SUBJECTS OF EXAMINATION

IN THE

ENGLISH LANGUAGE,

APPOINTED BY THE

Senate of the Calcutta University

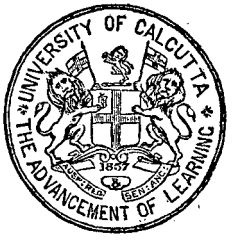
FOR THE

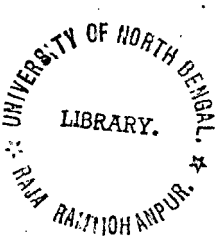
FIRST EXAMINATION IN ARTS

OF

DECEMBER

1862.





CALCUTTA:

PRINTED FOR THE UNIVERSITY, AT THE BAPTIST MISSION PRESS.

1861.

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PARADISE LOST.

"THE VERSE."

[The following is from the hand of the poet himself: as it is short, I have given his own orthography,* peculiar in some points.—Ed.]

"The measure is English Heroick Verse without Rime, as that of Homer in Greek, and of Virgil in Latin; Rime being no necessary Adjunct or true Ornament of Poem or good Verse, in longer Works especially, but the Invention of a barbarous Age, to set off wretched matter and lame Meeter; grac't indeed since by the use of some famous modern Poets, carried away by Custom, but much to their own vexation, hindrance, and constraint, to express many things otherwise, and for the most part worse, then else they would have exprest them. Not without cause, therefore, some both Italian and Spanish Poets of prime note, have rejected Rime both in longer and shorter Works, as have also, long since, our best English Tragedies; as a thing of itself, to all judicious ears, trivial and of no true musical delight; which consists only in apt Numbers, fit quantity of Syllables, and the sense variously drawn out from one verse into another, not in the jingling sound of like endings, a fault avoided by the learned Ancients both in Poetry and all good Oratory. This neglect then of Rime so little is to be taken for a defect, though it may seem so perhaps to vulgar Readers, that it rather is to be esteem'd an example set, the first in English, of ancient liberty recover'd to Heroick Poem from the troublesome and modern bondage of Riming."

* From Milton's own edition, 1669.

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK I.

ARGUMENT.

THIS first book proposes, first in brief, the whole subject, man's disobedience, and the loss thereupon of Paradise, wherein he was placed. Then touches the prime cause of his fall, the serpent, or rather Satan in the serpent, who, revolting from God, and drawing to his side many legions of Angels, was by the command of God driven out of heaven with all his crew into the great deep. Which action passed over, the Poem hastes into the midst of things, presenting Satan with his Angels now fallen into hell, described here, not in the centre, for heaven and earth may be supposed as yet not made, certainly not yet accursed; but in a place of utter darkness, fitliest called Chaos: here Satan with his Angels lying on the burning lake, thunderstruck and astonished, after a certain space recovers, as from confusion, calls up him who next in order and dignity lay by him: they confer of their miserable fall. Satan awakens all his legions, who lay till then in the same manner confounded: they rise; their numbers, array of battel, their chief leaders named, according to the idols known afterwards in Canaan and the countries adjoining. To these Satan directs his speech, comforts them with hope yet of regaining heaven, but tells them lastly of a new world and a new kind of creature to be created, according to an ancient prophecy or report in heaven; for that Angels were long before this visible creation, was the opinion of many ancient Fathers. To find out the truth of this prophecy, and what to determine thereon, he refers to a full council. What his associates thence attempt. Pandæmonium, the palace of Satan, rises, suddenly built out of the deep: the infernal Peers there sit in council.

OF man's first disobedience,* and the fruit
Of that forbidden tree, whose mortal taste
Brought death into the world, and all our woe,
With loss of Eden, till one greater Man

* Milton has proposed the subject of his poem in the first six verses: these lines are perhaps as plain, simple, and unadorned, as any of the whole poem; in which particular the author has conformed himself to the example of Homer, and the precept of Horace. His invocation to a work, which turns in a great measure on the creation of the world, is properly made to the Muse who inspired Moses in those books from whence our author drew his subject; and to the Holy Spirit, who is therein represented as operating after a particular manner in the first production of nature. The whole exordium rises very happily into noble language and sentiment, as I think the transition to the fable is exquisitely beautiful and natural.—ADDISON.

Restore us, and regain the blissful seat,
Sing, heavenly Muse, that on the secret top
Of Oreb, or of Sinai, didst inspire
That shepherd, who first taught the chosen seed,
In the beginning how the heavens and earth
Rose out of chaos: or, if Sion hill
Delight thee more, and Siloa's brook* that flow'd
Fast by the oracle of God, I thence
Invoke thy aid to my adventurous song,
That with no middle flight intends to soar
Above the Aonian mount, while it pursues
Things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme.†
And chiefly thou, O Spirit, that dost prefer
Before all temples the upright heart and pure,
Instruct me, for thou know'st; thou from the first
Wast present, and with mighty wings outspread
Dove-like sat'st brooding‡ on the vast abyss,
And madest it pregnant: what in me is dark
Illumine, what is low raise and support;
That to the highth of this great argument
I may assert eternal Providence,
And justify the ways of God to men.§
Say first, for heaven hides nothing from thy view,

---

* *And Siloa's brook.*

Siloa was a small brook that flowed near the temple of Jerusalem: it is mentioned, Isaiah viii. 6; so that, in effect, Milton invokes the heavenly Muse that inspired David and the prophets on Mount Sion, and at Jerusalem; as well as Moses on Mount Sinai.—NEWTON.

† *Rhyme.*

Rhyme here means *verse*.—T. WARTON.

‡ *Dove-like sat'st brooding.*

Alluding to Gen. i. 2. "The spirit of God *moved* on the face of the waters;" for the word that we translate *moved*, signifies properly *brooded*, as a bird doth upon her eggs; and Milton says like a *dove*, rather than any other bird, because the descent of the Holy Ghost is compared to a dove, Luke iii. 22. As Milton studied the Scriptures in the original language, his images and expressions are oftener copied from them than from our translations.—NEWTON.

§ *And justify the ways of God to men.*

Pope has thought fit to borrrw this verse, with some little variation, "Essay on Man," ep. i. 16:—"but *vindicate* the ways of God to man." It is not easy to conceive any good reason for Pope's preferring *vindicate;* but Milton uses *justify*, as it is the Scripture word, "that thou mightest be *justified* in thy sayings." Rom. iii. 4.—And "the ways of God to men" are *justified* in the many argumentative discourses throughout the poem, particularly in the cone ferences between God the Father and the Son.—NEWTON.

Nor the deep tract of hell,* say first what cause
Moved our grand parents, in that happy state,
Favour'd of Heaven so highly, to fall off
From their Creator, and transgress his will
For one restraint, lords of the world besides?
Who first seduced them to that foul revolt?
The infernal Serpent; he it was, whose guile,
Stirr'd up with envy and revenge, deceived
The mother of mankind; what time his pride
Had cast him out from heaven, with all his host
Of rebel Angels; by whose aid aspiring
To set himself in glory above his peers
He trusted to have equal'd the Most High,†
If he opposed; and with ambitious aim
Against the throne and monarchy of God
Raised impious war in heaven and battle proud
With vain attempt. ‡ Him the Almighty Power
Hurl'd headlong flaming from the ethereal sky,
With hideous ruin and combustion, down
To bottomless perdition, there to dwell
In adamantine chains and penal fire,
Who durst defy the Omnipotent to arms.
Nine times the space that measures day and night
To mortal men,‡ he with his horrid crew
Lay vanquish'd, rolling in the fiery gulf,
Confounded though immortal: but his doom
Reserved him to more wrath; for now the thought
Both of lost happiness and lasting pain
Torments him; round he throws his baleful eyes,
That witness'd huge affliction and dismay,

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* *Say first, for heaven hides nothing from thy view,*
Nor the deep tract of hell.

The poets attribute a kind of omniscience to the Muse; and very rightly, as enables them to speak of things which could not otherwise be supposed to ne to their knowledge. Milton's Muse being the Holy Spirit, must of course be omniscient: and the mention of heaven and hell is very proper in this place, as the scene of a great part of the poem is laid sometimes in hell and sometimes in heaven.—NEWTON.

† *He trusted to have equal'd the Most High.*

See Isaiah, ch. xiv. 13.—STILLINGFLEET.

‡ *Nine times the space that measures day and night*
To mortal men.

The nine days' astonishment, in which the angels lay entranced after their dreadful overthrow and fall from heaven, before they could recover either the use of thought or speech, is a noble circumstance, and very finely imagined. The division of hell into seas of fire, and into firm ground impregnated with the same furious element, with that particular circumstance of the exclusion of hope from those infernal regions, are instances of the same great and fruitful invention.—ADDISON.

Mix'd with obdurate pride and stedfast hate.
At once, as far as angels ken, he views
The dismal situation waste and wild:
A dungeon horrible, on all sides round,
As one great furnace, flamed; yet from those flames
No light,* but rather darkness visible†
Served only to discover sights of woe,
Regions of sorrow, doleful shades, where peace
And rest can never dwell; hope never comes,
That comes to all; but torture without end
Still urges, and a fiery deluge, fed
With ever-burning sulphur unconsumed:
Such place eternal justice had prepared
For those rebellious; here their prison ordain'd
In utter darkness; and their portion set
As far removed from God and light of heaven,
As from the centre thrice to the utmost pole.‡
O, how unlike the place from whence they fell!
There the companions of his fall o'erwhelm'd
With floods and whirlwinds of tempestuous fire,§
He soon discerns; and weltering by his side,
One next himself in power, and next in crime,
Long after known in Palestine, and named

---

* *Yet from those flames*
No light.

So the Wisdom of Solomon, ch. xviii. 5, 6:—"No power of the fire might give them light; only there appeared unto them a fire kindled of itself, very dreadful."—TODD.

† *Darkness visible.*

Milton seems to have used these words to signify gloom: absolute darkness is, strictly speaking, invisible; but where there is a gloom only, there is so much light remaining, as serves to show that there are objects, and yet that those objects cannot be distinctly seen.—PEARCE.

‡ *As from the centre thrice to the utmost pole.*

Thrice as far as it is from the centre of the earth, which is the centre of the world, according to Milton's system, b. ix. 103, and b. x. 671, to the pole of the world; for it is the pole of the universe, far beyond the pole of the earth, which is here called *the utmost pole*. Homer makes the seat of hell as far beneath the deepest pit of earth as the heaven is above the earth, Iliad viii. 16. Virgil makes it twice as far, Æneid, vi. 578: and Milton *thrice* as far; as if these three great poets had stretched their utmost genius, and vied with each other, who should extend his idea of the depth of hell farthest. But Milton's whole description of hell as much exceeds theirs, as in this single circumstance of the depth of it. And how cool and unaffecting is the Τάρταρον ἠερόεντα, the σιδήρειαί τε πύλαι καὶ χάλκεος οὐδός, of Homer,—the "lugentes campi," the "ferrea turris," and "horrisono stridentes cardine portæ," of Virgil, in comparison with this description by Milton, concluding with that artful constrast "O, how unlike the place from whence they fell."—NEWTON.

§ *Tempestuous fire.*

Psalm xi. 6:—"Upon the wicked the Lord will rain fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest."—DUNSTER.

Beëlzebub: to whom the arch-enemy,*
And thence in heaven call'd Satan,†—with bold words
Breaking the horrid silence thus began:—
If thou beest he—But O, how fallen! how changed
From him, who in the happy realms of light,
Clothed with transcendent brightness, didst outshine
Myriads, though bright! If he, whom mutual league,
United thoughts and counsels, equal hope
And hazard in the glorious enterprise,
Join'd with me once, now misery hath join'd
In equal ruin: into what pit thou seest,
From what highth fallen: so much the stronger proved
He with his thunder; and till then who knew
The force of those dire arms? yet not for those,
Nor what the potent Victor in his rage
Can else inflict, do I repent, or change,
Though changed in outward lustre, that fix'd mind
And high disdain from sense of injured merit,
That with the Mightiest raised me to contend,
And to the fierce contention brought along
Innumerable force of spirits arm'd,
That durst dislike his reign; and, me preferring,
His utmost power with adverse power opposed
In dubious battle on the plains of heaven,
And shook his throne. What though the field be lost?
All is not lost; the unconquerable will

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* *To whom the arch-enemy.*

The thoughts in the first speech and description of Satan, who is one of the principal actors in this poem, are wonderfully proper to give us a full idea of him: his pride, envy, and revenge, obstinacy, despair, and impenitence, are all of them very artfully interwoven. In short, his first speech is a complication of all those passions which discover themselves separately in several other of his speeches in the poem. The whole part of this great enemy of mankind is filled with such incidents as are very apt to raise and terrify the reader's imagination. Of this nature, in the book now before us, is his being the first that awakens out of the general trance, with his posture on the burning lake, his rising from it, and the description of his shield and spear: to which we may add his call to the fallen angels, that lay plunged and stupefied in the sea of fire.

Amidst those impieties which this enraged spirit utters in other places of this poem, the author has taken care to introduce none that is not big with absurdity, and incapable of shocking a religious reader: his words, as the poet himself describes them, bearing only "a semblance of worth, not substance." He is also with great art described as owning his adversary to be Almighty. Whatever perverse interpretation he puts on the justice, mercy, and other attributes of the Supreme Being, he frequently confesses his omnipotence; that being the perfection he was forced to allow him, and the only consideration which could support his pride under the shame of his defeat.—ADDISON.

† *And thence in heaven call'd Satan.*

For the word *Satan*, in Hebrew, signifies an *enemy*: he is THE ENEMY by way of eminence, the chief enemy of God and Man.—NEWTON.

And study of revenge, immortal hate,
And courage never to submit or yield,
And what is else not to be overcome;
That glory never shall his wrath or might
Extort from me: to bow and sue for grace
With suppliant knee, and deify his power,
Who from the terrour of this arm so late
Doubted his empire; that were low indeed;
That were an ignominy and shame beneath
This downfall; since, by fate, the strength of gods*
And this empyreal substance cannot fail;
Since, through experience of this great event,
In arms not worse, in foresight much advanced,
We may with more successful hope resolve
To wage by force or guile eternal war,
Irreconcileable to our grand Foe,
Who now triumphs, and in the excess of joy
Sole reigning holds the tyranny of heaven.
So spake the apostate angel, though in pain,
Vaunting aloud, but rack'd with deep despair:
And him thus answer'd soon his bold compeer:—
O prince, O chief of many throned powers,
That led the imbattel'd seraphim to war
Under thy conduct, and, in dreadful deeds
Fearless, endanger'd heaven's perpetual King;
And put to proof his high supremacy,
Whether upheld by strength, or chance, or fate:
Too well I see and rue the dire event,
That with sad overthrow and foul defeat
Hath lost us heaven, and all this mighty host
In horrible destruction laid thus low;
As far as gods and heavenly essences
Can perish: for the mind and spirit remains
Invincible, and vigour soon returns;
Though all our glory extinct,† and happy state
Here swallow'd up in endless misery.
But what if he our Conqueror, whom I now
Of force believe Almighty, since no less

---

* *Since, by fate, the strength of gods.*

For Satan supposes the angels to subsist by fate and necessity; and he represents them of an empyreal, that is, a fiery substance, as the Scripture itself does, Psalm civ. 4:—"He maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a *flame of fire*."—NEWTON.

‡ *Though all our glory extinct.*

As a flame put out and extinguished for ever. This word is very properly applied to their irrecoverable loss of that angelic beauty which accompanied them when in a state of innocence.—CALLENDER.

Than such could have o'erpower'd such force as ours!—
Have left us this our spirit and strength entire,
Strongly to suffer and support our pains?
That we may so suffice his vengeful ire;
Or do him mightier service, as his thralls
By right of war, whate'er his business be,
Here in the heart of hell to work in fire,
Or do his errands in the gloomy deep:
What can it then avail, though yet we feel
Strength undiminish'd, or eternal being,
To undergo eternal punishment?
Whereto with speedy words the arch-fiend replied:—
Fallen cherub, to be weak is miserable,
Doing or suffering;* but of this be sure,
To do aught good never will be our task,
But ever to do ill our sole delight;
As being the contrary to his high will,
Whom we resist. If then his providence
Out of our evil seek to bring forth good,
Our labour must be to pervert that end,
And out of good still to find means of evil:
Which oft-times may succeed, so as perhaps
Shall grieve him, if I fail not, and disturb
His inmost counsels from their destined aim.
But see! the angry Victor hath recall'd
His ministers of vengeance and pursuit
Back to the gates of heaven: the sulphurous hail,
Shot after us in storm, o'erblown hath laid
The fiery surge, that from the precipice
Of heaven received us falling; and the thunder,
Wing'd with red lightning and impetuous rage,
Perhaps hath spent his shafts, and ceases now
To bellow through the vast and boundless deep,
Let us not slip the occasion, whether scorn
Or satiate fury yield it from our foe.
Seest thou yon dreary plain forlorn and wild,

---

* *To be weak is miserable,*
Doing or suffering.

Satan having in his speech boasted that the "strength of gods could not fail." v. 116, and Beëlzebub having said, v. 146, "if God has left us this our strength entire, to suffer pain strongly, or to do him mightier service as his thralls, what then can our strength avail us?" Satan here replies very properly, whether we are to suffer or to work, yet still it is some comfort to have our strength undiminished: for it is a *miserable* thing, says he, to be *weak* and without strength, whether we are *doing* or *suffering*. This is the sense of the place; and this is farther confirmed by what Belial says, b. ii. 199:—

To suffer, as to do,
Our strength is equal. PEARCE.

The seat of desolation, void of light,
Save what the glimmering of these livid flames
Casts pale and dreadful? thither let us tend
From off the tossing of these fiery waves;
There rest, if any rest can harbour there;
And, reassembling our afflicted powers,
Consult how we may henceforth most offend
Our enemy; our own loss how repair;
How overcome this dire calamity;
What reinforcement we may gain from hope;
If not, what resolution, from despair.
Thus Satan, talking to his nearest mate,
With head uplift above the wave, and eyes
That sparkling blazed; his other parts besides
Prone on the flood, extended long and large,
Lay floating many a rood; in bulk as huge
As whom the fables name of monstrous size,
Titanian, or Earth-born, that warr'd on Jove,
Briareos, or Typhon, whom the den
By ancient Tarsus held; or that sea-beast
Leviathan, which God of all his works
Created hugest that swim the ocean stream:
Him, haply, slumbering on the Norway foam,
The pilot of some small night-founder'd skiff,*
Deeming some island, oft, as seamen tell,
With fixed anchor in his scaly rind
Moors by his side under the lee, while night
Invests the sea,† and wished morn delays.
So stretch'd out huge in length the arch-fiend lay,
Chain'd on the burning lake; nor ever thence
Had risen or heaved his head, but that the will‡

---

* *The pilot of some small night-foundered skiff.*

Some little boat, whose pilot dares not proceed in his course for fear of the dark night: a metaphor taken from a *foundered* horse that can go no farther; or *night-foundered*, in danger of sinking at night, from the term, *foundering at sea*. I prefer the former, as being Milton's aim.—HUME.

† *Invests the sea.*

A phrase often used by poets, who call darkness the mantle of the night, with which he *invests* the earth. Milton, in another place, has another such beautiful figure, and truly poetical, when speaking of the moon, b. iv. 609:—

And o'er the dark her silver mantle threw.

And in another place, b. ix. 52:—

Night's hemisphere had *veil'd* the horizon round.—CALLANDER.

‡ *But that the will.*

This a material part of the poem; and the management of it is admirable. The poet has nowhere shown his judgment more, than in the reasons assigned, on account of which we find this rebel released from his adamantine chains, and at liberty to become the great, though bad agent of the poem. We may also notice the finely plain but majestic language in which these reasons are assigned. —DUNSTER.

And high permission of all-ruling Heaven
Left him at large to his own dark designs;
That with reiterated crimes he might
Heap on himself damnation, while he sought
Evil to others; and enraged might see
How all his malice served but to bring forth
Infinite goodness, grace, and mercy shown
On man by him seduced: but on himself
Treble confusion, wrath, and vengeance pour'd.
Forthwith upright he rears from off the pool
His mighty stature; on each hand the flames,
Driven backward, slope their pointing spires, and, roll'd
In billows, leave in the midst a horrid vale.
Then with expanded wings he steers his flight
Aloft, incumbent on the dusky air
That felt unusual weight,* till on dry land
He lights; if it were land, that ever burn'd
With solid, as the lake with liquid fire;
And such appear'd in hue, as when the force
Of subterranean wind transports a hill
Torn from Pelorus, or the shatter'd side
Of thundering Ætna, whose combustible
And fuel'd entrails thence conceiving fire,
Sublimed with mineral fury, aid the winds,
And leave a singed bottom all involved
With stench and smoke: such resting found the sole
Of unblest feet. Him follow'd his next mate;
Both glorying to have 'scaped the Stygian flood,
As gods, and by their own recover'd strength,
Not by the sufferance of supernal Power.
Is this the region, this the soil, the clime,
Said then the lost archangel, this the seat,
That we must change for heaven? this mournful gloom
For that celestial light? Be it so, since he,
Who now is Sovran, can dispose and bid
What shall be right: farthest from him is best,
Whom reason hath equall'd, force hath made supreme
Above his equals. Farewell, happy fields,

---

* *Incumbent on the dusky air*
That felt unusual weight.

This conceit of the air's feeling unusual weight is borrowed from Spenser's description of the old dragon, Faer. Qu. I. xi. 18:—

Then with his waving wings displayed wyde,
Himself up high he lifted from the ground;
And with strong flight did forcibly divyde
The yielding *ayre*, which nigh *too feeble* found
Her flitting parts, and element unsound,
To beare so great a weight. THYER.

Where joy for ever dwells! Hail, horrors; hail,
Infernal world! and thou, profoundest hell,
Receive thy new possessor; one who brings
A mind not to be changed by place or time.
The mind is its own place, and in itself
Can make a heaven of hell, a hell of heaven.
What matter where, if I be still the same,
And what I should be; all but less than he
Whom thunder hath made greater? Here at least
We shall be free; the Almighty hath not built
Here for his envy; will not drive us hence:
Here we may reign secure; and in my choice
To reign is worth ambition, though in hell:
Better to reign in hell than serve in heaven.
But wherefore let we then our faithful friends,
The associates and copartners of our loss,
Lie thus astonish'd on the oblivious pool;
And call them not to share with us their part
In this unhappy mansion; or once more
With rallied arms to try what may be yet
Regain'd in heaven, or what more lost in hell?
So Satan spake, and him Beëlzebub
Thus answer'd: Leader of those armies bright,
Which but the Omnipotent none could have foil'd,
If once they hear that voice, their liveliest pledge
Of hope in fears and dangers, heard so oft
In worst extremes, and on the perilous edge
Of battle when it raged, in all assaults
Their surest signal, they will soon resume
New courage, and revive, though now they lie
Grovelling and prostrate on yon lake of fire,
As we erewhile, astounded and amazed:
No wonder, fallen such a pernicious highth.
He scarce had ceased, when the superior fiend
Was moving toward the shore: his ponderous shield,
Ethereal temper, massy, large, and round,
Behind him cast; the broad circumference
Hung on his shoulders, like the moon, whose orb
Through optic glass the Tuscan artist views
At evening, from the top of Fesolé,
Or in Valdarno, to descry new lands,
Rivers or mountains in her spotty globe.
His spear, to equal which the tallest pine,
Hewn on Norwegian hills,* to be the mast

---

* *Norwegian hills.*

The hills of Norway, barren and rocky, but abounding in vast woods, from whence are brought masts of the largest size.—HUME.

Of some great ammiral, were but a wand,
He walk'd with to support uneasy steps
Over the burning marle; not like those steps
On heaven's azure: and the torrid clime
Smote on him sore besides, vaulted with fire.
Nathless he so endured, till on the beach
Of that inflamed sea he stood, and call'd
His legions, angel forms, who lay intranced,
Thick as autumnal leaves that strow the brooks
In Vallombrosa, where the Etrurian shades
High overarch'd imbower; or scatter'd sedge
Afloat, when with fierce winds Orion arm'd*
Hath vex'd the Red-sea coast,† whose waves o'erthrow
Busiris and his‡ Memphian chivalry,
While with perfidious hatred§ they pursued
The sojourners of Goshen, who beheld
From the safe shore their floating carcases
And broken chariot-wheels: so thick bestrown,
Abject and lost, lay these, covering the flood,
Under amazement of their hideous change.
He call'd so loud, that all the hollow deep
Of hell resounded: Princes, potentates,
Warriors, the flower of heaven, once yours, now lost,
If such astonishment as this can seize
Eternal spirits: or have ye chosen this place
After the toil of battle to repose
Your wearied virtue, for the ease you find
To slumber here, as in the vales of heaven?
Or in this abject posture have ye sworn
To adore the Conqueror? who now beholds
Cherub and seraph rolling in the flood,
With scatter'd arms and ensigns, till anon
His swift pursuers from heaven gates discern
The advantage, and descending tread us down
Thus drooping, or with linked thunderbolts

* *With fierce winds Orion arm'd.*

Orion is a constellation represented in the figure of an armed man, and supposed to be attended with stormy weather:—"Assurgens fluctu nimbosus Orion." Virg. Æn. i. 539.—NEWTON.

† *Hath vex'd the Red-sea coast.*

The Red-sea abounds so much with sedge, that in the Hebrew Scriptures it is called the "Sedgy Sea." And Milton says "Hath vex'd the Red-sea coast," particularly, because the wind usually drives the sedge in great quantities towards the shore.—NEWTON.

‡ *Busiris.*

Pharaoh King of Egypt, is called by some writers Busiris.

§ *Perfidious hatred.*

Because Pharaoh, after leave given to the Israelites to depart, followed after them as fugitives.—HUME.

Transfix us to the bottom of this gulf.
Awake, arise; or be for ever fallen!
They heard, and were abash'd, and up they sprung
Upon the wing; as when men wont to watch
On duty, sleeping found by whom they dread,
Rouse and bestir themselves ere well awake.
Nor did they not perceive the evil plight
In which they were, or the fierce pains not feel;
Yet to their general's voice they soon obey'd,
Innumerable. As when the potent rod
Of Amram's son, in Egypt's evil day,
Waved round the coast, up call'd a pitchy cloud
Of locusts, warping on the eastern wind,
That o'er the realm of impious Pharaoh hung
Like night, and darken'd all the land of Nile:*
So numberless were those bad angels seen,
Hovering on wing under the cope of hell,
'Twixt upper, nether, and surrounding fires:
Till, as a signal given, the uplifted spear
Of their great Sultan waving to direct
Their course, in even balance down they light
On the firm brimstone, and fill all the plain.
A multitude, like which the populous north
Pour'd never† from her frozen loins, to pass

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* *Darken'd all the land of Nile.*

The devils, at the command of their infernal monarch, flying abroad over the world to injure the Christian cause, are similarly compared by Tasso to black storms obscuring the face of day. (Gier. Lib. iv. 18.) And, where they are all driven back by Michael, it is said, ix. 66:—

From these bad angels freed,
The world her darken'd visage
Lays aside ———

DUNSTER.

† *A multitude, like which the populous north*
Pour'd never.

This comparison doth not fall below the rest, as some have imagined. They were thick as the leaves, and numberless as the locusts; but such a multitude the north *never* poured forth. The subject of this comparison rises very much above the others,—the leaves and locusts. The northern parts of the world are observed to be more fruitful of people than the hotter countries: hence "the populous north," which Sir William Temple calls "the northern hive."—NEWTON.

Dr. Newton does not seem to be aware that the three comparisons which he refers to, relate to the three different states in which these fallen angels are represented. When abject they lie supine on the lake, they are in this situation compared, in point of number, to vast heaps of leaves which in autumn the poet himself had observed to bestrew the watercourses and bottoms of Vallombrosa. When roused by their great leader's objurgatory summons, and on wing, they are in this second situation again compared, in point of number, to the locusts which were sent as a divine vengeance or plague on the land of Egypt, when Pharaoh refused to let the Israelites depart: these two similes are admirable, and in their place could not, I believe, well be surpassed. That of the locusts,

Rhene or the Danaw, when her barbarous sons*
Came like a deluge on the south, and spread
Beneath Gibraltar to the Libyan sands.
Forthwith from every squadron and each band
The heads and leaders thither haste, where stood
Their great commander; godlike shapes and forms
Excelling human, princely dignities,
And powers, that erst in heaven sat on thrones;
Though of their names† in heavenly records now
Be no memorial, blotted out and razed
By their rebellion from the Book of Life.
Nor had they yet among the sons of Eve
Got them new names; till, wandering o'er the earth,
Through God's high sufferance for the trial of man,
By falsities and lies‡ the greatest part
Of mankind they corrupted to forsake
God their Creator, and the invisible
Glory of him that made them to transform,
Oft to the image of a brute, adorn'd

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independently of its being taken from Scripture, far surpasses in every respect that of the birds of passage in Virgil and Tasso, which both poets have joined to that of leaves falling, to represent the numerous ghosts crowding on the banks of Styx, and the multitude of devils driven back by Michael to the infernal regions. The object of the third comparison is to illustrate the number of the fallen angels, when alighted on the firm brimstone; and like soldiers, forming into bands, under their respective leaders. In this situation, I doubt if he could well have found anything so proper to compare them with, as the most numerous of troops which history records ever to have marched out upon any military expedition. But it must be allowed that the comparing one band of troops to another, where, though different in their nature, the description of them when embodied is so nearly similar, is rather an exemplification than a simile. Besides, comparing the numerous infernal legions to a circumstance of real undecorated history, is no very lucid or poetic illustration; and in this respect I much prefer the reference to the legends of romance and the fabulous ages, ver. 576, &c.—DUNSTER.

* *When her barbarous sons.*

They were truly *barbarous;* for besides exercising several cruelties, they destroyed all the monuments of learning and politeness wherever they came. They were the Goths, and Huns, and Vandals, who overran all the southern provinces of Europe; and, crossing the Mediterranean beneath Gibraltar, landed in Africa, and spread themselves as far as Libya. *Beneath Gibraltar* means, more southward, the north being uppermost in the globe.—NEWTON.

† *Though of their names.*

Psalm ix. 5, 6:—"Thou hast put out their *name* for ever and ever: their *memorial* is perished with them." And Rev. iii. 5.—"I will not blot his *name* out of the book of life."—GILLIES.

‡ *By falsities and lies.*

That is, as Mr. Upton observes, by *false idols*, under a corporeal representation *belying* the true God. The poet plainly alludes to Rom. i. 22, "Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts and creeping things."—NEWTON.

With gay religions full of pomp and gold,
And devils to adore for deities :*
Then were they known to men by various names,
And various idols through the heathen world.
Say, Muse, their names then known, who first, who last,
Roused from the slumber on that fiery couch
At their great emperor's call, as next in worth
Came singly where he stood on the bare strand;
While the promiscuous crowd stood yet aloof.
The chief were those, who, from the pit of hell
Roaming to seek their prey on earth, durst fix
Their seats long after next the seat of God,
Their altars by his altar, gods adored
Among the nations round; and durst abide
Jehovah thundering out of Sion, throned
Between the cherubim: yea, often placed
Within his sanctuary itself, their shrines,
Abominations; and with cursed things
His holy rites and solemn feasts profaned,
And with their darkness durst affront his light.
First Moloch,† horrid king, besmear'd with blood

---

* *And devils to adore for deities.*

Levit. xvii. 7:—"They shall no more offer their sacrifices unto devils." And see also Ps. cvi. 37.—TODD.

† *First Moloch, horrid king.*

First, after Satan and Beëlzebub. *Moloch* signifies *king*, and he is called "*horrid* king," because of the human sacrifices which were made to him: the expression, "passed through fire," is taken from Leviticus, xviii. 21; or 2 Kings xxiii. 10. His idol was of brass, sitting on a throne, and wearing a crown; having the head of a calf, and his arms extended to receive the miserable victims which were to be sacrificed; and therefore it is here probably styled "his grim idol." He was the god of the Ammonites, 1 Kings xi. 7, and was worshipped in Rabba, their capital city, called the "city of waters," 2 Sam. xi. 27; and in the neighbouring countries as far as to the river Arnon, the boundary of their country on the south.—NEWTON.

The part of Moloch is, in all its circumstances, full of that fire and fury which distinguish the spirit from the rest of the fallen angels. He is described in the first book as besmeared with the blood of human sacrifices, and delighted with the tears of parents and the cries of children: in the second book, he is marked out as the fiercest spirit that fought in heaven: and if we consider the figure which he makes in the sixth book, where the battle of the angels is described, we find it every way answerable to the same furious, enraged character.

It may be worth while to observe, that Milton has represented this violent impetuous spirit, who is hurried on by such precipitate passions, as the *first* that rises in that assembly to give his opinion on their present posture of affairs: accordingly, he declares himself abruptly for war; and appears incensed at his companions for losing so much time as even to deliberate upon it. All his sentiments are rash, audacious, and desperate: such is that of arming themselves with their tortures, and turning their punishments upon him who inflicted them. His preferring annihilation to shame or misery is also highly suitable to his character; as the comfort he draws from disturbing the peace of heaven, that, if

Of human sacrifice, and parents' tears;
Though for the noise of drums and timbrels loud
Their children's cries unheard, that pass'd through fire
To his grim idol. Him the Ammonite
Worshipp'd in Rabba and her watery plain,
In Argob, and in Basan, to the stream
Of utmost Arnon. Nor content with such
Audacious neighbourhood, the wisest heart
Of Solomon he led* by fraud to build
His temple right against the temple of God,
On that opprobrious hill; and made his grove
The pleasant valley of Hinnom,† Tophet thence
And black Gehenna call'd, the type of hell.
Next Chemos, the obscene dread of Moab's sons,
From Aroer to Nebo, and the wild
Of southmost Abarim; in Hesebon
And Horonaim, Seon's realm, beyond
The flowery dale of Sibma clad with vines,
And Eleale, to the asphaltic pool:
Peor his other name, when he enticed
Israel in Sittim, on their march from Nile,
To do him wanton rites, which cost them woe.
Yet thence his lustful orgies he enlarged
Even to that hill of scandal, by the grove
Of Moloch homicide, lust hard by hate;
Till good Josiah drove them thence to hell.
With these came they, who, from the bordering flood
Of old Euphrates‡ to the brook that parts
Egypt from Syrian ground, had general names
Of Baalim and Ashtaroth§, those male,
These feminine: for spirits, when they please,

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it be not victory, it is revenge, is a sentiment truly diabolical, and becoming the bitterness of this implacable spirit.—Addison.

* *The wisest heart*
Of Solomon he led.

Solomon built a temple to Moloch in the Mount of Olives, 1 Kings xi. 7, which is therefore called "that opprobrious hill."—Newton.

† *The pleasant valley of Hinnom.*

See Jer. vii. 31. It was called also *Tophet*, from the Hebrew *toph*, a drum; drums and such like noisy instruments being used to drown the cries of the children who were offered to this idol: and Gehenna, or the valley of Hinnom, is, in several places of the New Testament, and by our Saviour himself, made the name and type of hell."—Newton.

‡ *Old Euphrates.*

Gen. ii. 14. It bordered eastward on the Promised Land.—Newton.

§ *Baalim and Ashtaroth.*

They are frequently named together in Scripture. They were the general names of the gods and goddesses of Syria and Palestine: they are supposed to mean the sun and the host of heaven.—Newton.

Can either sex assume, or both; so soft-
And uncompounded is their essence pure;
Not tied or manacled with joint or limb,
Nor founded on the brittle strength of bones,
Like cumbrous flesh; but in what shape they choose,
Dilated or condensed, bright or obscure,
Can execute their aery purposes,
And works of love or enmity fulfil.
For those the race of Israel oft forsook
Their Living Strength, and unfrequented left
His righteous altar, bowing lowly down
To bestial gods; for which their heads as low
Bow'd down in battle, sunk before the spear
Of despicable foes. With these in troop
Came Astoreth,* whom the Phœnicians call'd
Astarte, queen of heaven, with crescent horns;
To whose bright image nightly by the moon
Sidonian virgins paid their vows and songs;
In Sion also not unsung, where stood
Her temple on the offensive mountain, built
By that uxorious king, whose heart, though large,†
Beguiled by fair Idolatresses, fell
To idols foul. Thammuz‡ came next behind,
Whose annual wound in Lebanon allured
The Syrian damsels to lament his fate
In amorous ditties, all a summer's day;
While smooth Adonis from his native rock
Ran purple to the sea, supposed with blood
Of Thammuz yearly wounded: the love-tale
Infected Sion's daughters with like heat;
Whose wanton passions in the sacred porch
Ezekiel saw,§ when, by the vision led,
His eye survey'd the dark idolatries
Of alienated Judah. Next came one
Who mourn'd in earnest, when the captive ark
Maim'd his brute image, head and hands lopp'd off
In his own temple, on the grunsel edge,
Where he fell flat, and shamed his worshippers:

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* *With these in troop*
Came Astoreth.

The goddess of the Phœnicians, under which name the moon was adored. Solomon built her a temple on the Mount of Olives.—NEWTON.

† *Whose heart, though large.*

1 Kings iv. 29:—"And God gave Solomon *largeness of heart*."—TODD.

‡ *Thammuz.*

He was the god of the Syrians, the same with Adonis.—NEWTON.

§ *Ezekiel saw.*

See Ezekiel viii. 12.—TODD.

Dagon his name*; sea monster, upward man
And downward fish: yet had his temple high
Rear'd in Azotus, dreaded through the coast
Of Palestine, in Gath, and Ascalon,
And Accaron and Gaza's frontier bounds.
Him follow'd Rimmon,† whose delightful seat
Was fair Damascus, on the fertile banks
Of Abbana and Pharphar, lucid streams.
He also against the house of God was bold:
A leper once he lost, and gain'd a king;
Ahaz, his sottish conqueror, whom he drew
God's altar to disparage,‡ and displace
For one of Syrian mode, whereon to burn
His odious offerings, and adore the gods
Whom he had vanquish'd. After these appear'd
A crew, who under names of old renown,
Osiris, Isis, Orus,§ and their train,
With monstrous shapes and sorceries abused
Fanatic Ægypt and her priests, to seek
Their wandering gods disguised in brutish forms
Rather than human. Nor did Israel 'scape
The infection,‖ when their borrow'd gold composed
The calf in Oreb; and the rebel king
Doubled that sin in Bethel and in Dan,
Likening his Maker to the grazed ox;
Jehovah, who in one night, when he passed¶
From Ægypt marching, equal'd with one stroke
Both her first-born and all her bleating gods.
Belial came last,** than whom a spirit more lewd

* *Dagon his name.*
See 1 Sam. v. 4.—NEWTON.

† *Rimmon.*
Rimmon was a god of the Syrians.—NEWTON.

‡ *God's altar to disparage.*
See 2 Kings xvi. 10; and 2 Chron. xxviii. 23.—NEWTON.

§ *Orus, &c.*
Orus was the son of Osiris and Isis.—NEWTON.

‖ *Nor did Israel 'scape*
The infection.
The Israelites, by dwelling so long in Egypt, were infected with the superstitions of the Egyptians.—NEWTON.

¶ *Who in one night, when he pass'd.*
See Exod. xii. 12, and Numb. xxxiii. 3, 4.—NEWTON.

** *Belial came last.*
Belial is described in the first book as the idol of the lewd and the luxurious: he is in the second book, pursuant to that description, characterised as timorous and slothful; and, if we look into the sixth book, we find him celebrated in the battle of angels for nothing but that scoffing speech which he makes to Satan, on their supposed advantage over the enemy. As his appearance is uniform, and of

Fell not from heaven, or more gross to love
Vice for itself: to him no temple stood
Or altar smoked; yet who more oft than he
In temples and at altars, when the priest
Turns atheist, as did Eli's sons, who fill'd
With lust and violence the house of God?
In courts and palaces he also reigns,
And in luxurious cities, where the noise
Of riot ascends above their loftiest towers,
And injury, and outrage: and when night
Darkens the streets, then wander forth the sons
Of Belial, flown with insolence and wine.
Witness the streets of Sodom, and that night
In Gibeah, when the hospitable door
Exposed a matron to avoid worse rape.
These were the prime* in order and might;
The rest were long to tell, though far renown'd,
The Ionian gods,† of Javan's issue, held
Gods, yet confess'd later‡ than heaven and earth,
Their boasted parents. Titan, heaven's first born,
With his enormous brood, and birthright seized
By younger Saturn: he from mightier Jove,
His own and Rhea's son, like measure found;
So Jove usurping reign'd: these first in Crete
And Ida known; thence on the snowy top

a piece, in these three several views, we find his sentiments in the infernal assembly every way conformable to his character. Such are his apprehensions of a second battle, his horrors of annihilation, his preferring to be miserable rather than *not to be*. I need not observe, that the contrast of thought in this speech, and that which precedes it, gives an agreeable variety to the debate.

Mammon's character is so fully drawn in the first book, that the poet adds nothing to it in the second. We were told that he was the first who taught mankind to ransack the earth for gold and silver, and that he was the architect of Pandæmonium, or the infernal palace, where the evil spirits were to meet to counsel. His speech in the second book is every way suitable to so depraved a character. How proper is that reflection, of their being unable to taste the happiness of heaven, were they actually there, in the mouth of one, who, while he was in heaven, is said to have had his mind dazzled with the outward pomps and glories of the place, and to have been more intent on the riches of the pavement, than on the beatific vision! I shall also leave the reader to judge how agreeable the sentiments are to the same character, b. ii. 262, &c.

Beëlzebub, who is reckoned the second in dignity that fell, and is, in the first book, the second that awakens out of the trance, and confers with Satan on the situation of their affairs, maintains his rank in the second book.—ADDISON.

* *These were the prime.*

Because these are the idols who are mentioned in the most ancient records, viz. by the sacred text.—CALLANDER.

† *The Ionian gods.*

Javan, the fourth son of Japhet, is supposed to have settled in the south-west part of Asia Minor, about *Ionia*.—NEWTON.

‡ *Yet confess'd later.*

See Deut. xxxii. 17.—TODD.

Of cold Olympus ruled the middle air,
Their highest heaven; or on the Delphian cliff,*
Or in Dodona, and through all the bounds
Of Doric land;† or who with Saturn old
Fled over Adria to the Hesperian fields,
And o'er the Celtic roam'd the utmost isles.‡
All these and more came flocking, but with looks
Downcast and damp; yet such wherein appear'd
Obscure some glimpse of joy, to have found their chief
Not in despair, to have found themselves not lost
In loss itself; which on his countenance cast
Like doubtful hue: but he, his wonted pride
Soon recollecting, with high words, that bore
Semblance of worth, not substance,§ gently raised
Their fainted courage, and dispell'd their fears:
Then straight commands, that at the warlike sound
Of trumpets loud and clarions, be uprear'd
His mighty standard: that proud honour claim'd
Azazel‖ as his right, a cherub tall;
Who forthwith from the glittering staff unfurl'd
The imperial ensign, which, full high advanced,
Shone like a meteor streaming to the wind,
With gems and golden lustre rich imblazed,
Seraphic arms and trophies; all the while
Sonorous metal blowing martial sounds:
At which the universal host up sent
A shout that tore hell's concave, and beyond
Frighted the reign of Chaos and old Night.
All in a moment through the gloom were seen
Ten thousand banners rise into the air
With orient colours waving: with them rose
A forest huge of spears; and thronging helms
Appear'd, and serried shields in thick array
Of depth immeasurable: anon they move

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* *The Delphian cliff.*

The famous oracle of Apollo at Delphos; and Dodona, the oracle of Jupiter. —CALLANDER.

† *Doric land.*

Greece; *the Hesperian fields*, Italy; and *o'er the Celtic*, France and the other countries overrun by the Celtes.—NEWTON.

‡ *Utmost isles.*

Britain, Ireland, and the adjacent islands.—CALLANDER.

§ *Semblance of worth, not substance.*

Spenser, Faer. Qu. II. ix. 2:—

Full lively is the *semblaunt*, though the *substance* dead.—THYER.

‖ *Azazel.*

This name is used for some demon or devil by several ancient authors, Jewish and Christian.—NEWTON.

In perfect phalanx to the Dorian mood* 550
Of flutes and soft recorders; such as raised
To highth of noblest temper heroes old
Arming to battle; and, instead of rage,
Deliberate valor breathed, firm, and unmoved
With dread of death to flight or foul retreat; 555
Nor wanting power to mitigate and 'suage
With solemn touches troubled thoughts, and chase
Anguish, and doubt, and fear, and sorrow, and pain,
From mortal or immortal minds. Thus they,
Breathing united force, with fixed thought, 560
Moved on in silence to soft pipes, that charm'd
Their painful steps o'er the burnt soil: and now
Advanced in view they stand, a horrid front
Of dreadful length and dazzling arms, in guise
Of warriors old with order'd spear and shield, 565
Awaiting what command their mighty chief
Had to impose: he through the armed files
Darts his experienced eye, and soon traverse
The whole battalion views; their order due,
Their visages and stature as of gods; 570
Their number last he sums. And now his heart
Distends with pride, and, hardening in his strength,†
Glories; for never, since created man,
Met such imbodied force, as named with these
Could merit more than that small infantry 575
Warr'd on by cranes; though all the giant brood
Of Phlegra with the heroic race were join'd
That fought at Thebes and Ilium, on each side
Mix'd with auxiliar gods;‡ and what resounds
In fable or romance of Uther's son,§ 580
Begirt with British and Armoric knights;
And all who since, baptized or infidel,
Jousted in Aspramont or Montalban,
Damasco, or Morocco, or Trebisond,
Or whom Biserta sent from Afric shore, 585
When Charlemain with all his peerage fell

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* *Dorian mood.*
Exciting to cool and deliberate courage.—NEWTON.

† *Hardening in his strength.*
See Dan. v. 20:—"His *heart* was lifted up, and his mind *hardened in pride*."—GILLIES.

‡ *Mix'd with auxiliar gods.*
In the war between the sons of Œdipus at Thebes, and between the Greeks and Trojans at Ilium, the heroes were assisted by the gods, who are therefore called *auxiliar gods*.—NEWTON.

§ *Uther's son.*
King Arthur, whose exploits Milton once intended to celebrate in an epic poem.—TODD.

By Fontarabia. Thus far these beyond
Compare of mortal prowess, yet observed
Their dread commander: he, above the rest
In shape and gesture proudly eminent,
Stood like a tower: his form had yet not lost
All her original brightness, nor appear'd
Less than archangel ruin'd, and the excess
Of glory obscured: as when the sun new-risen
Looks through the horizontal misty air,
Shorn of his beams; or from behind the moon,
In dim eclipse, disastrous twilight sheds
On half the nations, and with fear of change
Perplexes monarchs: darken'd so, yet shone
Above them all the archangel: but his face
Deep scars of thunder had intrench'd, and care
Sat on his faded cheek; but under brows
Of dauntless courage, and considerate pride
Waiting revenge: cruel his eye, but cast
Signs of remorse and passion, to behold
The fellows of his crime, the followers rather,
(Far other once beheld in bliss) condemn'd
For ever now to have their lot in pain;
Millions of spirits for his fault amerced*
Of heaven, and from eternal splendours flung
For his revolt; yet faithful how they stood,
Their glory wither'd. As when heaven's fire
Hath scathed the forest oaks or mountain pines,

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* *Millions of spirits for his fault amerced.*

I must not here omit that beautiful circumstance of Satan's bursting into tears upon his survey of those innumerable spirits whom he had involved in the same guilt and ruin with himself.

There is no single passage in the whole poem worked up to a greater sublimity than that wherein his person is described, ver. 589, &c. His sentiments are every way answerable to his character, and suitable to a created being of the most exalted and most depraved nature. Such is that in which he takes possession of the place of torments, ver. 250, &c., and afterwards, ver. 258, &c.

The catalogue of evil spirits has abundance of learning in it, and a very agreeable turn of poetry; which rises in a great measure from its describing the places where they were worshipped, by those beautiful marks of rivers so frequent among the ancient poets. The author had doubtless in this place Homer's catalogue of ships, and Virgil's list of warriors, in his view. The characters of Moloch and Belial prepare the reader's mind for their respective speeches and behaviour in the second and sixth books. The account of Thammuz is finely romantic, and suitable to what we read among the ancients of the worship which was paid to that idol.

The description of Azazel's stature, and the infernal standard which he unfurls, as also of that ghastly light by which the fiends appear to one another in their places of torments, are wonderfully poetical. Such are the shout of the whole host of fallen angels when drawn up in battle array; the review which the leader makes of his infernal army; the flash of light which appeared upon the drawing of their swords; the sudden production of the Pandæmonium; the artificial illumination made in it.—ADDISON.

With singed top their stately growth, though bare,
Stands on the blasted heath. He now prepared
To speak; whereat their doubled ranks they bend
From wing to wing, and half inclose him round
With all his peers: attention held them mute
Thrice he assay'd, and thrice, in spite of scorn,
Tears, such as angels weep, burst forth; at last
Words interwove with sighs found out their way.
O myriads of immortal spirits! O powers
Matchless, but with the Almighty; and that strife
Was not inglorious, though the event was dire,
As this place testifies, and this dire change
Hateful to utter: but what power of mind,
Foreseeing or presaging, from the depth
Of knowledge past or present, could have fear'd,
How such united force of gods, how such
As stood like these, could ever know repulse?
For who can yet believe, though after loss,
That all these puissant legions, whose exile
Hath emptied heaven,* shall fail to reascend
Self-raised, and repossess their native seat?
For me, be witness all the host of heaven,
If counsels different or dangers shunn'd
By me have lost our hopes: but he, who reigns
Monarch in heaven, till then as one secure
Sat on his throne, upheld by old repute,
Consent, or custom; and his regal state
Put forth at full; but still his strength conceal'd,
Which tempted our attempt, and wrought our fall.
Henceforth his might we know, and know our own;
So as not either to provoke, or dread
New war, provoked: our better part remains
To work in close design, by fraud or guile,
What force effected not; that he no less
At length from us may find, Who overcomes
By force, hath overcome but half his foe.
Space may produce new worlds, whereof so rife
There went a fame in heaven,† that he ere long

* *Hath emptied heaven.*

It is conceived that a third part of the angels fell with Satan, according to Rev. xii. 4.—NEWTON.

† *There went a fame in heaven.*

There is something wonderfully beautiful, and very apt to affect the reader's imagination, in this ancient prophecy or report in heaven concerning the creation of man. Nothing could show more the dignity of the species than this tradition, which ran of them before their existence: they are represented to have been the talk of heaven before they were created. Virgil, in compliment to the Roman commonwealth, makes the heroes of it appear in their state of pre-existence; but Milton does a far greater honour to mankind in general, as he gives us a glimpse of them even before they are in being.—ADDISON.

Intended to create, and therein plant
A generation, whom his choice regard
Should favour equal to the sons of heaven.
Thither, if but to pry, shall be perhaps
Our first eruption; thither or elsewhere:
For this infernal pit shall never hold
Celestial spirits in bondage, nor the abyss
Long under darkness cover. But these thoughts
Full counsel must mature: peace is despair'd;
For who can think submission? war then, war,
Open or understood, must be resolved.
He spake; and, to confirm his words, outflew
Millions of flaming swords, drawn from the thighs
Of mighty cherubim; the sudden blaze
Far round illumined hell: highly they raged
Against the Highest, and fierce with grasped arms
Clash'd on their sounding shields the din of war,
Hurling defiance toward the vault of heaven.
There stood a hill not far, whose grisly top
Belch'd fire and rolling smoke; the rest entire
Shone with a glossy scurf; undoubted sign
That in his womb was hid metallic ore,
The work of sulphur. Thither, wing'd with speed,
A numerous brigade hasten'd; as when bands
Of pioneers, with spade and pickaxe arm'd,
Forerun the royal camp, to trench a field,
Or cast a rampart. Mammon led them on;*
Mammon, the least erected spirit that fell
From heaven; for ev'n in heaven his looks and thoughts
Were always downward bent: admiring more
The riches of heaven's pavement, trodden gold,
Than aught divine or holy else enjoy'd
In vision beatific: by him first
Men also, and by his suggestion taught,
Ransack'd the centre, and with impious hands
Rifled the bowels of their mother earth
For treasures better hid. Soon had his crew
Open'd into the hill a spacious wound,
And digg'd out ribs of gold. Let none admire
That riches grow in hell; that soil may best
Deserve the precious bane. And here let those
Who boast in mortal things, and wondering tell

* *Mammon led them on.*

This name is Syriac, and signifies riches. "Ye cannot serve God and Mammon," Matth. vi. 24. Mammon is by some supposed to be the God of riches, and is accordingly personified by Milton, and had been before by Spenser; whose description of Mammon and his cave, Milton seems to have had his eye upon in several places.—NEWTON.

Of Babel, and the works of Memphian kings,
Learn how their greatest monuments of fame,
And strength, and art, are easily outdone
By spirits reprobate; and in an hour
What in an age they with incessant toil
And hands innumerable scarce perform.*
Nigh on the plain, in many cells prepared,
That underneath had veins of liquid fire
Sluiced from the lake, a second multitude
With wondrous art founded the massy ore,
Severing each kind, and scumm'd the bullion dross:
A third as soon had form'd within the ground
A various mould, and from the boiling cells
By strange conveyance fill'd each hollow nook:
As in an organ, from one blast of wind,
To many a row of pipes the sound-board breathes.
Anon out of the earth a fabric huge
Rose, like an exalation, with the sound
Of dulcet symphonies and voices sweet;
Built like a temple, where pilasters round
Were set, and Doric pillars overlaid
With golden architrave: nor did there want
Cornice or frieze with bossy sculptures graven;
The roof was fretted gold. Not Babylon,
Nor great Alcairo such magnificence
Equal'd in all their glories, to inshrine
Belus or Serapis, their gods; or seat
Their kings, when Egypt with Assyria strove
In wealth and luxury. The ascending pile
Stood fix'd her stately highth: and straight the doors,
Opening their brazen folds, discover wide
Within her ample spaces o'er the smooth
And level pavement: from the arched roof,
Pendent by subtle magic, many a row
Of starry lamps and blazing cressets, fed
With naphtha and asphaltus, yielded light
As from a sky. The hasty multitude
Admiring enter'd, and the work some praise,
And some the architect: his hand was known
In heaven by many a tower'd structure high,
Where sceptred angels held their residence,
And sat as princes; whom the supreme King
Exalted to such power, and gave to rule,
Each in his hierarchy, the orders bright.

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* *And hands innumerable scarce perform.*

There were 360,000 men employed for near twenty years upon one of the Pyramids, according to Diodorus Siculus, lib. i., and Pliny, lib. xxxvi. 12.—NEWTON.

Nor was his name unheard or unadored
In ancient Greece; and in Ausonian land
Men called him Mulciber; and how he fell
From heaven* they fabled, thrown by angry Jove
Sheer o'er the crystal battlements: from morn
To noon he fell, from noon to dewy eve,
A summer's day; and with the setting sun
Dropp'd from the zenith like a falling star,
On Lemnos, the Ægean isle; thus they relate,
Erring; for he with this rebellious rout
Fell long before; nor aught avail'd him now
To have built in heaven high towers; nor did he 'scape
By all his engines; but was headlong sent
With his industrious crew to build in hell.
  Meanwhile the winged heralds, by command
Of sovereign power, with awful ceremony
And trumpet's sound, throughout the host proclaim
A solemn council forthwith to be held
At Pandæmonium, the high capital
Of Satan and his peers: their summons call'd
From every band and squared regiment
By place or choice the worthiest; they anon
With hundreds and with thousands trooping came
Attended: all access was throng'd; the gates
And porches wide, but chief the spacious hall,
(Though like a cover'd field, where champions bold
Wont ride in arm'd, and at the soldan's chair
Defied the best of Panim chivalry
To mortal combat, or career with lance)
Thick swarm'd, both on the ground and in the air,
Brush'd with the hiss of rusling wings. As bees†

* *And how he fell*
From heaven, &c.

Alluding to Homer, Il. i. 590, &c. It is worth observing how Milton lengthens out the time of Vulcan's fall. He not only says with Homer, that it was all day long; but we are led through the parts of the day, from morn to noon, from noon to evening, and this a summer's day. See also Odyss. vii. 288.—NEWTON.

