysteries in Greek Tragedy

Sophistic scheme, the more subjective will it be found—in other words the earliest reasoners sought in their own minds the form, measure and substance of all other power. Abstracting from whatever was individual and accidental, from whatever distinguished one human mind from another, they fixed their attention exclusively on the characters which belong to all rational beings, and which therefore they contemplated as mind itself, mind in its essence. And however averse a scholar of the present day may be to these first-fruits of speculative thought, as metaphysics, a knowledge of their contents and distinctive tenets is indispensable as history. At all events without this knowledge he will in vain attempt to understand the spirit and genius of the arts, institutions and governing minds of ancient Greece. The difficulty of comprehending any scheme of opinion is proportionate to its greater or lesser likeness to the principles and modes of reasoning in which our own minds have been formed. Where the difference is so great as almost to amount to contrariety, no clearness in the exhibition of the scheme will remove the sense, or rather, perhaps the sensation, of strangeness from the hearer’s mind. Even beyond its utmost demerits it will appear obscure, unreal, visionary. This difficulty the author anticipates as an obstacle to the ready comprehension of the first principles of the eldest philosophy, and the esoteric doctrines of the Mysteries; but to the necessity of overcoming this the only obstacle, the thoughtful inquirer must resign himself, as the condition under which alone he may expect to solve a series of problems the most interesting of all that the records of ancient history propose or suggest.

The fundamental position of the Mysteries, Mr. Coleridge contends, consists in affirming that the productive powers or laws of nature are essentially the same with the active powers of the mind—in other words that mind, or Nous, under which term they combine the universal attributes of reason and will, is a principle of forms or patterns, endued with a tendency to manifest itself as such; and that this mind or eternal essence exists in two modes of being. Namely, either the form and the productive power, which gives it outward and phænomenal reality, are united in equal and adequate proportions, in which case it is what the eldest philosophers, and the moderns in imitation of them, call a law of nature: or the form remaining the same,
but with the productive power in unequal or inadequate proportions, whether the diminution be effected by the mind's own act or original determination not to put forth this inherent power, or whether the power have been repressed, and as it were driven inward by the violence of a superior force from without,—and in this case it was called by the most Ancient School "Intelligible Number," by a later School "Idea," or Mind—\( \chi\alpha\tau\iota\iota\iota\chi\nu \). To this position a second was added, namely, that the form could not put forth its productive or self-realizing power without ceasing at the same moment to exist for itself,—i.e. to exist, and know itself as existing. The formative power was as it were alienated from itself and absorbed in the product. It existed as an instinctive, essentially intelligent, but not self-knowing, power. It was law, Jupiter, or (when contemplated pluraly) the Dii Majores. On the other hand, to possess its own being consciously, the form must remain single and only inwardly productive. To exist for itself, it must continue to exist by itself. It must be an idea; but an idea in the primary sense of the term, the sense attached to it by the oldest Italian School and by Plato,—not as a synonyme of, but in contra-distinction from, image, conception or notion: as a true entity of all entities the most actual, of all essences the most essential.

Now on this Antithesis of idea and law, that is of mind as an unproductive but self-knowing power, and of mind as a productive but unconscious power, the whole religion of pantheism as disclosed in the Mysteries turns, as on its axis, bi-polar.

FRAGMENT OF AN ESSAY ON
TASTE. 1810.

The same arguments that decide the question, whether taste has any fixed principles, may probably lead to a determination of what those principles are. First then, what is taste in its metaphorical sense, or, which will be the easiest mode of arriving at the same solution, what is there in the primary sense of the word, which may give to its metaphorical meaning an import different from that of sight or hearing, on the one hand, and of touch or
352. Fragment of an Essay on Taste

smell on the other? And this question seems the more natural, because in correct language we confine beauty, the main subject of taste, to objects of sight and combinations of sounds, and never, except sportively or by abuse of words, speak of a beautiful flavour, or a beautiful scent.

Now the analysis of our senses in the commonest books of anthropology has drawn our attention to the distinction between the perfectly organic, and the mixed senses;—the first presenting objects, as distinct from the perception;—the last as blending the perception with the sense of the object. Our eyes and ears—(I am not now considering what is or is not the case really, but only that of which we are regularly conscious as appearances,) our eyes most often appear to us perfect organs of the sentient principle, and wholly in action, and our hearing so much more so than the three other senses, and in all the ordinary exertions of that sense, perhaps, equally so with the sight, that all languages place them in one class, and express their different modifications by nearly the same metaphors. The three remaining senses appear in part passive, and combine with the perception of the outward object a distinct sense of our own life. Taste, therefore, as opposed to vision and sound, will teach us to expect in its metaphorical use a certain reference of any given object to our own being, and not merely a distinct notion of the object as in itself, or in its independent properties. From the sense of touch, on the other hand, it is distinguishable by adding to this reference to our vital being some degree of enjoyment, or the contrary,—some perceptible impulse from pleasure or pain to complacency or dislike. The sense of smell, indeed, might perhaps have furnished a metaphor of the same import with that of taste; but the latter was naturally chosen by the majority of civilized nations on account of the greater frequency, importance, and dignity of its employment or exertion in human nature.

By taste, therefore, as applied to the fine arts, we must be supposed to mean an intellectual perception of any object blended with a distinct reference to our own sensibility of pain or pleasure, or, vice versa, a sense of enjoyment or dislike co-instantaneously combined with, and appearing to proceed from, some intellectual perception of the object;—intellectual perception, I say; for other-
wise it would be a definition of taste in its primary rather than in its metaphorical sense. Briefly, taste is a metaphor taken from one of our mixed senses, and applied to objects of the more purely organic senses, and of our moral sense, when we would imply the co-existence of immediate personal dislike or complacency. In this definition of taste, therefore, is involved the definition of fine arts, namely, as being such the chief and discriminative purpose of which it is to gratify the taste,—that is, not merely to connect, but to combine and unite, a sense of immediate pleasure in ourselves, with the perception of external arrangement.

The great question, therefore, whether taste in any one of the fine arts has any fixed principle or ideal, will find its solution in the ascertainment of two facts:—first, whether in every determination of the taste concerning any work of the fine arts, the individual does not, with or even against the approbation of his general judgment, involuntarily claim that all other minds ought to think and feel the same; whether the common expressions, 'I dare say I may be wrong, but that is my particular taste';—are uttered as an offering of courtesy, as a sacrifice to the undoubted fact of our individual fallibility, or are spoken with perfect sincerity, not only of the reason but of the whole feeling, with the same entireness of mind and heart, with which we concede a right to every person to differ from another in his preference of bodily tastes and flavours. If we should find ourselves compelled to deny this, and to admit that, notwithstanding the consciousness of our liability to error, and in spite of all those many individual experiences which may have strengthened the consciousness, each man does at the moment so far legislate for all men, as to believe of necessity that he is either right or wrong, and that if it be right for him, it is universally right,—we must then proceed to ascertain:—secondly, whether the source of these phenomena is at all to be found in those parts of our nature, in which each intellect is representative of all,—and whether wholly, or partially. No person of common reflection demands even in feeling, that what tastes pleasant to him ought to produce the same effect on all living beings; but every man does and must expect and demand the universal acquiescence of all intelligent beings in every conviction of his understanding.
FRAGMENT OF AN ESSAY ON BEAUTY. 1818.

The only necessary, but this the absolutely necessary, pre-requisite to a full insight into the grounds of the beauty in the objects of sight, is—the directing of the attention to the action of those thoughts in our own mind which are not consciously distinguished. Every man may understand this, if he will but recall the state of his feelings in endeavouring to recollect a name, which he is quite sure that he remembers, though he cannot force it back into consciousness. This region of unconscious thoughts, oftentimes the more working the more indistinct they are, may, in reference to this subject, be conceived as forming an ascending scale from the most universal associations of motion with the functions and passions of life,—as when, on passing out of a crowded city into the fields on a day in June, we describe the grass and king-cups as nodding their heads and dancing in the breeze,—up to the half perceived, yet not fixable, resemblance of a form to some particular object of a diverse class, which resemblance we need only increase but a little, to destroy, or at least injure, its beauty-enhancing effect, and to make it a fantastic intrusion of the accidental and the arbitrary, and consequently a disturbance of the beautiful. This might be abundantly exemplified and illustrated from the paintings of Salvator Rosa.

I am now using the term beauty in its most comprehensive sense, as including expression and artistic interest, — that is, I consider not only the living balance, but likewise all the accompaniments that even by disturbing are necessary to the renewal and continuance of the balance. And in this sense I proceed to show, that the beautiful in the object may be referred to two elements,—lines and colours; the first belonging to the shapely (forma, formalis, formosus), and in this, to the law, and the reason; and the second, to the lively, the free, the spontaneous, and the self-justifying. As to lines, the rectilineal are in themselves the lifeless, the determined ab extra, but still in immediate union with the cycloidal, which are expressive of function. The curve line is a modification of the force from without
Fragment of an Essay on Beauty 355

by the force from within, or the spontaneous. These
are not arbitrary symbols, but the language of nature,
universal and intuitive, by virtue of the law by which man
is impelled to explain visible motions by imaginary causa-
tive powers analogous to his own acts, as the Dryads,
Hamadryads, Naiads, &c.

The better way of applying these principles will be by a
brief and rapid sketch of the history of the fine arts,—in
which it will be found, that the beautiful in nature has been
appropriated to the works of man, just in proportion as the
state of the mind in the artists themselves approached to
the subjective beauty. Determine what predominance in
the minds of the men is preventive of the living balance of
excited faculties, and you will discover the exact counter-
part in the outward products. Egypt is an illustration
of this. Shapeliness is intellect without freedom; but
colours are significant. The introduction of the arch is not
less an epoch in the fine than in the useful arts.

Order is beautiful arrangement without any purpose ad
extra;—therefore there is a beauty of order, or order may
be contemplated exclusively as beauty.

The form given in every empirical intuition,—the stuff,
that is, the quality of the stuff, determines the agreeable:
but when a thing excites us to receive it in such and such a
mould, so that its exact correspondence to that mould is
what occupies the mind,—this is taste or the sense of beauty.
Whether dishes full of painted wood or exquisite viands
were laid out on a table in the same arrangement, would be
indifferent to the taste, as in ladies patterns; but surely the
one is far more agreeable than the other. Hence observe
the disinterestedness of all taste; and hence also a sensual
perfection with intellect is occasionally possible without
moral feeling. So it may be in music and painting, but
not in poetry. How far it is a real preference of the refined
to the gross pleasures, is another question, upon the sup-
position that pleasure, in some form or other, is that alone
which determines men to the objects of the former:—
whether experience does not show that if the latter were
equally in our power, occasioned no more trouble to enjoy,
and caused no more exhaustion of the power of enjoying
them by the enjoyment itself, we should in real practice
prefer the grosser pleasure. It is not, therefore, any ex-
cellence in the quality of the refined pleasures themselves,
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but the advantages and facilities in the means of enjoying them, that give them the pre-eminence.

This is, of course, on the supposition of the absence of all moral feeling. Suppose its presence, and then there will accrue an excellence even to the quality of the pleasures themselves; not only, however, of the refined, but also of the grosser kinds,—inasmuch as a larger sweep of thoughts will be associated with each enjoyment, and with each thought will be associated a number of sensations; and so, consequently, each pleasure will become more the pleasure of the whole being. This is one of the earthly rewards of our being what we ought to be, but which would be annihilated, if we attempted to be it for the sake of this increased enjoyment. Indeed it is a contradiction to suppose it. Yet this is the common argumentum in circulo, in which the eudæmonists flee and pursue.

* * *

NOTES ON CHAPMAN'S HOMER.

Extract of a Letter sent with the Volume.† 1807.

CHAPMAN I have sent in order that you might read the Odyssey; the Iliad is fine, but less equal in the translation, as well as less interesting in itself. What is stupidly said of Shakspeare, is really true and appropriate of Chapman; mighty faults counterpoised by mighty beauties. Excepting his quaint epithets which he affects to render literally from the Greek, a language above all others blest in the "happy marriage of sweet words," and which in our language are mere printer's compound epithets—such as quaffed divine joy-in-the-heart-of-man-infusing wine, (the undermarked is to be one word, because one sweet mellifluous word expresses it in Homer);—excepting this, it has no lock, no air, of a translation. It is as truly an original poem as the Faery Queene;—it will give you small idea of Homer, though a far truer one than Pope's epigrams, or Cowper's cumbersome most anti-Homeric Miltonism. For Chapman writes and feels as a poet,—as Homer might have written had he lived in England in the reign of Queen Elizabeth. In short, it is an exquisite poem, in spite of its frequent and perverse quaintnesses and harsh-

† Communicated through Mr. Wordsworth. Ed.
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nesses, which are, however, amply repaid by almost un-
exampled sweetness and beauty of language, all over spirit
and feeling. In the main it is an English heroic poem, the
tale of which is borrowed from the Greek. The dedication
to the Iliad is a noble copy of verses, especially those
sublime lines beginning,—

O! 'tis wondrous much
(Through nothing prisde) that the right vertuous touch
Of a well written soule, to vertue moves.
Nor haue we soules to purpose, if their loves
Of fitting objects be not so inflam'd.
How much then, were this kingdome's maine soul main'd,
To want this great inflamer of all powrs
That move in humane soules! All realmes but your,
Are honor'd with him; and hold blest that state
That have his workes to reade and contemplate.
In which, humanitie to her height is raisde;
Which all the world (yet, none enough) hath praisde.
Seas, earth, and heaven, he did in verse comprize;
Out sung the Muses, and did equalse
Their king Apollo; being so farre from cause
Of princes light thoughts, that their gravest lawes
May finde stufle to be fashioned by his lines.
Through all the pompe of kingdomes still he shines
And graceth all his gracer. Then let lie
Your lutes, and viols, and more lofty
Make the heroiques of your Homer sung,
To drums and trumpets set his Angels tongue:
And with the princely sports of haukes you use,
Behold the kingly flight of his high Muse:
And see how like the Phexix she renues
Her age, and starrie feathers in your sunne,
Thousands of yeares attending; everie one
Blowing the holy fire, and throwing in
Their seasons, kingdomes, nations that have bin
Subverted in them; lawes, religions, all
Offerd to change, and greedie funerall;
Yet still your Homer lasting, living, raigning,—

and likewise the 1st, the 11th, and last but one, of the pre-
fatory sonnets to the Odyssey. Could I have foreseen any
other speedy opportunity, I should have begged your
acceptance of the volume in a somewhat handsomer coat;
but as it is, it will better represent the sender,—to quote
from myself—

A man disherited, in form and face,
By nature and mishap, of outward grace.

Chapman in his moral heroic verse, as in this dedication
and the prefatory sonnets to his Odyssey, stands above
Notes on Chapman’s Homer

Ben Jonson; there is more dignity, more lustre, and equal strength; but not midway quite between him and the sonnets of Milton. I do not know whether I give him the higher praise, in that he reminds me of Ben Jonson with a sense of his superior excellence, or that he brings Milton to memory notwithstanding his inferiority. His moral poems are not quite out of books like Jonson’s, nor yet do the sentiments so wholly grow up out of his own natural habit and grandeur of thought, as in Milton. The sentiments have been attracted to him by a natural affinity of his intellect, and so combined;—but Jonson has taken them by individual and successive acts of choice.

All this and the preceding is well felt and vigorously, though harshly, expressed, respecting sublime poetry in genre; but in reading Homer I look about me, and ask how does all this apply here. For surely never was there plainer writing; there are a thousand charms of sun and moonbeam, ripple, and wave, and stormy billow, but all on the surface. Had Chapman read Proclus and Porphyry?—and did he really believe them,—or even that they believed themselves? They felt the immense power of a Bible, a Shaster, a Koran. There was none in Greece or Rome, and they tried therefore by subtle allegorical accomodations to conjure the poem of Homer into the βιβλίον θεοπαράδοσον of Greek faith.

Chapman’s identification of his fate with Homer’s, and his complete forgetfulness of the distinction between Christianity and idolatry, under the general feeling of some religion, is very interesting. It is amusing to observe, how familiar Chapman’s fancy has become with Homer, his life and its circumstances, though the very existence of any such individual, at least with regard to the Iliad and the Hymns, is more than problematic. N.B. The rude engraving in the page was designed by no vulgar hand. It is full of spirit and passion.