† *As Bees.*

An imitation of Homer, who compares the Grecians crowding to a *swarm of bees*, Il. ii. 87. There are such similes also in Virg., Æn. i. 430, vi. 707. But Milton carries the similitude farther than either of his great masters; and mentions the bees "conferring their state affairs," as he is going to give an account of the consultations of the devils.—NEWTON.

If we look into the conduct of Homer, Virgil, and Milton; as the great fable is the soul of each poem, so, to give their works an agreeable variety, their episodes are as so many short fables, and their similes so many short episodes; to which you may add, if you please, that their metaphors are so many short similes. If the reader considers the comparisons in the first book of Milton,—of the sun in an eclipse,—of the sleeping leviathan,—of the bees swarming about their hive,—of the fairy dance,—in the view wherein I have here placed them, he

In spring time, when the sun with Taurus rides,
Pour forth their populous youth about the hive
In clusters: they among fresh dews and flowers
Fly to and fro, or on the smoothed plank,
The suburb of their straw-built citadel,
New rubb'd with balm, expatiate and confer
Their state affairs: so thick the aery crowd
Swarm'd and were straiten'd; till, the signal given,
Behold a wonder! they, but now who seem'd
In bigness to surpass earth's giant sons,
Now less than smallest dwarfs*, in narrow room
Throng numberless, like that Pygmëan race
Beyond the Indian mount; or faery elves,
Whose midnight revels, by a forest side,
Or fountain, some belated peasant sees,
Or dreams he sees, while over-head the moon
Sits arbitress,† and nearer to the earth‡
Wheels her pale course: they, on their mirth and dance
Intent, with jocund music charm his ear:
At once with joy and fear his heart rebounds.
Thus incorporeal spirits to smallest forms
Reduced their shapes immense, and were at large,
Though without number still, amidst the hall
Of that infernal court. But far within,
And in their own dimensions, like themselves,
The great seraphic lords and cherubim
In close recess and secret conclave sat;
A thousand demi-gods on golden seats,
Frequent and full. After short silence then,
And summons read, the great consult began.

will easily discover the great beauties that are in each of those passages.—ADDISON.

* *Now less than smallest dwarfs.*

As soon as the infernal palace is finished, we are told, the multitude and rabble of spirits immediately shrunk themselves into a small compass, that there might be room for such a numberless assembly in this capacious hall: but it is the poet's refinement upon this thought which I most admire, and which is indeed very noble in itself; for he tells us, that notwithstanding the vulgar, among the fallen spirits, contracted their forms, those of the first rank and dignity still preserved their natural dimensions.—ADDISON.

† *Sits arbitress.*

Witness, spectatress.—HEYLIN.

‡ *Nearer to the earth.*

This is said in allusion to the superstitious notion of witches and faeries having great power over the moon.—NEWTON.

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK II.

ARGUMENT.

THE consultation begun, Satan debates whether another battle be to be hazarded for the recovery of heaven: some advise it, others dissuade. A third proposal is preferred, mentioned before by Satan, to search the truth of that prophecy or tradition in heaven concerning another world, and another kind of creature, equal, or not much inferior, to themselves, about this time to be created: *their doubt who shall be sent on this difficult search: Satan their chief* undertakes alone the voyage, is honoured and applauded. The council thus ended, the rest betake them several ways, and to several employments, as their inclinations lead them, to entertain the time till Satan return. He passes on his journey to hell gates; finds them shut, and who sat there to guard them; by whom at length they are opened, and discover to him the great gulf between hell and heaven; with what difficulty he passes through, directed by *Chaos, the Power of that place, to the sight of this new world* which he sought.

HIGH on a throne of royal state, which far
Outshone the wealth of Ormus and of Ind,
Or where the gorgeous east* with richest hand
Showers on her kings Barbaric pearl and gold,†
Satan exalted sat, by merit raised
To that bad eminence: and, from despair
Thus high uplifted beyond hope, aspires
Beyond thus high; insatiate to pursue
Vain war with heaven, and, by, success untaught,
His proud imaginations thus display'd:—

* *Or where the gorgeous east.*

See Spenser, Faery Queen, III. iv. 23:—

It did passe
The wealth of the East, and pomp of Persian kings.—NEWTON.

† *Showers on her kings Barbaric pearl and gold.*

It was the eastern ceremony, at the coronation of their kings, to powder them with *gold-dust* and *seed-pearl*. In the "Life of Timur-bec, or Tamerlane," written by a Persian contemporary author, are the following words, as translated by Mons. Petit de la Croix, in the account there given of his coronation, b. II. c. i.:—The princes of the blood royal and Emirs showered with liberal hand, according to custom, quantities of gold and precious stones on the head of the King.—WARBURTON.

Powers and Dominions, Deities of heaven,
For since no deep within her gulf can hold
Immortal vigor, though oppress'd and fallen,
I give not heaven for lost; from this descent
Celestial virtues rising, will appear
More glorious and more dread than from no fall,
And trust themselves to fear no second fate.
Me though just right and the fix'd laws of heaven
Did first create your leader; next free choice,
With what besides, in council or in fight,
Hath been achieved of merit; yet this loss,
Thus far at least recovered, hath much more
Establish'd in a safe unenvied throne,
Yielded with full consent. The happier state
In heaven, which follows dignity, might draw
Envy from each inferior; but who here
Will envy whom the highest place exposes
Foremost to stand against the Thunderer's aim
Your bulwark, and condemns to greatest share
Of endless pain? Where there is then no good
For which to strive, no strife can grow up there
From faction; for none sure will claim in hell
Precedence; none, whose portion is so small
Of present pain, that with ambitious mind
Will covet more. With this advantage then
To union, and firm faith, and firm accord,
More than can be in heaven, we now return
To claim our just inheritance of old;
Surer to prosper than prosperity
Could have assured us: and by what best way,
Whether of open war or covert guile,
We now debate. Who can advise, may speak.
He ceased; and next him Moloch, sceptred king,
Stood up, the strongest and the fiercest spirit
That fought in heaven, now fiercer by despair:
His trust was with the Eternal to be deem'd
Equal in strength, and rather than be less
Cared not to be at all: with that care lost
Went all his fear: of God, or hell, or worse,
He reck'd not; and these words thereafter spake.—
My sentence is for open war: of wiles,
More unexpert, I boast not: them let those
Contrive who need, or when they need, not now.
For while they sit contriving, shall the rest,
Millions that stand in arms, and longing wait
The signal to ascend, sit lingering here
Heaven's fugitives, and for their dwelling place
Accept this dark opprobrious den of shame,
The prison of his tyranny who reigns

By our delay? no; let us rather choose,
Arm'd with hell flames and fury, all at once
O'er heaven's high towers to force resistless way,
Turning our tortures into horrid arms
Against the Torturer; when to meet the noise
Of his almighty engine he shall hear
Infernal thunder; and for lightning see
Black fire and horror shot with equal rage
Among his angels; and his throne itself
Mix'd with Tartarean sulphur and strange fire,
His own invented torments. But perhaps
The way seems difficult and steep, to scale
With upright wing against a higher foe.
Let such bethink them, if the sleepy drench
Of that forgetful lake benumb not still,
That in our proper motion we ascend
Up to our native seat: descent and fall
To us is adverse. Who but felt of late,
When the fierce Foe hung on our broken rear
Insulting, and pursued us through the deep,
With what compulsion and laborious flight
We sunk thus low? the ascent is easy then:—
The event is fear'd; should we again provoke
Our stronger, some worse way his wrath may find
To our destruction; if there be in hell
Fear to be worse destroy'd; what can be worse
Than to dwell here, driven out from bliss, condemn'd
In this abhorred deep to utter woe;
Where pain of unextinguishable fire
Must exercise us without hope of end,
The vassals of his anger, when the scourge
Inexorably, and the torturing hour
Calls us to penance? more destroy'd than thus,
We should be quite abolish'd, and expire.
What fear we then? what doubt we to incense
His utmost ire? which, to the highth enraged,
Will either quite consume us, and reduce
To nothing this essential; happier far
Than miserable to have eternal being;—
Or if our substance be indeed divine,
And cannot cease to be, we are at worst
On this side nothing: and by proof we feel
Our power sufficient to disturb his heaven,
And with perpetual inroads to alarm,
Though inaccessible, his fatal throne:
Which, if not victory, is yet revenge.
He ended frowning, and his look denounced
Desperate revenge and battle dangerous
To less than gods. On the other side up rose

Belial, in act more graceful and humane :
A fairer person lost not heaven ; he seem'd
For dignity composed and high exploit :
But all was false and hollow ; though his tongue
Dropp'd manna, and could make the worse appear
The better reason, to perplex and dash
Maturest counsels ; for his thoughts were low ;
To vice industrious, but to nobler deeds
Timorous and slothful : yet he pleased the ear,
And with persuasive accent thus began :—
I should be much for open war, O Peers,
As not behind in hate, if what was urged,
Main reason to persuade immediate war,
Did not dissuade me most, and seem to cast
Ominous conjecture on the whole success :
When he, who most excels in fact of arms,
In what he counsels and in what excels
Mistrustful, grounds his courage on despair
And utter dissolution, as the scope
Of all his aim, after some dire revenge.
First, what revenge ? the towers of heaven are fill'd
With armed watch, that render all access
Impregnable ; oft on the bordering deep
Encamp their legions, or with obscure wing
Scout far and wide into the realm of night,
Scorning surprise. Or could we break our way
By force, and at our heels all hell should rise
With blackest insurrection, to confound
Heaven's purest light ; yet our great Enemy
All incorruptible would on his throne
Sit unpolluted,* and the ethereal mould
Incapable of stain would soon expel
Her mischief, and purge off the baser fire,
Victorious. Thus repulsed, our final hope
Is flat despair : we must exasperate
The Almighty Victor to spend all his rage,
And that must end us : that must be our cure,
To be no more : sad cure ! for who would lose,
Though full of pain, this intellectual being,
Those thoughts that wander through eternity,
To perish rather, swallow'd up and lost
In the wide womb of uncreated night,
Devoid of sense and motion ? and who knows,
Let this be good, whether our angry Foe

* *Would on his throne*
Sit unpolluted.

This is a reply to that part of Moloch's speech, where he had threatened to mix e throne itself of God with infernal sulphur and strange fire.—NEWTON.

Can give it, or will ever? how he can,
Is doubtful! that he never will, is sure.
Will he, so wise, let loose at once his ire
Belike through impotence,* or unaware,
To give his enemies their wish, and end
Them in his anger, whom his anger saves
To punish endless? Wherefore cease we then?
Say they who counsel war; we are decreed,
Reserved, and destined to eternal woe;
Whatever doing, what can we suffer more,
What can we suffer worse? Is this then worst,
Thus sitting, thus consulting, thus in arms?
What! when we fled amain, pursued and struck
With heaven's afflicting thunder, and besought
The deep to shelter us? this hell then seem'd
A refuge from those wounds: or when we lay
Chain'd on the burning lake? that sure was worse.
What, if the breath, that kindled† those grim fires,
Awaked, should blow them into sevenfold rage,
And plunge us in the flames? or from above
Should intermitted vengeance arm again
His red right hand to plague us? what, if all
Her stores were open'd, and this firmament
Of hell should spout her cataracts of fire,
Impendent horrors, threatening hideous fall
One day upon our heads? while we, perhaps
Designing or exhorting glorious war,
Caught in a fiery tempest, shall be hurl'd,
Each on his rock transfix'd, the sport and prey
Of racking whirlwinds: or for ever sunk
Under yon boiling ocean, wrapp'd in chains:
There to converse with everlasting groans,
Unrespited, unpitied, unreprieved,
Ages of hopeless end? this would be worse.
War therefore, open or conceal'd, alike
My voice dissuades; for what can force or guile
With him, or who deceive his mind, whose eye
Views all things at one view? He from heaven's highth
All these our motions vain sees and derides;
Not more almighty to resist our might,
Than wise to frustrate all our plots and wiles.
Shall we then live thus vile, the race of heaven,
Thus trampled, thus expell'd, to suffer here
Chains and these torments? better these than worse,

* *Through impotence.*
Weakness of mind.—PEARCE.

† *Breath, that kindled.*
See Isaiah, xxx. 33.—NEWTON.

By my advice; since fate inevitable
Subdues us, and omnipotent decree,
The Victor's will. To suffer, as to do,
Our strength is equal; nor the law unjust
That so ordains. This was at first resolved,
If we were wise, against so great a Foe
Contending, and so doubtful what might fall.
I laugh, when those, who at the spear are bold
And venturous, if that fail them, shrink and fear
What yet they know must follow, to endure
Exile, or ignominy, or bonds, or pain,
The sentence of their Conqueror. This is now
Our doom; which if we can sustain and bear,
Our Supreme Foe may in time much remit
His anger; and perhaps thus far removed
Not mind us not offending, satisfied
With what is punished: whence these raging fires
Will slacken, if his breath stir not their flames.
Our purer essence then will overcome
Their noxious vapour; or, inured, not feel;
Or changed at length, and to the place conform'd
In temper and in nature, will receive
Familiar the fierce heat, and void of pain;
This horror will grow mild, this darkness light:
Besides what hopes the never-ending flight
Of future days may bring, what chance, what change
Worth waiting: since our present lot appears
For happy though but ill, for ill not worst,
If we procure not to ourselves more woe.
Thus Belial, with words clothed in reason's garb
Counsell'd ignoble ease and peaceful sloth,
Not peace: and after him thus Mammon spake:—
Either to disenthrone the King of heaven
We war, if war be best; or to regain
Our own right lost. Him to unthrone we then
May hope, when everlasting Fate shall yield
To fickle Chance, and Chaos judge the strife:
The former, vain to hope, argues as vain
The latter: for what place can be for us
Within heaven's bound, unless heaven's Lord supreme
We overpower? Suppose he should relent
And publish grace to all, on promise made
Of new subjection; with what eyes could we
Stand in his presence humble, and receive
Strict laws imposed to celebrate his throne
With warbled hymns, and to his Godhead sing
Forced hallelujahs; while he lordly sits
Our envied Sovreign, and his altar breathes
Ambrosial odours, and ambrosial flowers,

Our servile offerings? This must be our task
In heaven, this our delight: how wearisome
Eternity so spent in worship paid
To whom we hate! Let us not then pursue,
By force impossible, by leave obtain'd
Unacceptable, though in heaven, our state
Of splendid vassalage: but rather seek
Our own good from ourselves; and from our own
Live to ourselves; though in this vast recess,
Free, and to none accountable; preferring
Hard liberty before the easy yoke
Of servile pomp. Our greatness will appear
Then most conspicuous, when great things of small,
Useful of hurtful, prosperous of adverse,
We can create; and in what place soe'er
Thrive under evil, and work ease out of pain
Through labour and endurance. This deep world
Of darkness do we dread? how oft amidst
Thick clouds and dark* doth heaven's all-ruling Sire
Choose to reside, his glory unobscured,
And with the majesty of darkness round
Covers his throne: from whence deep thunders roar
Mustering their rage, and heaven resembles hell!
As he our darkness, cannot we his light
Imitate when we please? this desert soil
Wants not her hidden lustre, gems and gold;
Nor want we skill or art, from whence to raise
Magnificence; and what can heaven show more?
Our torments also may in length of time
Become our elements; these piercing fires
As soft as now severe; our temper changed
Into their temper; which must needs remove
The sensible of pain. All things invite
To peaceful counsels, and the settled state
Of order; how in safety best we may
Compose our present evils, with regard
Of what we are, and where; dismissing quite
All thoughts of war. Ye have what I advise.
He scarce had finish'd, when such murmur fill'd
The assembly as when hollow rocks retain
The sound of blustering winds, which all night long
Had roused the sea, now with hoarse cadence lull
Sea-faring men o'er-watch'd, whose bark by chance,
Or pinnace anchors in a craggy bay

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* *How oft amidst*
Thick clouds and dark.
Imitated from Psalm xviii. 11, 13; and xcvii. 2.—Newton: and from 1 Kings viii. 12.—Todd.

After the tempest: such applause was heard
As Mammon ended; and his sentence pleased,
Advising peace: for such another field
They dreaded worse than hell: so much the fear
Of thunder and the sword of Michaël
Wrought still within them: and no less desire
To found this nether empire; which might rise,
By policy and long process of time,
In emulation opposite to heaven.
Which when Beëlzebub* perceived, than whom,
Satan except, none higher sat, with grave
Aspect he rose, and in his rising seem'd
A pillar of state: deep on his front engraven
Deliberation sat and public care;
And princely counsel in his face yet shone,
Majestic though in ruin: sage he stood,
With Atlantean shoulders fit to bear
The weight of mightiest monarchies: his look
Drew audience and attention still as night
Or summer's noontide air, while thus he spake:—
Thrones and imperial Powers, offspring of heaven,
Ethereal Virtues; or these titles now
Must we renounce, and, changing style, be call'd
Princes of hell? for so the popular vote
Inclines, here to continue, and build up here
A growing empire. Doubtless; while we dream,
And know not that the King of Heaven hath doom'd
This place our dungeon, not our safe retreat
Beyond his potent arm, to live exempt
From heaven's high jurisdiction, in new league
Banded against his throne; but to remain
In strictest bondage, though thus far removed,
Under the inevitable curb, reserved
His captive multitude: for he, be sure,
In height or depth, still first and last will reign
Sole king, and of his kingdom lose no part
By our revolt; but over hell extend
His empire, and with iron sceptre rule
Us here, as with his golden those in heaven.
What sit we then projecting peace and war?

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* *Which when Beëlzebub.*

Beëlzebub maintains his rank in the book now before us. There is a wonderful majesty described in his rising up to speak. He acts as a kind of moderator between the two opposite parties, and proposes a third undertaking, which the whole assembly gives in to. The motion he makes of detaching one of their body in search of a new world, is grounded upon a project devised by Satan, and cursorily proposed by him in the first book, ver. 650 et seq., upon which project Beëlzebub grounds his proposal in the present book, ver. 344, &c.—ADDISON.

War hath determined us, and foil'd with loss
Irreparable; terms of peace yet none
Vouchsafed or sought: for what peace will be given
To us enslaved, but custody severe,
And stripes and arbitrary punishment
Inflicted? and what peace can we return,
But to our power hostility and hate,
Untamed reluctance, and revenge, though slow,
Yet ever plotting how the Conqueror least
May reap his conquest, and may least rejoice
In doing what we most in suffering feel?
Nor will occasion want, nor shall we need
With dangerous expedition to invade
Heaven, whose high walls fear no asssult, or siege,
Or ambush from the deep. What if we find
Some easier enterprise? There is a place,
(If ancient and prophetic fame in heaven
Err not) another world, the happy seat
Of some new race call'd Man, about this time
To be created like to us, though less
In power and excellence; but favour'd more
Of Him who rules above: so was his will
Pronounced among the gods, and by an oath,
That shook heaven's whole circumference, confirm'd.
Thither let us bend all our thoughts to learn
What creatures there inhabit; of what mould,
Or substance: how endued, and what their power,
And where their weakness; how attempted best,
By force or subtlety. Though heaven be shut,
And heaven's high Arbitrator sit secure
In his own strength, this place may lie exposed,
The utmost border of his kingdom, left
To their defence who hold it: here perhaps
Some advantageous act may be achieved
By sudden onset; either with hell fire
To waste his whole creation, or possess
All as our own, and drive, as we were driven,
The puny habitants; or if not drive,
Seduce them to our party, that their God
May prove their foe, and with repenting hand
Abolish his own works. This would surpass
Common revenge, and interrupt his joy
In our confusion; and our joy upraise
In his disturbance: when his darling sons,
Hurl'd headlong to partake with us, shall curse
Their frail original and faded bliss,
Faded so soon. Advise, if this be worth
Attempting; or to sit in darkness here
Hatching vain empires. Thus Beëlzebub

Pleaded his devilish counsel, first devised
By Satan, and in part proposed. For whence,
But from the author of all ill, could spring
So deep a malice, to confound the race
Of mankind in one root, and earth with hell
To mingle and involve, done all to spite
The great Creator? But their spite still serves
His glory to augment. The bold design
Pleased highly those infernal States, and joy
Sparkled in all their eyes; with full assent
They vote: whereat his speech he thus renews:—
Well have ye judged, well ended long debate,
Synod of gods! and, like to what ye are,
Great things resolved: which from the lowest deep
Will once more lift us up, in spite of fate,
Nearer our ancient seat; perhaps in view
Of those bright confines, whence, with neighbouring arms
And opportune excursion, we may chance
Re-enter heaven; or else in some mild zone
Dwell, not unvisited of heaven's fair light,
Secure; and at the brightening orient beam
Purge off this gloom: the soft delicious air,
To heal the scar of these corrosive fires,
Shall breathe her balm. But, first, whom shall we send
In search of this new world? whom shall we find
Sufficient? who shall tempt with wandering feet
The dark unbottom'd infinite abyss,
And through the palpable obscure find out
His uncouth way? or spread his aery flight,
Upborne with undefatigable wings,
Over the vast abrupt, ere he arrive
The happy isle; what strength, what art can then
Suffice, or what evasion bear him safe
Through the strict senteries and stations thick
Of angels watching round? here he had need
All circumspection; and we now no less
Choice in our suffrage: for on whom we send,
The weight of all, and our last hope, relies.
This said, he sat; and expectation held
His look suspense, awaiting who appear'd
To second, or oppose, or undertake
The perilous attempt: but all sat mute,
Pondering the danger with deep thoughts; and each
In other's countenance read his own dismay,
Astonish'd: none among the choice and prime
Of those heaven-warring champions could be found,
So hardy, as to proffer or accept
Alone the dreadful voyage: till at last,
Satan, whom now transcendent glory raised

Above his fellows, with monarchal pride,
Conscious of highest worth, unmoved thus spake :—
O progeny of heaven, empyreal thrones,
With reason hath deep silence and demur
Seized us, though undismay'd. Long is the way
And hard, that out of hell leads up to light :
Our prison strong, this huge convex of fire,
Outrageous to devour, immures us round
Ninefold ; and gates of burning adamant
Barr'd over us prohibit all egress.
These pass'd, if any pass, the void profound
Of unessential Night* receives him next,
Wide gaping ; and with utter loss of being
Threatens him, plunged in that abortive gulf.
If thence he 'scape into whatever world,
Or unknown region ; what remains him less
Than unknown dangers and as hard escape ?
But I should ill become this throne, O Peers,
And this imperial sovreignty, adorn'd
With splendour, arm'd with power, if aught proposed
And judged of public moment, in the shape
Of difficulty or danger, could deter
Me from attempting. Wherefore do I assume
These royalties, and not refuse to reign,
Refusing to accept as great a share
Of hazard as of honour, due alike
To him who reigns, and so much to him due
Of hazard more, as he above the rest
High honour'd sits ? Go, therefore, mighty powers,
Terror of heaven, though fallen ! intend at home,
While here shall be our home, what best may ease
The present misery, and render hell
More tolerable : if there be cure or charm
To respite, or deceive, or slack the pain
Of this ill mansion. Intermit no watch
Against a wakeful Foe ; while I abroad
Through all the coasts of dark destruction seek
Deliverance for us all : this enterprize
None shall partake with me. Thus saying rose
The monarch, and prevented all reply ;
Prudent, lest from his resolution raised
Others among the chief might offer now,
Certain to be refused, what erst they fear'd ;
And so refused might in opinion stand
His rivals ; winning cheap the high repute,

* *Of unessential Night.*
Unessential, void of being ; darkness approaching nearest to, and being the best resemblance of, nonentity.—HUME.

Which he through hazard huge must earn. But they
Dreaded not more the adventure, than his voice
Forbidding; and at once with him they rose:
Their rising all at once was as the sound
Of thunder heard remote. Towards him they bend
With awful reverence prone; and as a god
Extol him equal to the Highest in heaven.
Nor fail'd they to express how much they praised,
That for the general safety he despised
His own: for neither do the spirits damn'd
Lose all their virtue; lest bad men should boast
Their specious deeds on earth, which glory excites,
Or close ambition varnish'd o'er with zeal.
Thus they their doubtful consultations dark
Ended, rejoicing in their matchless chief:
As when from mountain tops the dusky clouds
Ascending, while the north wind sleeps, o'erspread
Heaven's cheerful face; the louring element
Scowls o'er the darken'd landskip snow, or shower:
If chance the radiant sun with farewell sweet
Extend his evening beam, the fields revive,
The birds their notes renew, and bleating herds
Attest their joy, that hill and valley rings.
Oh shame to men! devil with devil damn'd
Firm concord holds; men only disagree*
Of creatures rational, though under hope
Of heavenly grace; and, God proclaiming peace,
Yet live in hatred, enmity, and strife
Among themselves, and levy cruel wars,
Wasting the earth, each other to destroy:
As if, which might induce us to accord,
Man had not hellish foes enow besides,
That day and night for his destruction wait.
The Stygian council thus dissolved; and forth
In order came the grand infernal peers:
Midst came their mighty paramount, and seem'd
Alone the antagonist of Heaven; nor less
Than hell's dread emperor, with pomp supreme
And God-like imitated state: him round
A globe of fiery seraphin inclosed,
With bright emblazonry and horrent arms.
Then of their session ended they bid cry
With trumpet's regal sound the great result:
Towards the four winds four speedy cherubim
Put to their mouths the sounding alchymy,
By herald's voice explain'd: the hollow abyss

* *Men only disagree.*

This has allusion to the contentious age in which Milton lived and wrote.—
YER.

Heard far and wide: and all the host of hell
With deafening shout return'd them loud acclaim.
Thence more at ease their minds, and somewhat raised
By false presumptuous hope, the ranged powers
Disband; and, wandering, each his several way
Pursues, as inclination or sad choice
Leads him perplex'd; where he may likeliest find
Truce to his restless thoughts, and entertain
The irksome hours, till his great chief return.
Part, on the plain,* or in the air sublime,
Upon the wing or in swift race contend,
As at the Olympian games, or Pythian fields:
Part curb their fiery steeds, or shun the goal
With rapid wheels, or fronted brigades form.
As when to warn proud cities war appears
Waged in the troubled sky, and armies rush
To battle in the clouds, before each van
Prick forth the aery knights, and couch their spears
Till thickest legions close: with feats of arms
From either end of heaven the welkin burns.
Others, with vast Typhœan rage more fell,
Rend up both rocks and hills, and ride the air
In whirlwind: hell scarce holds the wild uproar.
As when Alcides, from Œchalia crown'd
With conquest, felt the envenom'd robe, and tore
Through pain up by the roots Thessalian pines;
And Lichas from the top of Œta threw
Into the Euboic sea. Others more mild,
Retreated in a silent valley, sing
With notes angelical to many a harp
Their own heroic deeds, and hapless fall
By doom of battle; and complain that fate
Free virtue should enthral to force or chance.
Their song was partial; but the harmony
What could it less when spirits immortal sing?
Suspended hell, and took with ravishment
The thronging audience. In discourse more sweet,
(For eloquence the soul,† song charms the sense,)

* *Part, on the plain.*

The diversions of the fallen angels, with the particular account of their place of habitation, are described with great pregnancy of thought and copiousness of invention. The diversions are every way suitable to beings who had nothing left them but strength and knowledge misapplied. Such are their contentions at the race, and in feats of arms, with their entertainments at v. 539, &c.

Their music is employed in celebrating their own criminal exploits; and their discourse, in sounding the unfathomable depths of fate, free will, and foreknowledge.—ADDISON.

† *For eloquence the soul.*

Here is the preference given to intellect above the pleasures of the senses. —BRYDGES.

Others apart sat on a hill retired,
In thoughts more elevate, and reason'd high
Of providence, foreknowledge, will, and fate;
Fix'd fate, free will, foreknowledge absolute:
And found no end, in wandering mazes lost.
Of good and evil much they argued then,
Of happiness and final misery,
Passion and apathy, and glory and shame;
Vain wisdom all, and false philosophy:
Yet with a pleasing sorcery could charm
Pain for a while or anguish, and excite
Fallacious hope; or arm the obdured breast
With stubborn patience as with triple steel.
Another part, in squadrons and gross bands,
On bold adventure to discover wide
That dismal world, if any clime perhaps,
Might yield them easier habitation, bend
Four ways their flying march, along the banks
Of four infernal rivers,* that disgorge
Into the burning lake their baleful streams:
Abhorred Styx, the flood of deadly hate;
Sad Acheron, of sorrow, black and deep;
Cocytus, named of lamentation loud
Heard on the rueful stream; fierce Phlegethon,
Whose waves of torrent fire inflame with rage.
Far off from these a slow and silent stream,
Lethe, the river of oblivion, rolls
Her watery labyrinth; whereof who drinks,
Forthwith his former state and being forgets;
Forgets both joy and grief, pleasure and pain.
Beyond this flood a frozen continent
Lies, dark and wild, beat with perpetual storms
Of whirlwind, and dire hail which on firm land
Thaws not; but gathers heap, and ruin seems

* *Along the banks*
Of four infernal rivers.

The several circumstances in the description of hell are finely imagined; as the four rivers which disgorge themselves into the sea of fire, the extremes of cold and heat, and the river of oblivion. The monstrous animals produced in that infernal world are represented by a single line, which gives us a more horrid idea of them than a much longer description would have done:—

worse
Than fables yet have feign'd, or fear conceived.

This episode of the fallen spirits, and their place of habitation, comes in very happily to unbend the mind of the reader from its attention to the debate. An ordinary poet would indeed have spun out so many circumstances to a great length, and by that means have weakened, instead of illustrated, the principal fable.—ADDISON.

Of ancient pile: all else deep snow and ice;
A gulf profound as that Serbonian bog
Betwixt Damiata and mount Casius old,
Where armies whole have sunk: the parching air
Burns frore,* and cold performs the effect of fire.
Thither by harpy-footed furies haled,
At certain revolutions all the damn'd
Are brought; and feel by turns the bitter change
Of fierce extremes, extremes by change more fierce:
From beds of raging fire to starve in ice
Their soft ethereal warmth; and there to pine
Immovable, infix'd, and frozen round,
Periods of time; thence hurried back to fire.
They ferry over this Lethean sound
Both to and fro, their sorrow to augment,
And wish and struggle, as they pass, to reach
The tempting stream, with one small drop to lose
In sweet forgetfulness† all pain and woe.
All in one moment, and so near the brink:
But Fate withstands, and to oppose the attempt
Medusa with Gorgonian terror guards
The ford, and of itself the water flies
All taste of living wight, as once it fled
The lip of Tantalus. Thus roving on
In confused march forlorn, the adventurous bands,
With shuddering horror pale, and eyes aghast,
View'd first their lamentable lot, and found
No rest; through many a dark and dreary vale
They pass'd, and many a region dolorous,
O'er many a frozen, many a fiery Alp,
Rocks,‡ caves, lakes, fens, bogs, dens, and shades of death,
A universe of death, which God by curse
Created evil, for evil only good,
Where all life dies, death lives, and nature breeds,
Perverse, all monstrous, all prodigious things,
Abominable, inutterable, and worse

---

* *Burns frore.*

See Ecclus. xlii. 20, 21: "When the cold north-wind bloweth, it devoureth the mountains, and *burneth* the wilderness, and consumeth the grass *as fire*."—NEWTON.

† *In sweet forgetfulness.*

This is a fine allegory, to show that there is no forgetfulness in hell. Memory makes a part of the punishment of the damned, and the reflection but increases their misery.—NEWTON.

‡ *Rocks, caves, &c.*

Milton's are the

Rocks, caves, lakes, fens, bogs, dens, and shades of *death*;

and the idea, caused by a word, which nothing but a word could annex to the others, raises a very great degree of the sublime; which is raised yet higher by what follows, A UNIVERSE OF DEATH.—BURKE.

Than fables yet have feign'd, or fear conceived,
Gorgons, and hydras, and chimæras dire.
Meanwhile the adversary of God and man,
Satan, with thoughts inflamed of highest design,
Puts on swift wings, and toward the gates of hell
Explores his solitary flight: sometimes
He scours the right-hand coast, sometimes the left;
Now shaves with level wing the deep, then soars
Up to the fiery concave towering high.
As when far off at sea* a fleet descried
Hangs in the clouds, by equinoctial winds
Close sailing from Bengala, or the isles
Of Ternate and Tidore, whence merchants bring
Their spicy drugs: they on the trading flood
Through the wide Æthiopian to the Cape
Ply, stemming nightly toward the pole: so seem'd
Far off the flying fiend. At last appear
Hell bounds, high reaching to the horrid roof,
And thrice threefold the gates: three folds were brass,
Three iron, three of adamantine rock,
Impenetrable, impaled with circling fire,
Yet unconsumed. Before the gates there sat
On either side a formidable shape;
The one seem'd woman to the waist, and fair,
But ended foul in many a scaly fold,
Voluminous and vast, a serpent arm'd
With mortal sting: about her middle round
A cry of hell hounds never ceasing bark'd
With wide Cerberean mouths, full loud, and rung
A hideous peal: yet when they list, would creep,
If aught disturb'd their noise, into her womb,
And kennel there; yet there still bark'd and howl'd
Within unseen. Far less abhorr'd than these
Vex'd Scylla bathing, in the sea that parts
Calabria from the hoarse Trinacrian shore:
Nor uglier follow the night-hag, when, call'd
In secret, riding through the air she comes,
Lured with the smell of infant blood, to dance
With Lapland witches, while the labouring moon

labores lunae

* *As when far off at sea.*

Satan "towering high," is here compared to a fleet of Indiamen discovered at a distance, as it were "hanging in the clouds," as a fleet at a distance seems to do. This is the whole of the comparison; but, as Dr. Pearce observes, Milton in his similitudes (as is the practice of Homer and Virgil too,) after he has shown the common resemblance, often takes the liberty of wandering into some unresembling circumstances; which have no other relation to the comparison than that it gave him the hint, and as it were set fire to the train of his imagination. —NEWTON.

Eclipses at their charms. The other shape,
If shape it might be call'd, that shape had none
Distinguishable in member, joint, or limb,
Or substance might be call'd that shadow seem'd,
For each seem'd either; black it stood as night,
Fierce as ten furies, terrible as hell,
And shook a dreadful dart; what seem'd his head
The likeness of a kingly crown had on.
Satan was now at hand, and from his seat
The monster moving onward came as fast,
With horrid strides; hell trembled as he strode.
The undaunted fiend what this might be admired;
Admired, not fear'd; God and his Son except,
Created thing nought valued he, nor shunn'd;
And with disdainful look thus first began:—
Whence and what art thou,* execrable shape,
That darest, though grim and terrible, advance

* *Whence and what art thou?*

Milton has interwoven in the texture of his fable some particulars which do not seem to have probability enough for an epic poem; particularly in the actions which he ascribes to Sin and Death, and the picture which he draws of the Limbo of Vanity, with other passages in the second book. Such allegories rather savour of the spirit of Spenser and Ariosto, than of Homer and Virgil.

It is, however, a very finished piece of its kind, when it is not considered as a part of an epic poem. The genealogy of the several persons is contrived with great delicacy: Sin is the daughter of Satan, and Death the offspring of Sin: the incestuous mixture between Sin and Death produces those monsters and hell-hounds, which from time to time enter into their mother, and tear the bowels of her who gave them birth: these are the terrors of an evil conscience, and the proper fruits of Sin, which naturally rise from the apprehensions of death. This last beautiful moral is, I think clearly intimated in the speech of Sin, where complaining of this her dreadful issue, she adds:—

Before mine eyes in opposition sits
Grim Death, my son and foe; who sets them on,
And me, his parent, would full soon devour
For want of other prey, but that he knows
His end with mine involved.

I need not mention to the reader the beautiful circumstance in the last part of this quotation: he will likewise observe how naturally the three persons concerned in this allegory are tempted, by one common interest, to come into a confederacy together: and how properly Sin is made the portress of hell, and the only being than can open the gates of that world of tortures.

The descriptive part of this allegory is likewise very strong, and full of sublime ideas. The figure of Death, the regal crown upon his head, the menace of Satan, his advancing to the combat, the outcry at his birth, are circumstances too noble to be passed over in silence, and extremely suitable to this king of terrors. I need not mention the justness of thought which is observed in the generation of these several symbolical persons; that Sin was produced upon the first revolt of Satan, that Death appeared soon after he was cast into hell, and that the terrors of conscience were conceived at the gate of this place of torments. The description of the gates is very poetical, as the opening of them is full of Milton's spirit.—ADDISON.

Thy miscreated front athwart my way
To yonder gates? through them I mean to pass,
That be assured, without leave ask'd of thee:
Retire, or taste thy folly; and learn by proof,
Hell-born, not to contend with spirits of heaven!
To whom the goblin full of wrath replied:—
Art thou that traitor angel, art thou he,
Who first broke peace in heaven, and faith, till then
Unbroken, and in proud rebellious arms
Drew after him the third part of heaven's sons
Conjured against the Highest; for which both thou
And they, outcast from God, are here condemn'd
To waste eternal days in woe and pain?
And reckon'st thou thyself with spirits of heaven,
Hell-doom'd, and breathest defiance here and scorn,
Where I reign king, and, to enrage thee more,
Thy king and lord! Back to thy punishment,
False fugitive, and to thy speed add wings;
Lest with a whip of scorpions I pursue
Thy lingering, or with one stroke of this dart
Strange horror seize thee, and pangs unfelt before.
So spake the grisly terror; and in shape,
So speaking, and so threatening, grew tenfold
More dreadful and deform: on the other side,
Incensed with indignation, Satan stood
Unterrified, and like a comet burn'd,
That fires the length of Ophiuchus huge
In the arctic sky, and from his horrid hair
Shakes pestilence and war. Each at the head
Level'd his deadly aim; their fatal hands
No second stroke intend; and such a frown
Each cast at the other, as when two black clouds,
With heaven's artillery fraught, come rattling on
Over the Caspian; then stand front to front,
Hovering a space, till winds the signal blow
To join their dark encounter in mid air;
So frown'd the mighty combatants, that hell
Grew darker at their frown; so match'd they stood;
For never but once more was either like
To meet so great a Foe:† and now great deeds
Had been achieved, whereof all hell had rung,
Had not the snaky sorceress, that sat
Fast by hell gate, and kept the fatal key,
Risen, and with hideous outcry rush'd between.

---

* *So great a Foe.*

esus Christ, who, as it follows v. 734, will one day destroy both Death, and im that has the power of death, that is, the devil." Heb. ii. 14.—NEWTON.

O father, what intends thy hand, she cried,
Against thy only son? What fury, O son,
Possesses thee to bend that mortal dart
Against thy father's head? and know'st for whom?
For him who sits above, and laughs the while
At thee, ordain'd his drudge, to execute
Whate'er his wrath, which he calls justice, bids;
His wrath, which one day will destroy ye both.
She spake, and at her words the hellish pest
Forebore; then these to her Satan returned:—
So strange thy outcry, and thy words so strange
Thou interposest, that my sudden hand
Prevented spares to tell thee yet by deeds
What it intends; till first I know of thee,
What thing thou art, thus double form'd; and why,
In this infernal vale first met, thou call'st
Me father, and that phantasm call'st my son:
I know thee not, nor ever saw till now
Sight more detestable than him and thee.
To whom thus the portress of hell gate replied:
Hast thou forgot me then, and do I seem
Now in thine eye so foul, once deem'd so fair
In heaven? when at the assembly, and in sight
Of all the seraphim with thee combined
In bold conspiracy against heaven's King,
All on a sudden miserable pain
Surprised thee; dim thine eye, and dizzy swum
In darkness, while thy head flames thick and fast
Threw forth; till on the left side opening wide,
Likest to thee in shape and countenance bright,
Then shining heavenly fair, a goddess arm'd,
Out of thy head I sprung:* amazement seized
All the host of heaven; back they recoil'd afraid
At first, and call'd me Sin, and for a sign
Portentous held me: but, familiar grown,
I pleased, and with attractive graces won
The most averse; thee chiefly; who full oft
Thyself in me thy perfect image viewing
Becamest enamour'd; and such joy thou took'st
With me in secret, that my womb conceived
A growing burden. Meanwhile war arose,

* *Out of thy head I sprung.*

Sin is rightly made to spring out of the head of Satan, as Wisdom or Minerva did out of Jupiter's; and Milton describes the birth of the one very much in the same manner as the ancient poets have described that of the other.—NEWTON.

And fields were fought in heaven; wherein remain'd
(For what could else?) to our Almighty Foe
Clear victory, to our part loss and rout
Through all the empyrean: down they fell
Driven headlong from the pitch of heaven, down
Into this deep, and in the general fall
I also; at which time this powerful key
Into my hand was given, with charge to keep
These gates for ever shut, which none can pass
Without my opening. Pensive here I sat
Alone, but long I sat not, till my womb,
Pregnant by thee and now excessive grown,
Prodigious motion felt and rueful throes.
At last this odious offspring whom thou seest,
Thine own begotten, breaking violent way,
Tore through my entrails, that, with fear and pain
Distorted, all my nether shape thus grew
Transform'd: but he, my inbred enemy,
Forth issued, brandishing his fatal dart
Made to destroy: I fled, and cried out *Death;*
Hell trembled at the hideous name, and sigh'd
From all her caves, and back resounded, *Death.*
I fled, but he pursued, though more, it seems,
Inflamed with lust than rage; and, swifter far,
Me overtook, his mother, all dismay'd;
And, in embraces forcible and foul
Ingendering with me, of that rape begot
These yelling monsters, that with ceaseless cry
Surround me, as thou saw'st; hourly conceived
And hourly born, with sorrow infinite
To me: for, when they list, into the womb
That bred them they return, and howl and gnaw
My bowels, their repast; then bursting forth
Afresh with conscious terrors vex me round,
That rest or intermission none I find.
Before mine eyes in opposition sits
Grim Death, my son and foe, who sets them on;
And me his parent would full soon devour
For want of other prey, but that he knows
His end with mine involved; and knows that I
Should prove a bitter morsel, and his bane,
Whenever that shall be; so Fate pronounced.
But thou, O father, I forewarn thee, shun
His deadly arrow; neither vainly hope
To be invulnerable in those bright arms,
Though temper'd heavenly; for that mortal dint,
Save he who reigns above, none can resist.
She finish'd, and the subtle fiend his lore
Soon learned, now milder, and thus answer'd smooth:—

Dear daughter,* since thou claim'st me for thy sire,
And my fair son here show'st me, the dear pledge
Of dalliance had with thee in heaven, and joys
Then sweet, now sad to mention, through dire change
Befallen us, unforeseen, unthought of; know,
I come no enemy, but to set free
From out this dark and dismal house of pain,
Both him and thee, and all the heavenly host
Of spirits, that, in our just pretences arm'd,
Fell with us from on high: from them I go
This uncouth errand sole, and one for all
Myself expose; with lonely steps to tread
The unfounded deep, and through the void immense
To search with wandering quest a place foretold
Should be, and, by concurring signs, ere now
Created, vast and round, a place of bliss
In the purlieus of heaven, and therein placed
A race of upstart creatures, to supply
Perhaps our vacant room; though more removed,
Lest heaven, surcharged with potent multitude,
Might hap to move new broils. Be this, or aught
Than this more secret, now design'd, I haste
To know; and, this once known, shall soon return,
And bring ye to the place where thou and Death
Shall dwell at ease, and up and down unseen
Wing silently the buxom air, imbalm'd
With odours; there ye shall be fed and fill'd
Immeasurably; all things shall be your prey.
He ceased, for both seem'd highly pleased, and Death
Grinn'd horrible a ghastly smile, to hear
His famine should be fill'd, and bless'd his maw
Destined to that good hour: no less rejoiced
His mother bad, and thus bespake her sire:—
The key of this infernal pit by due,
And by command of heaven's all-powerful King,
I keep, by him forbidden to unlock
These adamantine gates; against all force
Death ready stands to interpose his dart,
Fearless to be o'ermatch'd by living might.
But what owe I to his commands above,
Who hates me, and hath hither thrust me down
Into this gloom of Tartarus profound,
To sit in hateful office, here confined,
Inhabitant of heaven and heavenly-born,

---

* *Dear daughter.*

Satan had now learned his lore or lesson; and the reader will observe how artfully he changes his language: he had said before that he had never seen "sight more detestable;" but now it is *dear daughter* and *fair son*.—NEWTON.

Here, in perpetual agony and pain,
With terrors and with clamours compass'd round
Of mine own brood, that on my bowels feed?
Thou art my father, thou my author, thou
My being gavest me; whom should I obey
But thee? whom follow? thou wilt bring me soon
To that new world of light and bliss, among
The gods who live at ease; where I shall reign
At thy right hand voluptuous, as beseems
Thy daughter and thy darling, without end.
Thus saying, from her side the fatal key,
Sad instrument of all our woe, she took;
And, towards the gate rolling her bestial train,
Forthwith the huge portcullis high up drew,
Which but herself not all the Stygian powers
Could once have moved: then in the keyhole turns
The intricate wards, and every bolt and bar
Of massy iron or solid rock with ease
Unfastens: on a sudden open fly,
With impetuous recoil and jarring sound,
The infernal doors, and on their hinges grate
Harsh thunder, that the lowest bottom shook
Of Erebus. She open'd, but to shut
Excell'd her power; the gates wide open stood,
That with extended wings a banner'd host,
Under spread ensigns marching, might pass through
With horse and chariots rank'd in loose array;
So wide they stood, and like a furnace mouth
Cast forth redounding smoke and ruddy flame.
Before their eyes in sudden view appear
The secrets of the hoary deep; a dark
Illimitable ocean, without bound,
Without dimension, where length, breadth, and highth,
And time, and place, are lost; where eldest Night
And Chaos,* ancestors of Nature, hold
Eternal anarchy, amidst the noise

* *Where eldest Night*
And Chaos.

All the ancient naturalists, philosophers, and poets, hold that Chaos was the first principle of all things; and the poets particularly make Night a goddess, and represent Night or darkness, and Chaos or confusion, as exercising uncontrolled dominion from the beginning. Thus Orpheus, in the beginning of his Hymn to Night, addresses her as the mother of the gods and men, and origin of all things. See also Spenser in imitation of the ancients, F. Q. I. v. 22. And Milton's system of the universe is, in short, that the empyrean heaven, and chaos, and darkness, were before the creation, heaven above and chaos beneath; and then, upon the rebellion of the angels; first, hell was formed out of chaos, stretching far and wide beneath; and afterwards heaven and earth, another world hanging over the realm of Chaos, and won from his dominion.—NEWTON.

Of endless wars, and by confusion stand:
For hot, cold, moist, and dry, four champions fierce,
Strive here for mastery, and to battle bring
Their embryon atoms; they around the flag
Of each his faction, in their several clans,
Light-arm'd or heavy, sharp, smooth, swift, or slow,
Swarm populous, unnumber'd as the sands
Of Barca or Cyrene's torrid soil,
Levied to side with warring winds, and poise
Their lighter wings. To whom these most adhere,
He rules a moment: Chaos umpire sits,
And by decision more imbroils the fray,
By which he reigns: next him, high arbiter,
Chance governs all. Into this wild abyss,
The womb of nature, and perhaps her grave,—
Of neither sea, nor shore, nor air, nor fire,
But all these in their pregnant causes mix'd
Confusedly, and which thus must ever fight,
Unless the Almighty Maker them ordain
His dark materials to create more worlds;—
Into this wild abyss the wary fiend
Stood on the brink of hell, and look'd awhile
Pondering his voyage; for no narrow frith
He had to cross. Nor was his ear less peal'd
With noises loud and ruinous, (to compare
Great things with small) than when Bellona storms,
With all her battering engines bent to raze,
Some capital city; or less than if this frame
Of heaven were falling, and these elements
In mutiny had from her axle torn
The steadfast earth. At last his sail-broad vans
He spreads for flight, and in the surging smoke
Uplifted spurns the ground; thence many a league,
As in a cloudy chair, ascending rides
Audacious; but, that seat soon failing, meets
A vast vacuity: all unawares
Fluttering his pennons vain, plumb down he drops
Ten thousand fathom deep; and to this hour
Down had been falling, had not by ill chance
The strong rebuff of some tumultuous cloud,
Instinct with fire and nitre, hurried him
As many miles aloft: that fury stay'd,
Quench'd in a boggy Syrtis, neither sea,
Nor good dry land: nigh founder'd on he fares,
Treading the crude consistence, half on foot,
Half flying; behoves him now both oar and sail.
As when a gryphon, through the wilderness
With winged course, o'er hill or moory dale,
Pursues the Arimaspian, who by stealth,

Had from his wakeful custody purloin'd
The guarded gold; so eagerly the fiend
O'er bog or steep, through strait, rough, dense, or rare,*
With head, hands, wings, or feet, pursues his way,
And swims, or sinks, or wades, or creeps, or flies.
At length a universal hubbub wild
Of stunning sounds and voices all confused,
Borne through the hollow dark, assaults his ear
With loudest vehemence: thither he plies,
Undaunted to meet there whatever power
Or spirit of the nethermost abyss†
Might in that noise reside, of whom to ask
Which way the nearest coast of darkness lies,
Bordering on light; when straight behold the throne
Of Chaos, and his dark pavilion spread‡
Wide on the wasteful deep: with him enthroned
Sat sable-vested Night, eldest of things,
The consort of his reign; and by them stood
Orcus and Ades,§ and the dreaded name
Of Demogorgon;‖ Rumour next, and Chance,
And Tumult and Confusion all imbroil'd;
And Discord with a thousand various mouths.
To whom Satan turning boldly, thus:—Ye powers,
And spirits of this nethermost abyss,
Chaos and ancient Night, I come no spy,
With purpose to explore or to disturb
The secrets of your realm; but by constraint

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* *O'er bog, or steep, through strait, rough, dense, or rare.*
he difficulty of Satan's voyage is very well expressed by so many mono-ables as follow, which cannot be pronounced but slowly, and with frequent ses.—NEWTON.

† *The nethermost abyss.*
hough the throne of Chaos was above hell, and consequently a part of the ss was so, yet a part of that abyss was at the same time below hell; ar below, as that, when Satan went from hell on his voyage, he fell in abyss ten thousand fathom deep; and the poet there adds, that if it had been for an accident, he had been falling down there to this hour: nay, vas so deep, as to be illimitable, and where *highth is lost.* The abyss , considered altogether, was nethermost in respect of hell, below which it so endlessly extended.—PEARCE.

‡ *And his dark pavilion spread.*
salm xviii. 11:—"He made *darkness* his secret place, his *pavilion* round ut him."—DUNSTER.

§ *Orcus and Ades.*
rcus for Pluto, and Ades for any dark place.—RICHARDSON.

‖ *Of Demogorgon.*
he very name of Demogorgon the ancients supposed capable of producing most terrible effects, which they therefore dreaded to pronounce. He is tioned as of great power in incantations.—NEWTON.

Wandering this darksome desert,—as my way
Lies through your spacious empire up to light,—
Alone, and without guide, half lost, I seek
What readiest path leads where your gloomy bounds
Confine with heaven; or if some other place,
From your dominion won, the ethereal King
Possesses lately, thither to arrive
I travel this profound: direct my course;
Directed, no mean recompense it brings,
To your behoof, if I that region lost,
All usurpation thence expell'd, reduce
To her original darkness and your sway,
Which is my present journey, and once more
Erect the standard there of ancient Night:
Yours be the advantage all, mine the revenge.
Thus Satan; and him thus the anarch old,
With faltering speech and visage incomposed,
Answer'd:—I know thee, stranger, who thou art;
That mighty leading angel, who of late
Made head against heaven's King, though overthrown.
I saw and heard; for such a numerous host
Fled not in silence through the frighted deep,
With ruin upon ruin, rout on rout,
Confusion worse confounded; and heaven gates
Pour'd out by millions her victorious bands
Pursuing. I upon my frontiers here
Keep residence; if all I can will serve
That little which is left so to defend,
Encroach'd on still through your intestine broils
Weakening the sceptre of old Night: first hell,
Your dungeon, stretching far and wide beneath;
Now lately heaven and earth, another world,
Hung o'er my realm, link'd in a golden chain
To that side heaven from whence your legions fell:
If that way be your walk, you have not far;
So much the nearer danger: go, and speed:
Havock, and spoil, and ruin are my gain.
He ceased; and Satan stay'd not to reply;
But, glad that now his sea should find a shore,
With fresh alacrity and force renew'd
Springs upward, like a pyramid of fire,*

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* *Springs upward, like a pyramid of fire.*

In Satan's voyage through Chaos there are several imaginary persons described, as residing in that immense waste of matter. This may perhaps be conformable to the taste of those critics who are pleased with nothing in a poet which has not life and manners ascribed to it; but, for my own part, I am pleased most with those passages in this description which carry in them a greater measure of probability, and are such as might possibly have happened: of this kind is his first mounting in the smoke that rises from the

Into the wild expanse; and through the shock
Of fighting elements, on all sides round
Environ'd, wins his way; harder beset
And more endanger'd than when Argo pass'd
Through Bosporus betwixt the justling rocks:
Or when Ulysses on the larboard shunn'd
Charybdis, and by the other whirlpool steer'd.
So he with difficulty and labour hard
Moved on, with difficulty and labour he;
But, he once past, soon after, when man fell,
(Strange alteration!) Sin and Death amain
Following his track, (such was the will of Heaven)
Paved after him a broad and beaten way
Over the dark abyss, whose boiling gulf
Tamely endured a bridge of wondrous length,
From hell continued, reaching the utmost orb
Of this frail world; by which the spirits perverse
With easy intercourse passed to and fro
To tempt or punish mortals, except whom
God and good angels guard by special grace.
But now at last the sacred influence
Of light appears, and from the walls of heaven
Shoots far into the bosom of dim Night
A glimmering dawn: here Nature first begins
Her farthest verge, and Chaos to retire,
As from her outmost works a broken foe,
With tumult less and with less hostile din;
That Satan, with less toil, and now with ease,
Wafts on the calmer wave by dubious light;
And, like a weather-beaten vessel, holds
Gladly the port, though shrouds and tackle torn;
Or in the emptier waste, resembling air,
Weighs his spread wings, at leisure to behold
Far off the empyreal heaven, extended wide
In circuit, undetermined square or round,
With opal towers and battlements adorn'd
Of living sapphire, once his native seat;
And fast by, hanging in a golden chain,

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infernal pit; his falling into a cloud of nitre and the like combustible materials, that by their explosion still hurried him forward in his voyage; his springing upwards like a pyramid of fire; with his laborious passage through that confusion of elements, which the poet calls

The womb of nature, and perhaps her grave.

The glimmering light which shot into the Chaos from the utmost verge of the creation, and the distant discovery of the earth, that hung close by the moon, are wonderfully beautiful and poetical.—ADDISON.

This pendent world, in bigness as a star
Of smallest magnitude close by the moon.
Thither, full fraught with mischievous revenge,
Accursed, and in a cursed hour, he hies.

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK III.

ARGUMENT.

GOD sitting on his throne sees Satan flying towards this world, then newly created; shows him to the Son, who sat at his right hand; foretells the success of Satan in perverting mankind; clears his own justice and wisdom from all imputation, having created man free, and able enough to have withstood his tempter; yet declares his purpose of grace towards him, in regard he fell not of his own malice, as did Satan, but by him seduced. The Son of God renders praises to his Father for the manifestation of his gracious purpose towards man; but God again declares, that grace cannot be extended towards man without the satisfaction of divine justice; man hath offended the majesty of God by aspiring to Godhead, and therefore with all his progeny devoted to death must die, unless some one can be found sufficient to answer for his offence, and undergo his punishment. The Son of God freely offers himself a ransom for man; the Father accepts him, ordains his incarnation, pronounces his exaltation above all names in heaven and earth; commands all the angels to adore him; they obey, and, hymning to their harps in full quire, celebrate the Father and the Son. Meanwhile Satan alights upon the bare convex of this world's outermost orb; where wandering he first finds a place, since called the Limbo of Vanity; what persons and things fly up thither; thence comes to the gate of heaven, described ascending by stairs, and the waters above the firmament that flow about it; his passage thence to the orb of the sun; he finds there Uriel, the regent of that orb; but first changes himself into the shape of a meaner angel; and, pretending a zealous desire to behold the new creation, and man whom God had placed here, inquires of him the place of his habitation, and is directed; alights first on Mount Niphates.*

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* Milton having in the first and second books represented the infernal world with all its horrors, the thread of his fable naturally leads him into the opposite regions of bliss and glory.