I am so dull, that neither in the original nor in any translation could I ever find any wit or wise purpose in this poem. The whole humour seems to lie in the names. The frogs and mice are not frogs or mice, but men, and yet they do nothing that conveys any satire. In the Greek there is much beauty of language,
Notes on Barclay’s Argenis

but the joke is very flat. This is always the case in rude ages;—their serious vein is inimitable,—their comic low and low indeed. The psychological cause is easily stated, and copiously exemplifiable.

NOTE IN CASAUBON’S PERSIUS,

1807.

There are six hundred and sixteen pages in this volume, of which twenty-two are text; and five hundred and ninety-four commentary and introductory matter. Yet when I recollect, that I have the whole works of Cicero, Livy, and Quintililian, with many others,—the whole works of each in a single volume, either thick quarto with thin paper and small yet distinct print, or thick octavo or duodecimo of the same character, and that they cost me in the proportion of a shilling to a guinea for the same quantity of worse matter in modern books, or editions,—I am a poor man, yet one whom Βιβλίων κτήσεως ἐν παιδαρίῳ δεῖνος ἐκράτησε τόπος, feel the liveliest gratitude for the age, which produced such editions, and for the education, which by enabling me to understand and taste the Greek and Latin writers, has thus put it in my power to collect on my own shelves, for my actual use, almost all the best books, in spite of my small income. Somewhat too I am indebted to the ostentation of expense among the rich, which has occasioned these cheap editions to become so disproportionately cheap.

NOTES ON BARCLAY’S ARGENIS.

1803.¹

Heaven forbid that this work should not exist in its present form and language! Yet I cannot avoid the wish that it had, during the reign of James I., been moulded into an heroic poem in English octave stanza, or epic blank verse;—which, however, at that time had not been invented, and which, alas! still remains the sole property of the inventor, as if the Muses had given him an unevadable patent for it. Of dramatic blank verse we have many

¹ Communicated by the Rev. Derwent Coleridge.
Notes on Barclay's Argenis

and various specimens;—for example, Shakspeare's as compared with Massinger's, both excellent in their kind:—of lyric, and of what may be called Orphic, or philosophic, blank verse, perfect models may be found in Wordsworth: of colloquial blank verse there are excellent, though not perfect, examples in Cowper;—but of epic blank verse, since Milton, there is not one.

It absolutely distresses me when I reflect that this work, admired as it has been by great men of all ages, and lately, I hear, by the poet Cowper, should be only not unknown to general readers. It has been translated into English two or three times—how, I know not, wretchedly, I doubt not. It affords matter for thought that the last translation (or rather, in all probability, miserable and faithless abridgment of some former one) was given under another name. What a mournful proof of the incelebrity of this great and amazing work among both the public and the people! For as Wordsworth, the greater of the two great men of this age, (at least, except Davy and him, I have known, read of, heard of, no others)—for as Wordsworth did me the honour of once observing to me, the people and the public are two distinct classes, and, as things go, the former is likely to retain a better taste, the less it is acted on by the latter. Yet Telemachus is in every mouth, in every schoolboy's and schoolgirl's hand! It is awful to say of a work, like the Argenis, the style and Latinity of which, judged (not according to classical pedantry, which pronounces every sentence right which can be found in any book prior to Boetius, however vicious the age, or affected the author, and every sentence wrong, however natural and beautiful, which has been of the author's own combination, — but) according to the universal logic of thought as modified by feeling, is equal to that of Tacitus in energy and genuine conciseness, and is as perspicuous as that of Livy, whilst it is free from the affectations, obscurities, and lust to surprise of the former, and seems a sort of antithesis to the slowness and prolixity of the latter;—(this remark does not, however, impeach even the classicality of the language, which, when the freedom and originality, the easy motion and perfect command of the thoughts, are considered, is truly wonderful):—of such a work it is awful to say, that it would have been well if
it had been written in English or Italian verse! Yet the event seems to justify the notion. Alas! it is now too late. What modern work, even of the size of the Paradise Lost—much less of the Faery Queene—would be read in the present day, or even bought or be likely to be bought, unless it were an instructive work, as the phrase is, like Roscoe's quartos of Leo X., or entertaining like Boswell's three of Dr. Johnson's conversations? It may be fairly objected—what work of surpassing merit has given the proof?—Certainly, none. Yet still there are ominous facts, sufficient, I fear, to afford a certain prophecy of its reception, if such were produced.

NOTES ON CHALMERS'S LIFE OF
SAMUEL DANIEL.

The justice of these remarks cannot be disputed, though some of them are too figurative for sober criticism.

Most genuine! a figurative remark! If this strange writer had any meaning, it must be.—Headly's criticism is just throughout, but conveyed in a style too figurative for prose composition. Chalmers's own remarks are wholly mistaken; too silly for any criticism, drunk or sober, and in language too flat for any thing. In Daniel's Sonnets there is scarcely one good line; while his Hymen's Triumph, of which Chalmers says not one word, exhibits a continued series of first-rate beauties in thought, passion, and imagery, and in language and metre is so faultless, that the style of that poem may without extravagance be declared to be imperishable English. 1820.

BISHOP CORBET.

I almost wonder that the inimitable humour, and the rich sound, and propulsive movement of the verse, have not rendered Corbet a popular poet. I am convinced that a reprint of his poems, with illustrative and chit-chat biographical notes, and cuts by Cruikshank, would take with the public uncommonly well. September, 1823.
NOTES ON SELDEN'S TABLE TALK.¹

There is more weighty bullion sense in this book, than I ever found in the same number of pages of any uninspired writer.

Opinion.

Opinion and affection extremely differ. I may affect a woman best, but it does not follow I must think her the handsomest woman in the world. * * * Opinion is something wherein I go about to give reason why all the world should think as I think. Affection is a thing wherein I look after the pleasing of myself.

Good! This is the true difference betwixt the beautiful and the agreeable, which Knight and the rest of that άλφα θεός άρεω have so beneficially confounded, meretricibus scilicet et Plutoni.

O what an insight the whole of this article gives into a wise man’s heart, who has been compelled to act with the many, as one of the many! It explains Sir Thomas More’s zealous Romani-ism, &c.

Parliament.

Excellent! O! to have been with Selden over his glass of wine, making every accident an outlet and a vehicle of wisdom!

Poetry.

The old poets had no other reason but this, their verse was sung to music; otherwise it had been a senseless thing to have fettered up themselves.

No man can know all things; even Selden here talks ignorantly. Verse is in itself a music, and the natural symbol of that union of passion with thought and pleasure, which constitutes the essence of all poetry, as contradistinguished from science, and distinguished from history civil or natural. To Pope’s Essay on Man, - in short, to whatever is mere metrical good sense and wit, the remark applies.

Ib.

Verse proves nothing but the quantity of syllables; they are not meant for logic.

¹ These remarks on Selden were communicated by Mr. Cary. Ed.
Notes on Tom Jones

True; they, that is, verses, are not logic; but they are, or ought to be, the envoys and representatives of that vital passion, which is the practical cement of logic; and without which logic must remain inert.

NOTES ON TOM JONES.¹

MANNERS change from generation to generation, and with manners morals appear to change,—actually change with some, but appear to change with all but the abandoned. A young man of the present day who should act as Tom Jones is supposed to act at Upton, with Lady Bellaston, &c. would not be a Tom Jones; and a Tom Jones of the present day, without perhaps being in the ground a better man, would have perished rather than submit to be kept by a harridan of fortune. Therefore this novel is, and, indeed, pretends to be, no exemplar of conduct. But, notwithstanding all this, I do loathe the cant which can recommend Pamela and Clarissa Harlowe as strictly moral, though they poison the imagination of the young with continued doses of tinct. lytter, while Tom Jones is prohibited as loose. I do not speak of young women;—but a young man whose heart or feelings can be injured, or even his passions excited, by aught in this novel, is already thoroughly corrupt. There is a cheerful, sun-shiny, breezy spirit that prevails everywhere, strongly contrasted with the close, hot, day-dreamy continuity of Richardson. Every indiscretion, every immoral act, of Tom Jones, (and it must be remembered that he is in every one taken by surprise—his inward principles remaining firm—) is so instantly punished by embarrassment and unanticipated evil consequences of his folly, that the reader's mind is not left for a moment to dwell or run riot on the criminal indulgence itself. In short, let the requisite allowance be made for the increased refinement of our manners,—and then I dare believe that no young man who consulted his heart and conscience only, without advert ing to what the world would say—could rise from the perusal of Fielding's Tom Jones, Joseph Andrews, or Amelia, without feeling himself a better man;—at least, without an intense conviction that he could not be guilty of a base act.

¹ Communicated by Mr. Gillman. Ed
Notes on Tom Jones

If I want a servant or mechanic, I wish to know what he does:—but of a friend, I must know what he is. And in no writer is this momentous distinction so finely brought forward as by Fielding. We do not care what Blifil does;—the deed, as separate from the agent, may be good or ill; but Blifil is a villain;—and we feel him to be so from the very moment he, the boy Blifil, restores Sophia’s poor captive bird to its native and rightful liberty.

Book xiv. ch. 8.

Notwithstanding the sentiment of the Roman satirist, which denies the divinity of fortune; and the opinion of Seneca to the same purpose; Cicero, who was, I believe, a wiser man than either of them, expressly holds the contrary; and certain it is there are some incidents in life so very strange and unaccountable, that it seems to require more than human skill and foresight in producing them.

Surely Juvenal, Seneca, and Cicero, all meant the same thing, namely, that there was no chance, but instead of it providence, either human or divine.

Book xv. ch. 9.

The rupture with Lady Bellaston.

Even in the most questionable part of Tom Jones, I cannot but think, after frequent reflection, that an additional paragraph, more fully and forcibly unfolding Tom Jones’s sense of self-degradation on the discovery of the true character of the relation in which he had stood to Lady Bellaston, and his awakened feeling of the dignity of manly chastity, would have removed in great measure any just objections,—at all events relatively to Fielding himself, and with regard to the state of manners in his time.

Book xvi. ch. 5.

That refined degree of Platonic affection which is absolutely detached from the flesh, and is indeed entirely and purely spiritual, is a gift confined to the female part of the creation; many of whom I have heard declare (and doubtless with great truth) that they would, with the utmost readiness, resign a lover to a rival, when such resignation was proved to be necessary for the temporal interest of such lover.

I firmly believe that there are men capable of such a sacrifice, and this, without pretending to, or even admiring or seeing any virtue in, this absolute detachment from the flesh.
ANOTHER SET OF NOTES ON TOM JONES.

Book i. ch. 4.

"Beyond this the country gradually rose into a ridge of wild mountains, the tops of which were above the clouds."

As this is laid in Somersetshire, the clouds must have been unusually low. One would be more apt to think of Skiddaw or Ben Nevis, than of Quantock or Mendip Hills.

Book xi. ch. 1.

"Nor can the Devil receive a guest more worthy of him, nor possibly more welcome to him than a slanderer."

The very word Devil, Diabolus, means a slanderer.

Book xii. ch. 12.

"And here we will make a concession, which would not perhaps have been expected from us; That no limited form of government is capable of rising to the same degree of perfection, or of producing the same benefits to society with this. Mankind has never been so happy, as when the greatest part of the then known world was under the dominion of a single master; and this state of their felicity continued under the reign of five successive Princes."

Strange that such a lover of political liberty as Fielding should have forgotten that the glaring infamy of the Roman morals and manners immediately on the ascent of Commodus prove, that even five excellent despots in succession were but a mere temporary palliative of the evils inherent in despotism and its causes. Think you that all the sub-despots were Trojans and Antonines? No! Rome was left as it was found by them, incapable of freedom.

Book xviii. ch. 4.

Plato himself concludes his Phædon with declaring, that his best argument amounts only to raise a probability; and Cicero himself seems rather to profess an inclination to believe, than any actual belief, in the doctrines of immortality.

No! Plato does not say so, but speaks as a philosophic Christian would do of the best arguments of the scientific intellect. The assurance is derived from a higher principle. If this be Methodism Plato and Socrates were arrant
Jonathan Wild

Methodists and New Light men; but I would ask Fielding what ratiocinations do more than raise a high degree of probability. But assuredly an historic belief is far different from Christian faith.

No greater proof can be conceived of the strength of the instinctive anticipation of a future state than that it was believed at all by the Greek Philosophers, with their vague and (Plato excepted) Pantheistic conception of the First Cause. S. T. C.

JONATHAN WILD.¹

Jonathan Wild is assuredly the best of all the fictions in which a villain is throughout the prominent character. But how impossible it is by any force of genius to create a sustained attractive interest for such a ground-work, and how the mind wearies of, and shrinks from, the more than painful interest, the μισοτηθ, of utter depravity,—Fielding himself felt and endeavoured to mitigate and remedy by the (on all other principles) far too large a proportion, and too quick recurrence, of the interposed chapters of moral reflection, like the chorus in the Greek tragedy,—admirable specimens as these chapters are of profound irony and philosophic satire. Chap. VI. Book 2, on Hats,²—brief as it is, exceeds any thing even in Swift’s Lilliput, or Tale of the Tub. How forcibly it applies to the Whigs, Tories, and Radicals of our own times.

Whether the transposition of Fielding’s scorching wit (as B. III. c. xiv ) to the mouth of his hero be objectionable on the ground of incredulus odi, or is to be admired as answering the author’s purpose by unrealizing the story, in order to give a deeper reality to the truths intended,—I must leave doubtful, yet myself inclining to the latter judgment. 27th Feb. 1832

¹ Communicated by Mr. Gillman. Ed.
² In which our hero makes a speech well worthy to be celebrated; and the behaviour of one of the gang, perhaps more unnatural than any other part of this history.
As he never dropped the mask, so he too often used the poisoned dagger of an assassin.

Dedication to the English nation.

The whole of this dedication reads like a string of aphorisms arranged in chapters, and classified by a resemblance of subject, or a cento of points.

Ibi. If an honest, and I may truly affirm a laborious, zeal for the public service has given me any weight in your esteem, let me exhort and conjure you never to suffer an invasion of your political constitution, however minute the instance may appear, to pass by, without a determined persevering resistance.

A longer sentence and proportionately inelegant.

Ibi. If you reflect that in the changes of administration which have marked and disgraced the present reign, although your warmest patriots have, in their turn, been invested with the lawful and unlawful authority of the crown, and though other reliefs or improvements have been held forth to the people, yet that no one man in office has ever promoted or encouraged a bill for shortening the duration of parliaments, but that (whoever was minister) the opposition to this measure, ever since the septennial act passed, has been constant and uniform on the part of government.

Long, and as usual, inelegant. Junius cannot manage a long sentence; it has all the ins and outs of a snappish figure-dance.

Preface.

An excellent preface, and the sentences not so snipt as in the dedication. The paragraph near the conclusion beginning with "some opinion may now be expected," &c. and ending with "relation between guilt and punishment," deserves to be quoted as a master-piece of rhetorical ratiocination in a series of questions that permit no answer; or (as Junius says) carry their own answer along with them. The great art of Junius is never to say too much, and to avoid with equal anxiety a common-place manner, and matter that is not common-place. If ever he deviates into any originality of thought, he takes care that it shall be such as excites surprise for its acuteness, rather than admira-
Notes on Junius

tion for its profundity. He takes care? say rather that nature took care for him. It is impossible to detract from the merit of these Letters: they are suited to their purpose, and perfect in their kind. They impel to action, not thought. Had they been profound or subtle in thought, or majestic and sweeping in composition, they would have been adapted for the closet of a Sydney, or for a House of Lords such as it was in the time of Lord Bacon; but they are plain and sensible whenever the author is in the right, and whether right or wrong, always shrewd and epigrammatic, and fitted for the coffee-house, the exchange, the lobby of the House of Commons, and to be read aloud at a public meeting. When connected, dropping the forms of connexion, desultory without abruptness or appearance of disconnexion, epigrammatic and antithetical to excess, sententious and personal, regardless of right or wrong, yet well-skilled to act the part of an honest warm-hearted man, and even when he is in the right, saying the truth but never proving it, much less attempting to bottom it,—this is the character of Junius;—and on this character, and in the mould of these writings must every man cast himself, who would wish in factious times to be the important and long remembered agent of a faction. I believe that I could do all that Junius has done, and surpass him by doing many things which he has not done: for example,—by an occasional induction of startling facts, in the manner of Tom Paine, and lively illustrations and witty applications of good stories and appropriate anecdotes in the manner of Horne Tooke. I believe I could do it if it were in my nature to aim at this sort of excellence, or to be enamoured of the fame, and immediate influence, which would be its consequence and reward. But it is not in my nature. I not only love truth, but I have a passion for the legitimate investigation of truth. The love of truth conjoined with a keen delight in a strict and skilful yet impassioned argumentation, is my master-passion, and to it are subordinated even the love of liberty and all my public feelings—and to it whatever I labour under of vanity, ambition, and all my inward impulses.