If Milton's majesty forsakes him anywhere, it is in those parts of his poem where the divine persons are introduced as speakers. One may, I think, observe that the author proceeds with a kind of fear and trembling, whilst he describes the sentiments of the Almighty; he dares not give his imagination its full play, but chooses to confine himself to such thoughts as are drawn from the books of the most orthodox divines, and to such expressions as may be met with in Scripture. The beauties therefore which we are to look for in these speeches are not of a poetical nature; nor so proper to fill the mind with sentiments of grandeur, as with thoughts of devotion; the passions which they are designed to raise, are a divine love and religious fear. The particular beauty of the speeches in the third book consists in that shortness and perspicuity of style, in which the poet has couched the greatest mysteries of Christianity, and drawn together, in a regular

HAIL, holy Light! * offspring of heaven first born,
Or of the Eternal co-eternal beam,
May I express thee unblamed? since God is light,†
And never but in unapproached light
Dwelt from eternity; dwelt then in thee
Bright effluence of bright essence increate.
Or hear'st thou rather, pure ethereal stream,
Whose fountain who shall tell?‡ Before the sun,
Before the heavens thou wert, and at the voice
Of God, as with a mantle, didst invest
The rising world of waters dark and deep,
Won from the void and formless infinite.
Thee I revisit now with bolder wing,
Escaped the Stygian pool, though long detain'd
In that obscure sojourn; while in my flight
Through utter and through middle darkness§ borne,
With other notes than to the Orphean lyre,
I sung of Chaos and eternal Night;
Taught by the heavenly Muse to venture down
The dark descent, and up to reascend,
Though hard and rare: thee I revisit safe,
And feel thy sovran vital lamp; but thou
Revisit'st not these eyes, that roll in vain
To find thy piercing ray, and find no dawn;
So thick a drop serene hath quench'd their orbs,
Or dim suffusion veil'd. Yet not the more
Cease I to wander where the Muses haunt

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scheme, the whole dispensation of Providence with respect to man. He has represented all the abstruse doctrines of predestination, free-will and grace; as also the great points of incarnation and redemption, (which naturally grow up in a poem that treats of the fall of man,) with great energy of expression, and in a clearer and stronger light than I have ever met with in any other writer. As these points are dry in themselves to the generality of readers, the concise and clear manner in which he has treated them is very much to be admired; as is likewise the particular art which he has made use of in the interspersing of all those graces of poetry which the subject was capable of receiving.—ADDISON.

* *Hail, holy Light.*

This celebrated complaint, with which Milton opens the third book, deserves all the praises which have been given it, though it may rather be looked on as an excrescence than as an essential part of the poem. The same observation might be applied to that beautiful digression upon hypocrisy in the same book.—ADDISON.

† *Since God is light.*

See 1 John i. 5; and 1 Tim. vi. 16—NEWTON.

‡ *Whose fountain who shall tell?*

As in Job xxxviii. 19. "Where is the way where light dwelleth?"—HUME.

§ *Through utter and through middle darkness.*

Through hell, which is often called *utter* darkness; and through the great gulf between hell and heaven, the *middle* darkness.—NEWTON.

Clear spring, or shady grove, or sunny hill,
Smit with the love of sacred song; but chief
Thee, Sion, and the flowery brooks beneath,*
That wash thy hallow'd feet, and warbling flow,
Nightly I visit; nor sometimes forget
Those other two equal'd with me in fate,
So were I equal'd with them in renown,
Blind Thamyris and blind Mæonides,†
And Tiresias and Phineus, prophets old:
Then feed on thoughts, that voluntary move
Harmonious numbers; as the wakeful bird
Sings darkling, and in shadiest covert hid
Tunes her nocturnal note. Thus with the year
Seasons return, but not to me returns
Day, or the sweet approach of even or morn,
Or sight of vernal bloom, or summer's rose,
Or flocks, or herds, or human face divine;
But cloud instead, and ever-during dark
Surrounds me, from the cheerful ways of men
Cut off, and for the book of knowledge fair
Presented with a universal blank
Of nature's works, to me expunged and rased,
And wisdom at one entrance quite shut out.
So much the rather thou, celestial Light,
Shine inward, and the mind through all her powers
Irradiate; there plant eyes, all mist from thence
Purge and disperse, that I may see and tell
Of things invisible to mortal sight.
Now had the Almighty Father from above,
From the pure empyrean where he sits
High throned above all highth, bent down his eye,
His own works and their works at once to view.
About him all the sanctities of heaven
Stood thick as stars, and from his sight received
Beatitude past utterance; on his right
The radiant image of his glory sat,
His only Son: on earth he first beheld
Our two first parents, yet the only two
Of mankind, in the happy garden placed,
Reaping immortal fruits of joy and love,

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* *The flowery brooks beneath.*

Kedron and Siloah. He still was pleased to study the beauties of the ancient
its, but his highest delight was in the songs of Sion, in the holy Scriptures;
l in these he meditated day and night. This is the sense of the passage strip-
l of its poetical ornaments.—NEWTON.

† *Blind Thamyris and blind Mæonides.*

Mæonides is Homer. Thamyris was a Thracian, and invented the Doric mood
measure. Tiresias and Phineus, the one a Theban, the other a king of Arcadia,
ious blind prophets and poets of antiquity.—NEWTON.

Uninterrupted joy, unrival'd love,
In blissful solitude: he then survey'd
Hell and the gulf between, and Satan there
Coasting the wall of heaven on this side night
In the dun air sublime, and ready now
To stoop with wearied wings, and willing feet,
On the bare outside of this world, that seem'd
Firm land imbosom'd without firmament,*
Uncertain which, in ocean or in air.
Him God beholding from his prospect high,
Wherein past, present, future, he beholds,
Thus to his only Son foreseeing spake:—
Only-begotten Son, seest thou what rage
Transports our adversary? whom no bounds
Prescribed, no bars of hell, nor all the chains
Heap'd on him there, nor yet the main abyss
Wide interrupt, can hold; so bent he seems
On desperate revenge, that shall redound
Upon his own rebellious head. And now,
Through all restraint broke loose, he wings his way
Not far off heaven, in the precincts of light,
Directly towards the new-created world,
And man there placed; with purpose to assay
If him by force he can destroy, or, worse,
By some false guile pervert; and shall pervert:
For man will hearken to his glozing lies,
And easily transgress the sole command,
Sole pledge of his obedience: so will fall,
He and his faithless progeny. Whose fault?
Whose but his own? Ingrate, he had of me
All he could have: I made him just and right,
Sufficient to have stood, though free to fall.
Such I created all the ethereal powers
And spirits, both them who stood and them who fail'd:
Freely they stood who stood, and fell who fell.
Not free, what proof could they have given sincere
Of true allegiance, constant faith, or love?
Where only, what they needs must do, appear'd,
Not what they would: what praise could they receive?
What pleasure I from such obedience paid?
When will and reason, (reason also is choice)
Useless and vain, of freedom both despoil'd,
Made passive both, had served necessity,

* *Firm land imbosom'd without firmament.*

The universe appeared to Satan to be a solid globe, encompassed on all sides, but uncertain whether with water or air, but *without firmament*, without any sphere or fixed stars over it, as over the earth. The sphere, or fixed stars, was itself comprehended in it, and made a part of it.—NEWTON.

Not me. They therefore, as to right belong'd,
So were created, nor can justly accuse
Their Maker, or their making, or their fate;
As if predestination over-ruled
Their will, disposed by absolute decree
Or high foreknowledge: they themselves decreed
Their own revolt, not I: if I foreknew,
Foreknowledge had no influence on their fault,
Which had no less proved certain unforeknown.
So without least impulse or shadow of fate,
Or aught by me immutably foreseen,
They trespass, authors to themselves in all,
Both what they judge and what they choose; for so
I form'd them free, and free they must remain,
Till they enthrall themselves; I else must change
Their nature, and revoke the high decree,
Unchangeable, eternal, which ordain'd
Their freedom: they themselves ordain'd their fall.
The first sort by their own suggestion fell,
Self-tempted, self-depraved: man falls deceived
By the other first: man therefore shall find grace,
The other none: in mercy and justice both,
Through heaven and earth, so shall my glory excel;
But mercy first and last shall brightest shine.
Thus while God spake, ambrosial fragrance fill'd
All heaven, and in the blessed spirits elect
Sense of new joy ineffable diffused.
Beyond compare the Son of God was seen
Most glorious; in him all his Father shone
Substantially express'd;* and in his face
Divine compassion visibly appear'd,
Love without end, and without measure grace;
Which uttering, thus he to his Father spake:—
O Father, gracious was that word which closed
Thy sovreign sentence, that man should find grace;
For which both heaven and earth shall high extol
Thy praises, with the innumerable sound
Of hymns and sacred songs, wherewith thy throne
Encompass'd shall resound thee ever bless'd.
For should man finally be lost? should man,
Thy creature late so loved, thy youngest son,
Fall circumvented thus by fraud, though join'd
With his own folly? that be from thee far,†
That far be from thee, Father, who art judge

* *Substantially express'd.*
See Heb. i. 3.—HUME.

† *That be from thee far.*
See Gen. xviii. 45.—NEWTON.

Of all things made, and judgest only right.
Or shall the adversary thus obtain
His end, and frustrate thine? shall he fulfil
His malice, and thy goodness bring to naught;
Or proud return, though to his heavier doom,
Yet with revenge accomplish'd, and to hell
Draw after him the whole race of mankind,
By him corrupted? or wilt thou thyself
Abolish thy creation, and unmake,
For him, what for thy glory thou hast made?
So should thy goodness and thy greatness both
Be question'd and blasphemed without defence.
To whom the great Creator thus replied:—
O Son, in whom my soul hath chief delight,
Son of my bosom, Son, who art alone
My word, my wisdom, and effectual might,
All hast thou spoken as my thoughts are, all
As my eternal purpose hath decreed:
Man shall not quite be lost, but saved who will;
Yet not of will in him, but grace in me
Freely vouchsafed: once more I will renew
His lapsed powers, though forfeit and enthral'd
By sin to foul exorbitant desires:
Upheld by me, yet once more he shall stand
On even ground against his mortal foe,
By me upheld; that he may know how frail
His fallen condition is, and to me owe
All his deliverance, and to none but me.
So I have chosen of peculiar grace,
Elect above the rest; so is my will:
The rest shall hear me call, and oft be warn'd
Their sinful state, and to appease betimes
The incensed Deity, while offer'd grace
Invites; for I will clear their senses dark,
What may suffice, and soften stony hearts
To pray, repent, and bring obedience due.
To prayer, repentance, and obedience due,
Though but endeavour'd with sincere intent,
Mine ear shall not be slow, mine eye not shut:
And I will place within them as a guide
My umpire Conscience, whom if they will hear,
Light after light, well used, they shall attain;
And to the end, persisting, safe arrive.
This my long sufferance and my day of grace
They who neglect and scorn shall never taste;
But hard be harden'd, blind be blinded more,
That they may stumble on, and deeper fall;
And none but such from mercy I exclude.
But yet all is not done; man disobeying

Disloyal breaks his fealty, and sins
Against the high supremacy of Heaven,
Affecting Godhead, and so losing all,
To expiate his treason hath naught left;
But to destruction sacred and devote,
He with his whole posterity must die;
Die he or justice must: unless for him
Some other able, and as willing, pay
The rigid satisfaction, death for death.
Say, heavenly powers, where shall we find such love?
Which of you will be mortal to redeem
Man's mortal crime; and just the unjust to save?
Dwells in all heaven charity so dear?
He ask'd, but all the heavenly quire stood mute;
And silence was in heaven: on man's behalf
Patron or intercessor none appear'd;
Much less that durst upon his own head draw
The deadly forfeiture, and ransom set.
And now without redemption all mankind
Must have been lost, adjudged to death and hell
By doom severe, had not the Son of God,
In whom the fullness dwells of love divine,
His dearest mediation thus renew'd:—
Father, thy word is pass'd; man shall find grace;
And shall grace not find means? that finds her way,
The speediest of thy winged messengers,
To visit all thy creatures, and to all
Comes unprevented, unimplored, unsought;
Happy for man, so coming; he her aid
Can never seek, once dead in sins and lost;
Atonement for himself or offering meet,
Indebted and undone, hath none to bring.
Behold me then, me for him, life for life,
I offer: on me let thine anger fall;
Account me man; I for his sake will leave
Thy bosom, and this glory next to thee
Freely put off, and for him lastly die
Well pleased; on me let Death wreak all his rage;
Under his gloomy power I shall not long
Lie vanquish'd; thou hast given me to possess
Life in myself for ever; by thee I live,
Though now to Death I yield, and am his due
All that of me can die; yet that debt paid,
Thou wilt not leave me in the loathsome grave
His prey, nor suffer my unspotted soul
For ever with corruption there to dwell:*

* *With corruption there to dwell.*
Psalm xvi. 10. "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither suffer thine

But I shall rise victorious, and subdue
My vanquisher, spoil'd of his vaunted spoil;
Death his death's wound shall then receive, and stoop,
Inglorious, of his mortal sting disarm'd.
I through the ample air in triumph high
Shall lead hell captive, maugre hell, and show
The powers of darkness bound. Thou, at the sight
Pleased, out of heaven shalt look down and smile;
While, by thee raised, I ruin all my foes,
Death last, and with his carcase glut the grave:
Then, with the multitude of my redeem'd,
Shall enter heaven long absent, and return,
Father, to see thy face, wherein no cloud
Of anger shall remain, but peace assured
And reconcilement: wrath shall be no more
Thenceforth, but in thy presence joy entire.

His words here ended, but his meek aspect
Silent yet spake, and breathed immortal love
To mortal men, above which only shone
Filial obedience; as a sacrifice
Glad to be offer'd, he attends the will
Of his great Father. Admiration seized
All heaven, what this might mean and whither tend,
Wondering; but soon the Almighty thus replied:

O thou, in heaven and earth the only peace
Found out for mankind under wrath, O thou,
My sole complacence! well thou know'st how dear
To me are all my works; nor man the least,
Though last created, that for him I spare
Thee from my bosom and right hand, to save,
By losing thee awhile, the whole race lost.
Thou therefore, whom thou only canst redeem,
Their nature also to thy nature join;
And be thyself man among men on earth,
Made flesh, when time shall be, of virgin seed,
By wondrous birth: be thou in Adam's room
The head of all mankind, though Adam's son.
As in him† perish all men, so in thee,
As from a second root, shall be restored,
As many as are restored; without thee none.
His crime makes guilty all his sons; thy merit
Imputed shall absolve them, who renounce
Their own both righteous and unrighteous deeds,
And live in thee transplanted, and from thee

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ly One to see corruption;" applied to our Saviour's resurrection by St. Peter, s ii. 20, 21.—NEWTON.

† *As in him, &c.*

ee 1 Cor. xv. 22.—NEWTON.

Receive new life. So man, as is most just,
Shall satisfy for man, be judged and die;
And dying rise, and rising with him raise
His brethren, ransom'd with his own dear life.
So heavenly love shall outdo hellish hate
Giving to death, and dying to redeem;
So dearly to redeem what hellish hate
So easily destroy'd; and still destroys
In those who, when they may, accept not grace.
Nor shalt thou, by descending to assume
Man's nature, lessen or degrade thine own,
Because thou hast, though throned in highest bliss
Equal to God, and equally enjoying
God-like fruition, quitted all to save
A world from utter loss; and hast been found
By merit more than birthright Son of God:
Found worthiest to be so by being good,
Far more than great or high. Because in thee
Love hath abounded more than glory abounds;
Therefore thy humiliation shall exalt
With thee thy manhood also to this throne;
Here shalt thou sit incarnate, here shalt reign
Both God and Man, Son both of God and Man,
Anointed universal King. All power
I give thee; reign for ever, and assume
Thy merits; under thee, as head supreme,
Thrones, princedoms, powers, dominions, I reduce:
All knees to thee shall bow, of them that bide
In heaven, or earth, or under earth in hell.
When thou attended gloriously from heaven
Shalt in the sky appear, and from thee send
The summoning archangels to proclaim
Thy dread tribunal: forthwith from all winds
The living, and forthwith the cited dead
Of all past ages, to the general doom
Shall hasten: such a peal shall rouse their sleep.
Then, all thy saints assembled, thou shalt judge
Bad men and angels; they arraign'd shall sink
Beneath thy sentence: hell, her numbers full,
Thenceforth shall be for ever shut. Meanwhile
The world shall burn, and from her ashes spring
New heaven and earth, wherein the just shall dwell,
And after all their tribulations long
See golden days, fruitful of golden deeds,
With joy and love triumphing and fair truth:
Then thou thy regal sceptre shalt lay by,
For regal sceptre then no more shall need;
God shall be all in all. But, all ye gods,
Adore him, who to compass all this dies;
Adore the Son, and honour him as me.

No sooner had the Almighty ceased, but all
The multitude of angels with a shout,*
Loud as from numbers without number, sweet
As from blest voices, uttering joy; heaven rung
With jubilee, and loud hosannas fill'd
The eternal regions. Lowly reverent
Towards either throne they bow, and to the ground
With solemn adoration down they cast
Their crowns inwove with amarant and gold;
Immortal amarant, a flower which once
In paradise fast by the tree of life
Began to bloom; but soon for man's offence
To heaven removed, where first it grew, there grows,
And flowers aloft shading the fount of life
And where the river of bliss through midst of heaven
Rolls o'er Elysian flowers her amber stream;
With these, that never fade, the spirits elect
Bind their resplendent locks inwreathed with beams;
Now in loose garlands thick thrown off, the bright
Pavement, that like a sea of jasper shone,
Impurpled with celestial roses smiled.
Then crown'd again their golden harps they took,
Harps ever tuned, that glittering by their side
Like quivers hung, and with preamble sweet
Of charming symphony they introduce
Their sacred song, and waken raptures high;
No voice exempt, no voice but well could join
Melodious part: such concord is in heaven.
Thee, Father, first they sung, Omnipotent,
Immutable, Immortal, Infinite,
Eternal King; thee Author of all being,
Fountain of light, thyself invisible
Amidst the glorious brightness where thou sitt'st
Throned inaccessible; but when thou shadest
The full blaze of thy beams, and through a cloud

* *With a shout.*

The survey of the whole creation, v. 56, and of everything that is transacted in it, is a prospect worthy of Omniscience; and as much above that in which Virgil has drawn Jupiter, as the christian idea of the Supreme Being is more rational and sublime than that of the heathens. The particular objects on which he is described to have cast his eye are represented in the most beautiful and lively manner.

Satan's approach to the confines of the creation is finely imaged in the beginning of the speech which immediately follows. The effects of this speech in the blessed spirits, and in the Divine Person to whom it was addressed, cannot but fill the mind of the reader with a secret pleasure and complacency.

I need not point out the beauty of the circumstance, wherein the whole host of angels are represented as standing mute; nor show how proper the occasion was to produce such a silence in heaven. The close of this divine colloquy, and the hymn of angels which follows upon it, are wonderfully beautiful and poetical.—ADDISON.

Drawn round about thee like a radiant shrine,
Dark with excessive bright* thy skirts appear,
Yet dazzle heaven; that brightest seraphim
Approach not; but with both wings veil their eyes.
Thee next they sang of all creation first,
Begotten Son, Divine Similitude,
In whom conspicuous countenance without cloud
Made visible the Almighty Father shines,
Whom else no creature can behold: on thee
Impress'd the effulgence of his glory abides;
Transfused on thee his ample Spirit rests.
He heaven of heavens and all the powers therein
By thee created, and by thee threw down
The aspiring dominations: thou that day
Thy Father's dreadful thunder didst not spare,
Nor stop thy flaming chariot-wheels that shook
Heaven's everlasting frame; while o'er the necks
Thou drovest of warring angels, disarray'd.
Back from pursuit thy powers with loud acclaim
Thee only extoll'd, Son of thy Father's might,
To execute fierce vengeance on his foes;
Not so on man; him, through their malice fallen,
Father of mercy and grace, thou didst not doom
So strictly; but much more to pity incline.
No sooner did thy dear and only Son
Perceive thee purposed not to doom frail man
So strictly, but much more to pity inclined;
He, to appease thy wrath, and end the strife
Of mercy and justice in thy face discern'd,
Regardless of the bliss wherein he sat
Second to thee, offer'd himself to die
For man's offence. O unexampled love,
Love no where to be found, less than Divine!
Hail, Son of God! Saviour of men! Thy name
Shall be the copious matter of my song
Henceforth; and never shall my harp thy praise
Forget, nor from thy Father's praise disjoin.
Thus they in heaven, above the starry sphere,
Their happy hours in joy and hymning spent.
Meanwhile upon the firm opacous globe
Of this round world, whose first convex divides,
The luminous inferior orbs, inclosed
From Chaos and the inroad of Darkness old;
Satan alighted walks; a globe far off

* *Dark with excessive bright.*

Gray has imitated this, speaking of Milton,—

Blasted with excess of light,
Closed his eyes in endless night.

It seem'd,* now seems a boundless continent,
Dark, waste, and wild, under the frown of night
Starless, exposed, and ever-threatening storms
Of Chaos blustering round, inclement sky;
Save on that side, which from the wall of heaven,
Though distant far, some small reflection gains
Of glimmering air, less vex'd with tempest loud:
Here walk'd the fiend at large in spacious field.
As when a vulture† on Imaus bred,
Whose snowy ridge the roving Tartar bounds,
Dislodging from a region scarce of prey
To gorge the flesh of lambs, or yeanling kids
On hills where flocks are fed, flies towards the springs
Of Ganges or Hydaspes, Indian streams;
But in his way lights on the barren plains
Of Sericana, where Chineses drive
With sails and wind‡ their canv waggons light:
So on this windy sea of land the fiend
Walk'd up and down alone, bent on his prey;
Alone, for other creature in this place,
Living or lifeless, to be found was none;
None yet, but store hereafter from the earth
Up hither like aërial vapours flew
Of all things transitory and vain, when sin
With vanity had fill'd the works of men:
Both all things vain, and all who in vain things
Built their fond hopes of glory, or lasting fame,
Or happiness in this or the other life;
All who have their reward on earth, the fruits

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* *A globe far off*
It seem'd.

Satan's walk upon the outside of the universe, which at a distance appeared to him of a globular form, but upon his nearer approach looked like an unbounded plain, is natural and noble; as his roaming upon the frontiers of the creation, between that mass of matter which was wrought into a world, and that shapeless unformed heap of materials which still lay in chaos and confusion, strikes the imagination with something astonishingly great and wild.—ADDISON.

† *As when a vulture.*

This simile is very apposite and lively, and corresponds exactly in all the particulars. Satan coming from hell to earth, in order to destroy mankind, but lighting first on the bare convex of the world's outermost orb, "a sea of land," as the poet calls it, is very fitly compared to a vulture flying in quest of his prey, tender lambs or kids new-yeaned, from the barren rocks to the more fruitful hills and streams of India; but lighting in his way on the plains of Sericana, which were in a manner "a sea of land" too; the country being so smooth and open, that carriages were driven (as travellers report) with sails and wind. Imaus is a celebrated mountain in Asia.—NEWTON.

‡ *Chineses drive*
With sails and wind.

Gray has caught the tone of this:

The dusky people drive before the gales.

Of painful superstition and blind zeal,
Naught seeking but the praise of men, here find
Fit retribution, empty as their deeds:
All the unaccomplish'd works of nature's hand,
Abortive, monstrous, or unkindly mix'd,
Dissolved on earth, fleet hither, and in vain,
Till final dissolution wander here:
Not in the neighbouring moon, as some have dream'd;
Those argent fields more likely habitants,
Translated saints, or middle spirits hold
Betwixt the angelical and human kind:
Hither of ill-join'd sons,* and daughters born
First from the ancient world those giants came
With many a vain exploit, though then renown'd:
The builders next of Babel on the plain
Of Sennaar, and still with vain design
New Babels, had they wherewithal, would build:
Others came single; he, who to be deem'd
A god, leap'd fondly into Ætna flames,
Empedocles; and he who, to enjoy
Plato's Elysium, leap'd into the sea,
Cleombrotus, and many more too long,
Embryos and idiots, eremites and friars,
White, black, and grey, with all their trumpery.
Here pilgrims roam, that stray'd so far to seek
In Golgotha him dead, who lives in heaven;
And they, who to be sure of Paradise,†
Dying put on the weeds of Dominic,
Or in Franciscan think to pass disguised;
They pass the planets seven, and pass the fix'd,
And that crystalline sphere‡ whose balance weighs
The trepidation talk'd, and that first moved:
And now Saint Peter at heaven's wicket seems

* *Hither of ill-join'd sons.*

He means the *sons of God* ill-joined with *the daughters of men*, alluding to that text of Scripture, Gen. vi. 4:—"There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them; the same became mighty men, which were of old, men of renown." Where, by the "sons of God," some Fathers and commentators have understood *angels*, as if the angels had been enamoured and married to women: but the true meaning is, that the posterity of Seth and other patriarchs, who were worshippers of the true God, and therefore called "the sons of God," intermarried with the idolatrous posterity of wicked Cain.—NEWTON.

† *And they, who to be sure of Paradise.*

This verse, and the two following, allude to a ridiculous opinion that obtained in the dark ages of popery; that, at the time of death, to be clothed in a friar's habit, was an infallible road to heaven.—BOWLE.

‡ *And that crystalline sphere.*

He speaks here according to the ancient astronomy, adopted and improved by Ptolemy.—NEWTON.

To wait them with his keys, and now at foot
Of heaven's ascent they lift their feet, when, lo!
A violent cross wind from either coast
Blows them transverse ten thousand leagues awry
Into the devious air: then might ye see
Cowls, hoods, and habits with their wearers toss'd
And flutter'd into rags; then reliques, beads,
Indulgences, dispenses, pardons, bulls,
The sport of winds: all these upwhirl'd aloft,
Fly o'er the backside of the world far off,
Into a limbo large and broad,* since call'd
The Paradise of Fools, to few unknown
Long after, now unpeopled, and untrod.
All this dark globe the fiend found as he pass'd;
And long he wander'd till at last a gleam
Of dawning light turn'd thitherward in haste
His travel'd steps: far distant he descries,
Ascending by degrees magnificent
Up to the wall of heaven, a structure high;
At top whereof, but far more rich, appear'd
The work as of a kingly palace gate,
With frontispiece of diamond and gold
Imbellish'd; thick with sparkling orient gems
The portal shone, inimitable on earth
By model or by shading pencil drawn.
The stairs were such as whereon Jacob saw
Angels ascending and descending, bands
Of guardians bright, when he from Esau fled
To Padan-Aram in the field of Luz,
Dreaming by night under the open sky,
And waking cried "This is the gate of heaven."
Each stair mysteriously was meant, nor stood
There always, but drawn up to heaven sometimes
Viewless; and underneath a bright sea flow'd
Of jasper, or of liquid pearl, whereon
Who after came from earth, sailing arrived,
Wafted by angels; or flew o'er the lake,
Rapt in a chariot drawn by fiery steeds.
The stairs were then let down; whether to dare
The fiend by easy ascent, or aggravate
His sad exclusion from the doors of bliss:
Direct against which open'd from beneath,

* *Into a limbo large and broad.*

The *limbus patrum*, as it is called, is a place that the schoolmen supposed to be in the neighbourhood of hell, where the souls of the patriarchs were detained, and those good men who died before our Saviour's resurrection. Our author gives the same name to his "Paradise of Fools," and more rationally places it beyond "the backside of the world."—NEWTON.

Just o'er the blissful seat of Paradise,
A passage down to the earth, a passage wide;
Wider by far than that of after times
Over Mount Sion, and, though that were large,
Over the promised land to God so dear;
By which, to visit oft those happy tribes,
On high behests his angels to and fro
Pass'd frequent, and his eye with choice regard,
From Paneas, the fount of Jordan's flood,
To Beërsaba, where the Holy Land
Borders on Ægypt and the Arabian shore:
So wide the opening seem'd, where bounds were set
To darkness, such as bound the ocean wave.
Satan from hence now on the lower stair,
That scaled by steps of gold to heaven gate,
Looks down with wonder at the sudden view
Of all this world at once. As when a scout,
Through dark and desert ways with peril gone
All night, at last by break of cheerful dawn
Obtains the brow of some high-climbing hill,
Which to his eye discovers unaware
The goodly prospect of some foreign land
First seen; or some renown'd metropolis,
With glistering spires and pinnacles adorn'd,
Which now the rising sun gilds with his beams:
Such wonder seized, though after heaven seen,
The spirit malign; but much more envy seized,
At sight of all this world beheld so fair.
Round he surveys, (and well might, where he stood
So high above the circling canopy
Of night's extended shade,) from eastern point
Of Libra to the fleecy star that bears
Andromeda far off Atlantic seas
Beyond the horizon: then from pole to pole
He views in breadth; and without longer pause
Downright into the world's first region throws
His flight precipitant; and winds with ease
Through the pure marble air his oblique way
Amongst innumerable stars, that shone
Stars distant, but nigh hand seem'd other worlds;
Or other worlds they seem'd, or happy isles,
Like those Hesperian gardens, famed of old,
Fortunate fields, and groves and flowery vales,
Thrice happy isles; but who dwelt happy there
He stay'd not to inquire. Above them all,
The golden sun, in splendour likest heaven,
Allured his eye: thither his course he bends
Through the calm firmament; but up or down,
By centre or eccentric, hard to tell,

Or longitude, where the great luminary,
Aloof the vulgar constellations thick,
That from his lordly eye keep distance due,
Dispenses light from far; they as they move
Their starry dance in numbers that compute
Days, months, and years, towards his all-cheering lamp
Turn swift their various motions; or are turn'd
By his magnetic beam, that gently warms
The universe, and to each inward part
With gentle penetration, though unseen,
Shoots invisible virtue even to the deep;
So wondrously was set his station bright.
There lands the fiend; a spot like which perhaps
Astronomer in the sun's lucent orb
Through his glazed optic tube yet never saw.*
The place he found beyond expression bright,
Compared with aught on earth, metal or stone;
Not all parts like, but all alike inform'd
With radiant light, as glowing iron with fire:
If metal, part seem'd gold, part silver clear;
If stone, carbuncle most or chrysolite,
Ruby or topaz, to the twelve that shone
In Aaron's breastplate; and a stone besides
Imagined rather oft than elsewhere seen:
That stone, or like to that which here below
Philosophers in vain so long have sought;
In vain, though by their powerful art they bind
Volatile Hermes, and call up unbound
In various shapes old Proteus from the sea,
Drain'd through a limbeck to his native form.
What wonder then if fields and regions here
Breathe forth elixir pure, and rivers run
Potable gold; when with one virtuous touch,
The arch-chemic sun, so far from us remote,
Produces, with terrestrial humour mix'd,
Here in the dark so many precious things,
Of colour glorious and effect so rare?
Here matter new to gaze the devil met
Undazzled; far and wide his eye commands:
For sight no obstacle found here, nor shade,
But all sunshine. As when his beams at noon
Culminate from the equator, as they now
Shot upward still direct, whence no way round

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* *Through his glazed optic tube yet never saw.*

The spots in the sun are visible with a telescope; but astronomer perhaps never saw, "through his glazed optic tube," such a spot as Satan, now he was in the sun's orb. The poet mentions this glass the oftener in honour of Galileo, whom he means here by the astronomer.—NEWTON.

Shadow from body opaque can fall; and the air,
No where so clear, sharpen'd his visual ray
To objects distant far; whereby he soon
Saw within ken a glorious angel stand.
The same whom John* saw also in the sun:
His back was turn'd, but not his brightness hid;
Of beaming sunny rays a golden tiar
Circled his head; nor less his locks behind
Illustrious on his shoulders fledge with wings
Lay waving round: on some great charge employ'd
He seem'd, or fix'd in cogitation deep.
Glad was the spirit impure, as now in hope
To find who might direct his wandering flight
To Paradise, the happy seat of man,
His journey's end, and our beginning woe.
But first he casts to change his proper shape;
Which else might work him danger or delay:
And now a stripling cherub he appears,
Not of the prime, yet such as in his face
Youth smiled celestial, and to every limb
Suitable grace diffused, so well he feign'd;
Under a coronet his flowing hair
In curls on either cheek play'd; wings he wore
Of many a colour'd plume sprinkled with gold;
His habit fit for speed succinct; and held
Before his decent steps a silver wand.
He drew not nigh unheard; the angel bright,
Ere he drew nigh, his radiant visage turn'd,
Admonish'd by his ear; and straight was known
The archangel Uriel, one of the seven,
Who in God's presence nearest to his throne
Stand ready at command, and are his eyes
That run through all the heavens, or down to the earth
Bear his swift errands, over moist and dry,
O'er sea and land: him Satan thus accosts:—
Uriel,† for thou of those seven spirits that stand
In sight of God's high throne, gloriously bright,
The first art wont his great authentic will
Interpreter through highest heaven to bring,
Where all his sons thy embassy attend;
And here art likeliest by supreme decree

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* *The same whom John.*
See Rev. xix. 17:—"And I saw an angel standing in the sun."—NEWTON.

† *Uriel.*
His name is derived from two Hebrew words, which signify *God is my light.* He is mentioned as a good angel in the second book of Esdras; and the Jews, and some Christians, conceive him to be an angel of light according to his name, and therefore he has, properly, his station in the sun.—NEWTON.

Like honour to obtain, and as his eye
To visit oft this new creation round;
Unspeakable desire to see, and know
All these his wondrous works, but chiefly man,
His chief delight and favour, him for whom
All these his works so wondrous he ordain'd,
Hath brought me from the quires of cherubim
Alone thus wandering. Brightest seraph, tell
In which of all these shining orbs hath man
His fixed seat, or fixed seat hath none,
But all these shining orbs his choice to dwell;
That I may find him, and, with secret gaze
Or open admiration, him behold,
On whom the great Creator hath bestow'd
Worlds, and on whom hath all these graces pour'd:
That both in him and all things, as is meet,
The universal Maker we may praise;
Who justly hath driven out his rebel foes
To deepest hell; and, to repair that loss,
Created this new happy race of men
To serve him better: wise are all his ways.
  So spake the false dissembler unperceived;
For neither man nor angel can discern
Hypocrisy, the only evil that walks
Invisible, except to God alone,
By his permissive will, through heaven and earth:
And oft, though wisdom wake, suspicion sleeps
At wisdom's gate, and to simplicity
Resigns her charge, while goodness thinks no ill
Where no ill seems; which now for once beguiled
Uriel, though regent of the sun, and held
The sharpest-sighted spirit of all in heaven:
Who to the fraudulent impostor foul,
In his uprightness, answer thus return'd:—
  Fair angel, thy desire, which tends to know
The works of God, thereby to glorify
The great Work-master, leads to no excess
That reaches blame, but rather merits praise
The more it seems excess, that led thee hither
From thy empyreal mansion thus alone,
To witness with thine eyes what some perhaps,
Contented with report, hear only in heaven:
For wonderful indeed are all his works,
Pleasant to know,* and worthiest to be all

* *Pleasant to know.*

This is one of those places where a negligence in metre is not only excusable, in taking away monotony, but carries with it a dignity which no smoothness of verse could give it, the words being in almost the same order as in Scripture.—STILLINGFLEET.

Had in remembrance always with delight:
But what created mind can comprehend
Their number; or the wisdom infinite
That brought them forth, but hid their causes deep?
I saw, when at his word the formless mass,
This world's material mould, came to a heap;
Confusion heard his voice, and wild uproar
Stood ruled; stood vast infinitude confined;
Till at his second bidding darkness fled,
Light shone, and order from disorder sprung.
Swift to their several quarters hasted then
The cumbrous elements, earth, flood, air, fire;
And this ethereal quintessence* of heaven
Flew upward, spirited with various forms,
That roll'd orbicular, and turn'd to stars
Numberless, as thou seest, and how they move;
Each had his place appointed, each his course;
The rest in circuit walls this universe.
Look downward on that globe, whose hither side
With light from hence, though but reflected, shines;
That place is earth, the seat of man; that light
His day, which else, as the other hemisphere,
Night would invade; but there the neighbouring moon,
So call that opposite fair star, her aid,
Timely interposes; and her monthly round
Still ending, still renewing, through mid heaven,
With borrow'd light her countenance triform
Hence fills and empties to enlighten the earth;
And in her pale dominion checks the night.
That spot to which I point is Paradise,
Adam's abode; those lofty shades his bower:
Thy way thou canst not miss, me mine requires.
Thus said, he turn'd; and Satan, bowing low,
As to superior spirits is wont in heaven,
Where honour due and reverence none neglects,
Took leave; and toward the coast of earth beneath,
Down from the ecliptic, sped with hoped success,
Throws his steep flight in many an aery wheel,
Nor stay'd, till on Niphates' top† he lights.

* *And this ethereal quintessence.*

The four elements hasted to their quarters, but this fifth essence flew upward. —NEWTON.

† *On Niphates' top.*

The poet lands Satan on this mountain, says, Hume, because it borders on Mesopotamia, in which the most judicious describers of Paradise place it.—DUNSTER.

Satan after having long wandered upon the surface, or utmost wall of the universe, discovers at last a wide gap in it, which led into the creation, and is described as the opening through which the angels pass to and fro into the lower

world, upon their errands to mankind. His sitting upon the brink of this passage, and taking a survey of the whole face of nature that appeared to him new and fresh in all its beauties, with the simile illustrating this circumstance, fills the mind of the reader with as surprising and glorious an idea as any that rises in the whole poem. He looks down into that vast hollow of the universe with the eye, or as Milton calls it in his first book, with the ken of an angel. He surveys all the wonders in this immense amphitheatre that lies between both the poles of heaven, and takes in at one view the whole round of the creation.

His flight between the several worlds that shined on every side of him, and the particular description of the sun, are set forth in all the wantonness of a luxuriant imagination. His shape, speech, and behaviour, upon his transforming himself into an angel of light, are touched with exquisite beauty. The poet's thought of directing Satan to the sun, which in the vulgar opinion of mankind is the most conspicious part of the creation; the placing in it an angel; is a circumstance very finely contrived, and the more adjusted to a poetical probability, as it was a received doctrine among the most famous philosophers, that every orb had its intelligence; and as an apostle in sacred writ is said to have seen such an angel in the sun. In the answer which this angel returns to the disguised evil spirit, there is such a becoming majesty as is altogether suitable to a superior being. The part of it in which he represents himself as present at the creation, is very noble in itself; and not only proper where it is introduced, but requisite to prepare the reader for what follows in the seventh book:—

> I saw, when at his word the formless mass,
> This world's material mould, came to a heap:
> Confusion heard his voice, and wild uproar
> Stood ruled; stood vast infinitude confined;
> Till, at his second bidding, Darkness fled,
> Light shone, and order from disorder sprung.

In the following part of the speech he points out the earth with such circumstances, that the reader can scarce forbear fancying himself employed on the same distant view of it.—ADDISON.

SELECTIONS FROM THE

LIFE OF

ADMIRAL BLAKE,

BY

HEPWORTH DIXON, Esq.

CHAPTER I.

1599-1625.

THE SCHOLAR.

One of the most active of the Severn merchants in the latter part of the sixteenth century was Humphrey Blake of Plansfield and Bridgwater. This man's father, Robert Blake, a person whose success in life was illustrated by many virtues, had been the first of his family to step out of the narrow circle of a country life and interrupt the old traditions by removing from Tuxwell, the seat of his ancestors for several generations, to Bridgwater, where he hoped to share the harvests then so abundantly reaped in the field of Spanish commerce. The oldest Blake—or Blacke, as the name is sometimes spelt in the Records—whose story is in any way known, is one Humphrey, who lived in the reign of Henry VIII., Mary and Edward VI., and held the estate of Tuxwell, in the parish of Bishop's Lydyard, county of Somerset, in capite, by payment of the fortieth part of a knight's fee. He died towards the close of 1558, and the property then passed to his son John, who immediately conveyed it to one Thomas Blake, probably the deceased Humphrey's brother. This Thomas, who was great-grandfather to the admiral, seems to have been in serious trouble about the middle of Queen Elizabeth's reign, as he at that time made over to his friends and neighbours, James Clark and Mathew Stradling, the titles of his estate; but the occasion for this transfer, whatever it may have been, soon passed away, and the property was re-conveyed to its former owner, from whom it descended in the course of nature to his son Robert. This

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nore active and ambitious personage married a lady named Margaret ymonds, and settled in Bridgwater, where he improved his fortune y commercial enterprise, and during a long life retained the respect nd confidence of his fellow-citizens. Three several times he had he honour to serve as chief magistrate in his adopted town; namely n 1573, 1579 and in 1587, as appears by the inscriptions still preerved on panels in the Townhall of Bridgwater. At his death, vhich occurred in 1591, he bequeathed 240*l.*, equal to more than 1000*l.* f our present money, to relieve the poor and repair the causeways; hus setting an example of liberality to his townsmen and descendants vhich the latter at least piously and honourably followed.* Humhrey, his son, succeeded to the business; but his temper seems to ave been too sanguine and adventurous for the ordinary action of rade, with its small risks and quick returns. Although he married co-heiress, yet his bold speculations sometimes turned out so ill as o cause him not only serious losses, but even threaten to involve the amily fortunes in ruin. This possible end of his speculations seemed, owever, as yet far off; and in the meantime, inheritor of a good state and a name held in universal respect, he made a considerable igure in the locality, living in one of the best houses in Bridgwater, nd twice filling the chair of its chief magistrate.

His marriage with Sara, daughter and co-heiress of Humphrey Villiams, made him master of Plansfield—that Plansfield which is escribed by all previous writers who have treated of Blake's parentage s the original seat of his family. The precise way in which the state came into his possession is not ascertained; whether it came o him directly in right of his wife, or was purchased with part of er dowry; but it is certain that he was the first member of the Blake family who owned that property, for in the Herald's Visitation f Somerset in 1623, he is styled Humphrey Blake of Plansfield, on of Robert Blake of Bridgwater.

Sara Williams, the admiral's mother, was descended by a collateral ne from the knightly owners of Plansfield, an extremely good omersetshire family. The estate had lapsed to the Crown on the eath of Sir Nicholas Williams, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth; ut it was restored to his widow Mabel, and probably continued in he family of Williams until carried with the female inheritor to that f the Blakes.

The firstfruits of this marriage, the future admiral and general of ngland, came into the world about the end of August, 1599, and eceived the rite of baptism at the parish church of Bridgwater on

* The following is copied from panels in the parish church of Bridgwater:—Robert Blake of this Town, Gentleman, did give towards pious uses ye sum of o hundred and forty Pounds, which sum is in ye custody of ye Common Councell this Borough to remain as a stock for ever, ye profitt or interest thereof to be arly distributed at ye discretion of ye Maior, Aldermen, and Burgesses for ye ne being, towards ye reliefe of ye poor people of ye said Borough, and reperation ye Cawsies within ye said Parish. He died Ano 1592."

the 27th of September. He was called Robert in pious remembrance of his grandfather. Many other children followed the first born in rapid succession; in all twelve boys.

After a lapse of two centuries and a half, it may still be possible to recover an idea, more or less faint, but true in its main features, of the mode in which this interesting family lived down there in the West of England, and of the influences under which the young commander passed the fifteen years of his childhood and early youth.

Bridgwater, on the river Parrett, stands in the centre of a rich plain, now covered with orchards and cornfields but in the seventeenth century little better than a wide morass, bounded on one side by the Quantock hills, and on the other, at a less distance, by the wooded slopes of the Poldons. The valley, about three miles in width, includes several spots famous in English story. There the victorious armies of the king of Wessex had been arrested. There our own Alfred had found shelter from the fury of the Danes. There, in later times Monmouth fought and lost the battle of Sedgemoor. The town was built, as it is now, on both sides of the river; but at that time the eastern suburb, joined to the main body of the town by an ancient and solid stone bridge of three arches, was inhabited almost exclusively by opulent traders and gentry. High street, leading through the corn-market—where there was a famous inn, known to the country gentlemen for miles round as the *Swan*, and a picturesque old market-cross,—was filled with fine shops; and the little town had an air of bustle and business. Lying on the great highway from Gloucester and Bristol to Taunton, Exeter and Plymouth, the western traffic of course all passed through it. Pack-horses, laden with Yorkshire wool, tinkled their merry bells along its streets and over its old bridge night and day. Yet even then the town seemed to have passed its prime. Grass already grew in some of its outlying streets, and many of its houses wore a funereal aspect. In former times it had been defended by a wall and gates; but nearly every vestige of these defences had been swept away. The Castle, once a royal appanage, held by the Queens of England as a dower, kept watch and ward over the surrounding country; but though an imposing structure in the feudal era, it too had fallen from its high estate. Some faint rays of light from a distant past lingered about its decaying walls and turrets; in the wars of the Roses it had bravely withstood siege and storm; and in spite of its changed condition it still boasted the proud honours of a virgin fortress.

The first object to catch a stranger's eye as he stands on the iron bridge, which in recent years has replaced the old stone edifice, is a row of young elms on the left bank of the stream; those elm-trees grow in what was formerly Humphrey Blake's garden. On the same bank, a little below the bridge, lie such relics of the old fortress as may still be traced. The house in which the admiral was born, in which he passed his youth, and in which, when at Bridgwater, he lived in the full blaze of his renown, still stands in what was formerly a part of St. Mary's-street; a house two stories high, built of blue

lias stone, with walls of immense thickness, heavy stone stairs, oak wainscots and decorated ceilings; altogether a habitation of Tudor origin and of unmistakeable importance in those times. The gardens, bounded by Durleigh brook, the river Parrett and the highway, were about two acres in extent, and seem to have been laid out with simple taste, mingling fruit-trees and flower-beds, scented plants and greenery for the kitchen. Though it stood within a few steps of the church and Corn Hill, the mansion nevertheless enjoyed a complete rural seclusion; while the windows looked out over a wide expanse of valley away to the sunny slopes and summits of the Quantocks. It was in this secluded garden, by that old stone bridge, among the ships, native and foreign, lying at anchor in the stream, and under the guns of that grim fortress, that the ruddy-faced and curly-haired boy, Robert Blake, played and pondered, as was his habit, until the age of sixteen. From his father's garden he could daily see the extraordinary flow of tide known to seamen as a "bore"—a phenomenon only met with in the Ganges, the Severn, and one or two other streams; and the conversation of his father and of his father's friends would contribute in no slight degree to fix his young mind on the sea and its affairs.

When it is said that Humphrey Blake was a merchant trading with Spain, it is not to be inferred that his days were spent, in the pacific routine of the desk and the exchange. The life of a trader was then a life of peril and adventure. He mostly manned his own ship and sailed with his argosy. Like later cruisers among the Pacific islands, his course and his destination was rarely known before he quitted port. Failing in one harbour to dispose of his cargo, he spread his canvass in search of better markets. Experience of strange lands and stranger people was the daily incident of this change of place; and he was compelled to hold his own, not merely against the duties, fines, and exactions of the more legitimate powers, but against the still more unscrupulous and formidable corsair. Piracy was not, in the sixteenth century, the despicable calling it is now: in the opinion of that age, a pirate was but a soldier of fortune on another element. France, Germany, and Italy were overrun with mercenary heroes, eager to sell their swords in any cause where good pay and a fair amount of profligacy were allowed; and hundreds of distressed English gentlemen, as soon as the civil wars were over, took to the sea for bread in a similar spirit. In some parts of Europe entire districts lived on the plunder of unprotected vessels, long after the close of these troubles; and many persons still living can remember a time when the daring valour of the Greek and Biscayan freebooters was the theme of winter tales and popular ballads. Nor were these unlicensed spoilers the worst enemies whom the peaceful merchant had to encounter at sea. The Moors of Africa had erected piracy into a national system. For ages the Salee rover had been a terror to the south of Europe; and the Tunisian and the Algerine, equal to him in skill, daring, and fanaticism, had the advantage over him of better ports and larger privateers. No coast in Christendom

was free from their incursions; but their favourite stations were the bays and harbours of Portugal and Spain, as in these ports they found it easy to attack and capture stragglers from the fleets of two worlds. To the ordinary motives of the pirate, adventure and greed of gold, the Moor added the fiercer spurs of religious difference and hereditary hate. Europeans, it may be justly said, had forced the Moors into piracy as a measure of defence. Their expulsion from Granada in the fifteenth century roused the worst passions of their nature; and that band of armed priests, nestled behind the impregnable ramparts of Malta, and sworn to hold no truce with their race and faith,—a vow which they kept to the last letter, by frequent piratical descents on the coasts of Africa, marking their path along the shore with burning villages, slaughtered peasants and captive women and children, soon to be exposed by these Christian missionaries in the slave-markets of Venice, Seville and Genoa,—left them no other policy but that of revenge and retaliation. In their undiscriminating rage, the followers of Mohammed waged war against the commerce of all civilised countries; when the opportunity offered, they seized both fleets and cargoes; and, like the Knights of Malta, carried off their prisoners for sale to the bazars of Tunis, Tripoli and Algiers.

For protection against these formidable enemies, the merchant had to trust solely to his own bold heart and steady hand. His vessel, however small, carried some means of defence. The crew were well armed. Aids to escape were kept in readiness. From the British Channel to the Straits of Gibraltar, the course of the Severn adventurer lay through continual perils. Every rock and inlet along the coast had to be carefully examined for concealed enemies before his little barque could venture on. The adventurer lived on deck, and eat, drank and slept with his mind on the alert and his brain ready for every emergency. On his return from a successful voyage, many were the tales of perilous encounters, chance-escapes and valorous deeds which he had to tell his friends and children on the dark winter nights:—and such stories were, no doubt, a part of the food on which the imagination of young Blake, silent and thoughtful from his childhood, was fed in the old mansion at Bridgwater.

The rudiments of a more regular education he obtained at the grammar-school, then considered one of the best foundations of its kind in England. This edifice has long disappeared from the streets of Bridgwater; but by a curious coincidence it has been replaced by another school of similar aims and character, conducted in the very house in which the admiral was born and in which he lived. At the grammar-school he made a decent progress with his Greek and Latin; something of navigation, ship-building and the routine of sea duties he probably learned from his father or from his father's factors and servants. His own taste, however, his habit of mind and the bent of his ambition led to the field of literary endeavour; and, as he was the first of his race who had shewn any strong vocation to letters and learning, his father, proud of his talents and his studies, resolved

that he should have every chance of rising to eminence in his chosen walk that means and education could confer. Nor was this early culture thrown away. At sixteen he was already prepared for the university, and at his own earnest desire was allowed to proceed to Oxford, where he matriculated as a member of St. Alban's Hall in Lent Term 1615, in company with Edward Reynolds, afterwards raised to the see of Worcester, and John Earl, subsequently bishop of Salisbury.

But little is known of Blake's college life. It is recorded of him that he rose early, and was extremely assiduous at his books, lectures, and devotions; that he took great delight in field-sports, particularly in fishing and shooting. If any credit is to be attributed to an ancient piece of gossip, which whether false or true, is of respectable age, and is preserved to us by a writer who revered his name and was intimate with several members of the family,—his aquatic sports were sometimes extended to the catching of swans, then as plentiful on the Isis as they still are on the Thames. There is no ground for this report beyond the common scandal of the time, and many writers have rejected it without examination:—but if Shakspeare in his youth had a passion for deer, why may not Blake in his youth have had a weakness for cygnets?

He had not been long at Oxford before his young ambition prompted him to try his strength against Robert Hegge and Robert Newlin in a contest for a scholarship of Christ Church, then vacant; but he soon found that a student without friends or influence had little chance of success in that aristocratic college. The failure of his first effort did not, however, cast him down:—he kept close at his books and looked steadily towards the future. Nevertheless, willing to accept such friendly support as came in his way unsought, he removed from St. Alban's Hall, where he had found and felt himself a stranger, to Wadham College, at the request of his father's friend, Nicholas Wadham, a Somersetshire man, who had then recently founded the noble edifice which bears his name. In this new college, Blake remained several years; there he took the usual honours and completed his education:—and in the great dining-hall of Wadham, among the effigies of poets, divines and antiquaries, a portrait of the admiral is still shewn with honest pride as that of its most illustrious scholar.

During the years which he remained at Wadham College, waiting for an opportunity to establish himself in some permanent position in the University, the family prospects were gradually growing darker at Bridgwater. On the whole, Humphrey Blake had been a decidedly unprosperous man; many of his most important ventures in trade had failed to realise a profit; in some his actual losses had been severe. In these speculations much of his own and his wife's property was now gone; and in the decline of life he found himself for the first time in debt and difficulty. The absence of his former means chafed his ardent and ambitious mind; the more so as his misfortunes had fallen on him when the energy and buoyancy of youth were

passed, but not the cares and responsibilities of early manhood. He had married somewhat late in life; his family had nevertheless increased steadily and rapidly; and now at fifty-seven or eight he found himself already an old man with no less than ten children, varying in ages from Robert of twenty, down to little Alexander, then in the arms of his nurse. These troubles preyed on his spirits, and with the increasing darkness of his fortunes his health too began to fail.

Robert, in his humble rooms at Wadham College, shared in all the family fears and afflictions. He felt acutely the painful position in which his father stood, embarrassed with debts and surrounded with so many responsibilities; and the feeling gave a new and higher impulse to his desire to obtain a fellowship in one of the colleges. At this very time a vacancy occurred at Merton, and he offered himself as a candidate for the office—not as in the earlier period of his academical career, from a boyish ambition to achieve honours and place, but from an almost sacred wish to be useful to his brothers, and to relieve his father of the modest expense of his maintenance at Oxford. Alexander Fisher, John Earl, Edward Reynolds, his old comrades at St. Alban's Hall, and several other young men of parts and learning were in the lists. Had his efforts been crowned with success, had he gained the fellowship and its humble salary, it is probable that the future life of the renowned admiral would have passed in the seclusion of a college, among the books and studies he already loved so well:—in which case Taunton would in all human probability have remained in royalist hands, the battle of Naseby would not have been fought, Tromp would have remained unconquered, Spain unscathed, Tunis and Santa Cruz uncelebrated! How little did Sir Henry Savile, then warden of Merton College, dream that in rejecting Blake from his petty senate, he was turning back on the world one of those great master-spirits who were soon to overturn the government, humiliate his adored sovereign, and on the ruin of the fallen house elevate England to the height of human grandeur! But so it was. Sir Henry, a man of sense and acquirements, as witness his fine edition of St. Chrysostom, had an eccentric distaste for men of low stature, and chose his senators, as the Prussian king did his grenadiers, by their height. The young Somersetshire student, thick-set, fair-complexioned, and only five feet six, fell below his standard of manly beauty; and the loss of his election was then and there commonly attributed to this caprice of the learned warden. But it is not unfair to suppose that other reasons may have influenced the adverse decision. Blake was already known to profess Puritan sentiments, and with that fearless frankness which distinguished him through life, he loudly protested against every attempt of the court and courtly prelates to impart a papistical character to the rubric of the Church. Sir Henry Savile, on the other hand, was a servile supporter of King James's policy in affairs spiritual. This difference of principles would account for the result of the election without the help of an unworthy and ridiculous caprice. It must, however, be

stated that no writer of that time makes any reference to this difference of opinion as a ground of objection to Blake.

Blake remained five years at Oxford after this incident, and in good time took his degree of Master of Arts. There seems to be no ground for supposing that want of learning was the bar to his advancement in the University. He had read the best authors in Greek and Latin, and wrote the latter language at least sufficiently well for verse or epigram. Even in the busiest days of his public life, he made it a point of pride not to forget his classical studies. When out at sea, in chase of the enemy or fiercely cruising before a foreign station, his grave humour—and never man had finer sense of sarcasm, or used that brilliant weapon with greater effect—loved to find expression for its scorn and merriment in the satires of Horace and Juvenal; thus in some degree relieving the stern fervour of Puritan piety with the more easy graces of ancient scholarship.