Letter I. From this Letter all the faults and excellencies of Junius may be exemplified. The moral and political aphorisms are just and sensible, the irony in which his personal satire is conveyed is fine, yet always intellig-
Notes on Junius

ible; but it approaches too nearly to the nature of a sneer; the sentences are cautiously constructed without the forms of connection; the *he* and *it* everywhere substituted for the *who* and *which*; the sentences are short, laboriously balanced, and the antitheses stand the test of analysis much better than Johnson's. These are all excellencies in their kind;—where is the defect? In this;—there is too much of each, and there is a defect of many things, the presence of which would have been not only valuable for their own sakes, but for the relief and variety which they would have given. It is observable too that every Letter adds to the faults of these Letters, while it weakens the effect of their beauties.

L. III. A capital letter, addressed to a private person, and intended as a sharp reproof for intrusion. Its short sentences, its witty perversions and deductions, its questions and omissions of connectives, all in their proper places are dramatically good.

L. V. For my own part, I willingly leave it to the public to determine whether your vindication of your friend has been as able and judicious as it was certainly well intended; and you, I think, may be satisfied with the warm acknowledgments he already owes you for making him the principal figure in a piece in which, but for your amicable assistance, he might have passed without particular notice or distinction.

A long sentence and, as usual, inelegant and cumbersome. This Letter is a faultless composition with exception of the one long sentence.

L. VII. These are the gloomy companions of a disturbed imagination: the melancholy madness of poetry, without the inspiration.

The rhyme is a fault. 'Fancy' had been better; though but for the rhyme, imagination is the fitter word.

Ib. Such a question might perhaps discompose the gravity of his muscles, but I believe it would little affect the tranquility of his conscience.

A false antithesis, a mere verbal balance; there are far, far too many of these. However, with these few exceptions, this Letter is a blameless composition. Junius may be safely studied as a model for letters where he truly writes letters. Those to the Duke of Grafton and others, are small pamphlets in the form of letters.
L. VIII. To do justice to your Grace’s humanity, you felt for Mac Quick as you ought to do; and, if you had been contented to assist him indirectly, without a notorious denial of justice, or openly insulting the sense of the nation, you might have satisfied every duty of political friendship, without committing the honour of your sovereign, or hazarding the reputation of his government.

An inelegant cluster of *without*. Junius asks questions incomparably well;—but *ne quid nimis*.

L. IX. Perhaps the fair way of considering these Letters would be as a kind of satirical *poeems*; the short, and for ever balanced, sentences constitute a true metre; and the connexion is that of satiric poetry, a witty logic, an association of thoughts by amusing semblances of cause and effect, the sophistry of which the reader has an interest in not stopping to detect, for it flatters his love of mischief, and makes the sport.

L. XII. One of Junius’s arts, and which gives me a high notion of his genius, as a poet and satirist, is this:—he takes for granted the existence of a character that never did and never can exist, and then employs his wit, and surprises and amuses his readers with analyzing its incompatibilities.

L. XIV. Continual sneer, continual irony, all excellent, if it were not for the ‘all’;—but a countenance, with a malignant smile in statuary figure on it, becomes at length an object of aversion, however beautiful the face, and however beautiful the smile. We are relieved, in some measure, from this by frequent just and well expressed moral aphorisms; but then the preceding and following irony gives them the appearance of proceeding from the head, not from the heart. This objection would be less felt, when the Letters were first published at considerable intervals; but Junius wrote for posterity.

L. XXIII. Snee and irony continued with such gross violation of good sense, as to be perfectly nonsense. The man who can address another on his most detestable vices in a strain of cold continual irony, is himself a wretch.

L. XXXV. To honour them with a determined predilection and confidence in exclusion of your English subjects, who placed your family, and, in spite of treachery and rebellion, have supported it upon the throne, is a mistake too gross even for the unsuspecting generosity of youth.

The words ‘upon the throne,’ stand unfortunately for
Wonderfulness of Prose

the harmonious effect of the balance of 'placed' and 'supported.'

This address to the king is almost faultless in composition, and has been evidently tormented with the file. But it has fewer beauties than any other long letter of Junius; and it is utterly undramatic. There is nothing in the style, the transitions, or the sentiments, which represents the passions of a man emboldening himself to address his sovereign personally. Like a Presbyterian's prayer, you may substitute almost every where the third for the second person without injury. The newspaper, his closet, and his own person were alone present to the author's intention and imagination. This makes the composition vapid. It possesses an Isocratic correctness, when it should have had the force and drama of an oration of Demosthenes. From this, however, the paragraph beginning with the words 'As to the Scotch,' and also the last two paragraphs must be honourably excepted. They are, perhaps, the finest passages in the whole collection.

WONDERFULNESS OF PROSE.

It has just struck my feelings that the Pherceydean origin of prose being granted, prose must have struck men with greater admiration than poetry. In the latter it was the language of passion and emotion: it is what they themselves spoke and heard in moments of exultation, indignation, &c. But to hear an evolving roll, or a succession of leaves, talk continually the language of deliberate reason in a form of continued preconception, of a Z already possessed when A was being uttered,—this must have appeared godlike. I feel myself in the same state, when in the perusal of a sober, yet elevated and harmonious succession of sentences and periods, I abstract my mind from the particular passage and sympathise with the wonder of the common people, who say of an eloquent man—'He talks like a book!'
NOTES ON HERBERT'S TEMPLE AND HARVEY'S SYNAGOGUE.

G. Herbert is a true poet, but a poet *sui generis*, the merits of whose poems will never be felt without a sympathy with the mind and character of the man. To appreciate this volume, it is not enough that the reader possesses a cultivated judgment, classical taste, or even poetic sensibility, unless he be likewise a Christian, and both a zealous and an orthodox, both a devout and a devotional Christian. But even this will not quite suffice. He must be an affectionate and dutiful child of the Church, and from habit, conviction, and a constitutional predisposition to ceremoniousness, in piety as in manners, find her forms and ordinances aids of religion, not sources of formality; for religion is the element in which he lives, and the region in which he moves.

The Church, say rather the Churchmen of England, under the two first Stuarts, has been charged with a yearning after the Romish fopperies, and even the papistic usurpations; but we shall decide more correctly, as well as more charitably, if for the Romish and papistic we substitute the patritic leaven. There even was (natural enough from their distinguished learning, and knowledge of ecclesiastical antiquities) an overrating of the Church and of the Fathers, for the first five or even six centuries; these lines on the Egyptian monks, “Holy Macarius and great Anthony” (p. 205) supply a striking instance and illustration of this.

P. 10.

If thou be single, all thy goods and ground
Submit to love; but yet not more than all.
Give one estate as one life. None is bound
To work for two, who brought himself to thrall.
God made me one man; love makes me no more,
Till labour come, and make my weakness score.

I do not understand this stanza.

P. 41.

My flesh began unto my soul in pain,
Sicknesses clave my bones, &c.

Either a misprint, or a noticeable idiom of the word
and Harvey's Synagogue

"began?" Yes! and a very beautiful idiom it is: the first colloquy or address of the flesh.

P. 46.

What though my body run to dust?
Faith cleaves unto it, counting every grain,
With an exact and most particular trust,
Reserving all for flesh again.

I find few historical facts so difficult of solution as the continuance, in Protestantism, of this anti-scriptural superstition.