In the ninth year of his residence at Oxford, and in the twenty-seventh of his age, Blake was called to his father's bedside. The old man had grown worse in health, and was probably no longer able to manage his affairs. At last his son abandoned the long-cherished idea of a college life, gave up his rooms at Wadham, and took up his abode in the old house at Bridgwater. In November of the following year, his father died, probably without having made a will, as no reference is made to such a document in the family papers, and as no trace of it exists at Taunton, Wells, or the Prerogative Court in London.

As soon as the funeral rites were all over, Blake surveyed his position. The estate, such as it was, was encumbered with debts. His brothers Humphrey, William and George were of age or near it; Samuel was seventeen, Nicholas sixteen, Benjamin eleven, and Alexander six. Not one of them, with the possible exception of William, was settled in life; and the four youngest had still to be in some measure educated as well as started in the world. There were also the widowed mother and two young girls to support out of the wreck of their former fortunes. The first thing, then, was to ascertain the amount of residue after paying all the debts; and in order to clear off some of these claims, it is probable that Plansfield was at this time sold. When the debts were paid, it would seem that property exclusive of the house in St. Mary's-street, of about two hundred pounds a year, was all that remained to the family, or rather to himself as the eldest son. The means were slight, the responsibilities heavy; yet he accepted, and in due course achieved the task of rearing, educating and placing the whole of that numerous family in the way of obtaining their own bread.

During the nine years spent at Oxford, Blake's character was slowly but soundly developed. When he returned to his native town, and again took up his residence in the family mansion, he was already remarkable for that iron will, that grave demeanour, that free and dauntless spirit for which after-events found employment, but did not create. Simple in his tastes and habits, there was already a dignity

and refinement in every line of his noble countenance which bespoke command, and seemed to presage victory. His manners, though somewhat austere in one so young, were relieved by a certain bluntness of address, while his peculiar sense of humour and great vehemence of passion rendered his conversation at once impressive, agreeable, and picturesque. Abuses in Church and State, daily growing more corrupt and incorrigible, afforded an unfailing theme for his satire; the formal profligacy which reigned at court, the moral laxity and doctrinal intolerance which marked so many religious professors, excited his intense indignation; and both in public and in private places he never ceased to inveigh against them with bitter sarcasm and solid argument. The weak worldliness of the prelates, the mean subservience of the Church to royal vices and follies, drove young Blake, as they drove thousands of the ardent and uncorrupted, into Puritanism: the despicable pedantry, faithlessness and profligacy of the King, his favourites and his courtiers, insulting from their high station the moral sense of a virtuous, domestic and religious people, made him sigh for the republic of Pericles or of Scipio. The two theories were indeed near allied: the Puritan in religion became by an easy and natural progress a democrat in politics. The head of the State was the admitted head of the Church. The principles of divine right and irresponsibility which ruled in the one ruled also in the other. The King claimed to be the vicegerent of God in affairs spiritual as well as temporal; and on this point the Church was in complete accord with royalty. After the death of James, his son Charles taught the divine right of kings, Laud contended for the divine right of kings and bishops. Opposition to the ideas which reigned at Lambeth led therefore by a single step to protests against abuses in the secular government. Yet there was scarcely one statesman in that age with sufficient clearness of vision to perceive how nearly the two sets of principles were allied. It was left for time and events to shew that the Puritan, living under the rule of Star-Chambers and Courts of High Commission, became almost as a matter of course an advocate for the Republic. When Blake quitted Oxford in 1624, this startling name had scarcely yet been heard in public; the men who professed a reverence for democratic institutions were few in number and obscure in rank, being for the greater part either poor scholars, fresh from the study of ancient history and poetry, with the glory of that august literature still lingering in their minds, or pious dreamers of an earthly Zion, in which the simple laws and social equality of an early Hebrew tribe should be tried once more amid the complex wants and infinite resources of modern civilisation. But he never made a secret of his opinions.

Long before the throne was considered to be in danger, he was marked by courtiers of sense and observation as a person of avowed republican sentiments. He publicly declared himself of the school of Scipio and Pericles. It was on the model of these ancient heroes that, as a boy dreaming of the classic world, he had endeavoured to form his own character; and in after-life it became his fortune to

rival these celebrated men, not alone in their private virtues, but also in the splendour of their public achievements.

CHAPTER VI.

1652.

THE DUTCH WAR.

A cherished dream of the English Republicans had been the idea of forming the United Provinces of Holland and the new insular Commonwealth into one mighty Protestant state. The Dutch were then the greatest naval power in the world. The sea seemed to be their native element,—and their fleets of war and commerce were known in every port, from the farthest east to the remotest west. Their colonial empire was only inferior in extent to that of Spain; while their wealth, energy and valour, gave promise of its indefinite expansion. England possessed a larger home territory, better harbours, and a finer geographical position. Its population was more numerous; its maritime resources were scarcely, if at all, inferior; and its land forces, after putting down the proudest chivalry of Europe, were no longer to be compared with the mere mercenary troops of Italy and the Empire. The amalgamation of the two Commonwealths would, therefore, have produced a vast and powerful Republic, capable, should the need arise, of combatting all the crowns of the Continent. Such a union would have been able to dictate peace even to powers like France and Spain. It would have secured the ascendancy of Protestant ideas and a liberal policy in the north and west of Europe; and would have furnished a vantage-ground from which knowledge and free institutions might have contended with greater effect against the ignorance, bigotry and despotism which in modern times have found their strongholds in the east and south. But this splendid conception was opposed by commercial jealousies and dynastic interests. William, second Prince of Orange of that name, had married in the palmy days of Stuart rule, a daughter of Charles I.; so that in addition to his princely antipathy to commonwealths, he was urged to thwart the idea of such an alliance by the powerful motive of a possible succession for his wife and children to the English throne. He was extremely popular with the lower classes of his countrymen; and so long as he lived, the two Protestant states remained on bad terms. He refused to extend to the Parliament's agents the ordinary protection of Dutch laws. Dorislaus, its first envoy, was murdered at the Hague by followers of Montrose. Strickland, who succeeded to the perilous office, suffered daily insults in the public streets. Yet no redress could be obtained. Recent prosperity, a career of victory unrelieved by chance or check, had raised the pride of Holland to the highest. Within a few years the renowned Admirals of the Republic had humbled the power of Spain, punished the insolence of Dunkirk, compelled the Prince of Salee and the Deys of

Tunis and Algiers to sue for peace, and made the Sultan of Fez and Morocco tremble on his distant throne. After such successes, nothing seemed to them beyond the reach of their ambition; and many of their people, led by the Orange party, were anxious for a rupture with England at the moment of its supposed exhaustion, in the confident belief that in a few weeks they would be able to wrest from it that vain but fiercely disputed right to be considered mistress of the narrow seas.

But the Prince of Orange died somewhat suddenly, leaving the heir to his honours and passions yet unborn; and the democratic party, comprising nearly all that was liberal and enlightened in Holland, seized the opportunity to abolish the office of Stadtholder and restore the pure form of republican government. Their success encouraged the English leaders to believe that, even if their favourite idea of a complete fusion could not be realised, a close alliance, offensive and defensive, might be formed between the two states. Oliver St. John was sent over as ambassador to the States-General to propose a treaty of trade and friendship. His reception was at first cordial and flattering; but the negociations went on slowly and uncertainly. After a long consideration of the English proposals, their High Mightinesses offered a counter project. Debates, interviews, and written explanations multiplied; time wore on; and at length St. John, found that his leave of absence had expired. His pride was hurt at these delays. The exile court was still at the Hague,—and in addition to his ill success with the States-General, he was subject to frequent outrages from the Cavaliers. The Dutch, on their side, were angry with Parliament for having fixed a day for its agent's return, fancying it intended as a sarcasm or a menace. Probably the true cause of the delay was a desire on the part of Holland not to commit herself to the new Commonwealth until the result of the Scotch invasion should be seen:—St. John answered their complaints in haughty language, and took his leave, war between the two countries already raging in his heart.

As soon as the battle of Worcester had put an end to every doubt as to the stability of the Commonwealth, Dutch statesmen saw their mistake; and in turn the States-General sent envoys to assuage the wrath of Parliament, and endeavour to resume the negociation at the point where it had been interrupted. But new causes of offence were now in the way, and the terms once rejected could no longer be obtained. Some English merchants, in consequence of complaints made to the Council of State of their losses by Dutch privateers, had received letters of marque against the ships of that nation; and in a short time more than eighty prizes had been secured in the ports of our east coast. But a still more serious obstacle to negociation had arisen in passing the famous Navigation Act. The Dutch were a nation of traders. Their whale, cod and herring fisheries occupied a great number of vessels; but the largest and best part of their commercial navy was employed in the carrying trade. Amsterdam and Rotterdam were the exchanges of Europe; and the shipowners

of these rich ports made their largest fortunes by transporting the produce of art and nature from one country to another. Under the Stuarts, England had neglected this important branch of naval industry; but the Navigation Act, in declaring that no goods, the produce of Asia, Africa or America, should be imported into England except in vessels either belonging to subjects of the Commonwealth, or to the countries from which the goods were imported, put a period, so far as these islands, with all their colonies, connexions and dependencies, were concerned, to that lucrative and fruitful branch of Dutch enterprise. The first prayer of the new Ambassador, therefore, was that this severe law of exclusion should be repealed, or if not repealed at once, that its action should be suspended during the progress of negociation. But while urging this point in the name of peace, they were careful to hint before the Council of State that they were then fitting out a powerful fleet for the protection of their trade. Parliament took the hint as a menace, and replied by ordering its captains to exact all those honours to the red cross which had been claimed by England in the narrow seas from the Saxon times. This order soon raised new troubles. Commodore Young, falling in with a Dutch fleet returning from Genoa, sent to request the Admiral of the convoy to lower his flag; the latter refused to comply with a demand so unexpected without first consulting his superiors; and Young poured a broadside into the ships. A sharp action ensued, but the Dutchman was obliged to strike. To revenge what they professed to think an insult to their colours, the States-General fitted out a fleet of forty-two sail and placed it under the command of their renowned Admiral, Tromp, with instructions to use his experienced discretion as to when and how far he would insist on the point of supremacy; but he was positively required to repel on all occasions, and at all hazards, attacks on the traders of the Republic, and to support the dignity of its flag. Tromp's wily genius was well suited to the execution of these vague and plastic orders.

War had not yet been declared, and the ambassadors were still in London talking of peace, when the Dutch Admiral suddenly appeared in the Downs. Bourne, stationed with a squadron of the fleet near Dover, despatched a messenger with intelligence of this visit to Blake, then cruising in the *James* off Rye Bay, in the usual manner of the summer guard. Suspecting that some evil design was in contemplation, Blake instantly gave his orders, and in a few hours his whole force was under sail for the Straits. Next morning he saw for the first time his celebrated enemy lying in and about Dover roadstead; when he came within ten or twelve miles of the nearest ships, Tromp weighed anchor and stood out to sea, but without either lowering his flag or offering any explanation of this act of defiance. Blake fired a signal-gun to call attention to the omission. No answer was returned. To a second and a third shot Tromp replied derisively by a single gun, still keeping his course, with the flag flying proudly at mast-head. Over against Calais road, it was observed by the English that he fell in with a ketch coming

full speed from Holland, the captain of which evidently brought important orders, for he soon after veered round and made towards Blake, his own ship, the *Brederode*, being in the van. The English officers were rather mystified by these movements; but in spite of the presence of the Dutch ambassador in London, the Admiral felt a strong impression that Tromp had received instructions to offer battle, and he lay-to and got his squadron into as good a fighting posture as he could on so short a notice. The Dutch had a vastly superior force. Tromp counted forty-two men-of-war and frigates. Blake only fifteen. He had sent orders for Bourne to join him with his squadron of eight ships; but these were not yet in sight, and possibly would not arrive in time for the engagement which seemed to threaten. The disproportion of vessels did not, however, indicate the true disproportion of force. As a rule the English ships were larger than those of Holland, carrying more guns and a greater body of men; but, on the other hand, the Dutch ships were manned by veteran seamen, while the great body of men on board the English fleet were raw soldiers sent from the camp entirely unaccustomed to the new service.

When the two fleets came within musket-range, Blake, affecting not to notice the enemy's menacing attitude, shot out from his main body and advanced towards the *Brederode* to speak with its commander about the refusal of honours formerly paid to the royal colours; but the Dutch ship sent a broadside into the *James* and stopt her short. Blake and several of his officers were in the cabin when this salute burst on them, smashing all the glass, and severely damaging the stern. He lifted his eyes from his papers, and coolly observed—"Well, it is not very civil in Van Tromp to take my flagship for a brothel, and break my windows!" As he spoke, another broadside rolled from the decks of the *Brederode*. Curling his black whiskers round his fingers, as he always did in anger, he called his gunners to return the fire, and in a short time the battle became general.

The English admirals then in service had not hitherto seen maritime war conducted on a grand scale, like Tromp and the officers who had served under his orders in the great contest with Spain; and only one of them, Vice-admiral Penn, had received a regular naval education. When the Council of State appointed Blake to the sole command against Holland, they gave him two blank commissions, that he might select his own vice and rear-admirals for the ensuing year; and in conjunction with Cromwell, he had named Penn and Bourne to these important stations. Penn went on board the *Triumph*, sixty-eight guns, taking young Robert Blake, son of the Admiral's late brother Samuel, as his lieutenant; Bourne raised his flag on board the *St. Andrew*, of sixty guns. But not supposing it possible that their navy would be assailed while the Dutch envoys were still in London soliciting peace, Penn had got leave of absence from his ship, and was then on a visit to his family; so that Blake had to contend with inferior power against the greatest nautical

genius of the age, without having at his side a single person of practical knowledge as a seaman.

At four o'clock the contest began with a rapid succession of broadsides. On the part of Blake at least, no line appears to have been formed; fleet met fleet and ship grappled ship as they chanced to fall in each other's way. From the first onset, the *James*, a 50-gun ship, carrying 260 men, bore the brunt of the action. The recollection of Lyme and Taunton, of Scilly and Carthagena, fierce as it was, faded before this terrific work. More than seventy cannon-balls were lodged in his hull; his masts were completely blown away; and his rigging was torn into ribands by the tremendous gunnery of the Dutch. His master, one of his mates, and several of his other officers fell dead or wounded, at his side. For four hours the shot of the enemy flew about and around him without intermission. Six men were killed, thirty-five were desperately wounded, and many more were hurt; but his crew maintained the unequal contest with a bravery and resolution after his own heart. As night came down, their energies were roused to new life by the thunder of Bourne's cannon bursting suddenly in the enemy's rear. The sound of artillery, booming along the waters, had reached the rear-guard, consisting of the *St. Andrew* and seven other ships, and Bourne immediately crowded sail and stood out to sea in hope of sharing in the battle. He arrived in the crisis of the engagement, and his 300 additional guns sufficed to turn the scale of victory. Unable or unwilling to engage this new enemy, Tromp retired from the scene about nine o'clock with the fast-fading light, leaving his intended surprise and destruction of the English fleet at best a drawn battle. Blake was too much disabled to follow in his wake, his mizen-mast being shot away, his sails and cordage all torn and broken. He came to an anchor about four miles off the Ness, and spent the night in repairs and preparations for the morrow. But when day dawned the Dutch were not in sight. Far as the eye could reach, the Channel shewed no trace of an enemy:—and the Commonwealth was once more lord of the narrow seas. During the fight two Dutch ships had been boarded and taken; but one of them was so much damaged in the action that it was feared she would go down in the night, so that after rifling her holds and cabins the crew turned her adrift; the other capture, a ship of thirty guns, was brought in safely and manned for immediate service. Young Robert Blake greatly distinguished himself this day. In the absence of Vice-admiral Penn, he commanded the *Triumph*, and evinced such eminent skill and courage, that on Penn's removal to the *James*, he was appointed captain of that important vessel. With the one exception of the flag-ship, the fleet had not suffered materially. Only nine men were reported as slain in all the other ships. Of the Dutch, two hundred and fifty were taken prisoners, and nearly as many more were said to be killed.

The sudden encounter of two powerful fleets in the midst of peace, without declaration of war or other previous formality to prepare

men's minds for such a shock, produced an extraordinary sensation in the two countries. In London, the mob rose at the cry of treachery, and would perhaps have burnt the house of the Dutch ambassadors at Chelsea, had not the government sent down a troop of horse for their protection. These ambassadors made strenuous efforts to explain the causes of the rencounter. They declared that Tromp was not the first to begin. They accounted for his appearance in the Downs by alleging stress of weather. They said he was about to lower his flag when Blake began to fire; they expressed deep regret at what had occurred; and urged, with great apparent earnestness, that violent counsels should give place to renewed attempts at negociation. Their Admiral also pretended that he had not violated the peace; that from first to last he had merely stood on his defence. He declared that had he chosen to make use of his immense superiority of force, he could have destroyed the English fleet. The people received this declaration with laughter and contempt. At last the ambassadors offered to disavow and disgrace their great Admiral; but the more they pressed their point, the sterner and more exacting Parliament became. England, it replied, had suffered insult and wrong; its duty was therefore to seek reparation for the past, security for the future. Every day war seemed nearer; every day the States-General seemed more resolved to adhere to their pacific policy. As a final effort they sent over their grand pensionary, Pauw, a man whose character and office were thought likely to give unusual weight to his overtures; but the demands of Parliament rose at every turn, and after a fruitless attempt to negociate, this eminent ambassador gave up the vain effort to reconcile the two powers, and took his leave.

Blake continued master of the Channel. All pretence of reserve being thrown away in consequence of the late engagement, he exerted all his power to harass the enemy's trade, and to fit out such vessels as had fallen into his hands for immediate service against them. His cruisers brought prizes into port almost daily during the latter part of May and June. He captured ten merchant-men at one swoop. One day he received intelligence that a Dutch fleet of twenty-six traders, convoyed by three men-of-war, was coming up Channel:—they were all captured, traders and convoy, and the latter immediately manned and fitted for service. In less than a month, to the surprise and ecstacy of the Londoners, he had sent into the river more than forty rich prizes captured in open sea from their powerful and vigilant enemy. The Dutch merchants were compelled to abandon the Straits. Their argosies from the South of Europe and from the Eastern and Western Indies had either to run for safety into French ports and send their cargoes overland at an immense loss, or make the long and dangerous voyage round by the North. This brilliant success inspired the Council of State with new life. Orders were given to strengthen Dover pier. Forty sail were added by a vote to the fleet. At Blake's suggestion six additional fire-ships were prepared. The seamen's wages were raised; and the Vice-admirals of all the maritime stations

rom Norfolk to Hampshire were requested to summon together all nariners between the ages of fifteen and twenty, young, ardent, locile, and engage them in the State's service. Knowing the vast esources and inflexible spirit of the people with whom they were ibout to enter into serious conflict, the Council of State, Blake being i member, and in all matters connected with the navy, its chief uthority, resolved that the entire fleet should be raised to 250 sail and 4 fire-ships; and that the divisions should be commanded and located as ollows:—30 sail were to go forthwith to the west channel, ply between Brest and Scilly, and keep the sea open towards the south; 20 sail were o go northward, disturb the Dutch fisheries and capture their Baltic raders; 30 sail were to ride in the Straits; and the remaining 170 ail and the fire-ships were to keep together under Blake's immediate rders to oppose and fight the enemy. These magnificent ideas were ever realised in full:—but at the end of one month from the fight off)over, the energetic Admiral could count with patriotic pride no less han 105 vessels, carrying 3961 guns, under his flag. He was not, owever, equally strong in men. His constant cry was—seamen, oldiers! And the Commissioners of the Navy were engaged day nd night in devising means to supply him with this essential element f maritime power. Two regiments of foot were taken on board odily, and from that time marines became a necessary part of the uipment of our men-of-war.

Meanwhile the Dutch preparations for the campaign were made n the grandest scale. The dockyards of the Texel, the Maas, and ie Zuyder Zee resounded with the note of coming strife. Sixty ien-of-war, larger in size and more perfect in equipment than had ver yet been seen in those northern seas, were commenced. Convoys ot too far away were called back; merchant-men of heavy tonnage ere pressed into the service; the ablest seamen found in their ports, respective of age or nationality, were lured into the service by offers high wages and the hope of rich prizes; and in a few weeks their nowned Admiral, ripe in age, honours and experience, saw himself the head of 120 sail of ships - a power more than sufficient in the inion of every patriotic Dutchman to sweep the English navy from ie face of the earth.

The swift and unexpected opening of the war had placed the ercantile marine of both nations, especially in the North Sea, at ie mercy of privateers and cruising squadrons. At that period but w English vessels ventured to the south of Europe; the distance iecked the enterprises of the timid, and the more substantial peril Algerine pirates and Salee rovers operated to prevent the brave om seeking their fortunes in waters where the might of England is as yet little known and still less feared. In the opinion of these ree marauders, Holland was the only great naval power of Europe. ore than once she had chastised their insolence; and, as her traders oughed the southern waters in comparative safety, the spices of the evant, the silks of Italy and the wines of Portugal, were chiefly ought to England in Dutch bottoms. Baltic commerce, on the

contrary, was chiefly carried in our own bottoms; and at that very moment an unusual number of vessels were in the North and Baltic Seas, Parliament, in anticipation of war, having sent out several traders to purchase hemp, tar, and other ship-stores for them in Sweden, Denmark, and Pomerania. These stores were now become of essential importance. The dockyards were all bare; not a frigate in the fleet was decently supplied; and in the face of a contest which must occupy months and might extend to years, it was necessary to send a strong squadron to the north to collect these ships and convoy them safely home with their precious cargoes. There were other reasons which contributed their influence towards compelling Blake's particular attention to the squadron of the north. Ever since the atrocious action at Amboyna, which wrested the Spice Islands from our hands, the fleets of Holland had returned from either east or west by the long route of the Orkneys, so as to avoid bringing their precious freights within view of Dover Castle; one of these rich argosies was now known to be on the home voyage, and the Council of State was anxious that it should be harassed, and if possible cut off. Again, unable or unwilling to make use of the noble fisheries that nature has lavished on our coasts, the English of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries had allowed their more enterprising neighbours to reap the harvest almost unquestioned. The fisherman's life suited the Dutchman's coarse and laborious habits. The hulks or busses engaged in this trade, averaging from three hundred to five hundred tons burden, were each manned by about a dozen persons; usually the master with his wife and children, and about six or eight others, men and women. On board these herring-boats, children were able to earn their own bread from the age of four or five. The life was rude at best—the wages were always scanty. But the people had learned to live on stormy and sterile seas, to flourish on mud-banks and sandy plains. More than once our ancestors had tried to establish rival fisheries, but never with a chance of profit under such competition. With that fine old Saxon chivalry, still found in some portion of the lower classes, they refused to allow the women to divide their coarse toils or share their daily perils; nor had they yet learned to look without a sort of horror on infant labour. Free from these scruples, the Frisian had in his lower nature a commercial advantage against which it was ruinous to compete. The Dutch family, huddled in a corner of the buss, found a part of its coarse food in the waters on which it exercised its craft. The English fisherman, who left his wife and children at home, had to support them out of the nett profits of his spoil. Thus the whole trade fell into the former hands; and at the opening of the war between the two countries the boats engaged in it were counted by thousands. Could the Dutch make good their claim to fish among the Northern Islands? This was an open question. They did fish in those waters. But while the fact was allowed, the right was denied; and on taking the supreme direction of the war, Blake was anxious to give practical effect to the denials of his government. While the squadron was

reparing for sea, information came to hand that the spring fleet of
ese herring-busses, consisting of more than six hundred sail, con-
oyed by twelve men-of-war, was on its way home laden with fish.
lis first idea had been to send Sir George Ascue to the North, and
ay in person to oppose Admiral Tromp; but as that great genius
f strategy lay still in the Texel, making no sign of an immediate
tention to put to sea, he changed this part of his plan, and resolved
o go in person to the North. Sending swift messengers to the
Baltic, to desire all the merchant-vessels, private and public, ready
o return home, then in and about the Sound, to rendezvous at
Elsinore, and there await his arrival,—he went down to Dover,
stalled Ascue as his lieutenant in the Channel, with orders to keep
sharp eye in Tromp's movements, and set sail in the *Resolution* for
he North, attended by a magnificent array of sixty ships.

On the 21st of June, Blake fired his parting salute in Dover road:
o awful a burst of cannon had not been heard by the inhabitants of
Kent *since* the days of the Armada. On the 9th of July, letters reached
he Council of State announcing that a gallant fleet, supposed to be
General Blake's, had passed in sight of Dunbar. Two days later, de-
patches left Westminster in hot haste, by mounted couriers, to inform
im that a sudden change had occurred in the enemy's dispositions,—
hat as soon as he was known to have passed the Frith of Forth the
Dutch Admiral had quitted his lair,—that he was then riding with
02 men-of-war and ten fire-ships in the Downs,—that the whole
oast was alarmed for its safety, none knowing where a blow would
rst be struck,—and that so far from Ascue being able to afford them
ny protection, he had himself been compelled to run under the guns
f Dover Castle. The couriers rode day and night with urgent
etters of recall; but before these came into the Admiral's hands, one
f the three great objects of his expedition had been accomplished.
Meeting the great herring-fleet off Bockness, his advanced guard of
wenty sail fell furiously on the men-of-war, and after a gallant
ontest, prolonged by the obstinate valour of the Dutch against
uperior numbers for three hours, sunk three of the twelve and took
he other nine. All the herring-busses, six hundred in number, fell
nto his power with their freights of herrings. But as these boats
elonged to poor families, whose entire capital and means of life they
onstituted, he took from them, on a rough computation, every tenth
erring as a royalty, and then warning the men never to fish again in
he creeks and islands belonging to the Commonwealth of England
ithout first obtaining from the Council of State a formal permission,
e sent them home with all their boats and the remainder of their
argo untouched. This characteristic act of clemency called down
evere censures on the Admiral in certain quarters. Many condemned
uch generosity to an enemy as Quixotic. "If the fish," said the
oliticians, "were of no use to the fleet, he should have thrown them
nto the sea." The answer was, "That they were human food, and that
housands would suffer, none would gain, by their destruction." Even
nen like Ludlow blamed him for not keeping possession of the poor

fellows' boats. But Blake took no trouble to justify his noble instincts against such critics. His was indeed a happy fate:—the only fault ever advanced by friend or foe against his public life was an excess of generosity towards his vanquished enemies!

Kent was up in arms to repel the menacing invader. Seamen living in the ports crowded on board Ascue's squadron with offers of service. The regular militia turned out. Between Deal and Sandown Castle a long double platform was erected, with cannon at intervals to sweep the shore should the Dutch attempt to land. But these warlike preparations, though they evinced the national spirit, did less to preserve the coast from outrage than those elements which have so often proved our best allies in the hour of danger. A calm kept the enemy spell-bound in mid-channel until the country had recovered from its first alarm. When the wind returned, it blew from the land, and with such steady violence, that with all his skill Tromp was unable to get near enough for even a passing broadside. To the south of his position, Ascue rode in perfect safety with his small squadron; and some fresh ships, preparing to join him just before the Dutchman's appearance in the Straits, were retained in the Thames by a counter order. Tromp, it is believed, had expected to intercept this reinforcement as it left the river, and then by a sudden onset to crush Ascue under overwhelming cannonades. Success on these two points would have left Blake with about fifty sail—for he had despatched eight of his best frigates to strengthen the Downs squadron—against a fleet flushed with victory and thrice his power. But the weather having foiled him in these hopes, the wily Dutchman returned with the strong gale then blowing to the Texel, where a vast fleet of merchants were impatiently waiting to set forth on their voyage under his protection. Convoying these vessels northward, he saw the Baltic traders through the Sound, the busses disperse to their fishing stations, and the Indiamen separate to pursue their several voyages out of all danger from English cruisers,—and then went in search of Blake's squadron, confident in his immense superiority of force, and not unwilling to put the fortunes of his country to the arbitration of a regular battle. Since his recent victory, Blake had suffered severely from storms, and his ships were scattered among the roadsteads of the Orkney Islands for repair; but on hearing that his great enemy had followed him into the North, he hastily prepared for an encounter of the two navies.

Towards evening, on the 5th of August, the fleets came in sight of each other between Fair Isle and Fould, almost half-way from the Orkneys to the Shetland group. Smarting under a recollection of former wrongs, both confident of success, Tromp trusting to his naval genius and superior force, Blake in the Lord of Hosts and the valour of his men, they eagerly prepared to engage. But the empire of the seas was to be then and there decided in favour of a new claimant. Whilst preparations were being made in the *Resolution* to attack the Dutch fleet, the sky gradually assumed a dark and threatening aspect. The wind, which had been extremely variable for some days,

suddenly settled itself north-north-west. In the human excitement of the moment, these signs were not at first observed; but as the gale rose, and the sky continued to grow black and lurid, Blake signalled his ships to look out for the coming storm; and leave the enemy to shift for themselves, certain that there could be no engagement that day. At length it burst:—and the fiercest of mortal passions were stilled in a moment before the awful demonstrations of nature. The fitful gleams of light, now and then caught through the storm and darkness, told the commanders that another power had undertaken to disperse and separate their fleets. Many of the ships were soon unmanageable. Rudders were wrested violently off; sails were torn and twisted into knots, and the waves went through and through them every swell, throwing their white and seething foam into the very sky. The darkness, danger, and distance from aid and shelter, filled the imagination of the sailors with horror. "The fleet," says the Dutch writer of Cornelius Tromp, "being as it were buried by the sea in the most horrible abysses, rose out of them only to be tossed up to the clouds; here the masts were beaten down into the sea, there the deck was overflowed with the prevailing waves; the tempest was so much mistress of the ships, they could be governed no longer, and on every side appeared all the dreadful forerunners of a dismal wreck." The storm raged through the long night without abatement; and when day came down on the rolling waters, instead of the imperial fleets which rode so proudly among the rocks and islands a few hours previous, anxious in their fancied strength and majesty to put the freedom of the sea to an hour's arbitration,—a remnant of scattered, helpless and damaged ships were all that could be seen from the *Brederode* between land and sky. The Dutch had suffered terribly. More than one of their frigates had been dashed on the rocks, splintered into a myriad fragments, and every soul on board sent down into the foaming surge. Tromp picked up broken relics of three of his fire-ships:—their fate could not be doubted. They had all gone down. Most of his men-of-war and frigates were considerably damaged, and the greater part of his fleet was scattered beyond the possibility of recall. Some of the ships found refuge in the harbours of the Shetland group, others fled towards the Norwegian coast; and after spending several days in the vain attempt to collect the damaged elements of his power, Tromp was obliged to run into Scheveling with a remnant of only forty-two sail, to his own infinite chagrin and the extreme astonishment of his countrymen at the failure of an enterprise so vast and costly. Blake had been fortunate enough to keep his fleet together under shelter of the mainland of the Shetland Islands, and although he had not escaped without serious injury to many ships, he was able to keep the sea, and hang with his whole body of sixty-two sail, fleet and prizes, on the rear of the disabled Dutch. Finding the enemy disinclined to put out again from their harbours, he ravaged and insulted their coasts from Wadden to Zealand, and then ran across to Yarmouth with his prizes and nine hundred prisoners.

In a few days his standard was again waving in the Downs from the masts of the *Resolution*. Ascue and De Ruiter had met and drawn a battle, but the spirit of the States-General seemed to rise with their unexpected want of success, and they prepared another large and gallant fleet for service in the Channel under command of the renowned admiral and statesman De Witt. Tromp retired into private life. Clamorous at a reverse in one so long accustomed to victory, a Dutch mob insulted his age and misfortune; and in a fit of disgust the veteran laid down his commission. De Ruiter, too, was anxious to retire from the responsibilities of command. He pleaded his long services, his old age, his failing health; but his countrymen would not listen: he must lead them once more as of old to glory and victory. When the new squadron was ready for sea, De Witt joined De Ruiter, and took the supreme command. To oppose this new danger, Blake called in the force under Ascue from Plymouth; and the two fleets—that of England, composed of sixty-eight ships of various gunnage—that of Holland nearly but not quite equal to it in number of ships and guns—were once more in the same seas, and ready to try their strength against each other.

But while cruising about the channel in search of his more immediate enemy, Blake fell in with a French fleet under the Duke of Vendome, who had just engaged with and defeated the Spanish Admiral Count d'Oignon. This fleet was intended to relieve Dunkirk, then hotly pressed by the besieging Spaniards. The piratical town was in extremity; but the disaster of Count d'Oignon left the sea open to France, and Vendome ordered a relief squadron to rendezvous in Calais road, and take on board men, arms, stores and fresh provisions. As yet there had been no formal declaration of war between France and England. Though the privateers of Brest and Dunkirk continued the old depredations, and English cruisers often retaliated on French vessels, such disorders were not considered as seriously compromising the political relations of the two governments. But as soon as Blake learned that Vendome was collecting ships and stores for Dunkirk in the port of Calais, without waiting for instructions from London, or even reporting his intentions to his colleagues of the Council of State, he stood over for that harbour, where he found seven men-of-war, a small frigate, six fire-ships and a number of transports with men and provisions on board already collected and under sail. What was to be done? With that accession of strength Dunkirk would have been able to defy the Archduke Leopold for an indefinite period. English interests, commercial and political, required the downfall of that nest of privateers; the Council of State were anxious to see the town change hands; and they had already conceived a hope—afterwards realised—that the Spaniards might be induced on certain terms to cede their conquest. Blake knew the opinion of his countrymen on this subject too well to doubt how far he could go without incurring serious personal responsibility, if in striking a blow which would involve the government in trouble with the great Cardinal, he could achieve a sudden and complete suc-

cess. He therefore rode into Calais road; and in spite of the threats, protests and explanations of Vendome, he attacked the men-of-war, while part of his fleet chased the transports and fire-ships along the coast. As the resistance was not serious, the whole body of the French squadron, war-ships, fire-ships and transports, admirals, officers and men, were in a few hours safely harboured under the guns of Dover Castle. Dunkirk immediately surrendered to the Archduke Leopold:—and the seizure of Vendome's squadron remained, not only as an illustration of the extraordinary powers exercised by Blake at sea, but a striking instance of bold conception and equally rapid and effective execution.

These prizes safely harboured, the cruise in search of De Witt and De Ruiter was resumed. On the 28th of September, Penn, still on board the *James*, came in sight of the Dutchmen off the North Foreland; on seeing the signal, Blake, at that moment more than a league in advance of his main body, rode up to the vanguard and gave his brief but emphatic orders—"As soon as some more of our fleet comes up, bear in among them!" Blake was ever ready for action: he trusted in God and kept his powder dry. But De Witt was taken unawares; his ships were in disorder; a bad spirit prevailed among the men; and De Ruiter urged him to avoid a battle. His pride rendered him deaf to this sage councillor, and he resolved to fight even at a disadvantage rather than exhibit to the world the spectacle of a Dutch admiral in retreat before the presumptuous islanders. His dispositions were made hastily and in confusion. De Ruiter was to lead the van, he himself the main body, De Wilde the rear. Evertz was stationed with a reserve to watch the action from a short distance, and sent out succours where they should be most needed. At the last moment De Witt sent an advice-boat round to each of his ships to beg the captains to do their duty in their respective posts on that great day. But this prayer was not heard. Apathy, intrigue and discontent were on every deck. The *Brederode*, Tromp's old flag-ship, was in the fleet, but the officers and men refused to allow the new Admiral to come on board her; and just before the action began his standard was removed to a huge Indiaman. Resenting the disgrace of their favourite leader, several other ships either disputed the new Admiral's orders, or obeyed them without the zeal which is essential to victory. But unwarned by these signs of disaffection—perhaps hoping that success would restore confidence and loyalty to his crews—De Witt hauled his foresails to the masts and formed his fleet into line.

About four o'clock in the afternoon, the English being then well up together, a single order was given out from the *Resolution*—to hold back their fire till close in with the enemy,- and the flag-ship, followed by the *James*, the *Sovereign* and the whole body of the vanguard, bore down on De Witt's line, which kept up an intermittent and harmless fire as it advanced. At this moment the Dutch tacked, and the two fleets came into almost instant collision. The crash of the first broadsides was terrific, for the ships were so near together,

that an unusual quantity of shot went home. For more than an hour the roar of artillery was incessant. After that its action was less furious; there were occasional pauses in the storm; and the Dutch ships clearing off to a greater distance, the sulphurous atmosphere broke in many places, and the winds drifted it away in huge masses. But although the Dutch fell back, they fell back fighting and with their faces to the enemy. With obstinate valour they continued the battle until night fell like a funeral pall on the scene of slaughter. The Dutch had suffered most severely in men, the English in masts and rigging. The most experienced admirals in both fleets were of opinion that De Witt could not have held out an hour longer without being entirely broken and annihilated. De Ruiter had commanded his division with consummate skill and bravery. A great part of his own crew was swept away; his mainyard was turned over to the left side; his main-sails, mizen-sails and rigging were all torn to shreds; his hull was seriously shattered; and he had received no less than four shots between wind and water. De Witt had atoned in a great measure for his rashness in fighting such an enemy under the circumstances of his fleet, by his courage and conduct during the action. Nevertheless, Holland was unmistakeably worsted. Under the first shock of the onset, two of its ships went down. Two others had been boarded and taken, one of them the Rear-admiral by Captain Mildmay in the *Nonsuch*, together with the two captains, and all the crews on deck. Throughout the Dutch fleet, the loss of life had been great. And to the infinite vexation of De Witt, about twenty of his captains, either disaffected to his person or unwilling to renew on the morrow so destructive an engagement, took advantage of the dark night to quit the main body with the ships under their command and make for Zealand, whither they carried the first news of the disaster.

All that night Blake observed lights burning in the enemy's ships, and assuming that they would fight again at daybreak, every hand on board the English fleet was employed in repairing sails, masts and cordage—in securing the prisoners already taken—in waiting on and soothing the wounded sailors—and in the sad and pious duties connected with the burial of the dead. The grey light dawned on the sleepless crews still at their necessary labours, and before sunrise the whole fleet was in motion bearing up towards the enemy, who at first seemed disposed to renew the bloody work of the previous day; but before the English van had got within range of cannon-shot a change of opinion took place, they hoisted full sail and stood up the Channel. De Witt had wished to fight. But Evertz and De Ruiter overruled his voice in the council of war, where it was resolved that an attempt should be made to collect the shattered and scattered remnants of their fleet; to gain one of their own ports and communicate with their masters; to repair, refit, and re-man their ships; and then await the commands of the States-General. Blake kept as close on their rear as the disabled state of his ships would allow; and having chased them into the Göree, where the shallows afforded them ample protection,

he was obliged to rest content with returning the insults offered to our own coasts by Admiral Tromp earlier in the summer.

Nothing could exceed the avidity with which reports of the battle of the North Foreland were read in London. It was the first great naval action which the nation had fought since the reign of Elizabeth; and indeed there was room for a little honest exultation. The prowess of England had now been arrayed against the best seamen and most experienced admirals in the world, and the English had come off victorious. At the very first trial of strength, they had established themselves as equal to the acknowledged masters of maritime war. Hitherto Tromp, Evertz, and De Ruiter had been regarded by Europe as peerless, if not invincible, commanders. Yet an English land-officer, with only three years' experience of the sea, had learned to contend with these renowned admirals on equal terms; rough soldiers, drafted from the camp, had, in the same period, ceased altogether to feel awe in the presence of the veteran sailors who had swept the imperial navies of Spain from the face of the ocean. Blake was fast rising into the first name in our naval history. His southern campaign, made while his genius was still unaided by experience, had placed him in general estimation by the side of Drake and Frobisher. His drawn battle with Tromp, his victory over De Ruiter and De Witt, raised him into the highest rank of living admirals.

Parliament shared the liberal enthusiasm of the people. With a somewhat premature contempt of their powerful enemy, they had desired Blake to dismiss a part of his fleet back to the merchant service from which it had been taken; they allowed the fortifications erected between Deal and Sandown to be destroyed; and they ordered the guns planted on the line of breastworks to be removed into the two castles. At Blake's urgent request they gave orders for thirty new frigates to be built; but for the moment all was confidence and security as to the future. The Council of State began a diligent study of the *Mare Clausum*, Selden's learned book on the right of England to assert the dominion of the narrow seas and to exclude the Dutch from any participation in the advantages of the northern fisheries. They had the book translated into English; and questions which had tested the learning and intellect of men like Grotius and Selden were debated in taverns, and practically settled in Council Chambers. Vendome's complaints were treated by the Council of State with haughty indifference. They already fancied their power supreme in the Channel; but they had not yet learned to understand the magnitude of their enemy's genius and resources.

CHAPTER VII.

1652-1653.

TROMP.

De Witt's return to Holland with the discomfited fleet was the signal for disorders in that country. His enemies of the Orange

party charged him with rashness, cowardice and treason. The common sailors, turbulent and disobedient before the engagement, pushed their dislike to the verge of mutiny after their defeat. Even on the flag-ship his position was most disagreeable, if his life were not in danger. Before going on board in the Texel he had been compelled by a decent regard for naval discipline to hang two of his seamen in Amsterdam, and at the execution he had been under the still more unfortunate necessity of shooting several citizens in order to prevent a rescue in the streets. In his day of power and of untried fortunes these acts of severity were borne in silent rage; but when he *returned from sea with broken power and faded laurels, the popular* passions rose against him like the surges of their own stormy coast. In Flushing he was mobbed as soon as he landed—and his proud heart was almost broken by the insult. In anger and disgust, he took to a sick chamber. De Ruiter shared in some measure the unpopularity of his chief, and he also offered to resign his commission. The moment of general alarm and indignation—for they had so often triumphed over every enemy at sea, they could not yet understand that their reverses were other than the result of gross misconduct,—sent the inconsiderate people to the feet of their old commander. They now remembered, that if Tromp's success in the early part of the war had not been such as they had expected, he at least had not suffered a signal defeat; if he had lost a powerful squadron, they had the consolation to feel that nature and not man had been the cause of its sudden overthrow. When the failure of his rivals allowed them time to estimate his claims with less haste and less passion, they could not but see that his reputation still towered above that of every other seaman in Holland; while, on the other hand, personal feeling and the incidents of his career had fitted him in a peculiar manner for the chief command in a war against England.

At ten years old, Tromp was present in his father's ship at the famous battle fought against Spain under the walls of Gibraltar in 1607. Shortly after that memorable event, he was captured by an English cruiser after a brisk engagement in which his father lost his life. Two years and a half he was compelled to serve in the menial capacity of cabin-boy on board the captor:—and thus were the seeds of hatred to England and the English sown in his proud and passionate heart. Once planted, this hatred grew with his growth and strengthened with his strength. For a long time his life was passed on board fishing-boats and merchant-men; but his nautical genius was irresistible, and he fought his way through legions of obstacles to high command. At thirty years old he was confessedly the ablest navigator in Holland. More than twenty years he had now commanded his country's fleets with success against Spain,—and had done more than any other individual to humble the pride and reduce the power of that extensive empire. The disastrous opening of the English war was no impeachment of his naval genius; and the insult offered to his former successes in stripping him of his great employments because nature had raised a destructive storm in the northern latitudes,

appeared to the States-General gratuitous and unworthy as soon as they discovered that his future services were necessary to the Republic. The old Admiral's passion was also soothed by royal good offices. The King of Denmark, alarmed at the sudden growth of England's maritime power, made interest with the leading Dutch statesmen with a view to promote a vigorous renewal of hostilities, and at his special intercession Tromp was restored to his former offices and honours, the most eminent of his rivals in naval ability and domestic influence, De Witt, De Ruiter, Evertz, and Floritz being appointed to serve under him as his Vice and Rear-admirals. De Witt, too much mortified at his recent failure to have any wish to re-appear on the same scene in an inferior place, excused himself from serving on the ground of ill-health; De Ruiter therefore again went on board as second in command.

Other nations became interested in the quarrels of the two Republics. The war had barely commenced before the States-General sent ambassadors to Denmark, Poland and other powers in the north of Europe to engage them in a common league against England. Frederick III., King of Denmark and Norway, listened to these proposals; and though he did not as yet choose to commit himself by an open acknowledgment of his leanings, he sought by an indirect and unexplained course of action to forward the views of his powerful continental friends. Under pretence of securing them against Dutch cruisers, Frederick refused to allow the ships which Blake had ordered to rendezvous at Elsinore to pass the Sound:—an idle pretence, since the English were at that time masters at sea. As the hemp, tar and other stores from the Baltic on board these ships were urgently needed in the dockyards, Parliament wrote to King Frederick desiring him as a friend and ally of the Commonwealth, to deliver up to their Admiral all the goods and ships then lying in his ports, and at their request Blake detached Captain Ball with twenty men-of-war and frigates to add force to this reasonable desire, and in the event of its receiving favourable attention to convoy the ships home in safety. After an absence of some weeks, Ball returned as he went out. Pressed to declare itself, the Court of Denmark vamped up a story about some old debts contracted by the late King of England on account of the German war, and claimed a right to detain the government vessels until these debts were liquidated. The expected supply of stores was therefore not obtained, —and the Commonwealth had a new enemy to deal with in the north of Europe.

The term for which Blake had been commissioned to act as sole General and Admiral of the Fleet being on the point of expiration, he requested that two colleagues should be joined with him in the command as in the first years of his naval service had been the case. A rare instance of self-denial! During his absence in the north he had seen the disadvantage of leaving the Downs to an inferior officer, however able; and in the belief that such a division of the supreme command would be serviceable to the country he set aside every

personal consideration and proposed to have two officers, enjoying the full confidence of the Council of State, associated with him in the new commission. Popham being dead, the choice of admirals fell on Colonel Deane, his former colleague, and General Monk; but both these officers were then employed in suppressing the last remnants of the war in Scotland, and they could not, for some time to come, take any active part in the naval war.

Severe weather being now set in and the Dutchmen busy in their dockyards with the preparation of another vast armament, Blake made the usual winter distribution of the fleet. Besides the twenty ships sent to Elsinore under Ball, Penn sailed with a similar squadron towards the North to convoy a fleet of colliers from Newcastle to London; a division of twelve ships was stationed in Plymouth Sound; fifteen of the most damaged vessels were ordered into the river for repair; and with the remainder of his force, consisting of thirty-seven men-of-war and frigates, the fire-ships and a few hoys,—Blake rode in the Channel, cruising from port to port between Essex and Hampshire, and expecting no enemy to appear until the return of fine weather. In this he was mistaken. Tromp's energy and influence had infused an extraordinary degree of activity into the marine department, the harbours and dockyards of Holland. In an incredibly short time they had fitted out and manned a vast fleet; and as soon as the English squadrons were dispersed for the winter stations, he secretly and unexpectedly drew out his ships and appeared off the Goodwin Sands with more than a hundred sail of the line, frigates and fire-ships. His plan was bold and well conceived. Throwing himself suddenly into the Downs with this overwhelming force, he intended to close up the Thames and cut off re-inforcements from Chatham or the Lea, to fall on Blake's little squadron like an avalanche, and either crush or drive it down Channel towards the Land's End, and then, with the entire coast at his mercy, to dictate peace to the Commonwealth on his own terms. At that time the thought of a winter campaign filled men's minds with terror; but Tromp relied on the effect of a swift and daring blow to conclude the war in a few days. Blake was scarcely aware that the Dutch were stirring before their ships were seen from the out-look of the *Triumph*, to which vessel he had removed his pennon. On the 9th of December the two fleets were in presence between Dover and Calais; and the knowledge that Tromp was on board assured the English Admiral that serious mischief was meant. A council of war was called on board the *Triumph*. Blake described the situation of the two countries at that moment, glanced at the superior force of the enemy, at the distance of his own squadrons, and ended by declaring his resolution to fight, if it were necessary, but on no account to fall down the Channel, leaving the coast-towns to be insulted, and perhaps destroyed by that mighty and uncrippled armament. The captains accepted his decision with alacrity, and returned to their several ships to report the result of their conference. All that day the two admirals watched each other's motions, the object being to gain the weather-

gage. The night proved cold and tempestuous, even for mid winter, and the ships were unable to keep well together. With the appearance of light the manœuvres of the previous day were renewed, the *Triumph* and the *Brederode* dodging each other for several hours in a slight and variable wind, their somewhat oblique course inclining slowly towards the Nase. At three in the afternoon the fleets were near to each other off that Essex headland. Tromp's patience was worn out, and anxious to engage, he made a sudden effort to get alongside the English Admiral at an advantage; but a rapid and decisive movement carried the *Triumph* clean under his bow to the weather-gage. In passing, the two ships exchanged broadsides. Blake was closely followed in his dexterous movement by the *Garland*, and missing the *Triumph*, Tromp ran against her with such violence as in an instant to break her bowspit and ship's-head with the weight of the crash. The *Garland* and the *Brederode* quickly engaged, the English ship of only forty-eight guns fighting with consummate bravery against its powerful enemy, until the *Bonadventure*, a trader of thirty guns, came to the rescue, and placed the Dutch Admiral himself in peril. Tromp encouraged his men by shouts and gestures to renewed efforts; he appealed to their love of country, their pride of race, their affection for himself. But all his exertions would have availed but little, had not Evertz seen his exposed position, and brought his own ship to bear on the *Bonadventure*, thus placing the gallant little merchantman between the fire of two powerful admirals. The four ships were all grappled together; but the English held out manfully against tremendous odds for more than an hour, when the contest was decided in favour of number of men and weight of metal. Out of the two hundred men on board the *Garland* at the beginning of the action, the captain and sixty officers and men were killed, and a still greater number were severely wounded; the *Bonadventure* had suffered to an equal extent; and the survivors being no longer able to defend their respective decks, the Dutchmen boarded and captured both the vessels. The *Triumph*, the *Vanguard* and the *Victory* bore the chief brunt of the action. At one time these three vessels were engaged with twenty of the enemy; and although they also suffered most severely in men, and were greatly damaged in their hulls, masts and rigging, they all came off safely from the desperate encounter. Night, which at that season of the year came down early, was already separating the fleets, when Blake heard for the first time of the unequal battle waged between the two Dutch Admirals and the *Garland* and *Bonadventure;* and notwithstanding the fatigue of his men, he gave orders to bear up to the *Brederode*, and endeavour to recover the captures. Other of the enemy's ships, however, crossed his line, and a more destructive conflict than had yet taken place ensued. Blake was surrounded by the Dutch ships. Three several times the *Triumph* was boarded in gallant style; but each time the boarders were driven back to their boats with fearful slaughter. The flag-ship was reduced to a wreck. The foretop-mast was shot away. The mainstay was gone. The sails and tackling

were all in ribands. The hull was shattered and pierced with hundreds of shots. The wonder was how she could keep her head above water; and had it not been for the *Sapphire*, a trader of thirty guns, and the *Vanguard*, which stood by him with unwavering steadiness and devotion, the English Admiral must have fallen before such overwhelming numbers in spite of his iron will and dauntless courage. Thick fog and December darkness at length put an end to the struggle. Under cover of night Blake drew off his ships, the *Triumph* being the last to retire from the scene of action, towards Dover roads. Tromp could not, or would not, follow on his rear. Next day the weather was thick with fog; the enemy was not in sight. The disabled vessels were ill prepared to brave the fury of the south-west wind; and, master of his own movements, the Admiral proposed to run into the Thames, and anchor in Lea-road to repair damages, ascertain the enemy's intentions, make some necessary alterations in the fleet, and wait the recall and concentration of his distant squadrons. The Dutch had not gained an easy victory. Their loss in men was extremely great. One of their vessels had been blown into the air, every man on board perishing. Tromp's ship and De Ruiter's ships were both put out of service, and many others were seriously crippled. But their victory was unquestionable: for the moment they were once again masters of the Channel.

There seem to have been three principal causes of this disaster—the first and last that England experienced under Blake's command—any one of them sufficient to account for it:—(1.) an overwhelming superiority of force on the part of Tromp; (2.) the extreme weakness to which some of the vessels were reduced for want of men; and (3.) cowardice or disaffection to the service, manifested at a critical moment of the battle by several captains in his little fleet. To the first of these causes Blake himself professed to attach only a secondary importance. Had all the thirty-seven ships behaved like the *Garland*, *Sapphire*, *Vanguard*, *Bonadventure*, *Victory*, and *Triumph*, the result would probably have been other than it was; and even his defeat, if the retirement of a squadron before a fleet three times its strength can be so called, was less galling to his proud nature than the idea of having officers under his command who at such a time could fail in duty to their country. In the letter which conveyed to the Council of State the first news of the reverse of fortune, he says:—"I am bound to let your honours know that there was much baseness of spirit, not among the merchant-men only, but in many of the State's ships. And therefore I make it my earnest request that your honours would be pleased to send down some gentlemen to take an impartial and strict examination of the deportment of several commanders, that you may know who are to be confided in and who are not. It will then be time to take into consideration the grounds of some other errors and defects, especially the discouragement and want of seamen. I shall be bold at present to name one—not the least,—which is, the great number of private men-of-war, especially out of the Thames. And I hope it will not be unseasonable for me, in behalf of myself, to desire your honours

that you would think of giving me, your unworthy servant, a discharge from this employment as far too great for me especially since your honours have added two such able gentlemen [Monk and Deane] for the undertaking of that charge; so that I may spend the remainder of my days in private retirement, and in prayers to the Lord for blessings on you and on this nation."

But instead of receiving the acceptance of his offer to resign, Blake soon found that the misfortune which might have ruined another man had given him strength and influence in the country. The Council of State wrote by return of courier to express their unanimous thanks for his gallant conduct in the late action and to assure him that all his proposals,—except the one which referred to his own retirement,—should be adopted. Never had he been so necessary to them as at that moment, and his hints and requests were immediately carried into effect, so far as lay with the Council. Three of their own body, Colonel Walton, Mr. Chaloner, and Colonel Morley were sent down to inquire into the alleged misconduct of certain officers, to report on the ineffective condition of the fleet, and, in case of need, to assist in a Council of War to be called by the Admiral after their arrival. Messengers were sent to recall the convoys to the Downs. Orders were sent to Deane and Monk to hold themselves in readiness to go on board at twenty-four hours' notice, and assume the responsibilities of their new rank. Cruisers and other vessels lying at Harwich and elsewhere on the near coasts were instructed to repair to the general rendezvous. A resolution was carried to raise the effective marine force to 30,000 men. More care was taken with the store magazines. The Navy Commissioners, long crippled by the perfidious policy of the Danish King, were empowered in this emergency to seize on hemp, tar and pitch, wherever these important articles could be found. But not a whisper was heard against the Admiral either in the Council or in the city. There was no attempt on the part of the Navy Commissioners to meddle with his schemes or to abridge his authority. The Council of State reposed an almost unbounded confidence in his genius and fidelity. Five days after the engagement off the Nase, they ordered—"that a letter be written to General Blake, to acquaint him with what the Council hath done for the giving him an addition of strength,—to let him know that (in regard the state of affairs is before him, and he hath a perfect understanding of them) *the Council do leave to him upon the place to do what he may for his own defence and the service of the Commonwealth.*" The next day they wrote again in the same spirit:—"The Council suggest objections to General Blake going with his fleet into Lea road, and recommend Harwich as a better position: *but still leave it to him to act according as his Council of War shall advise upon the place.*"

Curiously enough, the first disaster experienced by Blake at sea gave him power to effect reforms in the service and to root out abuses which had defied all his efforts in the day of his success. One great abuse was abolished that in his opinion lay at the source of the late

defeat. To encourage merchants and others having vessels capable of armament to place them during the war at the disposal of Government, an Order of Council had hitherto allowed the masters of such vessels to command them after the change of service: by which means many persons came to occupy, as a private right, important offices in the navy who had no real attachment to the new order of things, and there was good reason to suspect that some of the secret partisans of the Stuarts had crept into places of trust in this way for the express purpose of betraying the Commonwealth at the first favourable opportunity. These Royalists kept the exiled court well informed as to the state of the navy, and the exiles in turn communicated the latest information to the States-General. Thus the Admiral had not only to fight his great and astute adversary, but to struggle against intrigues abroad and treason at home. Before Tromp sailed from the Texel, Charles Stuart had caused a secret memoir to be drawn up by Lord Clarendon and the Marquis of Ormonde—to be presented to M. Borrel, Dutch Ambassador in Paris—in which he proposed to the States-General a plan for creating divisions in the English fleet and consequent excitement and weakness in the country. He declared that he was aware that many captains in the Commonwealth navy were his own friends; and he offered to go in person on board the Dutch fleet as a private officer, seeking no command, except of such vessels as should desert to him from their enemy. De Witt, however, as a sincere Republican, refused to accept this doubtful aid; but a certain knowledge of the fact on which the proposal was based, that many of Blake's officers served under false colours and were ripe for an act of treason, was of vast importance to Tromp in the arrangement of his bold and masterly campaign. Certain incidents in the late battle left no moral doubt that several captains had acted with direct or indirect reference to the enemy's design; and without being able to bring the crime of treason home to them, the Admiral took the occasion to insist on having a regulation adopted by the supreme Council, that in future all the captains and other officers should receive their appointments from the State.

As the inquiries of the three members, Walton, Morley and Chaloner proceeded, several officers were suspended, either for neglect of duty, lack of courage or other faults, against whom no suspicion of treachery or disaffection could arise. It was necessary to purge the fleet of its weak, as well as of its faithless, captains. No naval scrutiny was ever conducted with greater justice, openness and severity. The three members reported to the Admiral the results of their investigation in each case, and he delivered sentence of arrest or dismissal with a stern rigour, even when the law fell in its full weight on his own household and his own family. Francis Harvey, his secretary, was cashiered. Captains Young, Taylor, Saltonstill and others were put under arrest until the pleasure of the Council of State should be known. His brother Benjamin, to whom he was strongly attached as a brother and an officer, fell under suspicion of some neglect of duty; and however painful the exercise of power under such circum-

stances, he was instantly broken and sent on shore. This rigid measure of justice against his own flesh and blood silenced every complaint; and the service gained immeasurably in spirit, discipline and confidence.

While these reforms, recruitments and renovations were proceeding under Blake's immediate eye, Tromp rode up and down the Channel with a broom at his mast-head, a somewhat prosaic emblem of his right to sweep the narrow seas; and the States-General, still more elated with their victory than the Admiral himself, put out a proclamation against our manufactures—sent intelligence of their great successes to foreign powers—and interdicted all correspondence and communication with the British Islands, pretending, as if they were already assured victors, to place them in a state of naval blockade. Ballads, by-words and scurrilous caricatures delighted the ears and eyes of the excited populace. The names of the vessels captured in the fight afforded Dutch wits a theme for abuse: they had carried off the "garland," they said, from the islanders; and there were squibs and jokes about the "bon-adventure" having realised the prophecy of its name in falling into their hands. But what concerned the Council of State much more than these usual incidents of success, was a report that Tromp contemplated making a descent on the Isles of Jersey and Guernsey, and a very natural fear that the trading part of the community would suffer from the cruisers of their watchful and active enemy. These alarms hastened their preparations for the second winter campaign; and on the 8th of February Blake, still in the *Triumph*, sailed from Queensborough, at the head of sixty men-of-war and frigates, having Monk and Deane with twelve hundred soldiers from the camp on board. Penn was the Vice-admiral, Lawson the Rear-admiral. In the Straits the Portsmouth squadron of twenty sail came in, and with this addition to his effective strength Blake resolved to seek the Dutch fleet and give battle. Tromp had gone southward to meet a large fleet of traders, ordered by the States-General to rendezvous at the Isle of Rhe, opposite Rochelle, and convoy them home; but intelligence had there reached him that the English were about to quit the Thames in his absence with sixty sail, and he intended to arrive at the river mouth in time to block it up, prevent their departure, and keep the Portsmouth squadron from effecting a junction with the main body. Blake had stolen a march on the Dutch Admiral, and when the latter turned Cape de la Hogue, he was surprised to find the English with a force equal to his own prepared to dispute the passage of a sea so lately swept by his potential broom. Confident, however, of victory, he accepted with joy the offer of a battle which fortune had enabled him to decline without disadvantage had such been his pleasure.

Day was just breaking on the morning of February 18, when the vanguard of the Dutch Admiral was descried from the mast-head of the *Triumph*. Blake dressed and went to the out-look. Nature could scarcely boast a grander spectacle than rose before him as the sun came forth, shewing that heaving wintry sea covered with ships, and

lighting their sails and pennons with its pale radiance. The darkness of the weather had prevented mutual recognition until the foremost ships were within a league or so of each other. Fortunately the English Admirals were all together, the *Triumph* having Penn's ship, the *Speaker*, and Lawson's, the *Fairfax*, both within call; but Monk was some miles astern in the *Vanguard*, and the main body of the fleet lay about a league and a half apart at the moment when the Dutchmen came in sight. Tromp saw his advantage and pressed it home. With the wind in his favour he might have carried his convoy to the Scheldt in safety, and returned at his leisure to give battle; but he chose to play a bolder game, and fancying the enemy would be found unequal with a vanguard of some twenty ships to resist the weight of his attack, he sent his fleet of traders a little to windward, out of gun range, with orders for them to wait there and witness the engagement. Personal combined with public reasons to lend a thrilling interest to the coming battle. The two nations had now had time to collect their best forces. Their largest ships were in the array. The most renowned admirals were on board the respective fleets: Blake, Deane, Penn and Lawson on the one side; Tromp, Evertz, De Ruiter, Swers, Floritz and De Wilde, all great names in history, on the other. It was the first time Blake and Tromp had met on equal terms: even the common seamen felt that the day was come to test their relative prowess, and they burned with zeal to begin the struggle. At the outset, all the advantages of position were with the Dutch, their ships had the wind, and were close up together; and when their extended line of fire opened on the English vanguard, it seemed almost impossible for about twenty ships to withstand the crash of such tremendous broadsides. As usual, the *Triumph* was the first to engage, and the *Bredorode*, ever in the van, advanced to meet her, reserving fire till the two vessels were within musket-shot of each other, and her charge could be delivered with the most deadly effect. With a strong breeze in his favour Tromp shot by the *Triumph*, pouring a fearful broadside into her as he passed; and then, suddenly tacking round, fired a second close under her sails, splintering masts and spars, tearing canvass and cordage, and strewing the decks with heaps of killed and wounded men. With this fiery salute the two Admirals parted company for the day, Penn dashing in with the *Speaker* and other vessels to cover Blake from some part of the circle of fire in which he lay exposed to destruction. The battle became general as the other divisions of the English fleet came up. On both sides the wreck was awful. In less than an hour after the first shot was launched from the guns of the *Triumph*, the sea was covered with spars, torn sails and broken planks. Almost every ship engaged in the action had already had its cables cut asunder and its masts shot away. One moment an English crew were seen boarding a Dutch man-of-war, the next moment the boarders were driven back, and their own vessel was assailed in turn. Here there was a ship wrapt in flames; there one was going down with all her men on deck, their cries unheard or

their terrors unheeded by friend or foe; elsewhere a fearful explosion sent decks and crews whirling into the black and lurid atmosphere. It is said in contemporary accounts, that the tremendous roar of the artillery could be heard along the shores of the Channel, from Boulogne on the one side to Portland on the other. About mid-day Monk came up with the white division, and from time to time the other ships joined in the contest, thenceforward fought on nearly equal terms. De Ruiter kept up the credit of his old renown. Early in the battle he had singled out and engaged with the *Prosperous*, a hired merchantman of forty guns, commanded by Captain Barker; but the fire of the English ship was maintained with such resolute steadiness that he grew impatient with the result of his distant fighting; and ordering a boarding-party to prepare for action, he ran his ship alongside the enemy, when his Dutchmen gallantly leaped on her deck pistol and sword in hand. The close combat lasted a few seconds only. Driving the assailants back to their ship, Barker threatened De Ruiter in his turn; but the brave old seamen, shouting in his fierce humour to the men, "*Come, my lads, that was nothing—at them again!*" led them to a second and more furious assault. With their numbers reduced and their ship unmanageable, Barker and his officers were unable to resist this murderous onset, and they were all made prisoners. At that very instant Blake came to their assistance with several vessels. The prize was instantly recovered, and De Ruiter himself almost surrounded by the English. Vice-admiral Evertz and Captains Swers and Kriuk hastened to relieve their countryman from his dangerous position, and the battle soon raged round this new centre with extraordinary violence. Penn's ship, the *Speaker*, was so shattered by the guns, that she was considered no longer fit for such service; and as soon as night put an end to the engagement of that first day, he was despatched to the Isle of Wight for the guard left at that station. Kriuk, in the *Ostrich*, fought like a true sailor, till his rigging and masts were shot away to the very hull, and his deck was covered with the dead bodies of his comrades. At last, he was boarded by the English; but as the unfortunate vessel appeared to be sinking, and her officers and crew were nearly all killed or wounded, the boarders made a hasty plunder of her contents and left her to her fate. De Wilde offered his aid in an effort to bring her off; but a sudden calm came on, and not having a yard of sail still spread, the attempt to tow her away failed, and she was again abandoned. Next morning, Blake found her floating at her own will, the unburied corpses lying where they had fallen the previous day, and not a living soul on board! The fearless Captain Swers—afterwards the distinguished admiral of that name—was taken prisoner. Seeing his comrade, Captain De Port, roughly used by two English frigates, he flew to the rescue with his ship, and the four enemies were immediately locked together. De Port's ship was struck between wind and water and began to fill; he himself was severely wounded by the fall of a huge splinter; nevertheless, he continued to encourage his men by shouts, and to

flourish his hanger as he lay on his back writhing in agony, until ship and crew all went down into the great deep together. Effective as the Dutch cannonade had hitherto been thought, it was no match for the destructive fire of the English frigates; and after a desperate struggle, in which the enemies proved themselves worthy of each other, Swers' ship also went down, himself and several of his officers and crew being taken on board the frigates and their lives preserved. Towards dusk, Blake felt himself strong enough to detach a number of his swiftest sailers with orders to gain the wind, and if possible prevent the escape of that vast fleet of rich traders: but Tromp saw the movements of this squadron, and guessing its motive fell back with a great part of his fleet, so as to cover the convoy. This retreat put an end to the first day's engagement; for seeing their Admiral turn his face from the enemy, some of the Dutch captains hoisted sail and fled away under cover of the gathering darkness. Blake remained master of the scene of action, but his ships were too far damaged and his men too much exhausted to permit of an active night-chase in mid-winter. Heroic valour had characterised the officers and men on both sides. The Dutch had had eight men-of-war either taken by the enemy or destroyed. The *Prosperous*, the *Oak*, the *Assistance*, the *Sampson*, and several other English ships had been boarded and captured during some period of the day, though every vessel was afterwards recovered. The *Sampson* was our only loss on that day. Its brave commander, Captain Button, and nearly all his crew being slain, Blake took out of her the remaining officers and men and allowed her to drift away. This excepted, no other ship in the English fleet had suffered so severely as the *Triumph*. Her able captain, Andrew Ball, fell that day covered with glory: Sparrow, the Admiral's new secretary, was shot down at his side; and nearly half of the entire crew had been swept into eternity. Blake himself was wounded in the thigh, and the same ball which lamed him for the remainder of his life, tore away part of Deane's buff coat. The enemy's loss in men could not be ascertained; it was known to be very great by the entire clearance of more than one vessel, and the decks and guns of the captured ships were so horribly spattered with blood and brains, as to sicken and appal the most callous of the victors.

As soon as night came down, Blake's first care was to relieve the agonies of the wounded by sending them on shore to the well-prepared hospitals, where persons of all ranks and opinions vied with each other in the endeavour to promote their comfort and recovery; collections of money, clothes and linen being made for them throughout the West and the defects of the service made good by the spontaneous enthusiasm of the people. His own wound, though not really dangerous, demanded repose and proper medical treatment; but he would on no account listen to the friends who urged him to go on shore and seek for himself the relief which he had put in the way of his humblest comrade. The two fleets lay almost close together, with their lights streaming all night across the wintry sea

as beacons for each other's guidance. Until dawn the next day, every effective hand on board the English fleets was employed in restoring sails, stopping leaks, cleaning guns, and otherwise repairing the waste of war; every thing was made ready to renew the contest on the morrow, for a dead calm had succeeded to the fresh breeze blowing when the battle began, and if this calm should continue, it was thought impossible for the Dutch to avoid another battle. But as day broke, a light wind sprang up, and Tromp, anxious now to take home his convoy in safety, disposed his fleet in the form of a crescent, the two hundred traders in his centre, and crowding every inch of sail that he could spread out stood directly up the Channel. Blake followed with his whole power; the breeze which favoured the flight also aiding the pursuit; yet it was twelve o'clock before the *Triumph* came within gunshot of the rearmost enemy, and nearly two before the main body came up with them off Dengeness. Again compelled to fight, Tromp ordered the merchants to make sail for the nearest Dutch port, keeping close under the French shore between Calais and Dunkirk for protection, and then turned like a panther on his pursuer. The battle was renewed on both sides with fury. De Ruiter gave fresh proofs of his courage; but the fortune of war was still against him. After some hours of this second engagement his vessel became unmanageable, and would have fallen into the enemy's hands had not Tromp seen his danger and sent Captain Dain to bring him out from the fight. With great difficulty he was extricated from his position and carried away. An hour or so later Tromp also began to fall back towards Boulogne, still, however, contesting every wave, and the mingled rout and battle lasted until night again separated the hostile hosts.

Fortunately for the English fleet, though the air was bitterly cold, the sky was unusually clear for winter, so that the enemy's lights served them as polar stars and enabled their ships to keep pretty close together and well up for the new battle of the morrow. On the second day Blake had captured or destroyed five Dutch men-of-war. The advantages gained by the recent reforms came out clearly in face of the enemy:—the Admirals had not a single complaint to make as to the courage, steadiness and unity of purpose displayed by the inferior officers. In the Dutch fleet, on the contrary, want of concert, party-bitterness and personal envy, combined to clog the genius of the great commander. At the close of the second day's engagement several captains of ships sent word to the *Brederode* that they could resist no longer, pleading want of powder as an excuse, and Tromp was compelled to send these men away from the main body in the night so as to prevent the treason and cowardice from spreading to the other ships. To conceal the true nature and cause of this defection, he made a pretence of giving them instructions to take up a new position to windward of the convoy, and make such a show of resistance as would keep the English frigates from coming too near. But this device failed of its own weakness. When daylight dawned, Blake saw at a glance that the fleet had been considerably reduced,

and inferring that a squadron had been despatched in the night to cover the flight of the merchants, he sent off a division of fleet sailers, drawing little water, in pursuit of them while he himself bore down once more with the main body on his reduced but still unconquered enemy. Tromp fought, as usual, with the most desperate courage: but he had now little hope, with his broken and divided power, of doing more than occupy Blake until his richly laden convoy could run into the nearest port. Even this was doubtful. After the first shock of the third day's battle, he sent Captain Van Ness to the merchants, with orders for them to crowd sail and make for Calais road, as he found himself unable to afford them more than a few hours' protection from the enemy. As the fight grew fiercer, he sent his Fiscal or Treasurer to urge them to press on faster, or the English frigates would soon be amongst them. But the wind was then blowing from the French coast, and notwithstanding his energetic attempts, Van Ness was unable to carry such a number of disorganised ships sufficiently near land to be out of danger. More than half the Dutch frigates and men-of-war had now been taken, sunk or scattered; and considering that it was a species of insanity in Tromp to continue the engagement until they were all destroyed, the other captains, contrary to their express orders, retreated on the flying convoy. Confusion then reached its heights. Some of the English frigates came up; and the merchants, in their alarm and disorder, ran foul of each other, knocked themselves to pieces or fell blindly into the enemy's power. Still fighting with the retreating men-of-war, Blake arrived in the midst of this strange scene late in the afternoon, and finding several ships run against him, as if desirous of being captured, the thought occurred to him that this was a device of his wily adversary to stay the victorious pursuit, and give time to rally some part of the discomfited fleet,—and he issued strict and instant commands that every war-ship still in a condition to follow and fight the enemy should press on with all its force against the main body, leaving the traders in their rear to be watched and seized by the frigates already assigned to that service, or driven into ports whence it would be easy to recover them should the Dutch fleet be swept utterly from the Channel. Darkness alone put an end to the exciting chase. Tromp ran in under the French shore, some four miles from Calais, where he anchored the remnant of his once mighty fleet—now reduced to less than half the former number of masts, besides being damaged in every part. Blake consulted pilots and others well acquainted with the coast, as to what Tromp could do in his new position; and the general opinion of these men was, that the Dutch could not weather the coast of Artois, as the wind and tide then were, and would be compelled to come out again to sea in order to get home. He therefore cast his anchors and sat down to repair his damages. The night was unusually dark, with a high gale blowing, so that the enemy's lights could not be seen; and when day again dawned the sea was clear in that direction, Tromp having slipped away and tided towards Dunkirk, whence he got off into the

harbours of Zealand. By twelve o'clock in the morning, Blake was ready to give chase; but no enemy being then visible, and feeling that it would be useless to follow the runaways into the flats and shallows of their own coasts, he stood over towards England, and the gale still rising, carried his fleet and prizes into Stoake's Bay, whence he and his colleagues in command wrote to inform the House of their success.

Extremely false and exaggerated accounts of the great Battle of Portland were published in the two countries. Excepting the loss of their traders, the States-General tried to make the world believe that their fleet had done as much mischief as it had suffered:—but when Tromp was asked to sail against the enemy unencumbered by a convoy, he frankly confessed that his best war-ships had been already lost or destroyed. In their report to Parliament, the English commanders stated that their loss was confined to the *Sampson*, the vessel turned adrift the first night of the engagement,—and that their gain from the enemy was seventeen or eighteen men-of-war and a large fleet of merchant-ships, the precise number not being ascertainable at once, as the prizes had been carried into different ports. Sixteen sail were brought into Dover. Altogether it is probable that more than fifty of these vessels fell into English hands. On both sides the loss of life was great. The Dutch captains, Balk, Van Zaanen, De Port, Spanhem, Regemorter, Fokkes and Allart were all slain: Swers, Schey and Van Zeelst were taken prisoners. England had to mourn the deaths of three of her bravest captains—Ball, Mildmay and Barker. Blake himself was severely wounded, as were also his gallant Rear-admiral, Lawson, and many other of the most distinguished persons on board.

In London the first news of this terrible battle was received with boundless enthusiasm. At last the two nations had met on a fair field; the genius, strength and courage of the officers and men had been fairly tried; and the Commonwealth had gained a splendid victory. Special letters of thanks and congratulation were written to the three commanders. A day of general thanksgiving was appointed. Parliament began an immediate subscription in behalf of the wives and children of such as had fallen in the action: and a short time afterwards a public provision was made by the State itself for their support. Troops of horse escorted the prisoners from the various ports where they had been landed to London, and in every town through which these cavalcades passed on the journey the people rang the joy-bells in celebration of the battle. As to Blake himself, less mindful of his own wound than he was of the hurts of his humblest companion, he remained in St. Helen's road and about the Solent for some weeks after he had received it, refitting his ships, taking in fresh stores, and preparing to chastise the Brest privateers, who still infested the seas and made spoil of English and other traders engaged in the commerce with Ireland. But in April he received information on which he could rely that Tromp was making great efforts to equip another fleet. With a hundred sail he appeared

before the Texel, where he found about seventy Dutch men-of-war and frigates; his vanguard fired into them as soon as he came within gunshot, when they hastily retreated, leaving fifty of their doggers behind as prizes for the enemy. Tromp had already gone out on convoy service; but no longer able or willing to try the Channel passage, he was obliged to go round the north of Scotland to meet the fleet of Spanish and Levant merchants. He contrived by consummate seamanship to bring his ships safe home, though the wits of London and Westminster had their laugh at the expense of that top-gallant humour which had so lately threatened to brush the English navy from the seas in which he no longer dared to shew his pennons. Leaving him for the present secure in his fortified and inaccessible ports, Blake sailed towards the North with a small squadron, while Monk and Deane returned with eighty sail into the Downs where they witnessed and acquiesced in Cromwell's dispersion of the Long Parliament and in his assumption of supreme power.

The precise objects of this northern cruise have not been clearly stated. But as it had the effect of removing from the Downs and from the great majority of his naval comrades a popular commander, known for his sincere attachment to the Commonwealth, at the very moment when Cromwell had resolved to venture on the rash, indecent and unlawful act of dispersing by brute force the representatives of the nation, it is not difficult to surmise by whose intrigues the Council of State had been induced to urge it. His separation from the fleet—his removal to a distance from the scene of action—were necessary precautions; from the other generals and admirals Cromwell had little to fear. Monk was the obsequious creature of his will. Deane was a mere soldier without opinions. Penn was never likely to be found on the weaker side. But Blake, like other sincere and moderate Republicans, had accepted the death of Charles as the term of monarchy in this country. A Council of State, freely elected out of the whole body of representatives, and responsible to Parliament for their public conduct, seems to have been the form of government which he desired to see prevail. Soldier as he was, he strongly repudiated the rule of the sword. Between Blake and Cromwell there were strong points of contrast as well as of resemblance. Both were sincerely religious, undauntedly brave, fertile in expedients, irresistible in action. Born in the same year, they began and almost closed their lives at the same time. Both were country gentlemen of moderate fortune. Both were of middle age when the revolution came. Without previous knowledge or professional training, both attained to the highest honours of the respective services. But there the parallel ends. Blake's patriotism was as pure as Cromwell's was selfish. Anxious only for the glory and interest of his country, the great seaman took little or no care of his personal aggrandisement. His contempt of money, his impatience with the mere vanities of power, were supreme. With his most creditable aspirations the Lord-General mingled views of personal profit; he coveted power, place and patronage for himself—wealthy and aristo-

eratic connexions for his children. Open to the lowest order of corrupt influences in his own person, Cromwell never scrupled to appeal to the sense of private interest in others. Blake abhorred bribery in all its shapes; he even carried his objection so far as to declare against the custom of giving parliamentary rewards for any but the most extraordinary and meritorious services. By nature Cromwell was dark and suspicious; Blake was frank and open to a fault; his heart was in his hand, and his mind ever on his lips. In military genius, in command over men, in faculty for organising crude materials into actual power—they were perhaps at once equal and unequalled. In the highest moral attributes of manhood—in honesty, modesty, generosity, sincerity and magnanimity, Blake was far superior to Cromwell; and if he ultimately became in the world's eye the second man in England, it was chiefly, if not solely, because his nature and his principles forbad him to contend with the weapons of his rival.

On the famous 20th of April, 1653, Blake was quietly cruising with twenty ships between the Friths of Forth and Moray, when the troopers marched down to Westminster and cleared the House. Vane, Sidney, Lenthall, Marten and others opposed the illegal violence of the Lord-General. He abused them in coarse and characteristic language, added insult to injury, and turned them out of doors. Next day he dissolved the Council of State. On the 25th a council of officers in London declared for Cromwell, and the same afternoon brought despatches from Deane and Monk, with their adhesion and that of certain captains of their fleet to the number of thirty-three. Penn and the officers with him all signed to the same effect. But neither the Admiral himself, his brother Benjamin, nor his nephew Robert, set their hands to these documents, so that the name of Blake does not occur in the papers which carried to the usurper an assurance that his violence would not be opposed by the navy.

That Blake was dissatisfied with a change that soon condemned Algernon Sidney to the privacy of Penshurst, consigned Sir Harry Vane to a prison, and drove many of the liberal and moderate men whose opinions he shared, into private life, there is no reason to doubt. To his friends and associates he made no secret of his resentment. Had he been in his place in the Council of State when Cromwell entered, there would probably have been a louder and more important protest against the act of usurpation than that made by the Lord-President Bradshawe. But he was far away, and deeply engrossed with the duties of the service, when the deed of violence was done in Westminster; and before the intelligence reached him on his distant station, the change was an historical fact, formally accepted by the army and the fleet. From that moment he gave up politics. The gentry of Somersetshire returned him as their representative in the new Parliament; but he never sat again, or appeared in the House, except on the business of his department. The fears and intrigues of the usurper caused him to be excluded from the new Council of State. In a Parliament without real power, even his fearless truth

and uncompromising honesty could do little harm to the Lord-General's interests; while his very name on the rolls of the New Representative, lent a dignity to that assembly which Cromwell understood, and his admirers still claim as a sort of triumph for their hero. The case was different as regards the Council of State. Within that smaller and more powerful body, he might have proved a dangerous adviser and opponent so long as the great question of a settlement of the nation was still under discussion; it was, therefore, a necessary precaution, that, for a time at least, he should be excluded. Blake's opinions were known to be unfavourable to military rule, not only in England, but on the continent generally; and when the Dutch heard of a sudden revolution having been accomplished by the army in London, they at once leapt to the conclusion that their most redoubtable naval enemy would no longer carry on the war with the same vigour.

In these hopes they were deceived. Calling his captains together as soon as the messengers arrived at the fleet before Aberdeen with the news of the day, he told them, that whatever might be their private opinions, he considered it to be his duty and their duty to act in their several posts, while out at sea, with good faith, and in such a way as would best conduce to the public peace and welfare. He spoke of the irregularities which had occurred in London; but he would not admit that in such a crisis, threatened as the country was on every side with foreign enemies, the fleet had any right to plunge the country into the horrors of civil war. When pressed by some of his captains to declare against the clique of army officers and their leader, he at once took up a position which he never afterwards abandoned. "No," he said, "it is not for us to mind affairs of State, but to keep foreigners from fooling us." Though he suspected Cromwell and abhorred military rule, he had manliness and patriotism enough not to deprive his country of such services as he could render, because it had allowed itself to submit in an irregular way to a power not of his choosing. And fortunately this resolution was taken with his usual rapidity; for Tromp, Evertz, De Ruiter, and De Witt, under the impression that the fleets of England were divided from each other and torn by discords, sailed from the Göree with 120 ships, brought together and manned in haste, for Dover road, into which they drove a few stragglers, took two or three prizes, and began to fire on the town. The fleet then in and about the narrow seas was divided into three squadrons. Deane and Monk, with the red flag, in the *Resolution*, had under their immediate orders 38 sail, carrying 1440 guns and 6169 men; the white division, under Penn, consisted of 33 sail, with 1189 guns and 5085 men; Lawson commanded the blue, composed of 34 ships, having on board 1189 guns, and 5015 men; making a grand total of 105 ships, 3840 guns, and 16,269 men. The Dutch were about equal in guns and men, though they had a greater number of vessels. Blake, meanwhile, having learned by mounted couriers riding day and night that Tromp was in the Channel, and had already fired into Dover,

pread his sails and poured impetuously down the north coast before full breeze, burning with desire to revenge that insult and re-establish is invaded supremacy in the narrow seas. Early in the morning of une 2d, the two great fleets sighted each other about three leagues rom the Gable. Lawson pressed on in advance of his comrades, and harged through the enemy between eleven and twelve o'clock in the renoon, separating De Ruiter's squadron from the rest and engaging t in a severe contest before the main body on either side could be rought to bear. In about an hour Tromp was at the elbow of his allant comrade, and at three o'clock the firing was quite general.)ne of the first cannon-shots that swept the *Resolution* killed eneral Deane: Monk threw his cloak over the mangled corpse of is colleague, and shouted to the men to avenge his death. Tromp ad given out an extra quantity of liquor, and for some hours the)utchmen fought with reckless and extraordinary courage; but when arkness put an end to a long day's engagement, he found himself ot less damaged than the enemy. All that night, while the hostile eets, at barely gunshot distance from each other, were trying in aste and disorder to repair somewhat the waste of the past few ours, Blake was riding with his division, full sail and with streaming ights, for the scene of action, unaware of the day's events, the loss f his old friend Deane, and the doubtful position of the great fleet. ll night the officers and men, not a little dispirited at the death of ne of their old generals, watched and waited anxiously for the ignals of the Sea King. The summer morning dawned early, but o trace of his coming could be descried on the horizon. Fortunate- y, Tromp was unaware that Blake was expected in the course of the ay, believing him to be too far north to be recalled so soon, and he pent the whole morning in a series of skilful movements intended to ecover the weather-gage; but, owing to a sudden calm which came n, he was unsuccessful in this attempt, and about noon the fleets ere again within range of the great guns. The battle was renewed, s if by mutual consent, at the point where it ceased the night efore: it was maintained with energy; but neither party could laim an advantage over the other until the expected squadron hove n sight. Early in the afternoon, high above the din of battle, and reaking through it as the thunder-clap bursts through the roar of ind and rain in a southern storm, the explosion of his terrible rtillery was heard by the anxious and excited seamen on the Iollanders' rear and flank; and the sound, telling the tale of carnage nd destruction in every crash, roused them into new and more ormidable life. The young Captain Robert Blake was the first man o engage the enemy; he broke through the Dutch line, vomiting eath from every gun, and was received with a tremendous cheer rom the sailors of the fleet, to whom he brought ocular proofs of heir great commander's arrival on the scene. At four o'clock the attle ended and the rout began. Tromp fought with the energy of espair; but nothing could stand that impetuous onset. The men f the *Brederode* roused to fury by the cries and reproaches of their

Admiral, boarded the Vice-admiral—the *James*—but were repulsed by Penn's crew, who entered the *Brederode* with them, gained possession of the quarter-deck, and would probably have captured the ship, had not Tromp, resolved not to fall alive in the enemy's hands, thrown a light into the powder-magazine, and caused an explosion which sent the upper-deck and the gallant boarders who occupied it into mid air—the planks shivered into a thousand splinters—the men horribly scorched and mutilated. By a miracle Tromp himself was scarcely hurt; but a report of his death was spread about, and many of his captains, feeling that all was lost, turned and fled. De Ruiter and De Witt exerted themselves in vain. After his marvellous escape, Tromp quitted the disabled *Brederode* for a fast-sailing frigate, in which he flew through the fleet to assure them of his safety, encouraging the brave, threatening the waverers, and firing on the timid as they fled. But it was now too late: the day was irretrievably lost, and the brave old sailor at last and with great reluctance gave his sanction to the orders for retreat. As the flight became general, a fresh gale sprung up. Allowing them no pause, the English admirals pressed hotly on their rear, sunk many of their ships, captured several others, and would have destroyed the entire armament had they been favoured with two hours more daylight. But favoured by the dark night, Tromp sought shelter in the road before Ostend, and the next day escaped with the remnant of his fleet into Weilingen. Blake and Monk had to report that among their captures they counted 1350 Dutch prisoners, including six captains, Verburg, Schellinger, Laurence, Duin, Fietersz, and Westergo: eleven men-of-war, including a vice-admiral and two rear-admirals; two water-hoys and one fly-boat. The other ascertainable losses of the enemy included six men-of-war sunk, two blown up and one burnt. In their own fleet they counted 126 men slain and 236 wounded. Several of their ships had had their bows shot away, and the masts and rigging of many others were much shattered and destroyed.

Intelligence of this great defeat threw the United Provinces into a most dangerous ferment. The mob rose in various towns, deposed the magistrates, and accused the government of incapacity and treason. The Admirals offered to resign their commissions. Tromp told the Deputies of the States that it was impossible to fight the islanders any longer, unless their fleet could be reinforced by a great number of large ships; and De Ruiter boldly declared that he would go to sea no more with such a fleet as they then possessed. In the Assembly of the States, De Witt spoke the truth still more clearly out:—"Why," he said, "should I keep silence any longer? I am here before my sovereigns; I am free to speak:—and I must say that the English are at present masters both of us and of the seas." This was the opinion of the well-informed in both countries. The naval power of Holland was for the time completely broken, and the final battle of the war, hazarded and lost two months later, was but an expiring effort made with crippled means and under circumstances of the greatest discouragement. The condition of the Dutch flag-ship

was but a little worse than that of their navy throughout:—"The *Brederode*," says Tromp, in his report to the States-General, "has received several shots between wind and water; and though we have had her caulked as well as possible, she still leaks so fast, that last night, in spite of all our pumps, the water gained on us above five feet in height: till the present time we have contrived to keep her above water; but if after all we find our labour lost, we shall be obliged to run her ashore." Under these circumstances the States began to think of peace, and a vessel carrying a white flag was sent with an agent on board, who was instructed to go to London to prepare the way for two fresh ambassadors fully empowered to arrange the preliminaries of a treaty.

Though it kept the sea, the English fleet was in scarcely better condition than the enemy. After sending the wounded men on shore at Ipswich, where hospitals had been prepared for their reception, with strict orders that every care should be taken of their wounds, and every comfort afforded them during the progress of their recovery,—Blake pursued the flying enemy, keeping his great ships out at sea to avoid the shoals and sand-banks, but running his frigates close in land and scouring every bay and inlet. His objects were, to place the coast of Holland from the Zwin to the Texel in a state of blockade—to intercept and destroy the Dutch trade—to hinder the herring-busses and whaling-boats from going out on the usual summer voyage—and to keep the fleet closed up in the Texel and prevent its junction with that refitting in the Weilingen; and having determined on his plan, he collected such of his ships as appeared to be unable to remain at sea for some weeks to come, and sent them back to England with the prizes, himself remaining with the other portion of his fleet in the Dutch waters, capturing stray ships and holding the long chain of towns and ports between Ostend and the Ems in a state of perpetual alarm and irritation. His letters written at this time from before the Texel and the Vlie shew with how wide a range of obstacles he had to contend, and add new elements to the admiration excited by his victorious career. Five days after the battle he writes to the Board of Admiralty:—

"GENTLEMEN,—Since ours of the 6th present, we are got between the Texel and the Vlie, where we shall endeavour to hinder any men-of-war coming out from thence to make a conjunction with the Dutch fleet now at the Weilingen, as well as hinder their fishing and merchandising trade so near as we can.

"The ships sent for England with the Dutch prizes, of which you had an account in our last, we do desire they may be refitted and sent unto us so soon as possibly you can, and that the Commissioners of the Navy may be sent unto, to give order for as much victuals and water to be put on board them as they can well stow, also that so many other ships with victuals and water as can be got ready in that time, may come along with them, and for those victualling and water-ships now with us, we shall use our best endeavours to get it out as fast as we can, and dispose of it to each ship according to their

necessity so far as it will go, and then send them back for recruits, whereby the charge of hiring more ships for that service may be saved; but as yet we have not had time.

"We do desire that two or three of the best-sailing frigates may be hastened to us with powder and shot, which is our great want.

"We have sent orders to all those ships and vessels in Yarmouth road to repair unto us with all expedition, and do desire that for the future no more ships-of-war or others may be sent thither, but that they repair into the Zwin, where we shall send to them and for them as the service requires.

"We would gladly know certainly what quantity of victuals there lies now ready at Hull, Yarmouth, and Harwich upon any occasion.

"It is supposed as soon as the enemy is in a capacity to shew his head, he will endeavour to attempt somewhat upon our own coast; but we hope you will take care that he may be prevented, and if he shall come again and shoot into Dover pier, that you will not be much startled at it, though we assure you there shall be nothing wanting in us to hinder him in that or any thing else that may disturb the peace of this Commonwealth, so far as the Lord shall enable us.

"We do desire all diligence may be used to supply us with seamen, and that the first ships that come may bring as many with them as they can. We are," &c.

Next day he wrote again, complaining that the ships were in very bad condition and much in want of powder and shot. But supplies came in slowly. Want and sickness increased day by day. On the 12th he wrote again:

"The 11th present came many letters of yours to our hands, several of them, bearing date in May last, are duplicates of some we formerly received, and have already answered as to the material things therein. The same day also came Colonel Goffe, Major Bourne and Captain Hatsell, and seven ships-of-war, with eleven victuallers and water-ships in their company. What their lading particularly is we cannot as yet give you an account; but so soon as it comes to our hands, we shall communicate it unto you, which we hope will be by the next; only this we have in general, that there are 140 barrels of powder in the *Samuel* merchant, and 172 in the *John and Katherine* (besides a quantity of shot) over and above their proportion; also 700 soldiers, which might have been serviceable unto us had care been taken to have sent bedding and cloths along with them, according to your resolution at Chatham in that particular, which we hoped would have been adhered to; for want whereof they are likely to occasion much sickness amongst us, instead of answering your expectations.

"As soon as we have disposed of the victuals now come to us, we shall send the ships that brought it back again with what speed we can, that they may be recruited and returned to us; and we hope you will use all diligence for the hastening back the ships we sent into the river as a convoy to the Dutch prizes; we having many

ships here will be unfit for service before they get to us, let them make what haste they can. We sent the other day eleven ships and frigates to Harwich to wash and tallow, and then to complete three months' victuals, as also to take in the ammunition remaining at Yarmouth for the fleet, and so to return with all speed.

"For those ships and frigates of Captain Badily's squadron, which we understand are in a capacity for service, wanting some men, we desire they may be supplied and hastened to us, the rather because we are informed there are eleven or twelve great frigates newly launched at Amsterdam, Enchuysen, and thereabouts, which carry fifty guns a piece, besides the ten men-of-war which came home with the French fleet. We understand some hammocks are come in a hoy to Harwich, for which we have sent, but hear not of the other necessaries of wood and candles, so often mentioned unto you, of which the fleet wants a proportion of six weeks to even with our present victualling. The 1000lbs. is now come in the *John and Katherine*, and John Poortmans intends to get it aboard to-day, which we hope will yet be serviceable; for the *Cock* and *Brier* which you mention are on their way towards us; the latter of them we conceive may be very useful in her station on the western coast, and therefore do not desire her here. We have desired Major Bourne to remain about Harwich and Yarmouth, the better to despatch to us the ships and frigates that are or shall be sent thither, and such other vessels with provisions as are necessary for the fleet; and also to maintain a constant and mutual correspondence between the Council of State and yourselves with us. The supply of ammunition you have made unto us, especially of shot, will not answer our present wants in that behalf, wherefore we desire the continuance of your care therein, that what further quantities can be suddenly provided may be sent unto us accordingly."

About a fortnight later he complained that his stores and provisions were all run short; the beer, he said, was sour, the bread bad, the butter rancid, the cheese rotten. The amount of sickness on board was very great; and in spite of the enemy's present weakness, and the immense advantage of holding them in close blockade, he expressed a fear that, unless relieved, he would be compelled by want and sickness to return to England. His own health was bad, the consequence of his neglected wound, but of that he said little. The close of his letter, in which he had described one of his captures, gave excellent reasons for maintaining the blockade:

"It hath pleased God this last week," it ran, "to deliver several merchant-ships of the enemy into our hands, which was thus: Upon the 19th present some of our frigates, appointed to ply to and again before the Vlie, met with eleven sail, which proved to be Dutch ships, some of them come from the West Indies; and being ships of force, they fought for some time, but at length committed themselves to sailing as their securest way; whereby five of them escaped, but four are taken, one sunk, and another burnt. In this encounter Captain Vessey, Commander of the *Martin*, was slain, whom we

understand hath left a poor widow with a great charge of children, whose condition we leave to your consideration. Upon the 22d some other of our frigates met about thirty sail more to the northward of the Vlie, which being ships of no force endeavoured wholly an escape; but yet eleven of them were taken and some of the remainder scattered, and the rest got into port: two of these came from Swethland laden with guns, all new, whereof two are brass, and most of them carrying a bullet from 24lbs. weight to twelve, as we are informed, which we hope will be as seasonable for us as for them had they escaped; there were no more amongst them, had any guns but these two, the rest are richly laden for the most part; they are not all come into the fleet as yet; when they are, we shall send them in under the convoy of such ships as are least useful, also such sick and wounded men as are not fit to be kept on board; upon whose arrival in Lea road, whither we shall order them, we do desire speedy directions may be given concerning them as may stand with the good of the service. We intend also (if the Lord will) to make a trip over with the whole fleet upon the English shore, to see them out of danger, and then to return with what speed we can, leaving in the meantime so many of the best frigates we have to lie between the Dogger Bank and the Riff, to intercept the enemy's ships of trade expected home. We earnestly desire you will hasten unto us as many clean ships as you can, apprehending more service might be done than now is, had we a considerable number of them; also that you would send to Major Bourne that those ships now tallowing at Harwich may be expedited to us.

"We still continue before this place, sometimes at an anchor, at other times under sail."

One more extract from this correspondence will complete the dreary picture of this victorious fleet, and will bring down the story of the war to the point where Blake was compelled by illness to go on shore:

"Since our last, wherein we acquainted you with our resolutions to sail with the main body of the fleet for Sowle Bay, we have had blowing weather for the most part, whereby we were driven to leeward as far as Flamborough Head; but are now, through the goodness of God, come thus far on our way, and hope to get into the place of rendezvous this night, or to-morrow morning at furthest, where all diligence shall be used to accomplish the end of our coming thither; and therefore desire that what victualling ships and others can be sent from London within the time limited for our staying upon this coast, may be expedited to us, and we have written to Major Bourne in the like manner for such provisions as can be sent unto us from Yarmouth and Harwich. Our men fall sick very fast every day, having at present on board this ship upwards of eighty sick men, and some of them very dangerously, which we hear is generally through the whole fleet alike, proportionable to the number of men on board; so that we shall be constrained to send a considerable number unto Ipswich for their recovery; where there is

room enough for them and good accommodation, as we understand by a letter from Dr. Whistler lately come to our hands, to whom we have written that special care might be taken of them, and suitable provision made for them, according to their conditions; and do desire a considerable number of seamen may be sent unto us with what expedition you can, or else it is apprehended we shall be very weakly manned, to do service answerable to what is expected from us.

"We have this morning sent away the *Worcester* frigate for Chatham being very foul, and wanting a new foremast, which could not be supplied here. We should have ordered him to stay in Lea road to receive your directions, but that we apprehended much time would be lost that way, being appointed to make his repair unto the fleet with all expedition. The captain of her is a godly and valiant man, whom, with Captain Newbery, commander of the *Entrance*, we do especially recommend for two of the best frigates now a building, which if you shall approve of and appoint unto, we shall deliver them commissions upon notice given. We hope you do not forget to send us paper and canvass for cartridges, with a considerable quantity of old junk for wads, our necessity in this particular having been several times made known unto you. There are two honest captains more whom we desire to recommend unto you for removes into some of the new frigates now a building, with good strength, viz. Captain Bragg in the *Marmaduke* and Captain Hermon in the *Welcome;* they are already in ships of good force but slow sailers, and do apprehend they would do more and better service if better provided. We earnestly desire you will send down to us as much victuals as will complete us to the last of September, if you can, or else the quantity of butter, cheese and bread that was lost in the *Golliot* hoy, of which we gave you an account already, being much in want thereof. We also desire you will hasten unto us what clean ships and frigates you can from London, for want whereof so much service cannot be done as otherwise might be."

Next morning the fleet put in, and Blake was carried on shore more dead than alive, leaving Monk, Penn and Lawson on board to carry out and complete his plan for the final reduction of Holland.

One more blow, and all was over. Taking advantage of the temporary absence of the blockading fleet, the Dutch squadrons of the Texel and Weilingen put to sea and effected a junction with each other on the south coast; but their shattered power was no longer capable of bearding their powerful enemy, and when the English admirals hove in sight at the close of the month, they endeavoured by flight to avoid another battle. Penn and Lawson won their brightest laurels in this final conflict with Tromp, Evertz and De Ruiter. The fighting began at dusk; but night soon parted the combatants. Next day a heavy gale and thick dirty weather prevented a renewal of the action. On the third day the last shot was fired. The aged and able Admiral of Holland received a musket-ball in his heart; and after his death the captains of his fleet fled away, the English for the first and only time in that war pursuing the fugitives

without mercy; as the ruthless Monk had commanded them to give no quarter. They made no prisoners; they killed all who fell in their way; and after a few hours the contest became a massacre rather than a battle. The States-General, now thoroughly humbled, sent ambassadors to sue for peace; the negociations were carried on without further interruption; and early in the following spring a treaty was made in which they formally conceded to England the honours of the flag—agreed to banish the royalist exiles from Holland—gave the East India Company compensation for its losses—settled a sum of money on the heirs of their Amboyna victims—and made amends to the English traders who had suffered in the Baltic. In modern times there had been no maritime war to compare with this, either as to the interests concerned or the magnitude of the operations conducted. In less than two years the English Sea-General and his officers had according to our own computations, captured or destroyed seventeen hundred ships; the Hollanders themselves admitted that they had lost more than eleven hundred vessels. These twenty months war with England cost the States-General more money than they had expended during the twenty years war against Spain.

Honours and decorations awaited the successful admirals in England. The Council of State proposed that Parliament should order two gold chains, each of 300*l.* value, to be made and presented to the two surviving generals, Blake and Monk. Two other chains, valued at 100*l.* each, were given to Penn and Lawson. Four chains of 40*l.* each were presented to the four flag-officers. Rewards and promotions fell to the lot of many of the inferior officers. Penn was raised to the rank of Sea-General in the place of Deane. Lawson was made Vice-admiral. Captain Badely—who had recently fought and lost the battle of Porto Longone, the only event of any importance which had occurred in the Mediterranean during the Dutch war—was made Rear-admiral at the same time. A sum of 1040*l.* was voted for medals for the inferior officers and men. Bonfires were lighted in all public places, and most conspicuously on Tower Hill. A day of general thanksgiving, as usual with the Roundheads after a great victory, was appointed. But all this time Blake lay at home in a dangerous fever, and only heard the public exultation at his marvellous successes through the occasional echoes which in spite of medical precautions, came to disturb the repose of a sick room.

CHAPTER IX.

1654-1656.

SPANISH WAR.

The correspondence between Blake and Cromwell, so far as it related to the affairs of Spain and the course to be pursued by the southern fleet, had been carried on in cipher, and all the instructions

sent from London were regarded as secret. But the time was now come to throw off the mask. During the six months occupied by the series of bold and successful exploits which had established on both shores of the Mediterranean so salutary an awe of English prowess, the object of the expedition under Penn and Venables remained a profound mystery. Penn himself, when he sailed from Portsmouth, was unaware of the precise service on which his squadron was to be employed, for his orders were not to open the letter of final instructions until far enough from Europe to prevent any risk of their nature transpiring:—a very necessary precaution as the event proved, for that worldly seaman, already foreseeing the downfall of the Commonwealth, and anxious to secure to himself the future gratitude of the royal family by unexpected and splendid services in their cause, no sooner found himself at the head of a large fleet than he put himself into communication with the exile court at Cologne, offering to desert with his entire power from the Commonwealth, and sail into whatever port should be named for that purpose. Had he known on what errand he was about to proceed when this proposal was made, he would unquestionably have told the Stuarts, who, in their turn, would have eagerly seized the opportunity of strengthening their interests at Madrid by forwarding such a piece of state intelligence; and on the receipt of it there is no reason to suppose that Philip IV. would have refused to grant the use of one of his harbours in the Low Countries for the reception of the revolters. But having nowhere to receive so large a fleet—nor any means of supporting it except piracy, from which he was perhaps warned by the mysterious fate of his cousin Maurice,—Charles for a time declined the traitorous offer, and desired the Admiral to reserve his loyalty for some happier season. The expedition therefore sailed on its unknown voyage; and it was not until late in the spring of 1655 that news arrived in Europe from the west relating the particulars of an attack made by Penn and Venables on the great Spanish settlement of Hispaniola.

The idea of a secret expedition to invade the peace of an island in possession of a power against which war had not been formally declared, would be to the last degree offensive to modern notions of public honour. But in Cromwell's time the peace of Europe was not fixed on certain bases. Commerce and colonies lay almost beyond the pale of law and treaties. No French admiral would have thought it right to plunder Lyme or Sandown; but not one in ten would have considered it wrong to seize the merchants of either port on the high seas. By a curious political distinction countries might be at war in one latitude, though not in all—at sea when not on land. The seizure of Vendôme's fleet had not led to a war between France and England. The destruction of Rupert's squadron in the harbours of Carthagena had not interrupted the relations, such as they were, between London and Madrid. Europe, indeed, had never known such a thing as peace on the high seas; from the Northern jarl to the African corsair, the strong arm had ruled from the feudal times on

the highway of nations. Even when England and Spain had seemed to be on the best terms with each other in Europe, envy, jealousy and distrust reigned in the New World, and the elements of discord often broke out there into open violence and bloodshed. Cromwell affected to satisfy his conscience with the pretence that war already existed between the two countries in that hemisphere, and that an armament was needed for the protection of English interests in America.

Real causes for a war with Spain were neither few nor remote, though it is probable that the most active were such as would exercise little influence over the minds of statesmen in the nineteenth century. The first and gravest was the religious situation. Spain was ultra-Catholic, England ultra-Protestant. The most powerful and most warlike sects which supported Cromwell sincerely believed that Spain was the devil's stronghold in Europe. The Reformed faith—tolerated in the Holy Roman Empire, in France, still more recently in Portugal—had never found mercy at Madrid. Racks, wheels, boiling oil, and other yet more delicate means of torture, opposed the spread of new doctrines throughout Spain and the Indies; while frequent burnings and gibbetings were employed to keep the masses true to the creed of their fathers. The horror excited in Puritan England by the report of such atrocities was naturally heightened by the fact, that now and then a foreign resident—even an Englishman—fell under the frowns of the Holy Office, and whatever his country or his creed, suffered, without appeal, the sort of judgment bestowed by that terrible tribunal. In fact, the Inquisition was the great obstacle to a solid and durable peace between the two powers. When the Spanish Ambassador first proposed an alliance, Cromwell made this one of his two essential conditions:—that English merchants living in Spain should be allowed to exercise their own religion, have the use of Bibles and such other pious books as they might require, and be free from the control of the Holy Office. The Ambassador refused even to transmit this demand to his master, and the attempt at negociation failed. Other causes tended to excite the war-feeling. The murder of Ascham had not been forgotten or forgiven; nor the favours extended and the shelter afforded to Rupert and his revolted ships at Cadiz and Carthagena. Among political reasons, the obstinate refusal to allow foreign traders to visit any of the ports of America and the West India Islands, was the first and strongest. Liberty of trade—freedom from the Holy Office: these were the two conditions on which the Protector offered to treat. "What," exclaimed the Ambassador, "my master has but two eyes, and you ask him to pluck out both at once!" Not being able to make terms with the Catholic court, Cromwell resolved, as far as it lay in him, to cripple its resources, and thus force it to respect the commerce and religion of Englishmen.

Though Mazarin, acting on his famous maxim of state, seemed willing to give way on every point before the energetic rulers of the new Commonwealth, the causes of quarrel with France were not yet fully removed. The cruisers of the two countries still carried letters

of marque against each other's ships; and daily encounters took place at sea without either accelerating or retarding the long and tedious negociations of M. Bordeaux. For three years this agent had been in London asking for peace. Crafty diplomatists fancied that Cromwell employed his time in maturely weighing the relative advantages of a French or a Spanish alliance, and the ambassadors of the rival powers intrigued day and night to gain his adhesion. To the surprise of the old formalists, he at length took a decisive attitude against Spain, without first attempting to hurry on the settlement of his differences with France. Fearless of every consequence, while Penn and Venables went out to attack Hispaniola, Blake harassed the trade of Marseilles and kept the Toulon fleet locked up in the Mediterranean harbours. Whenever his cruisers found ships at sea sailing to or from French ports, they seized them as lawful prizes. One of his frigates took a Hamburg vessel bound for Marseilles, which he condemned. Another captured two Hamburgers and a Hollander; but as he found by their papers that two of these were not bound for French ports, they were set free; the other, carrying goods to Rouen, was confiscated. Such incidents occurred almost daily. Loud and bitter complaints were made by men in business at the delay of peace; discontents spread to other classes; and Bordeaux was urged by his countrymen to conclude a treaty with the Commonwealth at almost any sacrifice, rather than continue a state of things so wounding to the pride and disastrous to the commerce of France.

Even the pride of Louis XIV. yielded to the interests of his country. He treated on Cromwell's own terms. The point of honour and precedence was waived; Louis consented to banish the Stuart Princes, together with Hyde, Ormonde, and fifteen other of their adherents, from the soil of France; maritime hostilities were at once to cease between the two nations; and the treaty was on the very eve of signature, when news arrived in London of the horrible massacre of the Vaudois by the soldiers of the Duke of Savoy, an intimate friend and ally of the King of France. No event in history had ever fired the Protestant passions of the English people like the atrocious invasion of those Piedmont valleys. Fasts, prayers, denunciations, offered themselves as vents for the national fervour; collections of money were made for the sufferers in all the churches of London; and some of the bolder spirits proposed to send an army to the Savoy Alps; a project to which the Government was not altogether averse. But for the moment Cromwell trusted to his influence over Mazarin as the best means of obtaining justice for those poor Protestant villagers. He told Bordeaux that he would not make peace with his master until he knew his sentiments on the subject of the massacre and banishment of the Vaudois; and Blake received orders to uphold Protestant interests in the south with all the power at his command. The presence of an English fleet in the Mediterranean gave plenary force to Cromwell's suggestions. At first the Ambassador of Louis contended that France had nothing

to do with the matter,—that the Duke of Savoy was an independent prince,—that the Vaudois were rebels as well as heretics, and had justly incurred chastisement at the hands of their sovereign. Cromwell remained inexorable; and Bordeaux's master was at last compelled to interfere. Under the double pressure of English and French remonstrance, the Duke of Savoy granted a full amnesty to the Vaudois, and confirmed to them their ancient right to exercise their own forms of divine worship by a new decree.

Cromwell's letters informed Blake that in consequence of the blow about to be struck in the Western Archipelago, his presence with the fleet, if not his more active services, would be required on the Atlantic coast of Spain; and in consequence of these orders he sailed from Algiers towards the Straits of Gibraltar. But as the two countries were still at peace, he called at Malaga for fresh water, when an extremely characteristic incident occurred. A party of English sailors from his fleet, in rambling about the town, suddenly came upon a procession of priests carrying a Host through the streets, and instead of falling on their knees before the sacred symbol, like the pious Spaniards, the Puritan seamen laughed at and derided those who did so, until their want of reverence provoked one of the clergy to call on the populace to avenge the insult aimed at their religion. A street fight ensued; and with advantages of numbers and local knowledge on their side, the Malagayans beat the scoffers back to their ships, whither they carried an English version of the fray to their commander. Indignation and true policy concurred in inducing Blake to treat the affair gravely. In Lisbon, Venice and other Catholic ports, mob-law had been applied to the sailors of English merchant-vessels on the ground of alleged want of respect for the mummeries of foreign worship; and considering the new relations which the two countries were about to assume, he judged it due to the honour of his flag and necessary to the safety of his countrymen, to shew the Spaniards that he could and would redress such wrongs with promptitude and severity. Half measures, he felt, would be useless in such a case; so sending a trumpeter into the town, he demanded, not retaliation on the offending mob, as was expected, but that the priest who had set them on should be given up to justice. The Spaniards were astounded. Give up a Catholic priest to the judgment of heretics! The Governor of Malaga replied that he had no power over the offender, as in Spain the servants of the Church were not responsible to the civil power. "I will not stay to inquire," said the stern Englishman, "who has the power to send the offender to me; but if he be not on board the *St. George* within three hours, I will burn your city to the ground." And so he dismissed the messenger. No excuse, no protest, was admitted; and before the three hours had expired the priest made his appearance in the fleet. Blake now called accusers and accused together; heard the story on both sides; and decided that the seamen had behaved with rudeness and impropriety towards the natives, and thereby provoked the attack of which they complained. He told the priest

that if he had sent an account of what had occurred to him, the men should have been severely punished, as he would not suffer them to affront the religion of any people at whose ports they touched; but he expressed his extreme displeasure at their having taken the law into their own hands, as he would have them and all the world know that an Englishman was not to be judged and punished except by Englishmen. With this warning for the future, Blake, satisfied that the man had been given up and was then completely at his mercy, treated him with civility and sent him back unharmed to his friends, who, on hearing an account of the affair, were delighted and astonished at the magnanimity displayed by the terrible commander. Cromwell was mightily pleased with this little incident. He took the letters referring to it in his own hand to the Council, read them out with a smiling face, and when he had finished reading, declared that by such means they would make the name of Englishman as great as that of Roman was in Rome's most palmy days.