P. 54. Second poem on *The Holy Scriptures*.

This verse marks that, and both do make a motion
Unto a third that ten leaves off doth he.

The spiritual unity of the Bible—the order and connection of organic forms in which the unity of life is shewn, though as widely dispersed in the world of sight as the text.

Ib.

Then as dispersed herbs do watch a potion,
These three make up some Christian’s destiny.

Some misprint.

P. 87.

Sweet Spring, full of sweet days and roses,
A box where sweets compacted he.

Next.

P. 92. *Man*.

Each thing is full of duty:
Waters united are our navigation:
*Distinguished*, our habitation;
Below, our drink: above, our meat.
Both are our cleanliness. Hath one such beauty?
Then how are all things neat!

‘Distinguished.’ I understand this but imperfectly. Did they form an island? and the next lines refer perhaps to the then belief that all fruits grow and are nourished by water. But then how is the ascending sap ‘our cleanliness?’ Perhaps, therefore, the rains.

P. 410.

But he doth bid us take his blood for wine.

Nay, the contrary: take wine to be blood, and the blood of a man who died 1800 years ago. This is the faith
Notes on Herbert’s Temple
which even the Church of England demands;¹ for con-substantiation only adds a mystery to that of Transubstantiation, which it implies.

P. 175. The Flower.
A delicious poem.

Ib.

How fresh, O Lord, how sweet and clear
Are thy returns e’en as the flowers in spring;
To which, besides their own demean,
The late past frosts tributes of pleasure bring.
Grief melts away.
Like snow in May,
As if there were no such cold thing.

“The late past frosts tributes of pleasure bring.”

Epitritus primus + Dactyl + Trochee + a long word—syllable, which, together with the pause intervening between it and the word—trochee, equals -O -O -O -O -O- form a pleasing variety in the Pentameter iambic with rhymes. Ex. gr.

Thē lāte pāst frōsts | tributēs Ȝ | pλēsūre | bring.

N.B. First, the difference between -O | —and an amphimacer - O - | and this not always or necessarily arising out of the latter being one word. It may even consist of three words, yet the effect be the same. It is the pause that makes the difference. Secondly, the expediency, if not necessity, that the first syllable both of the Dactyl and the Trochee should be short by quantity, and only = - by force of accent or position—the Epitrite being true lengths. Whether the last syllable be - or = - the force of the rhymes renders indifferent. Thus, ... .

¹ This is one of my father’s marginalia, which I can hardly persuade myself he would have re-written just as it stands. Where does the Church of England affirm that the wine per se literally is the blood shed 1800 years ago? The language of our Church is that “we receiving these creatures of bread and wine, &c. may be partakers of His most blessed body and blood;” that “to such as rightly receive the same the cup of blessing is a partaking of the blood of Christ.” Does not this language intimate, that the blood of Christ is spiritually produced in the soul through a faithful reception of the appointed symbols, rather than that the wine itself, apart from the soul, has become the blood? In one sense, indeed, it is the blood of Christ to the soul: it may be metaphorically called so, if, by means of it, the blood is really, though spiritually, partaken. More than this is surely not affirmed in our formulas, nor taught by our great divines in general. I do not write these words by way of argument, but because I cannot re-print such a note of my father’s, which has excited surprise in some of his studious readers, without a protest. S. C.
and Harvey’s Synagogue 375

“As if there were no such cold thing.” Had been no such thing.

P. 181.

Thou who condemnest Jewish hate, &c.

Call home thine eye, (that busy wanderer,)

That choice may be thy story.

Their choice.

P. 184.

Nay, thou dost make me sit and dine

Even in my enemies’ sight.

Foemen’s.

P. 201. Judgment.

Almighty Judge, how shall poor wretches brook

Thy dreadful look, &c.

What others mean to do, I know not well;

Yet I here tell,

That some will turn thee to some leave therein

So void of sin,

That they in merit shall excel.

I should not have expected from Herbert so open an avowal of Romanism in the article of merit. In the same spirit is “Holy Macarius, and great Anthony,” p. 205.1

P. 237. The Communion Table.

And for the matter whereof it is made,

The matter is not much,

Although it be of tuck,

Or wood, or metal, what will last, or fade;

So vanity

And superstition avoided be.

1 Herbert however adds...

“But I resolve, when thou shalt call for mine,

That to decline,

And thrust a Testament into thy hand

Let that be scanned;

There thou shalt find my faults are thine.

Martin Luther himself might have penned this concluding stanza.

Since I wrote the above, a note in Mr. Pickering’s edition of Herbert has been pointed out to me

“The Rev. Dr. Bliss has kindly furnished the following judicious remark, and which is proved to be correct, as the word is printed ‘heare’ in the first edition (1553).” He says, “Let me take this opportunity of mentioning what a very learned and able friend pointed out on this note. The fact is, Coleridge has been misled by an error of the press.

What others mean to do, I know not well,

Yet I here tell, &c. &c.

Should be hear tell. The sense is then obvious, and Herbert is not made to do that which he was the last man in the world to have done, namely, to avow ‘Romanism in the article of merit.’”

This suggestion once occurred to myself, and appears to be right, as it is verified by the first edition; but at the time it seemed to me so obvious, that surely the correction would have been made before if there had not been some reason against it. S. C.
Notes on Herbert's Temple

_Tuch_ rhyming to _much_, from the German _tuch_, cloth, I never met with before, as an English word. So I find _platt_ for _foliage_ in Stanley's Hist. of Philosophy, p. 22.

P. 252. _The Synagogue_, by Christopher Harvey.

_The Bishop._

But who can show of old that ever any
Presbyteries without their bishops were:
_Though bishops without presbyteries many, &c._

An instance of _proving too much._ If_'Bishop without
Presb. B._ = Presb. i.e. no Bishop.

P. 253. _The Bishop._

To rule and to be ruled are distinct,
And several duties, severally belong
To several _persons._

Functions of times, but not persons, of necessity? Ex. Bishop to Archbishop.

P. 255. _Church Festivals._

_Who loves not you, doth but in vain profess_
_That he loves God, or heaven, or happiness._

Equally unthinking and uncharitable:—I approve of
them;—but yet remember Roman Catholic idolatry, and
that it originated in such high-flown metaphors as these.

P. 255. _The Sabbath, or Lord's Day._

_Hail_ Vail
_Holy_ Wholly
_King of days, &c._ To thy praise, &c.

Make it sense and lose the rhyme; or make it rhyme
and lose the sense.

P. 258. _The Nativity, or Christmas Day._

_Unfold thy face, unmask thy ray,_
_Shine forth, bright sun, double the day,_
_Let no malignant misty fume, &c._

The only poem in _The Synagogue_ which possesses _poetic_
merit; with a few changes and additions this would be a
striking poem.

Substitute the following for the fifth to the eighth line.

_To sheath or blunt one happy ray,_
_That wins new splendour from the day,_
_This day that gives thee power to rise,_
_And shine on hearts as well as eyes:_
Extract from a Letter

This birth-day of all souls, when first
On eyes of flesh and blood did burst
That primal great lucifíc light,
That rays to thee, to us gave sight.

P. 267. Whit-Sunday.

Nay, startle not to hear that rushing wind,
Wherewith this place is shaken, &c.

To hear at once so great variety
Of language from them come, &c.

The spiritual miracle was the descent of the Holy Ghost:
the outward the wind and the tongues: and so St. Peter
himself explains it. That each individual obtained the
power of speaking all languages, is neither contained in,
nor fairly deducible from, St. Luke’s account.

P. 269. Trinity Sunday.

The Trinity
In Unity,
And Unity
In Trinity,
All reason doth transcend.

Most true, but not contradict. Reason is to faith, as the
eye to the telescope.

EXTRACT FROM A LETTER

OF S. T. COLERIDGE TO W. COLLINS, R.A.

PRINTED IN THE LIFE OF COLLINS

BY HIS SON. VOL. I.

December, 1818.