Early in June the fleet passed the Straits and anchored once more in the Bay of Cadiz, where they received a more than usually hospitable reception. By the treaties then existing between the two states, not more than ten English ships-of-war could claim to enter any Spanish port at one time; yet as a mark of extraordinary confidence and respect, when the Governor of Cadiz sent down a present of bread, flesh and vegetables to the *St. George*, he desired it to be intimated to the Admiral, that although the capitulations declared that "there cannot come in hither above ten ships-of-war at once, nevertheless his lordship might come in with all his forces and welcome." But Blake, expecting every hour to receive intelligence from London which would compel him to exchange pacific greetings for acts of vigorous hostility, would have refused this invitation even had he not suspected that a snare might be concealed under this show of extreme courtesy. He excused himself on the plea that he had only touched at Cadiz on his way, and could stay no longer than was required to take fresh water and other necessaries on board. In the city every effort was made to learn what he intended to do next. Whether his fleet was bound for England, Lisbon or the Barbary coast, could not be ascertained even by the secret agents of the Council of State. But among the best-informed English residents in Cadiz, rumour fixed on Salee, the famous rovers of which still harassed our southern trade, as the scene in which the next grand naval spectacle would be exhibited.

This mystery was soon cleared up. Barely had Blake shipped his cables at Cadiz harbour when news arrived from the Archipelago. Penn, it turned out, had sailed from Barbadoes to Hispaniola. There the regiments were landed and given up to the sole direction of Venables; who, through cowardice, incapacity or treason—for he also, though unknown to Penn, was in correspondence with the Stuarts,—frittered away his most favourable opportunities, and finally led his men into a disastrous situation, from which they were only rescued by the intrepidity of Admiral Goodson and a body of seamen, sent

from the fleet for that purpose. The English had retired from the island disgraced and discomfited:—so far the expedition, begun with secret treason, had ended in a signal failure. But after this first overthrow, as the sealed orders required Penn to establish an interest in any part of the Spanish Indies, he sailed for Jamaica, landed his troops, put down a feeble attempt at resistance, and added that fine island to the permanent colonial empire of his country.

When this intelligence reached Madrid, Philip declared war against England—seized the persons of all English residents, merchants, factors and agents connected with the interests of their commerce, and laid an embargo on all their merchandise and properties, amongst others on those of Nicholas Blake, the Admiral's brother. The reported failure of the attempt on Hispaniola raised the spirits of the court to an extravagant height: the Governor of the island was made a grandee and pensioned; even the messenger who brought the news to Spain had 1500 ducats a-year settled on him for life. Blake's rapid and effective cruise in the Mediterranean, following in the immediate rear of the brilliant actions of the Dutch war, had caused the maritime powers of Europe, and particularly Spain, from its own experience of the Dutch admirals, to regard with blended interest and alarm what appeared to be the invincible prowess and fortunes of the young Commonwealth. The first signal check to that ascending power was therefore hailed with a delight out of all real proportion to its importance. In the safety of Hispaniola, Philip forgot the loss of Jamaica; in the escape of the Silver Fleets from the English squadron in the West Indies, he overlooked the more resolute and watchful enemy who lay in wait for them under the very guns of Cadiz.

While staying in the Channel before Cadiz, Blake had learned from his scouts that the Silver Fleet was expected from America in four or five weeks, and war being then inevitable, he stood across to Cape Santa Maria, the most southern point of land in Portugal, intending to make the bay or bays lying between that promontory and Cape St. Vincent the basis of his summer operations; with his frigates and fast sailers ranging the sea in a vast circle as far as wind and weather would permit, in search of the anticipated prize. In the Spanish harbour ten large galleons were being prepared for sea—six of them, it was reported, being intended for service at Hispaniola, the others for the Mediterranean; but Blake suspecting that they were designed as a convoy for the Silver Fleet, he endeavoured by absence from the port, by insult and by other provocations to force them to come out. But nothing would induce them to stir. Nearly a month the *St. George* rode before the little town of Lagos. The war-ships kept out at sea, the frigates menaced the coast; still the galleons did not move. At last, in the full belief that Philip would not allow his admirals to risk a battle—a belief founded on information reaching London through various and independent channels—Cromwell desired Blake to send home part of his fleet, so as to reduce the heavy expenses of the war; but before these instructions could be carried

into effect, news arrived at Lagos that the merchants of Seville, Cadiz, and San Lucar, seeing the government neglect to provide the necessary protection for their trade, had combined to equip at their private expense a squadron strong enough to put to sea for convoy service, and even give battle in case of need; and under these circumstances he abandoned the idea of sending back any part of his fleet, and as speedily as he was able got such of his vessels as were sea-worthy, and several that were not, together. On the 4th of July he wrote to Cromwell in reference to the state of his ships:—"Seeing it hath pleased your Highness to command my longer stay in and about these parts with the rest of the ships, I shall make bold to offer one humble desire, which I conceive to be my duty for the service of the Commonwealth and the better effecting the ends proposed,—that your Highness will be pleased to consider the condition of our fleet, especially of the great ships, which are very foul and defective, particularly the ship in which I am being very leaky and the mainmast unsound." Yet it was in vessels of this character that he had ruined Prince Rupert, cleared the Channel Islands, fought the battle of Portland, and chastised the pirates of Porto Ferino! Early in August the Spanish squadron, consisting of 28 men-of-war, and six fire-ships, with 36 long-boats, and 6000 troops on board, sailed from Cadiz, with the apparent intention of fighting the English.

Towards the middle of the month the two squadrons came in sight off the coast of Portugal, Blake having been southward in search of the Spaniards; but, after dodging each other for some days, they separated without exchanging a single shot, for reasons which are explained at length in the following letter from Blake to the Lord Protector:

"MAY IT PLEASE YOUR HIGHNESS,—Your commands of the 30th July I received by the *Assurance* frigate the 13th instant, with the intelligence of a great fleet prepared to come out of Cadiz and their design from your secretary, which in part we have found to be true, as I shall give your Highness an account.

"The 6th inst. I received a letter from Captain Smith (which comes herewith), whereupon we stood away for the coast of Barbary, as far as Mamora within three leagues; but having no news of the fleet there, we made towards the Bay of Cadiz, sending two frigates before to gain intelligence, who returned to us the 12th instant with this, that the fleet sailed from thence seven days before, and were plying off Cape St. Vincent to which place we hastened; and the 15th, in the morning, espied them to the windward of us, we being then off the Bay of Lagos, whither we desired to go for water; but they bearing up upon us, with intent (as we thought) to fight us, I called a council of war, which unanimously resolved to engage the first opportunity, being moved thereunto with an eager desire we had to see some end of our tedious expectation, and to prevent that accession of strength mentioned in the secretary's intelligence (whereof we likewise had notice from other hands), and also out of a despair of being able to keep the sea many days longer for want of liquor.

But the Spanish fleet forthwith tacked and stood the other way, and we after them all that night. In the morning we were fair by them; but there being little wind (not enough to work our ships) and a great sea, so that we could not make use of our lower tier, and also a thick fog, we did nothing that day; their fleet being then thirty-one in all. The next day we continued in the same resolution, and sent some frigates ahead to gain the wind, and to engage them; but the evening approaching, and a great part of our fleet far astern, we thought it best to desist for that time. These checks of Providence did put us upon second thoughts, and a strict review of the instructions which I had received; the which being all perused and compared together at a council of war, we could not find in them any authority given unto us to attack this party, but rather the contrary; and we had reason also to conceive it was not the intention of your Highness that we should be the first breakers of the peace, seeing your Highness having notice of the coming forth of the Spanish fleet did not give us any new direction at all touching the same in your last order of the 30th of July. Upon these grounds we receded from our first resolution, and took into consideration the state of our fleet, which we found in all things to be extremely defective, but more particularly in want of liquor; some of the ships having not beverage for above four days, and the whole not able to make above eight, and that at short allowance; and no small part both of our beverage and water stinking. Hereupon it was debated amongst us whether we should return to the Bay of Lagos or go to Lisbon for supplies, there being no other place but those two. To go to Lagos it was not held good, both because all that country could not afford us one pipe of beverage wine, and to get water there very difficult, and upon the least wind from the south or east almost impossible, and the place a dangerous road for such a fleet to anchor in, which we must have done for getting a quantity of water, beside many other inconveniences. It was therefore resolved that we should go to Lisbon. Nevertheless, we kept in sight two days after, and on the 22d inst. we lay a great part of the day with our sails hauled up, until they were very near us; but perceiving they had no intention to engage us, nor any commission to that purpose as we thought, and also understood by a small frigate of theirs of twenty-four guns, the captain whereof coming accidentally amongst us, I commanded aboard, who told us the same; and withal that they knew nothing of the expected fleet at all, but only that they were bound to attend the coming of the same. Hereupon, our liquor growing less, we stood away for Lisbon, where we arrived on the 24th instant, and anchored in the road of Cascaes. . . . How these passages of Providence will be looked upon, or what construction our carriage in this business may receive, I know not (although it hath been with all integrity of heart), but this we know, that our condition is dark and sad, and, without especial mercy, like to be very miserable:—our ships extremely foul, winter drawing on, our victuals expiring, all stores failing, our men falling sick through the badness of drink, and eating their victuals

boiled in salt water for two months' space; the coming of a supply uncertain (we received not one word from the Commissioners of the Admiralty and Navy by the last), and though it come timely, yet if beer come not with it we shall be undone that way. We have no place or friend, our recruits here slow, and our mariners (which I most apprehend) apt to fall into discontents through their long keeping abroad. Our only comfort is that we have a God to lean upon, although we walk in darkness and see no light. I shall not trouble your Highness with any complaints of myself, of the indisposition of my body, or troubles of my mind; my many infirmities will one day, I doubt not, sufficiently plead for me or against me, so that I may be free of so great a burden, consoling myself in the mean time in the Lord, and in the firm purpose of my heart with all faithfulness and sincerity to discharge the trust while reposed in me. . . . . As soon as we have got a sufficient proportion of liquor, which I hope may be in five or six days, we intend (God willing) to sail to the *southward cape, and to spend some time thereabouts, so long as we* can possibly lengthen out our victuals, so that we may be able to get home, in case the victualling ships do not come in time; which we shall then be forced to do, or must perish in the sea. I have no more at present to trouble your Highness with (this already being I fear too much), but shall ever remain,

"Your Highness's most humble

"And faithful servant,

"ROBERT BLAKE.

"Aboard the *St. George*, in Cascaes Road,

"*August* 30, 1655."

The allusion to his own indisposition of body and trouble of mind, contained in this letter, though brief and by the way, is extremely touching. He had left a sick room to go on board. For nearly a year he had never quitted the "very foul and defective" flag-ship. Want of exercise and sweet food, beer, wine, water, bread and vegetables, had helped to develop scurvy and dropsy; and his sufferings from these diseases were now acute and continuous. In fact, his constitution was completely undermined. For three weeks after the date of the letter just quoted, he kept his station in the Spanish waters, when, finding no relief come in, and supposing that the Silver Fleet would now remain in America until spring, he reluctantly turned his bows towards the north, and brought his squadron home to repair and replenish.

But there was no rest for him at home. Arrived in England, he found that in the present posture of affairs his retirement from the service, even for a time, would be extremely detrimental to the country. The Council had no one to take his place. Deane, Penn, Ascue, Lawson, all the men who had served with him in the Dutch war with eminent ability and success, were now either dead or out of employment:—Ascue had been pensioned and dismissed on the alleged ground of his want of success against De Ruiter, but in reality because suspected of a leaning towards the exiles; Penn had been

ostensibly broken for the failure on Hispaniola, more likely because Cromwell had heard of his treacherous offers; Lawson lay under a cloud, and was soon afterwards arrested as a Fifth-monarchy conspirator; Deane was dead; and Monk had neither the genius nor the desire far naval commands. But while the more experienced commanders were thus falling away, the duties and demands of the service were daily increasing. The nation was committed to a war with Spain. The Pope, ill at ease since the fright of the previous spring, was warmly engaged in a project for uniting all the Catholic maritime powers in a league against the formidable heretics; and agents from Venice, Florence, Madrid and some other cities, had already met in Rome. Genoa also threatened: many merchants of that Republic being interested in the safe arrival of the Silver Fleet, they strongly urged that the Genoese armada should join with that of Spain for their protection. Holland was again wavering in her friendship, report affirming that the King of Spain had tempted them to declare war against England by the offer of Dunkirk and two other ports in the narrow seas. Nor was peace yet firmly established with the Barbary powers; at the very first reverse of fortune these corsairs would have gladly seized the moment of retaliation and revenge. What perhaps most of all annoyed Cromwell was that John King of Portugal, who had thus far found means to delay the final execution of the treaties entered into twenty months previous—especially the clause which secured to English subjects in his dominions immunity from the Holy Office—now manifested a disposition to withdraw from the compact altogether.

In face of so many perils and uncertainties, Blake's services were indispensable. At such a time, his very name was worth a squadron of ordinary ships. Not to speak of the moral strength which his presence would give to any fleet going southward, the occasional sight of his flag would be pretty certain to keep the Barbary corsairs quiet; a sudden visit, paid by him to the Tagus, might bring John of Braganza to reason; and the dread of another call at Leghorn would probably be sufficient to frighten the Pope and the Grand Duke out of the proposed league of Catholic princes. However anxious for repose of mind and body, Blake could not decline the responsibilities of command without a breach of duty to his country; and ill as he then was, he lent his days and nights to the duties of his station, visiting the dockyards and arsenals, and urging the work of repair and replenishment by his presence and his counsels. But though he would not refuse the last pulse of his brain to his beloved country, his age and bodily sufferings warned him of the fatal consequences which might result to the service should he fall a victim to any sudden sickness while in those distant seas, with no colleague on board to whom in case of need he could devolve the supreme command; he therefore begged the Council of State to nominate another Sea-General to share his responsibilities and assist him with his knowledge. Whether he actually named Montagu for the office is uncertain; but true to the plan of their parliamentary predecessors,

the Council fixed on this soldier, a young man of good family, and a confidential friend of Cromwell, as the new general. The preparations of the fleet went on rapidly. Towards the end of February, 1656, the Generals went on board the *Naseby*, then in the Downs with part of the fleet, and they continued in the Channel, cruising between the river mouth, and St. Helen's road for the better expedition of affairs. The trouble of getting in the necessary provisions was almost incredible; every naval station on the coast was short of stores; nor could they be procured in sufficient haste at any price or favour. Blake's patience was at length tired out, and he resolved to sail without them:—"the expectation of the provisions and fire-ships," he writes to Cromwell on the 8th of March, "shall be no cause of stay; but as soon as ever we can get a supply from the shore of the things that are essentially requisite, which we are labouring at, we shall with the help of God be gone." At St. Helen's in the Isle of Wight, he received his final instructions, and while his fleet was getting under weigh for the south, he wrote his last letter in England—a very simple and a very touching farewell:

"*General Blake to Secretary Thurloe.*

"SIR,—I have received yours of the 13th instant, together with the enclosed note of the galleons; as also your intelligence touching the end of the war between the Protestant and Popish cantons, and the peace settled there, and likewise the probabilities of a truce for six years betwixt France and Spain; and the being of Charles Stuart with his company in Flanders. These sudden transactions seem to have some great matters in the womb of them; but we know that God is the supreme disposer of all the counsels, designs, and confederations in the world; and we know He is able to order them all for the greater good of His people. And our trust is, that He will do so even for our good also, if we can believe in Him. The Lord help our unbelief, and subdue our hearts to the obedience of His holy will in all things. We are now getting an anchor aboard, making ready to sail although there be little wind, or none at all. But we shall use our utmost endeavours to get to sea, not losing any opportunity that God shall afford us; as we have hitherto been careful, and hope that his Highness is confident we are and shall continue so, as far as God shall enable us; which is all at present from

"Your very affectionate friend and servant,

"ROBERT BLAKE.

"Aboard the *Naseby* in St. Helen's Road,
"*March* 15, 1656 (new style)."

Two days before the date of this letter he had made his will, writing the whole of it out with his own hand. The document ran:

"*The last Will and Testament of me, Robert Blake, written with my own hand as followeth.*

"First, I bequeath my soul into the hands of my most merciful Redeemer, the Lord Jesus Christ, by Him to be presented to His

heavenly Father, pure and spotless, through the washing of His blood which He shed for the remission of my sins, and, after a short separation from the body, to be again united with the same by the power of His eternal Spirit, and so to be ever with the Lord: Item, unto the town of Bridgwater I give one hundred pounds to be distributed among the poor thereof, at the discretion of Humphrey Blake my brother, and of the Mayor for the time being: Item, unto the town of Taunton I give one hundred pounds to be distributed among the poor of both parishes at the discretion of Samuel Perry, once my lieuteuant-colonel, and Mr. George Newton, minister of the gospel there, and of the Mayor for the time being: Item, I give unto Humphrey Blake my brother, the manor of Crandon-cum-Puriton, with all the rights thereto appertaining, to him and to his heirs for ever: Item, I give unto my brother Doctor William Blake three hundred pounds: Item, unto my brother George Blake I give three hundred pounds: Also, unto my brother Nicholas Blake I give three hundred pounds: Item, unto my brother Benjamin Blake I give my dwelling-house, situate in St. Mary's Street in Bridgwater, with the garden and appurtenances, as also my other house thereto adjoining, purchased of the Widow Coxe: likewise I give unto him all the claim I have in eleven acres of meadow and pasture (more or less) lying in the village of Ham, in the parish of Bridgwater, lately in the possession of the Widow Vincombe deceased: Item, unto my sister Bridget Bowdich, the wife of Henry Bowdich of Chard Stock, I give one hundred pounds; and to her children, of the body of Henry Bowdich aforesaid, I give the sum of nine hundred pounds, to be disposed among them according to the discretion of Humphrey, William, George, Nicholas, and Benjamin Blake aforesaid, my brothers, or any three of them: Item, unto my Brother Smythes, goldsmith in Cheapside, I give the sum of one hundred pounds: Item, unto my nephew, Robert Blake, son to Samuel Blake, my brother deceased, I give the gold chain bestowed on me by the late Parliament of England: also, all the claim I have in an annuity of twenty pounds, payable out of the farm of Pawlett: Item, unto my nephew Samuel Blake, younger son to Samuel, my brother deceased, I give two hundred pounds: Item, unto Sarah Quarrell, daughter of my late niece, Sarah Quarrell by her husband, Peter Quarrell, now dwelling in Taunton, I give the sum of two hundred pounds, to be disposed of for the benefit of the said Sarah Quarrell, according to the discretion of Humphrey, Nicholas, and Benjamin Blake, my brothers aforesaid: Item, unto my cousin John Blake, son unto my brother Nicholas Blake, I give one hundred pounds: Item, unto my cousin John Avery of Pawlett, once a soldier with me in Taunton Castle, I give fifty pounds: Item, unto Thomas Blake, son of my cousin William Blake, once commander of the *Tresto* frigate deceased, now aboard of the *Centurion* frigate in the service, I give fifty pounds: Item, all my plate, linen, bedding, with all my provisions aboard the ship *Naseby*, I give unto my nephews Robert and Samuel Blake aforesaid, and to my nephew John Blake aforesaid, to be divided between them by even and equal

portions: Item, unto the negro called Domingo, my servant, I give the sum of fifty pounds, to be disposed of by my aforesaid nephew, Captain Robert Blake, and Captain Thomas Adams, for his better education in the knowledge and fear of God: Item, unto my servants, James Knowles and Nicholas Bartlett, I give to each of them ten pounds: Item. unto the Widow Owen of Bridgwater, the relict of Mr. Owen, minister, I give ten pounds: Item, unto Eleanor Potter, widow, I give ten pounds: All the rest of my goods and chattels I do give and bequeath unto George, Nicholas, and Benjamin Blake, my brothers aforesaid, and also to Alexander Blake my brother, to be equally divided among them, whom I do appoint and ordain to be the executors of this my last will and testament. ROB. BLAKE."

"Signed and sealed aboard the *Naseby*, March the thirteenth, one thousand six hundred and fifty-five, in St. Helen's Road, in presence of Roger Cuttons, J. Hynde, John Bourne, Antho. Earming.

"Oliver, Lord Protector of the Commonwealth of England, Scotland, Ireland, and the dominions, territories thereunto belonging, to all to whom these presents shall come, greeting: Know ye, that upon the twentieth day of August, in the year of our Lord one thousand six hundred fifty and seven, before the Judges for probate of wills and granting administrations lawfully authorised, the last will and testament of the Honourable Robert Blake, late General of the Fleet for the Commonwealth of England at sea, deceased, was at London in common form proved, which will is to these presents annexed: And administration of all and singular the goods, chattels, and debts of the said deceased which may any manner or way concern him or his said will, was granted and committed to George Blake, Benjamin Blake, and Alexander Blake, three of the executors named in the said will, they first having taken their oaths well and truly to administer the same goods, chattels, and debts according to the tenour and effect of the same will; and to make or cause to be made a true and perfect inventory of all and singular the goods, chattels and debts of the said deceased, which have, shall or may come to their hands, possession, or knowledge; and also a true and just account in and concerning their said administration when they shall be assigned or lawfully called so to do; which touching an inventory they were presently assigned to perform at or before the last day of December now next ensuing the date hereof. Power being nevertheless reserved to make like probate and grant like administration to Nicholas Blake, the executor named in the will aforesaid, whenever he shall legally desire the same.

"Given at London, under the seal of the Court for Probate of Wills and granting Administrations, the day and year above said.

"R. HANKEY.

"MARK COTTLE, *Register*."

This solemn act accomplished, and the final instructions received from the Council of State, orders were given to get the ships under weigh. The squadron coasted as far west as Torbay, and as the white cliffs and

verdant slopes of Devonshire faded from his sight, the departing hero saw his last of England. As the Sea-Generals passed down the Portuguese coast, they sent their letters to King John and assurances of support to Mr. Meadows, English envoy at the court of Lisbon, in his demand for a complete recognition of all the clauses of the late treaty; but they never once slackened sail until they were again in the Bay of Cadiz, where their dispositions soon made the inhabitants aware that their daring intention was to remain the entire summer, and to hold the royal harbour in a state of perpetual blockade. By these means the Silver Fleets would be kept at sea in imminent danger, and the usual trade of the Seville and Cadiz merchants would be destroyed. The Spaniards did not, however, dream of fighting with the renovated fleet. Now and then a slight skirmish took place between a couple of stray ketches, shallops or long-boats; and one morning in the midst of a dead calm, when even the English frigates could not move a point of the compass, the royal galleon and two others rowed out and fought at a great advantage with some of Blake's outsiders. But the principal damage done on either side in this encounter was effected by a chance shot from one of the frigates lying close in shore, for this cannon-ball knocked down part of a church and killed two men.

While these affairs were going on, serious news came in hot haste from Lisbon. King John, suffering from stone, and in the hands of his priests, absolutely refused to accept the treaty; and the majesty of England had been insulted in the person of its envoy. Don Pantaleone and his brother, the Conde de Torre, as was generally given out at the time, waylaid and pistolled Mr. Meadows in the streets of the capital,—probably out of revenge for the death of their brother, who had been executed in London for murder. No attempt was made to discover the assassins. The wound did not prove mortal; but Blake remembered the unatoned murders of Ascham and Dorislaus; and this time he was resolved to shew the world that England would cause the law of nations to be respected towards her servants. Leaving a few frigates to keep watch over Cadiz, the whole fleet weighed for Lisbon, and in the first week of June anchored in Cascaes road at the Tagus mouth. But fear and dismay travelled faster than the *Naseby*, and as soon as it was known in Lisbon that Blake's instructions were clear and ample, the people rose against the priest party and compelled the invalid King to make peace with England. John sent for Mr. Meadows; and on receiving a promise that in case of compliance the Sea-Generals would not molest his ships or damage his ports, he consented to accept the treaty substantially as it then stood:—that is, with one or two verbal alterations, which in the opinion of the resident English, would not unfavourably affect their just claims, while, on the other hand, they would have the effect of soothing the King's pride. The right of our nation to have Bibles and other pious books in their houses, without being considered as thereby breaking the laws of the country, was conceded. The proposal of an appeal to the Pope in all disputes about religion, previously

insisted on by the Portuguese, was abandoned. The lives and properties of English settlers were placed beyond the reach of the Holy Office. The customs were reduced to twenty-three per cent. And, finally, the King consented to pay down in silver 50,000*l.* sterling, besides 20,000*l.* and some other monies due to the English for demurrage and freight of ships. A careful perusal of all the correspondence of John and his agents with the English, would probably incline the reader to believe that the hasty admission of these various claims, after two years of intrigue, and subterfuge, was intended only as a feint to gain time and induce the Generals not to enter the Tagus. But Blake knew the King of old, and he declared his fixed resolution to remain at Cascaes—or in case of need to sail up the river to Lisbon, and there wait the fulfilment of the treaty. Flurried by a message so energetic, the court sent to Mr. Meadows to beg that he would obtain for them some sort of assurance from the Generals that they would not molest their trade, if they, on their part, held fast to the terms of the treaty. Whereupon Blake and Montagu wrote:—"If his majesty of Portugal do perform on his part, and cause the money, which is by the treaty to be forthwith paid to his Highness's use, to be put into our possession, that it may be conveyed to England,—he may confidently assure himself that we shall never so far dishonour his Highness nor prostitute our own reputation, and bring a scandal on the faith and holiness of the religion we profess, as to violate any of the articles of the treaty." John had no resource but to pay the money, which was accordingly put on board and sent to England.

A rather ludicrous incident served to shew the effect of Blake's southern campaigns in the capital of the Catholic world. Pope Alexander VII. had been active in his hostility to England. He had invited Spain, Genoa, Florence and other maritime states, to make common cause against Puritan intruders into the Mediterranean. He had been the chief abettor of the dying King of Portugal in his faithless attempt to evade treaties. He had interposed the strongest obstacles to a just settlement of the Protestant question of the Vaudois. His Holiness, therefore, listened with fear and trembling for the renewed echoes of that Puritan cannon which had already left so many records of its presence on the shores of Spain, Italy and Barbary. One morning in the middle of June, while the red cross of the Commonwealth was still floating in the Tagus and Blake occupied in taking on board the Portuguese dollars, it was suddenly announced in the streets of Rome that the English fleet was cannonading Civita Vecchia! The poor Pope, supposing in his terror that the formidable heretics would in a few hours be thundering at the gates of the Eternal City, caused earthworks to be thrown up, and the cannon of St. Angelo to be dismounted, carried into the streets, and placed in the most commanding positions for defence. But as no enemy appeared in sight, scouts were sent down to Civita Vecchia, when it turned out that no damage had been done—that no English vessel had been in that harbour—and that the firing which had given rise to

the little comedy in Rome proceeded from a couple of Dutchmen, the crews of which were wasting their powder in a fit of drink!

The state of affairs remained unchanged before Cadiz. Cromwell, harassed for funds, was anxious to strike some sudden and tremendous blow against the great enemy of his country; and therefore sent out one Captain Loyd, "known to us to be a person of integrity," with a set of propositions as to how and where such a blow could be best dealt; "desiring to give no rule to you,"—Blake and Montagu,—but "rather as queries than as resolutions:"—a very remarkable instance of submission in a man of Cromwell's imperious character. The queries were:—Would it not be possible to burn the galleons at their moorings in the harbour? Could Cadiz itself be attacked with success? Or failing both these, might not an attempt be made to carry the town and Castle of Gibraltar? All these were points to be maturely considered. Drake had once burnt a fleet in the Bay of Cadiz. Essex and Raleigh had once carried the city by assault. On their way from Cascaes road the Sea-Generals held many consultations, examined charts and compared opinions; intending, if the project of burning the Spanish fleet as it lay in the Carracas appeared feasible, to fall suddenly and fiercely to the work of destruction the moment of their arrival. But not a single pilot could be found willing to undertake the responsibility of carrying an English warship into that narrow and dangerous harbour. Times had changed since Drake surprised the Spaniards. The expedition under Essex had taught them their weakness and their strength. When he arrived in the Bay, Blake obtained exact information from spies, secret agents and others, as to the means of defence possessed by the city, from which it appeared,—that the navigation of the channel was extremely difficult at all times,—that the Spaniards had thrown a number of heavy chains across it,—that large vessels had been placed in convenient positions ready to be sunk at the first signal of an attempt to enter it by force,—that guns had been planted on both shores of the passage,—and that the preparations for defence were altogether of the most complete and formidable character. It was therefore obvious to the council of war, that in order to destroy the fleet in Carracas it would be necessary first to subdue Cadiz. And this point was considered; but only for a moment. That the city was strong by nature, and still stronger by art, was well known to military men; but Cromwell's spies had led him to believe that it was ill-supplied with troops, and it was on this circumstance that he had indulged in his dream of an attack. On the spot the council of war obtained more exact accounts, when it appeared that in Cadiz, town and island, Porto Santa Maria and Rotto, where the Duke of Medina commanded in person, there were about forty thousand regular troops, some regiments of which vast force enjoyed the well-won reputation of being the finest infantry in the world. Under these circumstances they voted it irrational to think of making any attempt on the mainland, unless a large body of troops could be sent from England to co-operate with the fleet, as had been the case when

Essex and Raleigh forced their way into the town. An attack on Gibraltar was declared impracticable for similar reasons; the Spaniards having recently strengthened the works and thrown a powerful garrison into that important stronghold.

On receipt of the letters in which these decisions of the war-council were reported, the Protector and his Council wrote to Blake and Montagu as follows:

"GENTLEMEN,—We have seen a letter written by you to the Commissioners of the Admiralty, dated 9th May, from Tangier, which arrived here yesterday morning, whereby we understand the posture of the enemy, and that for the several reasons expressed by you in that said letter, it seems to you not rational to attempt the burning of the Spanish fleet in Cadiz; and thereupon apprehending that some of your ships may be spared into the Channel for the better securing of trade, and the blocking up of Dunkirk and Ostend, where the pirates and ships-of-war grow so numerous, that lately eighteen or nineteen of them in a body took twenty of our merchant-ships in two fleets, being under a convoy of a Dutch ship of thirty-six guns; therefore we have resolved to call into these seas part of the fleet now with you; and to that end we desire you, upon the receipt hereof, to give orders to ten ships, under a good officer, to sail with the first opportunity of wind and weather into the Downs, requiring them to give immediate notice unto us of their arrival. We leave it wholly unto you which of the ships you will send, conceiving you to be best able to judge which of them will be fittest for this service and may be best spared by you. Some thoughts we have had that the lesser sort of ships, and especially frigates, will best answer the aforesaid ends here. This we have resolved, not knowing any thing of your posture or counsels more than your aforesaid letter represents. But in case you are upon any design, or if aught else hath emerged, either upon our letter and instruction sent by Captain Loyd, or from your own thoughts, with which these orders will not well consist, we leave it to you, notwithstanding what we have herein written, whether you will send these ships or not; our intentions not being to disappoint any thing which may be in your eye or design to be done there by the fleet."

The fleet had barely taken up its former position in the Bay before it began to experience some of that extreme weather to which the hopes of the Spaniards seemed now chiefly turned as a means of compelling their enemy to go home. Several captains of ships were on board the *Naseby* receiving their instructions to sail for England in compliance with the request of the Council, when a gust of wind suddenly rose in the east and south-east, increased into a tremendous gale, snapt the anchor-chains, tore the cordage into shreds, and scattered the fleet—seven or eight ships, of which the *Naseby* was one, excepted—far and wide from Sagres to Tangier, doing serious damage to the entire squadron. The night which followed this terrible day was dark as well as tempestuous. Here and there the lights were hung out all night long as signals of distress, and in

every pause of the storm the commanders heard signal-guns booming over the sea from great distances. About one o'clock, the *Naseby* had a narrow escape of wreck. The *Taunton*, her sails torn and rudder unmanageable, came drifting before the gale right on them. Lights were hoisted and orders given for Captain Vallis, her commander, to open a new sail; but the poor fellow seemed to have lost all power over her movements. On she came, stern foremost, against the *Naseby*, which vessel had hitherto kept her anchor. A few moments and a collision appeared inevitable. Blake ordered his cables to be cut as a last chance, when suddenly, as he says in his letter to Cromwell—"it pleased God in very much mercy that she"—the *Taunton*—"let slip, and getting a sail open with much ado steered clear off us, else one or both of us, in all likelihood, had immediately gone to the bottom." Nearly all the vessels of his fleet lost their long-boats, and many of them their cables and anchors:—the *Resolution* had one of her anchors snapt into two pieces, and the other bent almost double. But none were absolutely lost. The *Kent* and the *Taunton* were the longest absent from the general gathering; but after a few days of painful suspense, to the infinite joy of their comrades they also returned. In one of his letters Montagu says "the sea ran mountains high; and he added suggestively—"Judge you what this sea is to ride in winter time!" Great damage was also done to the Spanish ships lying in harbour; many of the merchantmen being torn from their moorings and driven out to sea.

Six of the English ships, including the *Kent*, *Bristol* and *Mermaid*, were judged to be no longer fit for so rude a service, and were sent home to England. Meantime the Generals did their utmost to exasperate the enemy to come out and fight. But neither insult nor spoliation could sufficiently stir their blood: as the Lisbon agent expressed it in his correspondence, "the Spaniard used his buckler rather than his sword." Hearing that a Sicilian and a Genoese galley had taken part with the Spaniards of Malaga against the English, Blake despatched the *Ruby*, *Nantwich*, and *Lyon*, with the *Fox* fire-ship, to that port, in search of the offenders, and with orders to infest and alarm the coast on that side from Gibraltar to Valentia. Still the Cadiz galleons would not venture out. Blake then drew off a number of frigates and good sailers for a temporary guard, and with the body of his fleet sailed for the African coast in search of water and provisions; intending also to pay a brief visit to Salee, on the west coast of Africa, and teach the lawless rovers of that city some respect for European commerce and civilisation. Success attended him and his chosen officers. The expedition against Malaga was brilliantly executed. The English ships rode into the harbour at mid-day, with colours and pennons flying, and anchored between the bulwark and the pier-head in three fathoms of water. The people on shore were taken quite aback, fancying they were some ships come in to give themselves up to the King of Spain. But they were awoke from this dream by a sudden declaration that, if the Genoa galley was not given up to them at once, they would proceed

to fire every ship that was within the pier. After exchanging signals, the two galleys made an attempt to quit the port, the Genoese covering the Sicilian like a shield, when the frigates poured a broadside into the insolent Genoese, which broke her rudder, killed forty of her crew, and carried off her oars in splinters. The Sicilian slipt away in the confusion, but the Genoese was obliged to put back into the port, where she was grappled by the fire-ship and instantly wrapt in flames. The cannon of the land-works now opened on the English, and in return the ships began to bombard the town. A dozen resolute fellows leapt on shore from a long-boat, and in a few minutes they had spiked eight pieces of heavy ordnance under the very walls of the town. The people were in great confusion; many of the gentry fled away; the citizens hid themselves in their wine-casks; and it was thought that a force of 1000 men would have been able to capture and plunder the place, so great was the terror of the moment.

Blake and Montagu returned to their old station, but the Spaniards still remained in port. No Silver Fleets appeared. July and August passed away in glorious but not very profitable cruises, skirmishes and blockades. Winter was drawing near, and every ship in the service required to be careened and refitted. Victuals of every kind ran short. To obtain supplies even of bread and water, it was necessary to seek the ports of a friendly power. Blake, therefore, appointed Captain Richard Stayner, of the *Speaker*, to watch the bay with a squadron of seven ships, the *Speaker*, *Bridgwater*, *Providence*, *Plymouth*, and three others; and with the remainder of his power he sailed early in September for the northern part of Portugal. The Generals, however, had not come to an anchor in Aviero Bay before a fortunate accident brought a division of the long-expected Silver Fleet in sight of Stayner's squadron. Four magnificent Spanish royal galleons and two great merchantmen of Indian build, all of them laden with precious cargoes of gold, silver, pearls and precious stones, hides, indigo, sugar, cochineal, varinas and tobacco, and having the Viceroy of Lima and his family, a general, an admiral, and vice-admiral, together with about two thousand inferior persons on board, had left the Havanna early in June bound for Cadiz, under the impression that their European fleets would be able to protect them against every enemy, and without touching land at any point, they had made the whole voyage in the short space of fifty-seven days. On their way they picked up a little French barque, laden with hides, and afterwards, among the Western Islands, a Portuguese corn-factor, both of which vessels they made prizes. Either from mistake or from malice, the Portuguese sailors, when their captors inquired from them where the English fleet lay, replied that the Spaniards had beaten Blake a month ago, and driven him away from their coast; they consequently continued their voyage towards Europe in the utmost confidence, instead of running to the Azores for a convoy. In passing San Lucar they noticed a long-boat in the act of crossing the bar; but by some strange fatality they proceeded towards Cadiz without staying to

inquire how an English long-boat could be entering the Gaudalquiver if Blake's squadron had been discomfited and driven home. Even when they observed Stayner's frigates, just at dusk on the 8th of September, some five or six leagues eastward towards Cadiz, they concluded that they must be Spanish guard-ships lying about the harbour, and therefore did their best to keep close to them all night, putting their own lights on for company, and occasionally firing guns to announce their fortunate arrival. At day-dawn, they discovered their serious mistake; and, though they had a vast preponderance of force, they separated, and some of them ran ashore as the only means of saving the vast treasures with which they were freighted. A fresh gale, blowing hard from the north-east had scattered the English squadron, and only the *Speaker*, the *Plymouth* and the *Bridgwater* were at first sufficiently near the galleons to engage with them. Stayner naturally made to the flag-ship of the Spaniard; but finding that it was one of the weakest in the fleet, and suspecting that the flag was raised on that vessel merely to receive and draw off an enemy from the gold and silver galleons, he let her go, and she succeeded in making her escape with the Lisbon prize into Cadiz. The battle raged between the others for six hours. From the walls and towers of the city the Spaniards could see every turn of the engagement; two of their galleons were on fire at the same moment; two others of their ships went down to rise no more. After defending his charge with heroic valour, their Vice-admiral was overpowered, his vessel, on fire in several places, was hastily rifled by the conquerors of its gold and silver; the prisoners were removed to the *Speaker*, and it was then left to fill and sink. In this galleon went down the unfortunate Viceroy of Lima, with his wife and daughter. The *Plymouth* chased one of the traders to the shore, where she ran aground near Cape Degar; but it appeared by the statement of prisoners taken that she had no silver on board. The galleon of the Rear-admiral was taken, a prize of very great value. "The ship we took," says Stayner in his letter to Blake, "is worth all the rest of the fleet." It was a royal galleon of about 500 tons burden with 350 men on board when she struck her colours, and contained two million pieces of eight. Two other prizes were afterwards picked up; and of the whole eight vessels only two escaped capture or destruction. The money lost amounted to nine million pieces of eight. The loss in men on the English side was very slight; but several of the frigates were much damaged, especially the *Speaker*, which had borne the chief brunt of the battle.

Among the prisoners taken was the young Marquis de Badajoz, son of the Viceroy of Lima, whose melancholy and romantic story at once became a theme for poets and tale-tellers. His father was born a few leagues from Madrid, of a noble but reduced family of the pure Hidalgo blood. In early life his royal master made him Governor of Chili, in South America; afterwards he was translated to the Vice-royalty of Lima, which country he governed fourteen years; but his period of office being completed, his family grown up to youth, his own labours rewarded with wealth and honours, he embarked in the

vice-admiral with his lady, his four sons, and his three daughters—two of them affianced brides, one to a son of the great Duke of Medina Cœli, the other to Don Juan de Joyas, Rear-admiral of the fleet, and now Stayner's prisoner. When the flames began to spread in the galleon, the marchioness and one of her daughters swooning with heat and fear fell on their faces and were soon scorched to death. One of the boys also fell a victim to the fire. The marquis might have escaped unhurt, but seeing the blackened bodies of his companions where they lay, he rushed towards them, threw his arms about his wife, and died in the embrace. The young marquis, his brothers and sisters, were saved by the English boarders and carried to the *Speaker*, where they were treated with great civility even by the rude sailors. The eldest boy afterwards became quite a favourite with the two commanders: "He is a most pregnant, ingenious, and learned youth as I ever met with," said Montagu, "and his story is the saddest that ever I heard of or read of to my remembrance." The whole fortune of the family, consisting of 800,000 pieces of eight, was on board the vice-admiral; much of it was plundered by the boarders, and the rest went down with the wreck.

Cromwell had already desired one of the Generals to return home for a short time, to consult with the Board of Admiralty on the state of the fleet and on the general conduct of the war; and he had named Montagu for this purpose, as his absence would be least severely felt. Blake was desired, if the plan met with his approval, to make a selection from the squadron under his command of such good sailers as would be best likely to stand the wear of a winter campaign, and with these vessels keep guard before the harbour Cadiz, and utterly destroy its commerce. He thereupon removed the red cross of the Commonwealth to the mast of the *Swiftsure;* and collecting all Stayner's prizes with the other ships intended for home, he took farewell of his colleague, committing him to the mercies of God and the good-will of his countrymen. England soon rang with the new glories of its great seamen. Poems, plaudits and rewards without end met the victorious Montagu. A knighthood was reserved for Stayner. The bullion which he had captured was landed at Portsmouth, and some eight-and-thirty wagons, attended by chosen picquets of soldiers, carried it triumphantly through the western towns to London, where it was paraded through the city, and then immediately carried to the tower and coined into money.

CHAPTER X.

1656-1657.

SANTA CRUZ.

Stayner's brilliant success against the first division of the Silver Fleets which had fallen in the way of an English squadron, encouraged Blake in the idea that by remaining out at sea all winter,

he might perhaps be able to strike such a blow at the naval power of Spain, as would shake that overgrown and haughty empire to its foundations. The Mexican galleons had been disposed of by his lieutenant; those of Peru, known to be still more richly laden with gold, silver, pearls and precious stones, were on their way to Spain. Could he only keep the mouth of the Carracas closed, so as to prevent any caraval going out to warn them of their danger, it was not unlikely that they would follow in the track of the former fleet, and fall into his hands unprepared. But this advantage was only to be gained by a winter at sea; and in such a sea, with a fleet in the worst condition, and in his state of increasing bodily infirmity! The best of the great ships had gone home with the *Naseby*, Cromwell believing from all past naval experience that it would be impossible for them to ride through the storms of December and January on that dangerous coast: what remained as the Cadiz blockading squadron were about twenty frigates, with the *Swiftsure*, a vessel of 898 tons burden, carrying 380 men and 64 guns, as admiral. Yet the duties were numerous and of different kinds which this fleet of frigates was expected to perform. Simply to keep the seas would have been no easy task; but Blake was expected to hold the whole southern coast of Spain in a state of siege,—to close the Straits of Gibraltar against the enemy,—to intercept the Silver Fleets should they arrive,—to prevent the coming in of oak, hemp, tar, and other materials for ship-building from the north of Europe,—to entice out and then fight with the war-galleons known to be fitting up in Cadiz by the merchants of Seville for the defence of their property, —to cut off all communication over sea between Spain and Flanders, —to harass and destroy the enemy's trade, particularly that of their colonies and settlements in America,—to watch and check the movements of the Barbary corsairs,—and, finally, to protect the interests of English commerce with Portugal and the Straits of Gibraltar, then fiercely menaced by Biscayan and other Spanish privateers.

The Commonwealth expected full and daring service from its officers. But however much was hoped in England from the great Admiral's genius and good-fortune, the wonders of this winter cruise and the brilliant action with which it closed in the early spring at Santa Cruz surpassed every expectation. For the first few weeks, the Spaniards affected to laugh at a madman who could dream of riding out in that tempestuous ocean for a whole winter. Nevertheless, October and November passed away; and though daily storms scattered the devoted squadron, carrying some of the frigates to the African ports, others into the Straits, and now and then an unfortunate vessel as far as Cape St. Vincent, the bay was never free from the enemy; and after a day or two of decent weather, the fleet was found riding in all its strength across the entrance to Cadiz. Opinion then worked gradually round. The citizens began to fear that nature would probably not fight their battle as effectually as they had hoped. If the Mexican fleet was to come in, other means of defence must be considered. Some rich merchants at last offered to fit out a powerful

squadron. At their expense eight royal galleons were prepared forthwith; guns were also put on board twelve traders of heavy burden; and a solemn appeal was made to the chivalry of Spain to go on board the relief squadron as volunteers, and in that capacity make one grand effort to dislodge the enemy from his insulting position. Much was expected from this appeal; several spirited gentlemen offered their services, and the agents talked in heroic measures of their intended feats:—but for some reason not known to the English, the squadron did not venture outside the passage, and Blake continued undisputed master at sea. About mid-winter, De Ruiter anchored off the bar of San Lucar with nine or ten Dutch men-of-war; and the opinion current in diplomatic circles in the south of Europe was, that he intended openly to join the Spaniards against England. European diplomacy was probably well acquainted with the secret leanings of the States-General; but it erred in assuming that they would have the courage to declare their preference, and take upon themselves the consequences of their friendship for Spain. They rather chose to work for her in secret. Under false flags and with forged papers they from time to time carried succours to Cadiz and San Lucar; in the name of the Genoese they built and equipped in their dockyards as many frigates and men-of-war as would have formed a powerful fleet; and indeed at that very moment they had six magnificent ships, of from sixty to seventy guns each, on the stocks nearly finished. But De Ruiter carefully abstained from any offence against the red cross. He made a shew of the profoundest respect for Blake personally, and sailed away into the Mediterranean, as he pretended on a voyage against the pirates of Algiers and Tripoli.

The English were compelled to rule the Barbary powers with a rod of iron. A few months ago the Admiral had paid his promised visit to Salee, when he summoned the formidable rovers of that port to a consultation; but as the barbarians did not for the space of two days comply with his request, he drove two of their fleetest vessels on the rocks and broke them into fragments, threatening to deal in like manner with their entire fleet if they persisted in their refusal to treat with him according to the usages of nations. The Prince of Salee had already learned by the example of Tunis that Blake never threatened in vain, and on receiving this peremptory intimation he sent an agent to the *Naseby*. The sudden recall of the fleet towards the Bay of Cadiz, in expectation of the Silver Fleet, had prevented the formal conclusion of a treaty; but the rovers became more guarded from that time in their interference with English merchants. Early in February a violent storm in the Bay of Cadiz drove the blockading fleet towards the Straits, and the heavy gales increasing, Blake ran into Tetuan, a Morocco port just within the Straits, for shelter; and as some questions had arisen between him and the Dey of Algiers, ere he returned to Cadiz, he ran along the coast to that city, paid the Dey a flying visit, and arranged all his difficulties without having to fire a single shot. The affair of Porto Ferino had relieved him from the necessity of any more fighting with the pirates. In passing Tan-

gier, then a settlement of the Portuguese, he found it closely invested by the Moors, and so severely distressed as to be not unlikely to fall into their hands. In the high spirit of Christian chivalry he detached a part of his fleet to relieve the garrison, break the besieger's lines and support the interests of the new King of Portugal, Alphonso VI., on those shores:—a service which had the happy effect of saving the town and drawing still closer the bonds of friendship already established by his means between London and Lisbon.

Discontents arose and multiplied in Spain. The loss of one and the long delay of the other Silver Fleet rendered money scarce, crippling both public and private means. New taxes had to be imposed. Voluntary gifts and loans were tried,—and many Hidalgo families stript themselves of part of their ancient wealth to uphold the glory of their King. The Church also contributed its blessing and its money towards the support of a war against heretics. But these donations went but a short way towards meeting the enormous expenditure; and in its hour of need government was compelled to exact a fifth part of the estates, stock and property of every merchant in the empire. Thousands were ruined by this sweeping measure. Trade almost ceased. The Spanish dollar rose in value; debts were left unpaid; and many of the most princely residents of Cadiz and Seville were completely broken in their fortunes. In England the splendour of victory, the humiliation of a haughty foe, and now and then the sight of wagons filled with captured gold and silver, helped to sustain the popularity of the war; but the trading interests suffered severely from the corsairs of Brest and the Bay of Biscay. The amount of money taken from the enemy was slight when compared with the losses of private persons. Few indeed gained by the war except the privateers of the two nations, and that band of lawless adventurers who plundered peaceful traders under cover of any flag which it suited them for the moment to unfurl.

Nothing excites more wonder and admiration than the poverty of means with which this bold watch and guard was maintained. Hardly a single ship was seaworthy. The *Fairfax*, the *Worcester*, the *Plymouth*, the *Newcastle*, the *Foresight*, were all seriously damaged. Some were short of a mast, others had no powder; all were in want of spars, canvass, hemp and stores. Worst of all, sickness had carried off the ablest seamen of the fleet; and more than one of the frigates had not sufficient hands for the ordinary working service, much less for war. On the 11th of March, 1657, Blake writes from before Cadiz to the Admiralty:

"Our fleet at present, by reason of a long continuance abroad, are grown so foul, that if a fleet outward bound should design to avoid us, few of our ships would be able to follow them up. I have acquainted you often with my thoughts of keeping out those ships so long, whereby they are not only rendered in a great measure unserviceable, but withal exposed to desperate hazards: wherein, though the Lord hath most wonderfully and mercifully preserved us hitherto, I know no rule to tempt Him, and therefore again mind you of it, that

if any such accident should for the future happen to the damage of his Highness and the nation—which God forbid—the blame may not be at our doors, for we account it a great mercy that the Lord hath not given them [the Spaniards] the opportunity to take advantage of these our damages. Truly our fleet is generally in that condition, that it troubles me to think what the consequence may prove if such another storm, as we have had three or four lately, should overtake us before we have time and opportunity a little to repair. Our number of men is lessened through death and sickness, occasioned partly through the badness of victuals and the long continuance of poor men at sea. The captain of the *Fairfax* tells me, in particular, that they are forced to call all their company on deck whenever they go to tack. Therefore I desire that, if you intend us to stay out this summer, or any considerable part thereof that you will forthwith send us a sufficient supply of able seamen."

But Cromwell was too busy with his own schemes of personal aggrandisement to think of the brave men who were fighting the battles of their country on a distant station. No succours were sent out; nothing but apologies and excuses. The Lords of Admiralty said they were sorry to hear of his illness; sorry also to hear of the wretched state of his ships; but they could not promise him any immediate aid, because the Lord Protector's time was completely taken up with Parliamentary intrigues, the great question of Kingship being then under consideration. The events of the next few days, however, put an end to the tasks which held the sick Admiral a sort of prisoner in those waters. Letters of intelligence came to hand announcing that the second Silver Fleet, consisting of six royal galleons and sixteen other great ships, was on its way towards Europe; but that having heard of the former disaster and learning that the enemy was still in some force before the Bay of Cadiz, it had run for safety into harbour in one of the Canary Islands. At first this news was of a doubtful nature, perhaps an invention of the Spaniards to draw him off from his post; certainly it was too vague a report to justify a run with his whole squadron into a latitude so remote; but several hands, unknown to each other, furnished him with the same intelligence, and his habitual caution at last admitted that there were grounds for trusting to the general accuracy of his information. Finding that the fleet already prepared for sea did not venture forth, he arranged his plans, called in his cruisers, and on the 13th of April set sail with his whole force now recruited to twenty-five ships and frigates, for those islands. Don Diego Diagues, the Spanish Admiral at Santa Cruz, had news of Blake's intended movement and he made instant preparations to give the assailants a warm reception should they venture to attack his fleet. The port of Santa Cruz was then one of the strongest naval positions in the world. The harbour, shaped like a horse-shoe, was defended at the north side of the entrance by a regular castle, mounted with the heaviest ordnance and well garrisoned; along the inner line of the Bay seven powerful forts were disposed; and connecting these forts with each other and with the castle was a line of earth-

works, which served to cover the gunners and musketeers from the fire of an enemy. Sufficiently formidable of themselves to appal the stoutest heart, these works were now strengthened by the whole force of the Silver Fleet. The precious metals, pearls and other jewels, were carried on shore into the town; but the usual freightage, hides, sugar, spices, cochineal and other valuable commodities, remained on board, Don Diego having no fears for their safety. The royal galleons were then stationed on each side the narrow entrance of the Bay; their anchors dropped out, and their broadsides turned towards the sea. The other armed vessels were moored in a semicircle round the inner line, with openings between them so as to allow full play to the batteries on shore in case of necessity. Large bodies of musketeers were placed on the earthworks uniting the more solid fortifications and in this admirable arrangement of his means of resistance Diagues waited with confidence the appearance of his enemy.

On the evening of Saturday, April 18th, the foremost of the English frigates sighted what they believed to be the nearest point of land in the Canary Islands; but the weather was so extremely thick and hazy that doubts were entertained, and it was noon on Sunday before they were certain of their exact bearings. This circumstance afforded Diego timely warning of their approach. Next morning, Monday, the red cross of the Commonwealth was descried at daybreak from the royal galleons; the fleet appearing about three leagues distant, under crowded sail and bearing in before a stiff breeze. A Dutch captain, who had seen something of the late war, happened to be lying at that moment in the Santa Cruz roadstead with his vessel; when he saw the Sea-General's pennon floating on the wind, and the frigates in advance making direct for the harbour, he felt they were bent on mischief, and anxious to avoid any portion of the hard knocks likely to be given in the coming fray, went straight to the Spanish Admiral to ask his permission to retire. Diagues affected to smile at his fears. Why, his naval force alone was almost equal to the enemy. The royal galleons were mounted with the finest brass ordnance in the world. Their broadsides would oppose a living wall of fire against assault. With his castles, batteries and earthworks, his powerful and spirited garrison, his double line of war-ships, he considered, and not unreasonably considered, that his position was impregnable. The Dutchman shook his head: "For all this," he said, "I am very sure that Blake will soon be in among you."—"Well," replied the haughty Spaniard, "go, if you will; and let Blake come if he dare."—The applicant returned to his vessel, hoisted sail and escaped the destruction which awaited every spar and canvass afloat within the Bay of Santa Cruz that fatal morning.

As soon as day dawned on the English fleet, a frigate, which had been sent forward in the night for that purpose, signalled to the *Swiftsure* the welcome intelligence that the whole body of the Silver Fleet lay at anchor within the harbour. Thereupon Blake, roused from his sick-bed by the prospect of immediate action, called a council of war, stated the case in a few brief and pregnant words, and

ended with a proposal to ride into the port and attack the enemy in his formidable position. The shape of the harbour, the situation of the great castle, and the direction of the wind—then blowing steadily landwards—made it useless to think of bringing off the royal galleons. It only remained therefore to destroy them where they stood, with their threatening broadsides pointing towards the English ships. Many thought this scheme would be equally impossible to carry out; but the captains who had served in the attack on Porto Ferino had no doubt but that the bold conception of their general might be as brilliantly executed. At least it was resolved to make the attempt. Between six and seven o'clock, a solemn prayer was offered to the Disposer of events: no oath, no irreverent ribaldry, was ever heard on board that fleet; no rum or brandy was given out on the eve of battle; but every man on those gallant ships knelt down humbly, and in that fervent spirit which was in all trials and temptations the Roundheads' sustaining fire, asked the God of battles to bless His people, and put forth His right arm in support of the good cause. At seven all was ready—the sailors had breakfasted and prayed. A division of the best-equipped and most powerful ships was then drawn off and sent forward under the gallant Captain Stayner to attack the royal galleons and force an entrance into the harbour; Blake reserving to himself the task of silencing the castles and batteries on land. Stayner's old frigate, the *Speaker*, now bearing his pennon as Vice-admiral, rode in the van of this attacking squadron right at the entrance, unchecked by the tremendous broadsides of the galleons and regardless of the terrific flanking fire from the castle and batteries. In a space of time almost incredibly short he had passed the outer defences and established himself near the royal galleons, in the centre of a huge semicircle of shot. Blake instantly followed with the remainder of his fleet, and covering Stayner's flank with his frigates, so as to leave him free to fight the great ships without interruption from the batteries on shore, he commenced a furious cannonade on the whole line of defences, and especially against the castle. The Spaniards fought throughout with desperate valour, and for some hours the old peak of Teneriffe witnessed a scene which might almost be compared with one of its own stupendous outbursts. The Spanish musketeers kept up a most destructive fire from behind the covered way. Yet in spite of the highest courage, unanimity and conduct on the side of the defence, the cannonade along the earthworks gradually slackened. One by one the batteries ceased to answer. Before twelve o'clock Blake was able to leave the completion of this part of his task to a few well-stationed frigates, while he turned with the main body to the assistance of Stayner, engaged for four hours in an unequal contest with galleons of greatly superior force in men and guns. Diagues made heroic efforts to recover his failing ground; but it was now too late to turn the tide of victory. By two o'clock the battle was clearly won. Two of the Spanish ships had gone down, and every other vessel in the harbour, whether royal galleon, ship-of-war, or trader, was in flames.

Miles and miles round the scene of action, the lurid and fatal lights could be seen, throbbing and burning against the dull sky. The fire had done its work swiftly and awfully. Not a sail, not a single spar was left above water. The charred keels floated hither and thither. Some of them filled and sank. Others were thrown upon the strand. Here and there the stump of a burnt mast projected from the surface; but not a single ship—not a single cargo—escaped destruction. All went down together in this tremendous calamity.

Their victory complete, the next care of the English was to get away safely from the Bay, as the great guns of the castle at its entrance, supplied with fresh gunners, kept up a deadly fire from all its embrasures. Blake's plan, when he rode with a strong breeze into Santa Cruz, seems to have been to fight and destroy the Spanish galleons, first silencing as many of the land-batteries as might be necessary to that end, and then to retire with his fleet from the harbour at the ebb-tide; but just as the devouring flames had got safe hold of the Spaniards' hulls, ensuring the complete destruction of their ships, the wind began to veer a little towards the south-west—a change, as the pious sailors remarked, which had not been known to occur on that coast for many years—and by skilful management the whole squadron came out of the Bay with one slight accident, the striking of a frigate on an unknown rock. But she was got off without serious damage; and by seven o'clock in the evening all the ships were out in the Bay beyond gun-range. The loss of the Spaniards was immense. The finest part of their Silver Fleets was utterly annihilated: ships, guns, equipments, cargoes, all were gone. Considering the many disadvantages under which they had fought, the losses of the English were comparatively unimportant. Not a single ship was missing at the muster; but several frigates, particularly the *Speaker*, were rendered unfit for further service. The slain amounted to no more than 50; the wounded were about 150 in number.

Perhaps no naval action has ever been more warmly admired and more curiously criticised than this attack on Santa Cruz. "Of all the desperate attempts," says royalist Heath, "that were ever made in the world against an enemy by sea, this of the noble Blake's is not inferior to any."—"The whole action," writes Clarendon, "was so miraculous, that all men who knew the place concluded that no sober man, with what courage soever endued, would ever undertake it; whilst the Spaniards comforted themselves with the belief that they were devils and not men who had destroyed them in such a manner. And it can hardly be imagined how small loss the English sustained in this unparalleled action; no one ship being left behind, and the killed and wounded not exceeding two hundred men, when the slaughter on board the Spanish ships and on the shore was incredible." On the other side, it has been alleged by Sir Philip Warwick and later writers, that when Blake rode into the bay of Santa Cruz there was no reasonable probability that the wind would change when the work of destruction was effected; that had it not changed, the squadron would have been wind-bound within reach of the great

artillery of the castle for an indefinite period; that, in short, nothing less than the unexpected turn of wind could have saved the fleet which his rashness had placed in such imminent peril.

To these criticisms it would probably be a sufficient answer to say, that during his whole naval career the great Admiral never made a serious mistake: even his unequal and disastrous encounter with Tromp in the Downs was defensible on political grounds. The best proof, however, that he could bring his fleet out of the harbour when its work was done, is the fact that he did bring it out; had it appeared to him desirable for the ships to remain at anchor under the castle-guns, there is no reason to believe that they would have been unable to hold their position. Masters of the harbour for twelve hours, it would have been easy to remain masters for twelve days. Nor is it clear that the change of wind took place before the fleet quitted the bay—as accounts written on the spot represent that change as occurring after the muster in the offing—when a speedy return to Spain, not an escape from Santa Cruz, figures as the great object of providential interposition.

Intelligence of this great naval exploit reached London as Cromwell's second Parliament was drawing its first session to a close. The excitement was extreme. Popular ballads, in which Antichrist and the Inquisition were treated with disdainful waggery, were sung at every street-corner under the fantastic and picturesque gables of old London. The Lord Protector sent his secretary down to the House with the letter of details; and when honourable members had heard the whole story from Blake's own hand, they tendered him the thanks of the country for his eminent services, and voted five hundred pounds for the purchase of a jewel to be given him as a mark of honour and respect. The House partook of the liberal enthusiasm which filled the cities of London and Westminster. The representatives gave one hundred pounds to Captain Story, the messenger of such glorious news. They ordered a letter of thanks to be written to the officers of the fleet. Finally, they set apart an early day for a solemn national thanksgiving.

Cromwell himself wrote to the dying General a letter of thanks and congratulation:

"SIR,—I have received yours of the [20th April], and thereby the account of the good success it hath pleased God to give you at the Canaries, in your attempt upon the King of Spain's ships in the Bay of Santa Cruz. The mercy therein to us and this Commonwealth is very signal, both in the loss the enemy hath received, as also in the preservation of our ships and men, which indeed was very wonderful, and according to the wonted goodness and loving-kindness of the Lord, wherewith His people hath been followed in all these late revolutions; and call for on our part, that we should fear before Him, and still hope in His mercy. We cannot but take notice also, how eminently it hath pleased God to make use of you in this service, assisting you with wisdom in the conduct, and courage in the execution; and have sent you a small jewel, as a testimony of our own

and the Parliament's good acceptance of your carriage in this action. We are also informed that the officers of the fleet and the seamen carried themselves with much honesty and courage, and we are considering of a way to shew our acceptance thereof. In the meantime we desire you to return our hearty thanks and acknowledgments to them. Thus beseeching the Lord to continue His presence with you, I remain your very affectionate friend."

One unhappy incident had occurred to dash this great public triumph with a private grief. His brother Humphrey, removed from the Board of Prizes to the command of a frigate, saw his first real service in this most trying engagement, and in a moment of extreme agitation failed in his duty. After the muster-call in the offing, whispers began to circulate through the fleet that the General's brother had not done his part like an English captain, and certain voices accused him openly of cowardice. Humphrey seems to have been one of those jovial, plastic and good-natured men whom every one likes, and no one respects. Only a few months in the fleet, he was already a favourite with his brother officers; and when the accusation first arose against him, they tried to stifle it and by every means in their power sought to prevent the affair from coming under the notice of a court-martial. But the great Admiral was inexorable. Humphrey was his favourite brother; he was the next to him in age, and he had been his chief playfellow in boyhood; when on shore he always shared with him his house, his table and his leisure: but above and before all private affection for this favourite brother rose up in his mind the stern sense of public duty. For years it had been his office to purge that navy of all ungodly, unfaithful and inefficient officers with a rigorous hand; and how could he spare his own flesh and blood? The captains went to him in a body, and endeavoured to shew him that Humphrey's fault was a neglect rather than a breach of duty; and that the ends of justice would be met without the disgrace of a public sentence. They ventured to suggest that without taking formal notice of the scandal which was abroad in the fleet, he might be sent away to England until his fault was forgotten. Blake looked grave and angry. They nevertheless pressed their suit, believing that nature itself would prevent a failure of their application. They appealed to his private affection—they glanced at the offender's want of experience at sea. But it was all to no purpose. Blake answered that his first duty was to the service. Their very reasoning proved more clearly that this was not a case which could be allowed to pass into a precedent; and, at the conclusion of the interview, he ordered a court-martial to be summoned. "If none of you," said he, "will accuse him, I must myself be his accuser." The officers forming the court could only give one sentence on the evidence laid before them; but they sent with it a petition, signed by the entire court, to their Admiral, praying him to remit the sentence, and allow the culprit to return to England in his own ship. This prayer was granted, as it would have been in any ordinary case; but the Commander added to the painful document the stern words—"He shall

never be employed more." Yet to the brother thus sternly rebuked he left the greater part of his property.

The favourable wind which brought the squadron out of Santa Cruz carried it once more at a steady and rapid pace to the shores of Andalusia; but intelligence of the terrible disaster at the Canaries had already reached the merchants of Cadiz, and new endeavours were made to induce the States-General of Holland to unite with Spain in a league against the proud and victorious islanders. Dutch statesmen, alarmed at the extraordinary growth of English influence at sea, were disposed to entertain the advances made to them by their ancient and mortal enemies; they expedited the preparations of their fleet, and raised it to a force of seventy sail. Cromwell's ministers could obtain no satisfactory explanation of the reasons for this armament or of the service on which it was to be employed; and as soon as the battle of Santa Cruz had disabled Spain for some time, they wrote to inform Blake of their fears and uncertainties, and to beg that he would return with convenient haste to England. Warned of these intrigues with the States-General, the English frigates kept strict watch over the motions of the Dutch squadron in those seas, and soon found that, while declining to commit themselves to the hazards and expenses of another naval war, the officers readily engaged themselves to bring into Cadiz and other ports the gold and silver landed at Santa Cruz, by order of Don Diego Diagues, before the late attack. Aware of the contract, Blake declared these Dutchmen lawful prizes; and instructed the captains of his cruisers to chase, capture or destroy them whenever found with Spanish cargoes on board. By these prompt measures several of their ships and frigates were taken, laden in great part with gold and silver from that island. One of these Dutch vessels was reported to have a million pieces of eight on board. Another of his captures, the *Flying Fame* of Amsterdam, ran on shore near Suebra, in order to save the cargo; but it was got off again at full tide by the English frigates: it had 448 Spaniards, passengers from the Canaries, on board, besides a very valuable freight. Remonstrances were of course made by the Ambassadors of Holland against this rigorous policy. But Blake had little patience with the wiles and subterfuges of diplomacy. His object in those seas was to destroy the trade, the resources, the fleets of Spain; he considered its gold and silver, its pearls and precious stones, its spices, sugar, hides and cochineal lawful prey; and in whatever bottoms or under whatever flag he found these articles, he believed his right to seize them indisputable. The Dutchmen railed and spouted—but they kept the peace. From Norway to Barbary the echoes of Blake's thunder had been heard. The wavering were confirmed in their friendship for the Commonwealth; States which had so far proudly held aloof evinced the desire to cultivate a closer alliance; false friends suddenly grew eager and demonstrative in their civilities. To use the emphatic words of our agent at Lisbon, the English were "every where held in terror and honour."

But the hero's health was now failing fast. The excitement of Santa Cruz had fearfully augmented his disorders; his attached friends could see that he was nigh to death; and the dismissal of his brother had therefore been a most severe addition of sacrifice to his stern sense of duty. Confined to his cabin by sickness, he began to feel the whole loneliness of his position. Humphrey had been his companion from a child. No one clung to him like his brother Humphrey; no one knew so much of his inward life; no one was possessed so thoroughly of his thoughts and opinions on all subjects; no one had learned to conform to his habits so completely as this favourite. Few commanders have ever won so entirely the love, devotion, adoration of their officers and men. It was an article of faith for the captains to believe in his genius and fortune. The common sailors would have leapt into the sea, or rushed into the cannon's mouth, to gain a word of approbation from his lips. But the brother's place by the sick bed could not be supplied by any stranger to his blood. For himself, his work was nearly done. And he was most anxious, if God were willing, to go home, and die in his native town. He had his country's express permission to return should he think it useful to the service; but it lay on his conscience to perform one other task before he quitted for ever the seas in which he had kept this glorious watch; and that was to pay a second visit to Salee, and compel the Moorish corsairs to restore the Christian captives to their freedom, and enter into a treaty of peace with England. This was his last, and, in the opinion of his biographer, his most illustrious action. An accident had formerly defeated his attempt to exact reparation from these formidable pirates for the injuries inflicted by them on English commerce; before he finally quitted the southern waters, he considered it a sacred duty to return to Salee and complete the negociations then suddenly interrupted.

Unlike the pirates of Tunis, Tripoli, and Algiers, who went out to sea in the largest class of war-ships, the Moors of Salee, a town forming part of the dominions of the Emperor of Fez and Morocco, made their excursions in small but well-built and extremely fast-sailing vessels; the bar of the river on which their town was built not affording, even in good weather, more than a depth of ten or twelve feet of water. After a short prevalence of south-west winds, a strong swell of sea always broke on the bar, rendering it impassable for craft of any but the smallest size; so that in winter the pirates were usually compelled to lie still. But with the approach of spring, they would set out in their powerful little frigates, scour the European waters as far as the Bay of Biscay and the Sardinian sea, rifling unarmed traders, and even making occasional descents on the coasts of Spain and Italy in search of spoil and prisoners. On his second visit to this nest of corsairs, Blake succeeded, without firing a gun, or shedding a drop of blood, in bringing the Moorish Prince to reason:—he had conquered the rovers of Salee at Santa Cruz! The very day on which his frigates appeared off the bar, they accepted his proposed terms; and in less than a week he departed for the

north, having taken on board supplies of fresh water, cleared the whole body of Christian captives, and made peace with them for the future.

This crowning act of a virtuous and honourable life accomplished, the dying Admiral turned his thoughts anxiously towards the green hills of his native land. The letter of Cromwell, the thanks of Parliament, the jewelled ring sent to him by an admiring country,—all reached him together out at sea. These tokens of grateful remembrance caused him a profound emotion. Without after-thought, without selfish impulse, he had served the Commonwealth, day and night, earnestly, anxiously and with rare devotion. England was grateful to her hero. With the letter of thanks from Cromwell, a new set of instructions arrived, which allowed him to return with part of his fleet, leaving a squadron of some fifteen or twenty frigates to ride before the Bay of Cadiz and intercept its traders; with their usual deference to his judgment and experience, the Protector and Board of Admiralty left the appointment to the command entirely with him; and as his gallant friend Stayner was gone to England, where he received a knighthood and other well-won honours from the Government, he raised Captain Stoaks, the hero of Porto Ferino and a commander of rare promise, to the responsible position of his Vice-admiral in the Spanish seas.

Hoisting his pennon on his old flag-ship the *St. George*, Blake saw for the last time the spires and cupolas, the masts and towers, before which he had kept his long and victorious vigils. When he put in for fresh water at Cascaes road he was very weak. "I beseech God to strengthen him," was the fervent prayer of the English Resident at Lisbon, as he departed on the homeward voyage. While the ships rolled through the tempestuous waters of the Bay of Biscay, he grew every day worse and worse. Some gleams of the old spirit broke forth as they approached the latitude of England. He inquired often and anxiously if the white cliffs were yet in sight. He longed to behold once more the swelling downs, the free cities, the goodly churches of his native land. But he was now dying beyond all doubt. Many of his favourite officers silently and mournfully crowded round his bed, anxious to catch the last tones of a voice which had so often called them to glory and victory. Others stood at the poop and forecastle, eagerly examining every speck and line on the horizon, in hope of being first to catch the welcome glimpse of land. Though they were coming home crowned with laurels, gloom and pain were in every face. At last the Lizard was announced. Shortly afterwards the bold cliffs and bare hills of Cornwall loomed out grandly in the distance. But it was now too late for the dying hero. He had sent for the captains and other great officers of his fleet to bid them farewell; and while they were yet in his cabin, the undulating hills of Devonshire, glowing with the tints of early autumn, came full in view. As the ships rounded Rame Head, the spires and masts of Plymouth, the wooded heights of Mount Edgecombe, the low Island of St. Nicholas, the rocky steeps at the Hoe, Mount

Batten, the citadel, the many picturesque and familiar features of that magnificent harbour rose one by one to sight. But the eyes which had so yearned to behold this scene once more were at that very instant closing in death. Foremost of the victorious squadron, the *St. George* rode with its precious burden into the Sound; and just as it came into full view of the eager thousands crowding the beach, the pier-heads, the walls of the citadel, or darting in countless boats over the smooth waters between St. Nicholas and the docks, ready to catch the first glimpse of the hero of Santa Cruz, and salute him with a true English welcome,—he, in his silent cabin, in the midst of his lion-hearted comrades, now sobbing like little children, yielded up his soul to God.

The mournful news soon spread through the fleet and in the town. The melancholy enthusiasm of the people knew no bounds, and the national love and admiration expressed itself in the solemn splendour of his funeral rites. The day of his death the corpse was left untouched in its cabin, as something sacred; but next morning skilful embalmers were employed to open it; and, in presence of all the great officers of the fleet and port, the bowels were taken out and placed in an urn, to be buried in the great church in Plymouth. The body, embalmed and wrapt in lead, was then put on board again and carried round by sea to Greenwich, where it lay in state several days, on the spot since consecrated to the noblest hospital for seamen in the world. On the 4th of September a solemn procession was formed on the river. The corpse was placed on a state barge, covered with a velvet pall, adorned with pencils and escutcheons. Trumpeters in state barges, bearing his pennons as General-at-Sea, surmounted by the great banner of the Commonwealth, preceded the body. Humphrey and all his other brothers, all the nephews and other members of his family, together with the secretaries and servants attached to his immediate household, dressed in the deepest mourning, followed. After them came the Protector's Privy Council in their state barge, the Lords of the Admiralty and Navy, the Lord Mayor and Aldermen of the City of London, the Admirals, Vice-admirals and Captains of his fleet, the Field Officers of the army, and a vast procession of civil notables.

In this order they moved slowly up the river from Greenwich to Westminster, where they were received by a military guard and greeted with salvoes of artillery. At the stairs, the heralds re-formed the procession, which then marched slowly through Palace-yard to the venerable Abbey. A new vault had been made for his remains in Henry the Seventh's chapel, and close to that of the great Tudor monarch, and they were lowered into it amidst the tears and prayers of a grateful and admiring nation. Other heroes of the Commonwealth had been already buried within those regal precincts; and on every such occasion loyal tongues had not feared to accuse the new rulers with upstart and indecent pride. But no voice was raised against the interment there of the conqueror of Tromp, the hero of Tunis and Santa Cruz, the liberator of Christian slaves. In some unaccountable manner, this illustrious man escaped the common lot of greatness;

perhaps no one ever played so conspicuous a part in the drama of history who was followed by less envy, hatred and other uncharitableness. Personal foes he seems not to have known; and even the bitter enemies of his political creed spoke of what they deemed his errors more in sorrow than in anger. All parties owned, as they stood by that silent grave, that its occupant was one who had merited, by brilliant public services and the rarest disinterestedness, the highest rewards a grateful country could bestow. When the imposing ceremonial was closed, a stone slab was laid on the vault,—and they left him there in the old Abbey, with no other monument than that of his imperishable renown.

To their eternal infamy, the Stuarts afterwards disturbed the hero's grave. It was a mean revenge in them to touch the bones of Cromwell; but in his case they could urge the plea of moral and political retribution. The great usurper had been the chief cause of their father's tragic death; he had hunted them for years from land to land; he had shot their most faithful followers and confiscated their richest estates. But Blake had ever been for mild and moderate councils. He had opposed the late King's trial. He had disapproved the usurpation. When he found the sword prevail against law and right, he abandoned politics, like Sidney, Vane, and other of his illustrious compeers, giving up his genius to the service of his country against its foreign enemies. Surely after a life of the most eminent services, the ashes of such a man might have been allowed to rest in peace! The House of Lords, in their ardent zeal for the restored family, gave orders that the bodies of Cromwell, Ireton and Bradshaw should be dug out of their graves and treated with gross indignity; but even these zealots did not deem it decent to include the remains of Blake in their order. That infamy was reserved for Charles himself. In cold blood, nearly seventeen months after his landing at Dover from the deck of the *Naseby*, a royal command was issued by this prince to tear open the unobtrusive vault, drag out the embalmed body, and cast it into a pit in the Abbey yard. Good men looked aghast at such an atrocity. But what could the paramour of Lucy Walters, Barbara Palmer, Kate Peg, and Moll Davies, know of the stern virtues of the illustrious sailor! What sympathy could a royal spendthrift have with the man who, after a life of great employments and the capture of uncounted millions, died no richer than he was born! How could the prince who sold Dunkirk and begged a pension from Versailles feel any regard for a man who had humbled the pride of Holland, Portugal and Spain, who had laid the foundations of our lasting influence in the Mediterranean, and in eight years of success had made England the first maritime power in Europe!

A hole was dug for the reception of these hallowed bones near the back door of one of the prebendaries of Westminster:—and the remains of Cromwell's mother, of the gentle Lady Claypole, and of sturdy John Pym, were all cast into the same pit. How lightly Englishmen should tread that ground!

THE

FLOWER AND THE LEAF:

OR

THE LADY IN THE ARBOUR. A VISION.

BY

JOHN DRYDEN.

Now turning from the wintry signs, the sun
His course exalted through the Ram had run,
And whirling up the skies, his chariot drove
Through Taurus, and the lightsome realms of love;
Where Venus from her orb descends in showers,
To glad the ground, and paint the fields with flowers:
When first the tender blades of grass appear,
And buds, that yet the blast of Eurus fear,
Stand at the door of life, and doubt to clothe the year:
Till gentle heat, and soft repeated rains,
Make the green blood to dance within their veins:
Then, at their call, embolden'd out they come,
And swell the gems, and burst the narrow room;
Broader and broader yet, their blooms display,
Salute the welcome sun, and entertain the day.
Then from their breathing souls the sweets repair
To scent the skies, and purge the unwholesome air:
Joy spreads the heart, and, with a general song,
Spring issues out, and leads the jolly months along.
In that sweet season, as in bed I lay,
And sought in sleep to pass the night away,
I turn'd my weary side, but still in vain,
Though full of youthful health and void of pain:
Cares I had none, to keep me from my rest,
For love had never enter'd in my breast;
I wanted nothing Fortune could supply,
Nor did she slumber till that hour deny.
I wonder'd then, but after found it true,
Much joy had dried away the balmy dew:

Seas would be pools, without the brushing air,
To curl the waves; and sure some little care
Should weary nature so, to make her want repair.
When Chanticleer the second watch had sung,
Scorning the scorner sleep, from bed I sprung;
And dressing, by the moon, in loose array,
Pass'd out in open air, preventing day,
And sought a goodly grove, as fancy led my way.
Straight as a line in beauteous order stood
Of oaks unshorn a venerable wood;
Fresh was the grass beneath, and every tree,
At distance planted in a due degree,
Their branching arms in air with equal space
Stretch'd to their neighbours with a long embrace:
And the new leaves on every bough were seen,
Some ruddy-colour'd, some of lighter green.
The painted birds, companions of the spring,
Hopping from spray to spray, were heard to sing.
Both eyes and ears received a like delight,
Enchanting music, and a charming sight.
On Philomel I fix'd my whole desire;
And listen'd for the queen of all the choir;
Fain would I hear her heavenly voice to sing;
And wanted yet an omen to the spring.
Attending long in vain, I took the way,
Which through a path, but scarcely printed, lay;
In narrow mazes oft it seem'd to meet,
And look'd, as lightly press'd by fairy feet.
Wand'ring I walk'd alone, for still methought
To some strange end so strange a path was wrought:
At last it led me where an arbour stood,
The sacred receptacle of the wood;
This place unmark'd, though oft I walk'd the green,
In all my progress I had never seen:
And seized at once with wonder and delight,
Gazed all around me, new to the transporting sight.
'Twas bench'd with turf, and goodly to be seen,
The thick young grass arose in fresher green:
The mound was newly made, no sight could pass
Betwixt the nice partitions of the grass;
The well-united sods so closely lay;
And all around the shades defended it from day:
For sycamores with eglantine were spread,
A hedge about the sides, a covering over head.
And so the fragrant brier was wove between,
The sycamore and flowers were mix'd with green,
That nature seem'd to vary the delight,
And satisfied at once the smell and sight.

The master workman of the bower was known
Through fairy lands, and built for Oberon;
Who twining leaves with such proportion drew,
They rose by measure, and by rule they grew;
No mortal tongue can half the beauty tell:
For none but hands divine could work so well.
Both roof and sides were like a parlour made,
A soft recess, and a cold summer shade;
The hedge was set so thick, no foreign eye
The persons placed within it could espy:
But all that pass'd without with ease was seen,
As if nor fence nor tree was placed between.
'Twas border'd with a field; and some was plain
With grass, and some was sow'd with rising grain.
That (now the dew with spangles deck'd the ground)
A sweeter spot of earth was never found.
I look'd and look'd, and still with new delight;
Such joy my soul, such pleasures filled my sight;
And the fresh eglantine exhaled a breath,
Whose odours were of power to raise from death.
Nor sullen discontent, nor anxious care,
Even though brought thither, could inhabit there:
But thence they fled as from their mortal foe;
For this sweet place could only pleasure know.
Thus as I mused, I cast aside my eye,
And saw a medlar-tree was planted nigh.
The spreading branches made a goodly show,
And full of opening blooms was every bough.
A goldfinch there I saw with gaudy pride
Of painted plumes, that hopp'd from side to side,
Still pecking as she pass'd; and still she drew
The sweets from every flower, and suck'd the dew:
Sufficed at length, she warbled in her throat,
And tuned her voice to many a merry note,
But indistinct, and neither sweet nor clear,
Yet such as sooth'd my soul, and pleased my ear.
Her short performance was no sooner tried,
When she I sought, the nightingale, replied:
So sweet, so shrill, so variously she sung,
That the grove echoed, and the valleys rung:
And I so ravish'd with a heavenly note,
I stood entranced, and had no room for thought,
But all o'erpower'd with ecstacy of bliss,
Was in a pleasing dream of paradise;
At length I waked; and looking round the bower
Search'd every tree, and pried on every flower,
If any where by chance I might espy
The rural poet of the melody:

For still methought she sung not far away;
At last I found her on a laurel spray.
Close by my side she sat, and fair in sight,
Full in a line, against her opposite;
Where stood with eglantine the laurel twined;
And both their native sweets were well conjoin'd.
On the green bank I sat, and listen'd long;
(Sitting was more convenient for the song:)
Nor till her lay was ended could I move,
But wish'd to dwell for ever in the grove.
Only methought the time too swiftly pass'd,
And every note I fear'd would be the last.
My sight, and smell, and hearing were employ'd,
And all three senses in full gust enjoy'd.
And what alone did all the rest surpass,
The sweet possession of the fairy place;
Single, and conscious to myself alone
Of pleasures to the excluded world unknown;
Pleasures which no where else were to be found,
And all Elysium in a spot of ground.
Thus while I sat intent to see and hear,
And drew perfumes of more than vital air,
All suddenly I heard the approaching sound
Of vocal music on the enchanted ground:
An host of saints it seem'd, so full the choir;
As if the bless'd above did all conspire
To join their voices, and neglect the lyre.
At length there issued from the grove behind
A fair assembly of the female kind:
A train less fair, as ancient fathers tell,
Seduced the sons of heaven to rebel.
I pass their form, and every charming grace,
Less than an angel would their worth debase:
But their attire, like liveries of a kind,
All rich and rare, is fresh within my mind.
In velvet, white as snow, the troop was gown'd,
The seams with sparkling emeralds set around:
Their hoods and sleeves the same; and purfled o'er
With diamonds, pearls, and all the shining store
Of eastern pomp: their long descending train,
With rubies edged and sapphires, swept the plain:
High on their heads, with jewels richly set,
Each lady wore a radiant coronet.
Beneath the circles, all the choir was graced
With chaplets green on their fair foreheads placed.
Of laurel some, of woodbine many more;
And wreaths of Agnus castus others bore;
These last, who with those virgin-crowns were dress'd,
Appear'd in higher honour than the rest.

They danced around; but in the midst was seen
A lady of a more majestic mien;
By stature, and by beauty, mark'd their sovereign queen.
She in the midst began with sober grace;
Her servants' eyes were fix'd upon her face,
And as she moved or turned, her motions view'd,
Her measures kept, and step by step pursued.
Methought she trod the ground with greater grace,
With more of godhead shining in her face;
And as in beauty she surpass'd the choir,
So, nobler than the rest was her attire.
A crown of ruddy gold enclosed her brow,
Plain without pomp, and rich without a show;
A branch of Agnus castus in her hand
She bore aloft (her sceptre of command);
Admired, adored by all the circling crowd,
For wheresoe'er she turn'd her face, they bow'd:
And as she danced, a roundelay she sung,
In honour of the laurel, ever young:
She raised her voice on high, and sung so clear,
The fawns came scudding from the groves to hear:
And all the bending forest lent an ear.
At every close she made, the attending throng
Replied, and bore the burden of the song:
So just, so small, yet in so sweet a note,
It seem'd the music melted in the throat.
Thus dancing on, and singing as they danced,
They to the middle of the mead advanced,
Till round my arbour a new ring they made,
And footed it about the sacred shade.
O'erjoyed to see the jolly troop so near,
But somewhat awed I shook with holy fear;
Yet not so much, but that I noted well
Who did the most in song or dance excel.
Not long I had observed, when from afar
I heard a sudden symphony of war;
The neighing coursers, and the soldiers' cry,
And sounding trumps that seem'd to tear the sky:
I saw soon after this, behind the grove
From whence the ladies did in order move,
Come issuing out in arms a warrior train,
That like a deluge pour'd upon the plain:
On barbed steeds they rode in proud array,
Thick as the college of the bees in May,
When swarming o'er the dusky fields they fly,
New to the flowers, and intercept the sky.
So fierce they drove, their coursers were so fleet,
That the turf trembled underneath their feet.

To tell their costly furniture were long,
The summer's day would end before the song:
To purchase but the tenth of all their store,
Would make the mighty Persian monarch poor.
Yet what I can, I will; before the rest
The trumpets issued, in white mantles dress'd,
A numerous troop, and all their heads around
With chaplets green of cerrial-oak were crown'd;
And at each trumpet was a banner bound,
Which waving in the wind display'd at large
Their masters' coat of arms, and knightly charge.
Broad were the banners, and of snowy hue,
A purer web the silk-worm never drew.
The chief about their necks the scutcheons wore,
With orient pearls and jewels powder'd o'er:
Broad were their collars too, and every one
Was set about with many a costly stone.
Next these, of kings at arms a goodly train
In proud array came prancing o'er the plain:
Their cloaks were cloth of silver mix'd with gold,
And garlands green around their temples roll'd:
Rich crowns were on their royal scutcheons placed,
With sapphires, diamonds, and with rubies graced:
And as the trumpets their appearance made,
So these in habits were alike array'd;
But with a pace more sober, and more slow;
And twenty, rank in rank, they rode a-row.
The pursuivants came next, in number more;
And like the heralds each his scutcheon bore:
Clad in white velvet all their troop they led,
With each an oaken chaplet on his head.
Nine royal knights in equal rank succeed,
Each warrior mounted on a fiery steed;
In golden armour glorious to behold;
The rivets of their arms were nail'd with gold.
Their surcoats of white ermine fur were made;
With cloth of gold between, that cast a glittering shade.
The trappings of their steeds were of the same;
The golden fringe even set the ground on flame,
And drew a precious trail: a crown divine
Of laurel did about their temples twine.
Three henchmen were for every knight assign'd,
All in rich livery clad, and of a kind;
White velvet, but unshorn, for cloaks they wore,
And each within his hand a truncheon bore:
The foremost held a helm of rare device;
A prince's ransom would not pay the price.
The second bore the buckler of his knight,

The third of cornel-wood a spear upright,
Headed with piercing steel, and polish'd bright.
Like to their lords their equipage was seen,
And all their foreheads crown'd with garlands green.
And after these came arm'd with spear and shield
An host so great as covered all the field:
And all their foreheads, like the knights before,
With laurels evergreen were shaded o'er,
Or oak, or other leaves of lasting kind,
Tenacious of the stem, and firm against the wind.
Some in their hands, beside the lance and shield,
The boughs of woodbine or of hawthorn held,
Or branches for their mystic emblems took,
Of palm, of laurel, or of cerrial-oak.
Thus marching to the trumpet's lofty sound,
Drawn in two lines adverse they wheel'd around,
And in the middle meadow took their ground.
Among themselves the tourney they divide,
In equal squadrons ranged on either side.
Then turn'd their horses' heads, and man to man,
And steed to steed opposed, the jousts began.
They lightly set their lances in the rest,
And, at the sign, against each other press'd:
They met. I sitting at my ease beheld
The mix'd events, and fortunes of the field.
Some broke their spears, some tumbled horse and man,
And round the field the lighten'd coursers ran.
An hour and more, like tides, in equal sway
They rush'd, and won by turns, and lost the day:
At length the nine (who still together held)
Their fainting foes to shameful flight compell'd,
And with resistless force o'er-ran the field.
Thus, to their fame, when finish'd was the fight,
The victors from their lofty steeds alight:
Like them dismounted all the warlike train,
And two by two proceeded o'er the plain:
Till to the fair assembly they advanced,
Who near the secret arbour sung and danced.
The ladies left their measures at the sight,
To meet the chiefs returning from the fight,
And each with open arms embraced her chosen knight.
Amid the plain a spreading laurel stood,
The grace and ornament of all the wood:
That pleasing shade they sought, a soft retreat
From sudden April showers, a shelter from the heat:
Her leafy arms with such extent were spread,
So near the clouds was her aspiring head,
That hosts of birds, that wing the liquid air,
Perch'd in the boughs, had nightly lodging there:

And flocks of sheep beneath the shade from far
Might hear the rattling hail, and wintry war;
From heaven's inclemency here found retreat,
Enjoy'd the cool, and shunn'd the scorching heat:
A hundred knights might there at ease abide;
And every knight a lady by his side:
The trunk itself such odours did bequeath,
That a Moluccan breeze to these was common breath.
The lords and ladies here, approaching, paid
Their homage, with a low obeisance made;
And seem'd to venerate the sacred shade.
These rites perform'd, their pleasures they pursue,
With songs of love, and mix with measures new;
Around the holy tree their dance they frame,
And every champion leads his chosen dame.
I cast my sight upon the farther field,
And a fresh object of delight beheld:
For from the region of the West I heard
New music sound, and a new troop appeared;
Of knights and ladies mix'd a jolly band,
But all on foot they march'd, and hand in hand.
The ladies dress'd in richest robes were seen
Of Florence satin, flower'd with white and green,
And for a shade betwixt the bloomy gridelin.
The borders of their petticoats below
Were guarded thick with rubies on a row;
And every damsel wore upon her head
Of flowers a garland blended white and red.
Attired in mantles all the knights were seen,
That gratified the view with cheerful green:
Their chaplets of their ladies' colours were,
Composed of white and red, to shade their shining hair.
Before the merry troop the minstrels play'd;
All in their masters' liveries were array'd,
And clad in green, and on their temples wore
The chaplets white and red their ladies bore.
Their instruments were various in their kind,
Some for the bow, and some for breathing wind:
The psaltry, pipe, and hautboy's noisy band,
And the soft lute trembling beneath the touching hand.
A tuft of daisies on a flowery lay
They saw, and thitherward they bent their way;
To this both knights and dames their homage made,
And due obeisance to the daisy paid.
And then the band of flutes began to play,
To which a lady sung a virelay:
And still at every close she would repeat
The burden of the song, The daisy is so sweet.

The daisy is so sweet,—when she begun,
The troop of knights and dames continued on.
The concert and the voice so charmed my ear,
And soothed my soul, that it was heaven to hear.
But soon their pleasure pass'd: at noon of day,
The sun with sultry beams began to play:
Not Sirius shoots a fiercer flame from high,
When with his poisonous breath he blasts the sky;
Then droop'd the fading flowers (their beauty fled)
And closed their sickly eyes, and hung the head,
And rivel'd up with heat, lay dying in their bed.
The ladies gasp'd, and scarcely could respire;
The breath they drew, no longer air, but fire;
The fainty knights were scorch'd, and knew not where
To run for shelter, for no shade was near;
And after this the gathering clouds amain
Pour'd down a storm of rattling hail and rain:
And lightning flash'd betwixt: the field and flowers,
Burnt up before, were buried in the showers.
The ladies and the knights, no shelter nigh,
Bare to the weather and the wintry sky,
Were dropping wet, disconsolate, and wan,
And through their thin array received the rain:
While those in white, protected by the tree,
Saw pass in vain the assault, and stood from danger free,
But as compassion moved their gentle minds,
When ceased the storm, and silent were the winds,
Displeased at what, not suffering, they had seen,
They went to cheer the faction of the green:
The queen in white array, before her band,
Saluting, took her rival by the hand;
So did the knights and dames, with courtly grace,
And with behaviour sweet their foes embrace.
Then thus the queen with laurel on her brow,
Fair sister, I have suffer'd in your woe;
Nor shall be wanting aught within my power
For your relief in my refreshing bower.
That other answer'd with a lowly look,
And soon the gracious invitation took:
For ill at ease both she and all her train
The scorching sun had borne, and beating rain.
Like courtesy was used by all in white,
Each dame a dame received, and every knight a knight.
The laurel champions with their swords invade
The neighbouring forests, where the jousts were made,
And sere-wood from the rotten hedges took,
And seeds of latent fire from flints provoke:
A cheerful blaze arose, and by the fire
They warm'd their frozen feet, and dried their wet attire.

Refresh'd with heat, the ladies sought around
For virtuous herbs, which gather'd from the ground
They squeezed the juice, and cooling ointment made,
Which on their sun-burnt cheeks, and their chapt skins they laid:
Then sought green salads, which they bade them eat,
A sovereign remedy for inward heat.
The Lady of the Leaf ordain'd a feast,
And made the Lady of the Flower her guest:
When, lo! a bower ascended on the plain,
With sudden seats ordain'd, and large for either train.
This bower was near my pleasant arbour placed,
That I could hear and see whatever pass'd:
The ladies sat with each a knight between,
Distinguish'd by their colours, white and green;
The vanquish'd party with the victors join'd,
Nor wanted sweet discourse—the banquet of the mind.
Meantime, the minstrels play'd on either side,
Vain of their art, and for the mastery vied:
The sweet contention lasted for an hour,
And reach'd my secret arbour from the bower.

The sun was set; and Vesper, to supply
His absent beams, had lighted up the sky.
When Philomel, officious all the day
To sing the service of the ensuing May,
Fled from her laurel shade, and wing'd her flight
Directly to the queen array'd in white;
And hopping, sat familiar on her hand,
A new musician, and increased the band.

The goldfinch, who, to shun the scalding heat,
Had changed the medlar for a safer seat,
And hid in bushes 'scaped the bitter shower,
Now perch'd upon the Lady of the Flower;
And either songster holding out their throats,
And folding up their wings, renewed their notes:
As if all day, preluding to the fight,
They only had rehearsed, to sing by night.
The banquet ended, and the battle done,
They danced by star-light and the friendly moon:
And when they were to part, the laureate queen
Supplied with steeds the lady of the green,
Her and her train conducting on the way,
The moon to follow, and avoid the day.

This when I saw, inquisitive to know
The secret moral of the mystic show,
I started from my shade, in hopes to find
Some nymph to satisfy my longing mind:
And as my fair adventure fell, I found
A lady all in white, with laurel crown'd,

Who closed the rear, and softly paced along,
Repeating to herself the former song.
With due respect my body I inclined,
As to some being of superior kind,
And made my court according to the day,
Wishing her queen and her a happy May.
Great thanks, my daughter, with a gracious bow,
She said; and I, who much desired to know
Of whence she was, yet fearful how to break
My mind, adventured humbly thus to speak:
Madam, might I presume and not offend,
So may the stars and shining moon attend
Your nightly sports, as you vouchsafe to tell
What nymphs they were who mortal forms excel,
And what the knights who fought in listed fields so well.
To this the dame replied: Fair daughter, know,
That what you saw was all a fairy show:
And all those airy shapes you now behold
Were human bodies once, and clothed with earthly mould:
Our souls, not yet prepared for upper light,
Till doomsday wander in the shades of night;
This only holiday of all the year,
We privileged in sunshine may appear:
With songs and dance we celebrate the day,
And with due honours usher in the May.
At other times we reign by night alone,
And posting through the skies pursue the moon:
But when the moon arises, none are found;
For cruel Demogorgon walks the round,
And if he finds a fairy lag in light,
He drives the wretch before, and lashes into night.
All courteous are by kind; and ever proud
With friendly offices to help the good.
In every land we have a larger space
Than what is known to you of mortal race:
Where we with green adorn our fairy bowers,
And even this grove, unseen before, is ours.
Know farther, every lady clothed in white,
And, crown'd with oak and laurel every knight,
Are servants to the Leaf, by liveries known
Of innocence; and I myself am one.
Saw you not her so graceful to behold,
In white attire, and crown'd with radiant gold?
The sovereign lady of our land is she,
Diana call'd, the queen of chastity:
And, for the spotless name of maid she bears,
That Agnus castus in her hand appears;
And all her train, with leafy chaplets crown'd,
Were for unblamed virginity renown'd;

But those the chief and highest in command
Who bare those holy branches in their hand:
The knights adorn'd with laurel crowns are they,
Whom death nor danger ever could dismay,
Victorious names, who made the world obey:
Who, while they lived, in deeds of arms excell'd,
And after death for deities were held.
But those who wear the woodbine on their brow,
Were knights of love, who never broke their vow;
Firm to their plighted faith, and ever free
From fears, and fickle chance, and jealousy.
The lords and ladies, who the woodbine bear,
As true as Tristram and Isotta were.
  But what are those, said I, the unconquer'd nine,
Who crown'd with laurel wreaths in golden armour shine?
And who the knights in green, and what the train
Of ladies dress'd with daisies on the plain?
Why both the bands in worship disagree,
And some adore the flower, and some the tree?
  Just is your suit, fair daughter, said the dame:
Those laurell'd chiefs were men of mighty fame;
Nine worthies were they call'd of different rites,
Three Jews, three Pagans, and three Christian knights.
These, as you see, ride foremost in the field,
As they the foremost rank of honour held,
And all in deeds of chivalry excell'd:
Their temples wreath'd with leaves, that still renew;
For deathless laurel is the victor's due:
Who bear the bows were knights in Arthur's reign,
Twelve they, and twelve the peers of Charlemagne:
For bows the strength of brawny arms imply,
Emblems of valour and of victory.
Behold an order yet of newer date,
Doubling their number, equal in their state;
Our England's ornament, the crown's defence,
In battle brave, protectors of their prince:
Unchanged by fortune, to their sovereign true,
For which their manly legs are bound with blue.
These, of the Garter call'd, of faith unstain'd
In fighting fields the laurel have obtain'd,
And well repaid the honours which they gain'd.
The laurel wreaths were first by Cæsar worn,
And still they Cæsar's successors adorn:
One leaf of this is immortality,
And more of worth than all the world can buy.
  One doubt remains, said I, the dames in green,
What were their qualities, and who their queen?
Flora commands, said she, those nymphs and knights,
Who lived in slothful ease and loose delights;

Who never acts of honour durst pursue,
The men inglorious knights, the ladies all untrue:
Who, nursed in idleness, and train'd in courts,
Pass'd all their precious hours in plays and sports,
Till death behind came stalking on unseen,
And wither'd (like the storm) the freshness of their green.
These, and their mates, enjoy their present hour,
And therefore pay their homage to the Flower.
But knights in knightly deeds should persevere,
And still continue what at first they were;
Continue and proceed in honour's fair career.
No room for cowardice or dull delay;
From good to better they should urge their way.
For this with golden spurs the chiefs are graced,
With pointed rowels arm'd to mend their haste.
For this with lasting leaves their brows are bound;
For laurel is the sign of labour crown'd,
Which bears the bitter blast, nor shaken falls to ground:
From winter winds it suffers no decay,
For ever fresh and fair, and every month is May.
Even when the vital sap retreats below,
Even when the hoary head is hid in snow,
The life is in the leaf, and still between
The fits of falling snow, appears the streaky-green.
Not so the flower, which lasts for little space,
A short-lived good, and an uncertain grace;
This way and that the feeble stem is driven,
Weak to sustain the storms and injuries of heaven.
Propp'd by the spring, it lifts aloft the head,
But of a sickly beauty, soon to shed;
In summer living, and in winter dead.
For things of tender kind, for pleasure made,
Shoot up with swift increase, and sudden are decay'd.
With humble words, the wisest I could frame,
And proffer'd service, I repaid the dame;
That, of her grace, she gave her maid to know
The secret meaning of this moral show.
And she, to prove what profit I had made
Of mystic truth, in fables first convey'd,
Demanded, till the next returning May,
Whether the Leaf or Flower I would obey?
I chose the Leaf; she smiled with sober cheer,
And wish'd me fair adventure for the year,
And gave me charms and sigils, for defence
Against ill tongues that scandal innocence:
But I, said she, my fellows must pursue,
Already past the plain, and out of view.

We parted thus: I homeward sped my way,
Bewilder'd in the wood till dawn of day:
And met the merry crew who danced about the May.
Then late refresh'd with sleep, I rose to write
The visionary vigils of the night.—
Blush, as thou may'st, my little book with shame!
Nor hope with homely verse to purchase fame;
For such thy maker chose; and so design'd
Thy simple style to suit thy lowly kind.

DESCRIPTION OF WATERLOO,

BY

LORD BYRON.

STOP!—for thy tread is on an empire's dust!
An earthquake's spoil is sepulchred below!
Is the spot marked with no colossal bust?
Nor column trophied for triumphal show?
None; but the moral's truth tells simpler so,
As the ground was before, thus let it be;—
How that red rain hath made the harvest grow!
And is this all the world has gained by thee,
Thou first and last of fields! king-making Victory?

And Harold stands upon this place of skulls,
The grave of France, the deadly Waterloo!
How in an hour the power which gave annuls
Its gifts, transferring fame as fleeting too!
In "pride of place" here last the eagle flew,
Then tore with bloody talon the rent plain,
Pierced by the shaft of banded nations through;
Ambition's life and labours all were vain;
He wears the shattered links of the world's broken chain.

Fit retribution! Gaul may champ the bit
And foam in fetters;—but is earth more free?
Did nations combat to make *One* submit;
Or league to teach all kings true sovereignty?
What! shall reviving Thraldom again be
The patched-up idol of enlightened days?
Shall we, who struck the Lion down, shall we
Pay the Wolf homage? proffering lowly gaze
And servile knees to thrones; No; *prove* before ye praise!

If not, o'er one fallen despot boast no more!
In vain fair cheeks were furrowed with hot tears
For Europe's flowers long rooted up before
The trampler of her vineyards; in vain years

Of death, depopulation, bondage, fears,
Have all been borne, and broken by the accord
Of roused-up millions: all that most endears
Glory, is when the myrtle wreathes a sword
Such as Harmodius* drew on Athens' tyrant lord.

There was a sound of revelry by night,
And Belgium's capital had gathered then
Her beauty and her chivalry, and bright
The lamps shone o'er fair women and brave men;
A thousand hearts beat happily; and when
Music arose with its voluptuous swell,
Soft eyes looked love to eyes which spake again,
And† all went merry as a marriage-bell;
But hush! hark! a deep sound strikes like a rising knell!

Did ye not hear it?—No; 'twas but the wind,
Or the car rattling o'er the stony street;
On with the dance! let joy be unconfined;
No sleep till morn, when youth and pleasure meet
To chase the glowing hours with flying feet—
But hark!—that heavy sound breaks in once more,
As if the clouds its echo would repeat;
And nearer, clearer, deadlier than before;
Arm! Arm! it is—it is—the cannon's opening roar!

Within a windowed niche of that high hall
Sate Brunswick's fated chieftain; he did hear
That sound the first amidst the festival,
And caught its tone with Death's prophetic ear;
And when they smiled because he deemed it near,
His heart more truly knew that peal too well
Which stretched his father on a bloody bier,
And roused the vengeance blood alone could quell:
He rushed into the field, and, foremost fighting, fell.

Ah; then and there was hurrying to and fro,
And gathering tears, and tremblings of distress,
And cheeks all pale, which but an hour ago
Blushed at the praise of their own loveliness;
And there were sudden partings, such as press
The life from out young hearts, and choking sighs
Which ne'er might be repeated; who could guess
If ever more should meet those mutual eyes,
Since upon nights so sweet such awful morn could rise?

* See the famous Song on Harmodius and Aristogiton.—The best English translation is in Bland's Anthology, by Mr. Denman.

"With myrtle will I wreathe," &c.

† On the night previous to the action, it is said that a ball was given at Brussels.

And there was mounting in hot haste: the steed,
The mustering squadron, and the clattering car,
Went pouring forward with impetuous speed,
And swiftly forming in the ranks of war;
And the deep thunder, peal on peal afar;
And near, the beat of the alarming drum
Roused up the soldier ere the morning star:
While thronged the citizens with terror dumb, [come!"
Or whispering, with white lips—"The foe! They come! they

And wild and high the "Cameron's gathering" rose!
The war-note of Lochiel, which Albyn's hills
Have heard, and heard, too, have her Saxon foes:—
How in the noon of night that pibroch thrills,
Savage and shrill! But with the breath which fills
Their mountain-pipe, so fill the mountaineers
With the fierce native daring which instils
The stirring memory of a thousand years,
And *Evan's, Donald's fame rings in each clansman's ears!

And Ardennes waves above them her green leaves,
Dewy with nature's tear-drops, as they pass,
Grieving, if aught inanimate e'er grieves,
Over the unreturning brave,—alas!
Ere evening to be trodden like the grass
Which now beneath them, but above shall grow
In its next verdure, when this fiery mass
Of living valour, rolling on the foe
And burning with high hope, shall moulder cold and low.

Last noon beheld them full of lusty life,
Last eve in Beauty's circle proudly gay,
The midnight brought the signal-sound of strife,
The morn the marshalling in arms—the day
Battle's magnificently-stern array!
The thunder-clouds close o'er it, which when rent
The earth is covered thick with other clay,
Which her own clay shall cover, heaped and pent,
Rider and horse,—friend, foe,—in one red burial blent!

Their praise is hymned by loftier harps than mine;
Yet one I would select from that proud throng,
Partly because they blend me with his line,
And partly that I did his sire some wrong,

* Sir Evan Cameron, and his descendant Donald, the "gentle Lochiel" of the "forty-five."

And partly that bright names will hallow song;
And his was of the bravest, and when showered
The death-bolts deadliest the thinned files along,
Even where the thickest of war's tempest lowered,
They reached no nobler breast than thine, young, gallant Howard!

There have been tears and breaking hearts for thee,
And mine were nothing, had I such to give;
But when I stood beneath the fresh green tree,
Which living waves where thou didst cease to live,
And saw around me the wide field revive
With fruits and fertile promise, and the Spring
Come forth her work of gladness to contrive,
With all her reckless birds upon the wing,
I turned from all she brought to those she could not bring.

I turned to thee, to thousands, of whom each
And one as all a ghastly gap did make
In his own kind and kindred, whom to teach
Forgetfulness were mercy for their sake;
The Archangel's trump, not Glory's, must awake
Those whom they thirst for; though the sound of Fame
May for a moment soothe, it cannot slake
The fever of vain longing, and the name
So honoured but assumes a stronger, bitterer claim.

They mourn, but smile at length; and, smiling, mourn:
The tree will wither long before it fall;
The hull drives on, though mast and sail be torn;
The roof-tree sinks, but moulders on the hall
In massy hoariness; the ruined wall
Stands when its wind-worn battlements are gone;
The bars survive the captive they enthral;
The day drags through though storms keep out the sun;
And thus the heart will break, yet brokenly live on:

Even as a broken mirror, which the glass
In every fragment multiplies; and makes
A thousand images of one that was,
The same, and still the more, the more it breaks;
And thus the heart will do which not forsakes,
Living in shattered guise, and still, and cold,
And bloodless, with its sleepless sorrow aches,
Yet withers on till all without is old,
Shewing no visible sign, for such things are untold.

There is a very life in our despair,
Vitality of poison,—a quick root
Which feeds these deadly branches: for it were
As nothing did we die; but life will suit

Itself to sorrow's most detested fruit,
Like to the apples on the* Dead Sea's shore,
All ashes to the taste. Did man compute
Existence by enjoyment, and count o'er
Such hours 'gainst years of life,—say, would he name threescore ?

The Psalmist numbered out the years of man:
They are enough; and if thy tale be *true*,
Thou, who didst grudge him even that fleeting span,
More than enough, thou fatal Waterloo!
Millions of tongues record thee, and anew
Their children's lips shall echo them, and say—
"Here, where the sword united nations drew,
"Our countrymen were warring on that day!"
And this is much, and all which will not pass away.

There sunk the greatest, nor the worst of men,
Whose spirit antithetically mixt
One moment of the mightiest, and again
On little objects with like firmness fixt,
Extreme in all things! hadst thou been betwixt,
Thy throne had still been thine, or never been;
For daring made thy rise as fall: thou seekest
Even now to re-assume the imperial mien,
And shake again the world, the Thunderer of the scene!

Conqueror and captive of the earth art thou!
She trembles at thee still, and thy wild name
Was ne'er more bruited in men's minds than now
That thou art nothing, save the jest of Fame,
Who wooed thee once, thy vassal, and became
The flatterer of thy fierceness, till thou wert
A god unto thyself; nor less the same
To the astounded kingdoms all inert,
Who deemed thee for a time whate'er thou didst assert.

Oh, more or less than man—in high or low,
Battling with nations, flying from the field;
Now making monarchs' necks thy footstool, now
More than thy meanest soldier taught to yield;
An empire thou couldst crush, command, rebuild,
But govern not thy pettiest passion, nor,
However deeply in men's spirits skilled,
Look through thine own, nor curb the lust of war,
Nor learn that tempted Fate will leave the loftiest star.

* The (fabled) apples on the brink of the lake Asphaltes were said to be fair without, and within ashes.—*Vide Tacitus.*

Yet well thy soul hath brooked the turning tide
With that untaught innate philosophy,
Which, be it wisdom, coldness or deep pride,
Is gall and wormwood to an enemy.
When the whole host of hatred stood hard by
To watch and mock thee shrinking, thou hast smiled
With a sedate and all-enduring eye;—
When Fortune fled her spoiled and favourite child,
He stood unbowed beneath the ills upon him piled.

Sager than in thy fortunes; for in them
Ambition steeled thee on too far to show
That just habitual scorn which could contemn
Men and their thoughts; 'twas wise to feel, not so
To wear it ever on thy lip and brow,
And spurn the instruments thou wert to use
Till they were turned unto thine overthrow;
'Tis but a worthless world to win or lose;
So hath it proved to thee, and all such lot who choose.

If, like a tower upon a headlong rock,
Thou hadst been made to stand or fall alone,
Such scorn of man had helped to brave the shock;
But men's thoughts were the steps which paved thy throne,
Their admiration thy best weapon shone;
The part of Philip's son was thine, not then
(Unless aside thy purple had been thrown)
Like stern Diogenes to mock at men;
For sceptred cynics earth were far too wide a den.

But quiet to quick bosoms is a hell,
And *there* hath been thy bane; there is a fire
And motion of the soul which will not dwell
In its own narrow being, but aspire
Beyond the fitting medium of desire;
And, but once kindled, quenchless evermore
Preys upon high adventure, nor can tire
Of aught but rest; a fever at the core,
Fatal to him who bears, to all who ever bore.

This makes the madmen who have made men mad
By their contagion; conquerors and kings,
Founders of sects and systems, to whom add
Sophists, bards, statesmen, all unquiet things
Which stir too strongly the soul's secret springs,
And are themselves the fools to those they fool,
Envied, yet how unenviable! what stings
Are theirs! One breast laid open were a school
Which would unteach mankind the lust to shine or rule;

Their breath is agitation, and their life
A storm whereon they ride, to sink at last,
And yet so nursed and bigoted to strife,
That should their days, surviving perils past,
Melt to calm twilight, they feel overcast
With sorrow and supineness, and so die;
Even as a flame unfed, which runs to waste
With its own flickering, or a sword laid by
Which eats into itself, and rusts ingloriously.

He who ascends to mountain-*tops* shall find
The loftiest peaks most wrapt in clouds and snow
He who surpasses or subdues mankind,
Must look down on the hate of those below.
Though high *above* the sun of glory glow,
And far *beneath* the earth and ocean spread,
Round him are icy rocks, and loudly blow
Contending tempests on his naked head,
And thus reward the toils which to those summits led.

BIOGRAPHICAL

AND

CRITICAL ESSAYS,

BY

WILLIAM H. PRESCOTT.

ASYLUM FOR THE BLIND.

JULY, 1830.