To feel the full force of the Christian religion it is perhaps
necessary, for many tempers, that they should first be
made to feel, experimentally, the hollowness of human
friendship, the presumptuous emptiness of human hopes.
I find more substantial comfort now in pious George
Herbert’s Temple, which I used to read to amuse myself
with his quaintness, in short, only to laugh at, than in
all the poetry since the poems of Milton. If you have
not read Herbert I can recommend the book to you con-
fidently. The poem entitled “The Flower” is especially
Notes on Gray

affecting, and to me such a phrase as "and relish versing" expresses a sincerity and reality, which I would unwillingly exchange for the more dignified "and once more love the Muse," &c. and so with many other of Herbert's homely phrases.

NOTES ON MATHIAS' EDITION
OF GRAY.

On a distant prospect of Eton College.

Vol. i. p. 9.

Wanders the hoary Thames along
   His silver-winding way.

Gray

We want, methinks, a little treatise from some man of flexible good sense, and well versed in the Greek poets, especially Homer, the choral, and other lyrics, containing first a history of compound epithets, and then the laws and licenses. I am not so much disposed as I used to be to quarrel with such an epithet as "silver-winding;" ungrammatical as the hyphen is, it is not wholly illogical, for the phrase conveys more than silvery and winding. It gives, namely, the unity of the impression, the co-inherence of the brightness, the motion, and the line of motion.

P. 10.

Say, Father Thames, for thou hast seen
   Full many a sprightly race
Disporting on thy margent green,
   The paths of pleasure trace;
Who foremost now delight to cleave,
With pliant arm, thy glassy wave?
   The captive linnet which enthral?
What idle progeny succeed
To chase the rolling circle's speed,
   Or urge the flying ball?

Gray

This is the only stanza that appears to me very objectionable in point of diction. This, I must confess, is not only falsetto throughout, but is at once harsh and feeble, and very far the worst ten lines in all the works of Mr. Gray, English or Latin, prose or verse.
Notes on Gray

P. 12.

And envy wan, and faded care.¹
Grim-visaged comfortless despair.²
And sorrow’s piercing dart.³

¹ Bad in the first, ² in the second, ³ in the last degree.

P. 15.

The proud are taught to taste of pain. Gray.

There is a want of dignity—a sort of irony in this phrase to my feeling that would be more proper in dramatic than in lyric composition.


Whatever might be expected from a scholar, a gentleman, a man of exquisite taste, as the quintessence of sane and sound good sense, Mr. Gray appears to me to have performed. The poet Plato, the orator Plato, Plato the exquisite dramatist of conversation, the seer and the painter of character, Plato the high-bred, highly-educated, aristocratic republican, the man and the gentleman of quality stands full before us from behind the curtain as Gray has drawn it back. Even so does Socrates, the social wise old man, the practical moralist. But Plato the philosopher, but the divine Plato, was not to be comprehended within the field of vision, or be commanded by the fixed immovable telescope of Mr. Locke’s human understanding. The whole sweep of the best philosophic reflections of French or English fabric in the age of our scholarly bard, was not commensurate with the mighty orb. The little, according to my convictions at least, the very little of proper Platonism contained in the written books of Plato, who himself, in an epistle, the authenticity of which there is no tenable ground for doubting, as I was rejoiced to find Mr. Gray acknowledge, has declared all he had written to be substantially Socratic, and not a fair exponent of his own tenets,¹ even this little, Mr. Gray has either misconceived or honestly confessed that, as he was not one of the initiated, it was utterly beyond his comprehension. Finally, to repeat the explanation with which I closed the last page of these notes and extracts,

Volsimi ———— e vidi Plato
(Qua non quel Plato)

¹ See Plato’s second epistle φραστέων δή σοι δι’ αινιγμών κ. τ. λ., and towards the end τά δὲ νῦν λεγόμενα Σωκράτους ἔστι, κ. τ. λ. See also the 7th Epistle, p. 141.
Notes on Gray

P. 385. Hippias Major.

We learn from this dialogue in how poor a condition the art of reasoning on moral and abstracted subjects was before the time of Socrates: for it is impossible that Plato should introduce a sophist of the first reputation for eloquence and knowledge in several kinds, talking in a manner below the absurdity and weakness of a child; unless he had really drawn after the life. No less than twenty-four pages are here spent in vain, only to force it into the head of Hippias that there is such a thing as a general idea; and that, before we can dispute on any subject, we should give a definition of it.

Is not this, its improbability out of the question, contradicted by the Protagoras of Plato’s own drawing? Are there no authors, no physicians in London at the present moment, of “the first reputation,” i.e. whom a certain class cry up: for in no other sense is the phrase historically applicable to Hippias, whom a Sydenham redivivus or a new Stahl might not exhibit as pompous ignoramuses? no one Hippias amongst them? But we need not flee to conjectures. The ratiocination assigned by Aristotle and Plato himself to Gorgias and then to the Eleatic School, are positive proofs that Mr. Gray has mistaken the satire of an individual for a characteristic of an age or class.

May I dare whisper to the reeds without proclaiming that I am in the state of Midas,—may I dare to hint that Mr. Gray himself had not, and through the spectacles of Mr. Locke and his followers, could not have seen the difficulties which Hippias found in a general idea, secundum Platonem? S. T. C.


\[ \text{Hēbòkòs ὃ καλλιστος αἰσχρὸς ἀλλῳ γένει συμβαλέων.} \]
\[ \text{‘Ανθρώπων ὃ σοφώτατος πρὸς θεον πιθηκός φανεῖται.} \]

This latter passage is undoubtedly the original of that famous thought in Pope’s Essay on Man, B. 2:

‘And shewed a Newton as we shew an ape’

I remember to have met nearly the same words in one of our elder Poets.

P. 390—91.

That a sophist was a kind of merchant, or rather a retailer of

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1 Petrarch’s Trionfo della Fama, cap. terz. v. 46.
food for the soul, and, like other shopkeepers, would exert his eloquence to recommend his own goods. The misfortune was, we could not carry them off, like corporeal viands, set them by a while, and consider them at leisure, whether they were wholesome or not, before we tasted them: that in this case we have no vessel but the soul to receive them in, which will necessarily retain a tincture, and perhaps, much to its prejudice, of all which is instilled into it.

Query, if Socrates, himself a scholar of the sophists, is accurate, did not the change of ὁ σοφός into ὁ Σωφίστης, in the single case of Solon, refer to the wisdom-causing influences of his legislation? Mem:—to examine whether Φρονίστης was, or was not, more generally used at first in malum sensum, or rather the proper force originally of the termination ιστής, ἴστής—whether (as it is evidently verbal) it imply a reflex or a transitive act.

P. 390. Ὄη 'Ἀμαθία.

This is the true key and great moral of the dialogue, that knowledge alone is the source of virtue, and ignorance the source of vice; it was Plato's own principle, see Plat. Epist. 7. p. 336. Ἀμαθία, ἐξ ἴστης πάντα κακά πάσιν ἐπιβλέπως καὶ βλαστάνει καὶ εἰς ὁπετείς ἄποτελεῖ καρπόν τοῖς γεννησαει πρὸ ὕπατον. See also Sophist. p. 228 and 229, and Euthydemus from p. 278 to 281, and De Legib. I. 3. p. 688.) and probably it was also the principle of Socrates: the consequence of it is, that virtue may be taught, and may be acquired: and that philosophy alone can point us out the way to it.

More than our word, Ignorance, is contained in the Ἀμαθία of Plato. I, however, freely acknowledge, that this was the point of view, from which Socrates did for the most part contemplate moral good and evil. Now and then he seems to have taken a higher station, but soon quitted it for the lower, more generally intelligible. Hence the vacillation of Socrates himself: hence, too, the immediate opposition of his disciples, Antisthenes and Aristippus. But that this was Plato's own principle I exceedingly doubt. That it was not the principle of Platonism, as taught by the first Academy under Speusippus, I do not doubt at all. See the xivth Essay, p. 129-39 of The Friend, vol. i. In the sense in which Ἀμαθίας πάντα κακά ἐπιβλέπως, κ.τ.λ. is maintained in that Essay, so and no otherwise can it be truly asserted, and so and no otherwise did ὃς ἑμοὶ γέ δοκεῖ, Plato teach it.
BARRY CORNWALL.

BARRY CORNWALL is a poet, *me saltem judice*: and in that sense of the term, in which I apply it to C. Lamb and W. Wordsworth. There are poems of great merit, the authors of which I should yet not feel impelled so to designate.

The faults of these poems are no less things of hope, than the beauties; both are just what they ought to be,—that is, now.

If B. C. be faithful to his genius, it in due time will warn him, that as poetry is the identity of all other knowledges, so a poet cannot be a great poet, but as being likewise inclusively an historian and naturalist, in the light, as well as the life, of philosophy: all other men's worlds are his chaos.

Hints *obiter* are:—not to permit delicacy and exquisite-ness to seduce into effeminacy. Not to permit beauties by repetition to become mannerisms. To be jealous of fragmentary composition,—as epicurism of genius, and apple-pie made all of quinces. *Item*, that dramatic poetry must be poetry hid in thought and passion,—not thought or passion disguised in the dress of poetry. Lastly, to be economic and withholding in similes, figures, &c. They will all find their place, sooner or later, each as the luminary of a sphere of its own. There can be no galaxy in poetry, because it is language,—*ergo* processive,—*ergo* every the smallest star must be seen singly.

There are not five metrists in the kingdom, whose works are known by me, to whom I could have held myself allowed to have spoken so plainly. But B. C. is a man of genius, and it depends on himself—(competence protecting him from gnawing or distracting cares)—to become a rightful poet,—that is, a great man.

Oh! for such a man worldly prudence is transfigured into the highest spiritual duty! How generous is self-interest in him, whose true self is all that is good and hopeful in all ages, as far as the language of Spenser, Shakspeare, and Milton shall become the mother-tongue!

A map of the road to Paradise, drawn in Purgatory, on the confines of Hell, by S. T. C. July 30, 1819.

1 Written in Mr. Lamb's copy of the 'Dramatic Scenes.' *Ed.*
ON THE MODE OF STUDYING KANT.

EXTRACT FROM A LETTER OF MR. COLERIDGE TO J. GOODEN, ESQ.¹

Accept my thanks for the rules of the harmony. I perceive that the members are chiefly merchants; but yet it were to be wished, that such an enlargement of the society could be brought about as, retaining all its present purposes, might add to them the groundwork of a library of northern literature, and by bringing together the many gentlemen who are attached to it be the means of eventually making both countries better acquainted with the valuable part of each other; especially, the English with the German, for our most sensible men look at the German Muses through a film of prejudice and utter misconception.

With regard to philosophy, there are half a dozen things, good and bad, that in this country are so nick-named, but in the only accurate sense of the term, there neither are, have been, or ever will be but two essentially different schools of philosophy, the Platonic, and the Aristotelian. To the latter but with a somewhat nearer approach to the Platonic, Emanuel Kant belonged; to the former Bacon and Leibnitz, and, in his riper and better years, Berkeley. And to this I profess myself an adherent—nihil novum, vel inauditum audemus; though, as every man has a face of his own, without being more or less than a man, so is every true philosopher an original, without ceasing to be an inmate of Academus or of the Lyceum. But as to caution, I will just tell you how I proceeded myself twenty years and more ago, when I first felt a curiosity about Kant, and was fully aware that to master his meaning, as a system, would be a work of great labour and long time. First, I asked myself, have I the labour and the time in my power? Secondly, if so, and if it would be of adequate importance to me if true, by what means can I arrive at a rational presumption for or against? I inquired after all the more popular writings of Kant—read them with delight. I then read the Prefaces of several of his systematic works, as the Prolegomena, &c. Here too every part, I understood, and

¹ This letter and the following notes on Jean Paul were communicated by Mr. H. C. Robinson. S. C.
On the Mode of Studying Kant

that was nearly the whole, was replete with sound and
plain, though bold and to me novel truths; and I followed
Socrates’ adage respecting Heraclitus: all I understand is
excellent, and I am bound to presume that the rest is at
least worth the trouble of trying whether it be not equally
so. In other words, until I understand a writer’s igno-
rance, I presume myself ignorant of his understanding.
Permit me to refer you to a chapter on this subject in my
Literary Life.¹

Yet I by no means recommend to you an extension of
your philosophic researches beyond Kant. In him is con-
tained all that can be learned, and as to the results, you have
a firm faith in God, the responsible Will of Man and Im-
mortality; and Kant will demonstrate to you, that this
faith is acquiesced in, indeed, nay, confirmed by the Reason
and Understanding, but grounded on Postulates authorized
and substantiated solely by the Moral Being. There are
likewise mine: and whether the Ideas are regulative only,
as Aristotle and Kant teach, or constitutive and actual, as
Pythagoras and Plato, is of living interest to the philo-
sopher by profession alone. Both systems are equally
true, if only the former abstain from denying universally
what is denied individually. He, for whom Ideas are con-
stitutive, will in effect be a Platonist; and in those for
whom they are regulative only, Platonism is but a hollow
affectation. Dryden could not have been a Platonist.
Shakspeare, Milton, Dante, Michael Angelo and Rafael
could not have been other than Platonists. Lord Bacon,
who never read Plato’s works, taught pure Platonism in
his great work, the Novum Organum, and abuses his divine
predecessor for fantastic nonsense, which he had been the
first to explode. Accept my best respects, &c.

S. 1. COlERIDGE.


¹ Biographia Literaria, vol. i. chap. xii. p. 242. S. C.
NOTES ON THE PALINGENESIEN OF JEAN PAUL.

Written in the blank leaf at the beginning.

—S ist zu merken, dass die Sprache in diesem Buch nicht sey wie in gewöhnlich Bette, darin der Gedankenstrom ordentlich und chrbar hinström, sondern wie ein Verwüstung in Damm and Deichen. ¹

Preface, p. xxxi.

Two Revolutions, the Gallican, which sacrifices the individuals to the Idea or to the State, and in time of need, even the latter themselves; —and the Kantian-Moralist (Kantisch-Moralische), which abandons the affection of human Love altogether, because it can so little be described as merit; these draw and station us forlorn human creatures ever further and more lonesomely one from another, each on a frosty uninhabited island: nay the Gallican which excites and arms feelings against feelings, does it less than the Critical, which teaches us to disarm and to dispense with them altogether; and which neither allows Love to pass for the spring of virtue, nor virtue for the source of Love.² Transl.

But surely Kant's aim was not to give a full Sittenlehre, or system of practical material morality, but the a priori form—Ethice formalis: which was then a most necessary work, and the only mode of quelling at once both Necessitarians and Meritmongers, and the idol common to both, Eudaemonism. If his followers have stood still in lazy adoration, instead of following up the road thus opened out to them, it is their fault not Kant's.

S. T. C.

¹ It is observable that the language in this book is not as in an ordinary channel, wherein the stream of thought flows on in a seemly and regular manner but like a violent flood rushing against dyke and mole.

² Zwei Revolutionen, die gallische, welche der Idee oder dem Staate die Individuen, and im Notfall seinen selber opfert, und die kantisch-moralische, welche die Affekt der Menschenliebe liegen lässt, weil er so wenig wie Verdienste geben war den kan, diese ziehen und stellen uns verlas eene Menschen immer weiter un einsamer aus einander, jeden nur auf ein froiges unbewohnetes Eiland; ja die galliche, die nur Gefühle gegen Gefühle bewaffnet und aufhebt, dass es weniger als die kriefe, die sie entaffen und entbehren lüht, und die weder die Liebe als Quelle der Tugend noch diese als Quelle von jener gelten lassen kan.
L'ENVoy.

He was one who with long and large armfuls still collected precious armfuls in whatever direction he pressed forward, yet still took up so much more than he could keep together, that those who followed him gleaned more from his continual droppings than he himself brought home;—nay, made stately corn-ricks therewith, while the reaper himself was still seen only with a strutting armful of newly-cut sheaves. But I should misinform you grossly if I left you to infer that his collections were a heap of incoherent miscellanea. No! the very contrary. Their variety, conjoined with the too great coherency, the too great both desire and power of referring them in systematic, nay, genetic subordination, was that which rendered his schemes gigantic and impracticable, as an author, and his conversation less instructive as a man. *Auditorom inopem ipsa copia fecit.*—Too much was given, all so weighty and brilliant as to preclude a chance of its being all received,—so that it not seldom passed over the hearer's mind like a roar of many waters.