THERE is nothing in which the moderns surpass the ancients more conspicuously than in their noble provisions for the relief of indigence and distress. The public policy of the ancients seems to have embraced only whatever might promote the aggrandizement or the direct prosperity of the state, and to have cared little for those unfortunate beings who, from disease or incapacity of any kind, were disqualified from contributing to this. But the beneficent influence of Christianity, combined with the general tendency of our social institutions, has led to the recognition of rights in the individual as sacred as those of the community, and has suggested manifold provisions for personal comfort and happiness.

The spirit of benevolence, thus widely, and oftentimes judiciously exerted, continued, until a very recent period however, strangely insensible to the claims of a large class of objects, to whom nature, and no misconduct or imprudence of their own, as is too often the case with the subjects of public charity, had denied some of the most estimable faculties of man. No suitable institutions, until the close of the last century, have been provided for the nurture of the deaf and dumb, or the blind. Immured within hospitals and almshouses, like so many lunatics, and incurables, they have been delivered over, if they escaped the physical, to all the moral contagion too frequently incident to such abodes, and have thus been involved in a mental darkness far more deplorable than their bodily one.

This injudicious treatment has resulted from the erroneous principle of viewing these unfortunate beings as an absolute burden on the public, utterly incapable of contributing to their own subsistence, or of ministering in any degree to their own intellectual wants. Instead, however, of being degraded by such unworthy views, they should

have been regarded as, what in truth they are, possessed of corporeal and mental capacities perfectly competent, under proper management, to the production of the most useful results. If wisdom from one entrance was quite shut out, other avenues for its admission still remained to be opened.

In order to give effective aid to persons in this predicament, it is necessary to place ourselves as far as possible in their peculiar situation, to consider to what faculties this insulated condition is, on the whole, most favourable, and in what direction they can be exercised with the best chance of success. Without such foresight, all our endeavours to aid them will only put them upon efforts above their strength, and result in serious mortification.

The blind, from the cheerful ways of men cut off, are necessarily excluded from the busy theatre of human action. Their infirmity, however, which consigns them to darkness, and often to solitude, would seem favourable to contemplative habits, and to the pursuits of abstract science and pure speculation. Undisturbed by external objects, the mind necessarily turns within, and concentrates its ideas on any point of investigation with greater intensity and perseverance. It is no uncommon thing, therefore, to find persons setting apart the silent hours of the evening for the purpose of composition or other purely intellectual exercise. Malebranche, when he wished to think intensely, used to close his shutters in the daytime, excluding every ray of light; and hence Democritus is said to have put out his eyes in order that he might philosophize the better—a story, the veracity of which Cicero, who relates it, is prudent enough not to vouch for.

Blindness must also be exceedingly favourable to the discipline of the memory. Whoever has had the misfortune, from any derangement of the organ, to be compelled to derive his knowledge of books less from the eye than the ear, will feel the truth of this. The difficulty of recalling what has once escaped, of reverting to or dwelling on the passages read aloud by another, compels the hearer to give undivided attention to the subject, and to impress it more forcibly on his own mind by subsequent and methodical reflection. Instances of the cultivation of this faculty to an extraordinary extent have been witnessed among the blind, and it has been most advantageously applied to the pursuit of abstract science, especially mathematics.

One of the most eminent illustrations of these remarks is the well-known history of Saunderson, who, though deprived in his infancy not only of sight, but of the organ itself, contrived to become so well acquainted with the Greek tongue as to read the works of the ancient mathematicians in the original. He made such advances in the higher departments of the science, that he was appointed, "though not matriculated at the University," to fill the chair which a short time previous had been occupied by Sir Isaac Newton at Cambridge. The lectures of this blind professor on the most abstruse points of the Newtonian philosophy, and especially on optics, naturally filled his audience with admiration; and the perspicuity with

which he communicated his ideas is said to have been unequalled. He was enabled, by the force of his memory, to perform many long operations in arithmetic, and to carry in his mind the most complex geometrical figures. As, however, it became necessary to supply the want of vision by some symbols which might be sensible to the touch, he contrived a table in which pins, whose value was determined principally by their relative position to each other, served him instead of figures, while for his diagrams he employed pegs, inserted at the requisite angles to each other, representing the lines by threads drawn around them. He was so expert in his use of these materials, that, when performing his calculations, he would change the position of the pins with nearly the same facility that another person would indite figures, and when disturbed in an operation would afterward resume it again, ascertaining the posture in which he had left it by passing his hand carefully over the table. To such shifts and inventions does human ingenuity resort when stimulated by the thirst of knowledge; as the plant, when thrown into shade on one side, sends forth its branches eagerly in that direction where the light is permitted to fall upon it.

In like manner, the celebrated mathematician, Euler, continued, for many years after he became blind, to indite and publish the results of his scientific labours, and at the time of his decease left nearly a hundred memoirs ready for the press, most of which have since been given to the world. An example of diligence equally indefatigable, though turned in a different channel, occurs in our contemporary Huber, who has contributed one of the most delightful volumes within the compass of natural history, and who, if he employed the eyes of another, guided them in their investigation to the right results by the light of his own mind.

Blindness would seem to be propitious, also, to the exercise of the inventive powers. Hence poetry from the time of Thamyris and the blind Mæonides down to the Welsh harper and the ballad-grinder of our day, has been assigned as the peculiar province of those bereft of vision,

> "As the wakeful bird
> Sings darkling, and, in shadiest covert hid,
> Tunes her nocturnal note."

The greatest epic poem of antiquity was probably, as that of the moderns was certainly, composed in darkness. It is easy to understand how the man who has once seen can recall and body forth in his conceptions new combinations of material beauty; but it would seem scarcely possible that one born blind, excluded from all acquaintance with "coloured nature," as Condillac finely styles it, should excel in descriptive poetry. Yet there are eminent examples of this; among others, that of Blacklock, whose verses abound in the most agreeable and picturesque images. Yet he could have formed no other idea of colours than was conveyed by their moral associations, the source, indeed, of most of the pleasures we derive from descriptive poetry.

It was thus that he studied the variegated aspect of nature, and read in it the successive revolutions of the seasons, their freshness, their prime, and decay.

Mons. Guillié, in an interesting essay on the instruction of the blind, to which we shall have occasion repeatedly to refer, quotes an example of the association of ideas in regard to colours, which occurred in one of his own pupils, who, in reciting the well-known passage in Horace, "*rubente dexterâ sacras jaculatus arces*," translated the first two words by "fiery" or "burning right hand." On being requested to render it literally, he called it "red right hand," and gave as the reason for his former version, that he could form no positive conception of a red colour; but that, as fire was said to be red, he connected the idea of heat with this colour, and had therefore interpreted the wrath of Jupiter, demolishing town and tower, by the epithet "fiery or burning;" for "when people are angry," he added, "they are hot, and when they are hot, they must of course be red." He certainly seems to have formed a much more accurate notion of red than Locke's blind man.*

But while a gift for poetry belongs only to the inspired few, and while many have neither taste nor talent for mathematical or speculative science, it is a consolation to reflect that the humblest individual who is destitute of sight may so far supply this deficiency by the perfection of the other senses as by their aid to attain a considerable degree of intellectual culture, as well as a familiarity with some of the most useful mechanic arts. It will be easier to conceive to what extent the perceptions of touch and hearing may be refined if we reflect how far that of sight is sharpened by exclusive reliance on it in certain situations. Thus the mariner descries objects at night, and at a distance upon the ocean, altogether imperceptible to the unpractised eye of a landsman. And the North American Indian steers his course undeviatingly through the trackless wilderness, guided only by such signs as escape the eye of the most inquisitive white man.

In like manner, the senses of hearing and feeling are capable of attaining such a degree of perfection in a blind person, that by them alone he can distinguish his various acquaintances, and even the presence of persons whom he has but rarely met before, the size of the apartment, and the general locality of the spots in which he may happen to be, and guide himself safely across the most solitary districts and amid the throng of towns. Dr. Bew, in a paper in the Manchester Collection of Memoirs, gives an account of a blind man of his acquaintance in Derbyshire, who was much used as a guide for travellers in the night over certain intricate roads, and particularly when the tracks were covered with snow. This same man was afterward employed as a projector and surveyor of roads in that county. We well remember a blind man in the neighbouring

* Who fancied that the idea of scarlet was like the sound of a trumpet. *Locke's Essay. Book* 2. *Chap.* 4.

town of Salem, who officiated some twenty years since as the town crier, when that functionary performed many of the advertising duties now usurped by the newspaper, making his diurnal round, and stopping with great precision at every corner, trivium or quadrivium, to chime his "melodious twang." Yet this feat, the familiarity of which prevented it from occasioning any surprise, could have resulted only from the nicest observation of the undulations of the ground, or by an attention to the currents of air, or the different sound of the voice or other noises in these openings, signs altogether lost upon the man of eyes.

Mons. Guillié mentions several apparently well-attested anecdotes of blind persons who had the power of discriminating colours by the touch. One of the individuals noticed by him, a Dutchman, was so expert in this way that he was sure to come off conqueror at the card-table by the knowledge which he thus obtained of his adversary's hand, whenever it came to his turn to deal. This power of discrimination of colours, which seems to be a gift only of a very few of the finer-fingered gentry, must be founded on the different consistency or smoothness of the ingredients used in the various dyes. A more certain method of ascertaining these colours, that of tasting or touching them with the tongue, is frequently resorted to by the blind, who by this means often distinguish between those analogous colours, as black and dark blue, red and pink, which, having the greatest apparent affinity, not unfrequently deceive the eye.

Diderot, in an ingenious letter on the blind, *à l' usage de ceux qui voient*, has given a circumstantial narration of his visit to a blind man at Puisseaux, the son of a professor in the University of Paris, and well known in his day from the various accomplishments and manual dexterity which he exhibited, remarkable in a person in his situation. Being asked what notion he had formed of an eye, he replied, "I conceive it to be an organ on which the air produces the same effect as this staff on my hand. If, when you are looking at an object, I should interpose anything between your eyes and that object, it would prevent you from seeing it. And I am in the same predicament when I seek one thing with my staff and come across another." An explanation, says Diderot, as lucid as any which could be given by Descartes, who, it is singular, attempts, in his Dioptrics, to explain the analogy between the senses of feeling and seeing by figures of men blindfolded, groping their way with staffs in their hands. This same intelligent personage became so familiar with the properties of touch that he seems to have accounted them almost equally valuable with those of vision. On being interrogated if he felt a great desire to have eyes he answered, "Were it not for the mere gratification of curiosity, I think I should do as well to wish for long arms. It seems to me that my hands would inform me better of what is going on in the moon than your eyes and telescopes; and then the eyes lose the power of vision more readily than the hands that of feeling. It would be better to perfect the organ which I have than to bestow on me that which I have not."

Indeed, the "geometric sense" of touch, as Buffon terms it, as far as it reaches, is more faithful, and conveys oftentimes a more satisfactory idea of external forms than the eye itself. The great defect is that its range is necessarily so limited. It is told of Saunderson that, on one occasion, he detected by his finger a counterfeit coin which had deceived the eye of a connoisseur. We are hardly aware how much of our dexterity in the use of the eye arises from incessant practice. Those who have been relieved from blindness at an advanced, or even early period of life, have been found frequently to recur to the old and more familiar sense of touch, in preference to the sight. The celebrated English anatomist, Cheselden, mentions several illustrations of this fact in an account given by him of a blind boy, whom he had successfully couched for cataracts, at the age of fourteen. It was long before the youth could discriminate by his eye between his old companions, the family cat and dog, dissimilar as such animals appear to us in colour and conformation. Being ashamed to ask the oft-repeated question, he was observed one day to pass his hand carefully over the cat, and then, looking at her steadfastly, to exclaim, "So, puss, I shall know you another time." It is more natural that he should have been deceived by the illusory art of painting, and it was long before he could comprehend that the objects depicted did not possess the same relief on the canvass as in nature. He inquired, "Which is the lying sense here, the sight or the touch?"

The faculty of hearing would seem susceptible of a similar refinement with that of seeing. To prove this without going into farther detail, it is only necessary to observe that much the larger proportion of blind persons are, more or less, proficients in music, and that in some of the institutions for their education, as that in Paris, for instance, *all* the pupils are instructed in this delightful art. The gift of a natural ear for melody, therefore, deemed comparatively rare with the *clairvoyans*, would seem to exist so far in every individual as to be capable, by a suitable cultivation, of affording a high degree of relish, at least to himself.

As, in order to a successful education of the blind, it becomes necessary to understand what are the faculties, intellectual and corporeal, to the development and exercise of which their peculiar condition is best adapted, so it is equally necessary to understand how far, and in what manner, their moral constitution is likely to be affected by the insulated position in which they are placed. The blind man, shut up within the precincts of his own microcosm, is subjected to influences of a very different complexion from the bulk of mankind, inasmuch as each of the senses is best fitted to the introduction of a certain class of ideas into the mind, and he is deprived of that one through which the rest of his species receive by far the greatest number of theirs. Thus it will be readily understood that his notions of modesty and delicacy may a good deal differ from those of the world at large. The blind man of Puisseaux confessed that he could not comprehend why it should be reckoned improper

to expose one part of the person rather than another. Indeed, the conventional rules, so necessarily adopted in society in this relation, might seem, in a great degree, superfluous in a blind community.

The blind man would seem, also, to be less likely to be endowed with the degree of sensibility usual with those who enjoy the blessing of sight. It is difficult to say how much of our early education depends on the looks, the frowns, the smiles, the tears, the example, in fact, of those placed over and around us. From all this the blind child is necessarily excluded. These, however, are the great sources of sympathy. We feel little for the joys or the sorrows which we do not witness. "Out of sight, out of mind," says the old proverb. Hence people are so ready to turn away from distress which they cannot, or their avarice will not suffer them to relieve. Hence, too, persons whose compassionate hearts would bleed at the infliction of an act of cruelty on so large an animal as a horse or a dog, for example, will crush without concern a wilderness of insects, whose delicate organisation, and whose bodily agonies are imperceptible to the naked eye. The slightest injury occurring in our own presence affects us infinitely more than the tidings of the most murderous battle, or the sack of the most populous and flourishing city at the extremity of the globe. Yet such, without much exaggeration, is the relative position of the blind, removed by their infirmity at a distance from the world, from the daily exhibition of those mingled scenes of grief and gladness which have their most important uses, perhaps, in calling forth our sympathies for our fellow-creatures.

It has been affirmed that the situation of the blind is unpropitious to religious sentiment. They are necessarily insensible to the grandeur of the spectacle which forces itself upon our senses every day of our existence. The magnificent map of the heavens, with —

> "Every star
> Which the clear concave of a winter's night
> Pours on the eye,"

is not unrolled for them. The revolutions of the seasons, with all their beautiful varieties of form and colour, and whatever glories of the creation lift the soul in wonder and gratitude to the Creator, are not for them. Their world is circumscribed by the little circle which they can span with their own arms. All beyond has for them no real existence. This seems to have passed within the mind of the mathematician Saunderson, whose notions of a Deity would seem to have been, to the last, exceedingly vague and unsettled. The clergyman who visited him in his latter hours endeavoured to impress upon him the evidence of a God as afforded by the astonishing mechanism of the universe. "Alas!" said the dying philosopher, "I have been condemned to pass my life in darkness, and you speak to me of prodigies which I cannot comprehend, and which can only be felt by you, and those who see like you!" When reminded of the faith of Newton, Leibnitz, and Clarke, minds from whom he had drunk so deeply of instruction, and for whom he entertained the pro-

foundest veneration, he remarked, "the testimony of Newton is not so strong for me as that of Nature was for him; Newton believed on the word of God himself, while I am reduced to believe on that of Newton." He expired with this ejaculation on his lips, "God of Newton, have mercy on me!"

These, however, may be considered as the peevish ebullitions of a naturally sceptical and somewhat disappointed spirit, impatient of an infirmity which obstructed, as he conceived, his advancement in the career of science to which he had so zealously devoted himself. It was in allusion to this, undoubtedly, that he depicted his life as having been "one long desire and continued privation."

It is far more reasonable to believe that there are certain peculiarities in the condition of the blind which more than counterbalance the unpropitious circumstances above described, and, which have a decided tendency to awaken devotional sentiment in their minds. They are the subjects of a grievous calamity, which, as in all such cases, naturally disposes the heart to sober reflection, and, when permanent and irremediable, to passive resignation. Their situation necessarily excludes most of those temptations which so sorely beset us in the world—those tumultuous passions which, in the general rivalry, divide man from man, and embitter the sweet cup of social life—those sordid appetites which degrade us to the level of the brutes. They are subjected, on the contrary, to the most healthful influences. Their occupations are of a tranquil, and oftentimes of a purely intellectual character. Their pleasures are derived from the endearments of domestic intercourse, and the attentions almost always conceded to persons in their dependant condition must necessarily beget a reciprocal kindliness of feeling in their own bosoms. In short, the uniform tenor of their lives is such as naturally to dispose them to resignation, serenity, and cheerfulness; and accordingly, as far as our own experience goes, these have usually been the characteristics of the blind.

Indeed, the cheerfulness almost universally incident to persons deprived of sight, leads us to consider blindness as, on the whole, a less calamity than deafness. The deaf man is continually exposed to the sight of pleasures and to society in which he can take no part. He is the guest at a banquet of which he is not permitted to partake, the spectator at a theatre where he cannot comprehend a syllable. If the blind man is excluded from sources of enjoyment equally important, he has, at least, the advantage of not perceiving, and not even comprehending what he has lost. It may be added, that perhaps the greatest privation consequent on blindness is the inability to read, as that on deafness is the loss of the pleasures of society. Now the eyes of another may be made, in a great degree, to supply this defect of the blind man, while no art can afford a corresponding substitute to the deaf for the privations to which he is doomed in social intercourse. He cannot hear with the ears of another. As, however, it is undeniable that blindness makes one more dependant than deafness, we may be content with the conclusion that the former would be the

most eligible for the rich, and the latter for the poor. Our remarks will be understood as applying to those only who are wholly destitute of the faculties of sight and hearing. A person afflicted only with a partial derangement or infirmity of vision is placed in the same tantalizing predicament above described of the deaf, and is, consequently, found to be usually of a far more impatient and irritable temperament, and, consequently, less happy than the totally blind. With all this, we doubt whether there be one of our readers, even should he assent to the general truth of our remarks, who would not infinitely prefer to incur partial to total blindness, and deafness to either. Such is the prejudice in favour of eyes!

Patience, perseverance, habits of industry, and, above all, a craving appetite for knowledge, are sufficiently common to be considered as characteristics of the blind, and have tended greatly to facilitate their education, which must otherwise prove somewhat tedious, and, indeed, doubtful as to its results, considering the formidable character of the obstacles to be encountered. A curious instance of perseverance in overcoming such obstacles occurred at Paris, when the institutions for the deaf and dumb and for the blind were assembled under the same roof in the convent of the Celestines. The pupils of the two seminaries, notwithstanding the apparently insurmountable barrier interposed between them by their respective infirmities, contrived to open a communication with each other, which they carried on with the greatest vivacity.

It was probably the consideration of those moral qualities, as well as of the capacity for improvement which we have described as belonging to the blind, which induced the benevolent Haüy, in conjunction with the Philanthropic Society of Paris, to open there, in 1784, the first regular seminary for their education ever attempted. This institution underwent several modifications, not for the better, during the revolutionary period which followed; until, in 1816, it was placed on the respectable basis on which it now exists, under the direction of Dr. Guillié, whose untiring exertions have been blessed with the most beneficial results.

We shall give a brief view of the course of education pursued under his direction, as exhibited by him in the valuable treatise to which we have already referred, occasionally glancing at the method adopted in the corresponding institution at Edinburgh.

The fundamental object proposed in every scheme of education for the blind is, to direct the attention of the pupil to those studies and mechanic arts which he will be able afterward to pursue by means of his own exertions and resources, without any external aid. The sense of touch is the one, therefore, almost exclusively relied on. The fingers are the eyes of the blind. They are taught to read in Paris by feeling the surface of metallic types, and in Edinburgh by means of letters raised on a blank leaf of paper. If they are previously acquainted with spelling, which may be easily taught them before entering the institution, they learn to discriminate the several letters with great facility. The perceptions become so fine by practice,

that they can discern even the finest print, and when the fingers fail them, readily distinguish it by applying the tongue. A similar method is employed for instructing them in figures; the notation table, invented by Saunderson, and once used in the Paris seminary, having been abandoned as less simple and obvious, although his symbols for the representation of geometrical diagrams are still retained.

As it would be labour lost to learn the art of reading without having books to read, various attempts have been made to supply this desideratum. The first hint of the form now adopted for the impression of these books was suggested by the appearance exhibited on the reverse side of a copy as removed fresh from the printing-press. In imitation of this, a leaf of paper of a firm texture is forcibly impressed with types unstained by ink, and larger than the ordinary size, until a sufficiently bold relief has been obtained to enable the blind person to distinguish the characters by the touch. The French have adopted the Italian hand, or one very like it, for the fashion of the letters, while the Scotch have invented one more angular and rectilinear, which, besides the advantage of greater compactness, is found better suited to accurate discrimination by the touch than smooth and extended curves and circles.

Several important works have been already printed on this plan, viz., a portion of the Scriptures, catechisms, and offices for daily prayer; grammars in the Greek, Latin, French, English, Italian, and Spanish languages; a Latin *selecta*, a geography, a course of general history, a selection from English poets and prose writers, a course of literature, with a compilation of the choicest specimens of French eloquence. With all this, the art of printing for the blind is still in its infancy. The characters are so unwieldy, and the leaves (which cannot be printed on the reverse side, as this would flatten the letters upon the other) are necessarily so numerous as to make the volume exceedingly bulky, and of course expensive. The Gospel of St. John, for example, expands into three large octavo volumes. Some farther improvement must occur, therefore, before the invention can become extensively useful. There can be no reason to doubt of such a result eventually, for it is only by long and repeated experiment that the art of printing in the usual way, and every other art, indeed, has been brought to its present perfection. Perhaps some mode may be adopted like that of stenography, which although encumbering the learner with some additional difficulties at first, may abundantly compensate him in the condensed forms, and consequently cheaper and more numerous publications which could be afforded by it. Perhaps ink, or some other material of greater consistency than that ordinarily used in printing, may be devised, which, when communicated by the type to the paper, will leave a character sufficiently raised to be distinguished by the touch. We have known a blind person able to decipher the characters in a piece of music to which the ink had been imparted more liberally than usual. In the mean time, what has been already done has conferred a service on the blind

which we, who become insensible from the very prodigality of our blessings, cannot rightly estimate. The glimmering of the taper, which is lost in the blaze of day, is sufficient to guide the steps of the wanderer in darkness. The unsealed volume of Scripture will furnish him with the best sources of consolation under every privation; the various grammars are so many keys with which to unlock the stores of knowledge to enrich his after life, and the selections from the most beautiful portions of elegant literature will afford him a permanent source of recreation and delight.

One method used for instruction in writing is, to direct the pencil, or stylus, in a groove cut in the fashion of the different letters. Other modes, however, too complex for description here, are resorted to, by which the blind person is enabled not only to write, but to read what he has thus traced. A portable writing-case for this purpose has also been invented by one of the blind, who, it is observed, are the most ingenious in supplying, as they are best acquainted with, their own wants. A very simple method of epistolary correspondence, by means of a string-alphabet, as it is called, consisting of a cord or riband in which knots of various dimensions represent certain classes of letters, has been devised by two blind men at Edinburgh. This contrivance, which is so simple that it can be acquired in an hour's time by the most ordinary capacity, is asserted to have the power of conveying ideas with equal precision with the pen. A blind lady of our acquaintance, however, whose fine understanding and temper have enabled her to surmount many of the difficulties of her situation, after a trial of this invention, gives the preference to the mode usually adopted by her of pricking the letters on the paper with a pin—an operation which she performs with astonishing rapidity, and which, in addition to the advantage possessed by the string-alphabet of being legible by the touch, answers more completely the purposes of epistolary correspondence, since it may be readily interpreted by any one on being held up to the light.

The scheme of instruction at the institution for the blind in Paris comprehends geography, history, the Greek and Latin, together with the French, Italian, and English languages, arithmetic, and the higher branches of mathematics, music, and some of the most useful mechanic arts. For mathematics, the pupils appear to discover a natural aptitude, many of them attaining such proficiency as not only to profit by the public lectures of the most eminent professors in the sciences, but to carry away the highest prizes in the lyceums in a competition with those who possess the advantages of sight. In music, as we have before remarked, they all make greater or less proficiency. They are specially instructed in the organ, which, from its frequency in the churches, affords one of the most obvious means of obtaining a livelihood.

The method of tuition adopted is that of mutual instruction. The blind are ascertained to learn most easily and expeditiously from those in the same condition with themselves. Two male teachers, with one female, are in this way found adequate to the superintendence of

eighty scholars, which, considering the obstacles to be encountered, must be admitted to be a small apparatus for the production of such extensive results.

In teaching them the mechanic arts, two principles appear to be kept in view, namely, to select such for each individual respectively as may be best adapted to his future residence and destination; the trades, for example, most suitable for a seaport being those least so for the country, and *vice versâ*. Secondly, to confine their attention to such occupations as from their nature are most accessible to, and which can be most perfectly attained by, persons in their situation. It is absurd to multiply obstacles from the mere vanity of conquering them.

Printing is an art for which the blind show particular talent, going through all the processes of composing, serving the press, and distributing the types with the same accuracy with those who can see. Indeed, much of this mechanical occupation with the *clairvoyans* (we are in want of some such compendious phrase in our language) appears to be the result rather of habit than any exercise of the eye. The blind print all the books for their own use. They are taught, also, to spin, and to knit, in which last operation they are extremely ready, knitting very finely, with open work, &c., and are much employed by the Parisian hosiers in the manufacture of elastic vests, shirts, and petticoats. They make purses, delicately embroidered with figures of animals and flowers, whose various tints are selected with perfect propriety. The fingers of the females are observed to be particularly adapted to this nicer sort of work, from their superior delicacy, ordinarily, to those of men. They are employed also in manufacturing girths, in netting in all its branches, in making shoes of list, plush, cloth, coloured skin, and list carpets, of which a vast number is annually disposed of. Weaving is particularly adapted to the blind, who perform all the requisite manipulation without any other assistance but that of setting up the warp. They manufacture whips, straw bottoms for chairs, coarse straw hats, rope, cord, packthread, baskets, straw, rush, and plush mats, which are very saleable in France.

The articles manufactured in the asylum for the blind in Scotland are somewhat different; and as they show for what an extensive variety of occupations they may be qualified in despite of their infirmity, we will take the liberty, at the hazard of being somewhat tedious, of quoting the catalogue of them exhibited in one of their advertisements. The articles offered for sale consist of cotton and linen cloths, ticked and striped Hollands, towelling and diapers, worsted net for fruit-trees; hair cloth, hair mats, and hair ropes; basket-work of every description; hair, India hemp, and straw doormats; saddle girths; rope and twines of all kinds; netting for sheep-pens; garden and onion twine nets; fishing nets, beehives, mattresses, and cushions; feather beds, bolsters, and pillows; mattresses and beds of every description cleaned and repaired. The labours in this department are performed by the boys. The girls are employed in

sewing, knitting stockings, spinning, making fine banker's twine, and various works besides, usually executed by well-educated females.

Such is the emulation of the blind, according to Dr. Guillié, in the institution of Paris, that hitherto there has been no necessity of stimulating their exertions by the usual motives of reward or punishment. Delighted with their sensible progress in vanquishing the difficulties incident to their condition, they are content if they can but place themselves on a level with the more fortunate of their fellow creatures. And it is observed that many, who in the solitude of their own homes have failed in their attempts to learn some of the arts taught in this institution, have acquired a knowledge of them with great alacrity when cheered by the sympathy of individuals involved in the same calamity with themselves, and with whom, of course, they could compete with equal probability of success.

The example of Paris has been followed in the principal cities in most of the other countries of Europe: in England, Scotland, Russia, Prussia, Austria, Switzerland, Holland, and Denmark. These establishments, which are conducted on the same general principles, have adopted a plan of education more or less comprehensive, some of them, like those of Paris and Edinburgh, involving the higher branches of intellectual education, and others, as in London and Liverpool, confining themselves chiefly to practical arts. The results, however, have been in the highest degree cheering to the philanthropist in the light thus poured in upon minds to which all the usual avenues were sealed up—in the opportunity afforded them of developing those latent powers which had been hitherto wasted in inaction, and in the happiness thus imparted to an unfortunate class of beings, who now, for the first time, were permitted to assume their proper station in society and instead of encumbering, to contribute, by their own exertions, to the general prosperity.

We rejoice that the inhabitants of our own city have been the first to give an example of such beneficent institutions in the New World. And it is principally with the view of directing the attention of the public towards it that we have gone into a review of what has been effected in this way in Europe. The credit of having first suggested the undertaking here is due to our townsman, Dr. John D. Fisher, through whose exertions, aided by those of several other benevolent individuals, the subject was brought before the Legislature of this state, and an act of incorporation was granted to the petitioners, bearing date March 2nd, 1829, authorizing them, under the title of the "New England Asylum for the Blind," to hold property, receive donations and bequests, and to exercise the other functions usually appertaining to similar corporations.

A resolution was subsequently passed, during the same session, requiring the select men of the several towns throughout the commonwealth to make returns of the number of blind inhabitants, with their ages, periods of blindness, personal condition, &c. By far the larger proportion of these functionaries, however, with a degree of apathy which does them very little credit, paid no attention

whatever to this requisition. By the aid of such as did comply with it, and by means of circulars addressed to the clergymen of the various parishes, advices have been received from one hundred and forty-one towns, comprising somewhat less than half of the whole number within the state. From this imperfect estimate it would appear that the number of blind persons in these towns amounts to two hundred and forty-three, of whom more than one-fifth are under thirty years of age, which period is assigned as the limit within which they cannot fail of receiving all the benefit to be derived from the system of instruction pursued in the institutions of the blind.

The proportion of the blind to our whole population, as founded on the above estimate, is somewhat higher than that established by Zeune for the corresponding latitudes in Europe, where blindness decreases in advancing from the equator to the poles, it being computed in Egypt at the rate of one to one hundred, and in Norway of one to one thousand, which last is conformable to ours.

Assuming the preceding estimate as the basis, it will appear that there are about five hundred blind persons in the State of Massachusetts at the present moment; and, adopting the census of 1820, there could not at that time, according to the same rate, be less than sixteen hundred and fifty in all New England, one-fifth being under thirty years of age; a number which, as the blind are usually retired from public observation, far exceeds what might be conceived on a cursory inspection.

From the returns it would appear that a large proportion of the blind in Massachusetts are in humble circumstances, and a still larger proportion of those in years indigent or paupers. This is imputable to their having learned no trade or profession in their youth, so that, when deprived of their natural guardians, they have necessarily become a charge upon the public.

Since the year 1825 an appropriation has been continued by the Legislature for the purpose of maintaining a certain number of pupils at the Asylum for the Deaf and Dumb at Hartford. A resolution was obtained during the last session of the General Court authorizing the governor to pay over to the Asylum for the Blind whatever balance of the sum thus appropriated might remain in the treasury unexpended at the end of the current year, and the same with every subsequent year to which the grant extended, unless otherwise advised. Seven hundred dollars only have been received as the balance of the past year, a sum obviously inadequate to the production of any important result, and far inferior to what had been anticipated by the friends of the measure. On the whole, we are inclined to doubt whether this will be found the most suitable mode of creating resources for the asylum. Although, in fact, it disposes only of the superfluity, it has the appearance of subtracting from the positive revenues of the Deaf and Dumb, an institution of equal merit and claims with any other whatever. The Asylum for the Blind is an establishment of too much importance to be left thus dependant on a precarious contingent, and is worthy, were it only in

an economical point of view, of being placed by the state on some more secure and ample basis.

As it is, the want of funds opposes a sensible obstruction to its progress. The pressure of the times has made the present moment exceedingly unfavourable to personal solicitation, although so much has been effected in this way, through the liberality of a few individuals, that, as we understand, preparations are now making for procuring the requisite instructors and apparatus on a moderate and somewhat reduced scale.

As to the comprehensiveness of the scheme of education to be pursued at the asylum, whether it shall embrace intellectual culture, or be confined simply to the mechanic arts, this must, of course, be ultimately determined by the extent of its resources. We trust, however, it will be enabled to adopt the former arrangement, at least so far as to afford the pupils an acquaintance with the elements of the more popular sciences. There is such a diffusion of liberal knowledge among all classes in this country, that if the blind are suffered to go without any tincture of it from the institution, they will always, whatever be the skill acquired by them in mechanical occupations, continue to feel a sense of their own mental inferiority. The connexion of these higher with the more direct objects of the institution will serve, moreover, to give it greater dignity and importance. And while it will open sources of knowledge from which many may be in a situation to derive permanent consolation, it will instruct the humblest individual in what may be of essential utility to him, as writing and arithmetic, for example, in his intercourse with the world.

To what extent it is desirable that the asylum be placed on a charitable foundation is another subject of consideration. This, we believe, is the character of most of the establishments in Europe, That in Scotland, for instance, contains about a hundred subjects, who, with their families included, amount to two hundred and fifty souls, all supported from the labours of the blind, conjointly with the funds of the institution. This is undoubtedly one of the noblest and most discriminating charities in the world. It seems probable, however, that this is not the plan best adapted to our exigencies. We want not to maintain the blind, but to put them in the way of contributing to their own maintenance. By placing the expenses of tuition and board as low as possible, the means of effecting this will be brought within the reach of a large class of them; and for the rest, it will be obvious economy in the state to provide them with the means of acquiring an education at once that may enable them to contribute permanently towards their own support, which, in some shape or other, is now chargeable on the public. Perhaps, however, some scheme may be devised for combining both these objects, if this be deemed preferable to the adoption of either exclusively.

We are convinced that, as far as the institution is to rely for its success on public patronage, it will not be disappointed. If once successfully in operation, and brought before the public eye, it cannot

fail of exciting a very general sympathy, which, in this country, has never been refused to the calls of humanity. No one, we think, who has visited the similar endowments in Paris or in Edinburgh will easily forget the sensations which he experienced on witnessing so large a class of his unfortunate fellow-creatures thus restored from intellectual darkness to the blessings, if we may so speak, of light and liberty. There is no higher evidence of the worth of the human mind than its capacity of drawing consolation from its own resources under so heavy a privation; so that it not only can exhibit resignation and cheerfulness, but energy to burst the fetters with which it is encumbered. Who could refuse his sympathy to the success of these efforts, or withhold from the subject of them the means of attaining his natural level and usefulness in society, from which circumstances, less favourable to him than to ourselves, have hitherto excluded him?

CERVANTES.

JULY, 1837.

The publication, in this country, of an important Spanish classic in the original, with a valuable commentary, is an event of some moment in our literary annals, and indicates a familiarity, rapidly increasing, with the beautiful literature to which it belongs. It may be received as an omen favourable to the cause of modern literature in general, the study of which, in all its varieties, may be urged on substantially the same grounds. The growing importance attached to this branch of education is visible in other countries quite as much as in our own. It is the natural, or rather, necessary result of the changes which have taken place in the social relations of man in this revolutionary age. Formerly, a nation, pent up within its own barriers, knew less of its neighbours than we now know of what is going on in Siam or Japan. A river, a chain of mountains, an imaginary line, even, parted them as far asunder as if oceans had rolled between. To speak correctly, it was their imperfect civilization, their ignorance of the means and the subjects of communication, which thus kept them asunder. Now, on the contrary, a change in the domestic institutions of one country can hardly be effected without a corresponding agitation in those of its neighbours. A treaty of alliance can scarcely be adjusted without the intervention of a general congress. The sword cannot be unsheathed in one part of Christendom without thousands leaping from their scabbards in every other. The whole system is bound together by as nice sympathies as if animated by a common pulse, and the remotest countries of Europe are brought into contiguity as intimate as were in ancient times the provinces of a single monarchy.

This intimate association has been prodigiously increased of late years by the unprecedented discoveries which science has made for facilitating intercommunication. The inhabitant of Great Britain, that *ultima Thule* of the ancients, can now run down to the extremity of Italy in less time than it took Horace to go from Rome to Brundusium. A steamboat of fashionable tourists will touch at all the places of note in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* in fewer weeks than it would have cost years to an ancient argonaut, or a crusader of the middle ages. Every one, of course, travels, and almost every capital and noted watering-place on the continent swarms with its thousands, and Paris with its tens of thousands, of itinerant Cockneys, many of whom, perhaps, have not wandered beyond the sound of Bow-bells in their own little island.

Few of these adventurers are so dull as not to be quickened into something like curiosity respecting the language and institutions of the strange people among whom they are thrown, while the better sort and more intelligent are led to study more carefully the new forms, whether in arts or letters, under which human genius is unveiled to them.

The effect of all this is especially visible in the reforms introduced into the modern systems of education. In both the universities recently established in London, the apparatus for instruction, instead of being limited to the ancient tongues, is extended to the whole circle of modern literature; and the editorial labours of many of the professors show that they do not sleep on their posts. Periodicals, under the management of the ablest writers, furnish valuable contributions of foreign criticism and intelligence; and regular histories of the various continental literatures, a department in which the English are singularly barren, are understood to be now in actual preparation.

But, although barren of literary, the English have made important contributions to the political history of the continental nations. That of Spain has employed some of their best writers, who, it must be admitted, however, have confined themselves so far to the foreign relations of the country as to have left the domestic in comparative obscurity. Thus Robertson's great work is quite as much the history of Europe as of Spain under Charles the Fifth; and Watson's *Reign of Philip the Second* might with equal propriety be styled "The War of the Netherlands" which is its principal burden.

A few works recently published in the United States have shed far more light on the interior organization and intellectual culture of the Spanish nation. Such, for example, are the writings of Irving, whose gorgeous colouring reflects so clearly the chivalrous splendours of the fifteenth century, and the travels of Lieutenant Slidell, presenting sketches equally animated of the social aspect of that most picturesque of all lands in the present century. In Mr. Cushing's *Reminiscences of Spain* we find, mingled with much characteristic fiction, some very laborious inquiries into curious and recondite points of history. In the purely literary department, Mr. Ticknor's beautiful lectures before the classes of Harvard University, still in manuscript,

embrace a far more extensive range of criticism than is to be found in any Spanish work and display, at the same time, a degree of thoroughness and research which the comparative paucity of materials will compel us to look for in vain in Bouterwek or Sismondi. Mr. Ticknor's successor, Professor Longfellow, favourably known by other compositions, has enriched our language with a noble version of the *Coplas de Manrique*, the finest gem beyond all comparison, in the Castilian verse of the fifteenth century. We have also read with pleasure a clever translation of Quevedo's *Visions*, no very easy achievement, by Mr. Elliot, of Philadelphia, though the translator is wrong in supposing his the first English version. The first is as old as Queen Anne's time, and was made by the famous Sir Roger L'Estrange. To close the account, Mr. Sales, the venerable instructor in Harvard College, has now given, for the first time in the New World, an elaborate edition of the prince of Castilian classics, in a form which may claim, to a certain extent, the merit of originality.

We shall postpone the few remarks we have to make on this edition to the close of our article; and in the meantime, we propose, not to give the life of Cervantes, but to notice such points as are least familiar in his literary history, and especially in regard to the composition and publication of his great work, the *Don Quixote;* a work which, from its wide and long-established popularity, may be said to constitute part of the literature, not merely of Spain but of every country in Europe.

The age of Cervantes was that of Philip the Second, when the Spanish monarchy, declining somewhat from its palmy state, was still making extraordinary efforts to maintain, and even to extend its already overgrown empire. Its navies were on every sea, and its armies in every quarter of the Old world and in the New. Arms was the only profession worthy of a gentleman; and there was scarcely a writer of any eminence—certainly no bard—of the age, who if he were not in orders, had not borne arms, at some period, in the service of his country. Cervantes, who, though poor, was born of an ancient family (it must go hard with a Castilian who cannot make out a pedigree for himself), had a full measure of this chivalrous spirit, and, during the first half of his life, we find him in the midst of all the stormy and disastrous scenes of the iron trade of war. His love of the military profession, even after the loss of his hand, or of the use of it, for it is uncertain which, is sufficient proof of his adventurous spirit. In the course of his chequered career he visited the principal countries in the Mediterranean, and passed five years in melancholy captivity at Algiers. The time was not lost, however, which furnished his keen eye with those glowing pictures of Moslem luxury and magnificence with which he has enriched his pages. After a life of unprecedented hardship, he returned to his own country, covered with laurels and scars, with very little money in his pocket, but with plenty of that experience which, regarding him as a novelist, might be considered his stock-in-trade.

The poet may draw from the depths of his own fancy, the scholar from his library; but the proper study of the dramatic writer, whether in verse or in prose is man—man, as he exists in society. He who would faithfully depict human character cannot study it too nearly and variously. He must sit down, like Scott by the fireside of the peasant, and listen to the "auld wife's" tale; he must preside, with Fielding, at a petty justice sessions, or share with some Squire Western in the glorious hazards of a foxhunt; he must, like Smollett and Cooper, study the mysteries of the deep, and mingle on the stormy element itself with the singular beings whose destinies he is to describe; or like Cervantes, he must wander among other races and in other climes before his pencil can give those chameleon touches which reflect the shifting, many-coloured hues of actual life. He may, indeed, like Rousseau, if it were possible to imagine another Rousseau, turn his thoughts inward, and draw from the depths of his own soul; but he would see there only his own individual passions and prejudices, and the portraits he might sketch, however various in subordinate details, would be, in their characteristic features only the reproduction of himself. He might, in short, be a poet, a philosopher, but not a painter of life and manners.

Cervantes had ample means for pursuing the study of human character, after his return to Spain, in the active life which engaged him in various parts of the country. In Andalusia he might have found the models of the sprightly wit and delicate irony with which he has seasoned his fictions; in Seville, in particular, he was brought in contact with the fry of small sharpers and pickpockets, who make so respectable a figure in his *picaresco* novels; and in La Mancha he not only found the geography of his *Don Quixote*, but that whimsical contrast of pride and poverty in the natives, which has furnished the outlines of many a broad caricature to the comic writers of Spain.

During all this, while he had made himself known only by his pastoral fiction, the *Galatea*, a beautiful specimen of an insipid class, which, with all its literary merits, afforded no scope for the power of depicting human character, which he possessed, perhaps, unknown to himself. He wrote, also, a good number of plays, all of which, except two, and these recovered only at the close of the last century, have perished. One of these, *The Siege of Numantia*, displays that truth of drawing and strength of colour which mark the consummate artist. It was not until he had reached his fifty-seventh year that he completed the first part of his great work, the *Don Quixote*. The most celebrated novels, unlike most works of imagination, seem to have been the production of the later period of life. Fielding was between forty and fifty when he wrote *Tom Jones*. Richardson was sixty, or very near it, when he wrote *Clarissa;* and Scott was some years over forty when he began the series of the *Waverley Novels*. The world, the school of the novelist, cannot be run through like the terms of a university, and the knowledge of its manifold varieties must be the result of long and diligent training.

The first part of the *Quixote* was begun, as the author tells us, in a prison, to which he had been brought, not by crime or debt, but by some offence, probably, to the worthy people of La Mancha. It is not the only work of genius which has struggled into being in such unfavourable quarters. The *Pilgrim's Progress*, the most popular, probably, of English fictions, was composed under similar circumstances. But we doubt if such brilliant fancies and such flashes of humour ever lighted up the walls of the prison-house before the times of Cervantes.

The first part of the *Don Quixote* was given to the public in 1605. Cervantes, when the time arrived for launching his satire against the old, deep-rooted prejudices of his countrymen, probably regarded it, as well he might, as little less rash than his own hero's tilt against the windmills. He sought, accordingly, to shield himself under the cover of a powerful name, and asked leave to dedicate the book to a Castilian grandee, the duke de Bejar. The duke, it is said, whether ignorant of the design, or doubting the success of the work, would have declined, but Cervantes urged him first to peruse a single chapter. The audience summoned to sit in judgment were so delighted with the first pages, that they would not abandon the novel till they had heard the whole of it. The duke, of course, without farther hesitation, condescended to allow his name to be inserted in this passport to immortality.

There is nothing very improbable in the story. It reminds one of a similar experiment by St. Pierre, who submitted his manuscript of *Paul and Virginia* to a circle of French *littérateurs*, Monsieur and Madame Necker, the Abbé Galiani, Thomas, Buffon, and some others, all wits of the first water in the metropolis. Hear the result, in the words of his biographer, or, rather, his agreeable translator: "At first the author was heard in silence; by degrees the attention grew languid; they began to whisper, to gape, and listened no longer. M. de Buffon looked at his watch, and called for his horses; those near the door slipped out; Thomas went to sleep; M. Necker laughed to see the ladies weep; and the ladies, ashamed of their tears, did not dare to confess that they had been interested. The reading being finished, nothing was praised. Madame Necker alone criticised the conversation of Paul and the old man. This *moral* appeared to her tedious and commonplace; it broke the action, chilled the reader, and was a sort of *glass of iced water*. M. de St. Pierre retired in a state of indescribable depression. He regarded what had passed as his sentence of death. The effect of his work on an audience like that to which he had read it left him no hope for the future." Yet this work was *Paul and Virginia*, one of the most popular books in the French language. So much for criticism!

The truth seems to be, that the judgment of no private circle, however well qualified by taste and talent, can afford a sure prognostic of that of the great public. If the manuscript to be criticised is our friend's, of course the verdict is made up before perusal. If some great man modestly sues for our approbation, our self-com-

placency has been too much flattered for us to withhold it. If it be a little man (and St. Pierre was but a little man at that time), our prejudices—the prejudices of poor human nature--will be very apt to take an opposite direction. Be the cause what it may, whoever rests his hopes of public favour on the smiles of a *coterie* runs the risk of finding himself very unpleasantly deceived. Many a trim bark which has flaunted gaily in a summer lake has gone to pieces amid the billows and breakers of the rude ocean.

The prognostic, in the case of Cervantes, however proved more correct. His work produced an instantaneous effect on the community. He had struck a note which found an echo in every bosom. Four editions were published in the course of the first year,—two in Madrid, one in Valencia, and another at Lisbon.

This success, almost unexampled in any age, was still more extraordinary in one in which the reading public was comparatively limited. That the book found its way speedily into the very highest circles in the kingdom is evident from the well-known exclamation of Philip the Third, when he saw a student laughing immoderately over some volume: "The man must be either out of his wits, or reading *Don Quixote*." Notwithstanding this, its author felt none of that sunshine of royal favour which would have been so grateful in his necessities.

The period was that of the golden prime of Castilian literature. But the monarch on the throne, one of the ill-starred dynasty of Austria, would have been better suited to the darkest of the Middle Ages. His hours, divided between his devotions and his debaucheries, left nothing to spare for letters; and his minister, the arrogant duke of Lerma, was too much absorbed by his own selfish, though shallow schemes of policy, to trouble himself with romance writers or their satirist. Cervantes, however, had entered on a career which, as he intimates in some of his verses, might lead to fame, but not to fortune. Happily he did not compromise his fame by precipitating the execution of his works from motives of temporary profit. It was not till several years after the publication of the *Don Quixote* that he gave to the world his *Exemplary Novels*, as he called them; fictions which, differing from anything before known, not only in the Castilian, but, in some respects, in any other literature, gave ample scope to his dramatic talent, in the contrivance of situations, and the nice delineation of character. These works, whose diction was uncommonly rich and attractive, were popular from the first.

One cannot but be led to inquire why, with such success as an author, he continued to be so straitened in his circumstances, as he plainly intimates was the case more than once in his writings. From the *Don Quixote*, notwithstanding its great run, he probably received little, since he had parted with the entire copyright before publication, when the work was regarded as an experiment, the result of which was quite doubtful. It is not so easy to explain the difficulty when his success as an author had been so completely established. Cervantes intimates his dissatisfaction, in more than one place in his

writings, with the booksellers themselves. "What, sir!" replies an author introduced into his *Don Quixote*, "would you have me sell the profit of my labour to a bookseller for three maravedis a sheet? for that is the most they will bid, nay, and expect, too, I should thank them for the offer." This burden of lamentation, the alleged illiberality of the publisher towards the poor author, is as old as the art of book-making itself. But the public receive the account from the party aggrieved only. If the bookseller reported his own case, we should, no doubt, have a different version. If Cervantes was in the right, the trade in Castile showed a degree of dexterity in their proceedings which richly entitled them to the pillory. In one of his tales, we find a certain licentiate complaining of "the tricks and deceptions they put upon an author when they buy a copyright from him; and still more, the manner in which they cheat him if he prints the book at his own charges; since nothing is more common than for them to agree for fifteen hundred, and have privily, perhaps as many as three thousand thrown off, one half, at the least, of which they sell, not for his profit, but their own."

The writings of Cervantes appear to have gained him, however, two substantial friends in Cabra, the count of Lemos, and the archbishop of Toledo, of the ancient family of Rojas; and the patronage of these illustrious individuals has been nobly recompensed by having their names for ever associated with the imperishable productions of genius.

There was still one kind of patronage wanting in this early age, that of a great, enlightened community—the only patronage which can be received without some sense of degradation by a generous mind. There was, indeed, one golden channel of public favour, and that was the theatre. The drama has usually flourished most at the period when a nation is beginning to taste the sweets of literary culture. Such was the early part of the seventeenth century in Europe; the age of Shakspeare, Jonson, and Fletcher in England; of Ariosto, Machiavelli, and the wits who first successfully wooed the comic muse of Italy; of the great Corneille some years later, in France; and of that miracle, or, rather "monster of nature," as Cervantes styled him, Lope de Vega in Spain. Theatrical exhibitions are a combination of the material with the intellectual, at which the ordinary spectator derives less pleasure, probably, from the beautiful creations of the poet than from the scenic decorations, music, and other accessories which address themselves to the senses. The fondness for *spectacle* is characteristic of an early period of society, and the theatre is the most brilliant of pageants. With the progress of education and refinement, men become less open to, or, at least, less dependent on the pleasures of sense, and seek their enjoyment in more elevated and purer sources. Thus it is that, instead of—

> "Sweating in the crowded theatre, squeezed
> And bored with elbow-points through both our sides,"

as the sad minstrel of nature sings, we sit quietly at home, enjoying the pleasures of fiction around our own firesides, and the poem or the

novel takes the place of the acted drama. The decline of dramatic writing may justly be lamented as that of one of the most beautiful varieties in the garden of literature. But it must be admitted to be both a symptom and a necessary consequence of the advance of civilization.

The popularity of the stage, at the period of which we are speaking, in Spain, was greatly augmented by the personal influence and reputation of Lope de Vega, the idol of his countrymen, who threw off the various inventions of his genius with a rapidity and profusion that almost staggers credibility. It is impossible to state the results of his labours in any form that will not powerfully strike the imagination. Thus, he has left 21,300,000 verses in print, besides a mass of manuscript. He furnished the theatre, according to the statement of his intimate friend, Montalvan, with 1,800 regular plays, and 400 *autos* or religious dramas—all acted. He composed, according to his own statement, more than 100 comedies in the almost incredible space of twenty-four hours each, and a comedy averaged between two and three thousand verses, great part of them rhymed and interspersed with sonnets and other more difficult forms of versification. He lived seventy-two years; and supposing him to have employed fifty of that period in composition, although he filled a variety of engrossing vocations during that time, he must have averaged a play a week, to say nothing of twenty-one volumes quarto of miscellaneous works, including five epics, written in his leisure moments, and all now in print!

The only achievements we can recall in literary history bearing any resemblance to, though falling far short of this, are those of our illustrious contemporary, Sir Walter Scott. The complete edition of his works, recently advertised by Murray, with the addition of two volumes, of which Murray has not the copyright, probably contains ninety volumes small octavo. To these should farther be added a large supply of matter for the *Edinburgh Annual Register*, as well as other anonymous contributions. Of these, forty-eight volumes of novels and twenty-one of history and biography were produced between 1814 and 1831, or in seventeen years. These would give an average of four volumes a year, or one for every three months during the whole of that period, to which must be added twenty-one volumes of poetry and prose previously published. The mere mechanical execution of so much work, both in his case and Lope de Vega's would seem to be scarce possible in the limits assigned. Scott, too, was as variously occupied in other ways as his Spanish rival, and probably, from the social hospitality of his life, spent a much larger portion of his time in no literary occupation at all.

Notwithstanding we have amused ourselves, at the expense of the reader's patience perhaps, with these calculations, this certainly is not the standard by which we should recommend to estimate works of genius. Wit is not to be measured, like broad-cloth, by the yard. Easy writing, as the adage says, and as we all know, is apt to be very hard reading. This brings to our recollection a conversation, in

the presence of Captain Basil Hall, in which some allusion having been made to the astonishing amount of Scott's daily composition, the literary argonaut remarked, "There was nothing astonishing in all that, and that he did as much himself nearly every day before breakfast." Some one of the company unkindly asked, "Whether he thought the *quality* was the same." It is the quality, undoubtedly, which makes the difference. And in this view Lope de Vega's miracles lose much of their effect. Of all his multitudinous dramas, one or two only retain possession of the stage, and few, very few are now even read. His facility of composition was like that of an Italian improvisatore, whose fertile fancy easily clothes itself in verse, in a language the vowel terminations of which afford such a plenitude of rhymes. The Castilian presents even greater facilities for this than the Italian. Lope de Vega was an improvisatore.

With all his negligences and defects, however, Lope's interesting intrigues; easy, sprightly dialogue; infinite variety of inventions; and the breathless rapidity with which they followed one another, so dazzled and bewildered the imagination, that he completely controlled the public, and became, in the words of Cervantes, "sole monarch of the stage." The public repaid him with such substantial gratitude as has never been shown, probably, to any other of its favourites. His fortune at one time, although he was careless of his expenses, amounted to one hundred thousand ducats, equal, probably, to between seven and eight hundred thousand dollars of the present day. In the same street in which dwelt this spoiled child of fortune, who, amid the caresses of the great, and the lavish smiles of the public, could complain that his merits were neglected, lived Cervantes, struggling under adversity, or at least earning a painful subsistence by the labours of his immortal pen. What a contrast do these pictures present to the imagination! If the suffrages of a *coterie*, as we have said, afford no warrant for those of the public, the example before us proves that the award of one's contemporaries is quite as likely to be set aside by posterity. Lope de Vega, who gave his name to his age, has now fallen into neglect even among his countrymen, while the fame of Cervantes, gathering strength with time, has become the pride of his own nation, as his works still continue to be the delight of the whole civilized world.

However stinted may have been the recompence of his deserts at home, it is gratifying to observe how widely his fame was diffused in his own lifetime, and that in foreign countries, at least, he enjoyed the full consideration to which he was entitled. An interesting anecdote illustrating this is recorded, which, as we have never seen it in English, we will lay before the reader. On occasion of a visit made by the Archbishop of Toledo to the French ambassador, resident at Madrid, the prelate's suite fell into conversation with the attendants of the minister, in the course of which Cervantes was mentioned. The French gentlemen expressed their unqualified admiration of his writings, specifying the *Galatea*, *Don Quixote*, and the Novels, which, they said, were read in all the countries round, and in France

particularly, where there were some who might be said to know them actually by heart. They intimated their desire to become personally acquainted with so eminent a man, and asked many questions respecting his present occupations, his circumstances, and way of life. To all this the Castilians could only reply that he had borne arms in the service of his country, and was now old and poor. "What!" exclaimed one of the strangers, "is Señor Cervantes not in good circumstances? Why is he not maintained, then, out of the public treasury?" "Heaven forbid," rejoined another, "that his necessities should be ever relieved, if it is these which make him write, since it is his poverty that makes the world rich."

There are other evidences, though not of so pleasing a character, of the eminence which he had reached at home in the jealousy and ill-will of his brother poets. The Castilian poets of that day seem to have possessed a full measure of that irritability which has been laid at the door of all their tribe since the days of Horace; and the freedom of Cervantes's literary criticisms, in his *Don Quixote* and other writings, though never personal in their character, brought down on his head a storm of arrows, some of which, if not sent with much force, were, at least, well steeped in venom. Lope de Vega is even said to have appeared among the assailants, and a sonnet, still preserved, is currently imputed to him, in which after much eulogy on himself, he predicts that the works of his rival will find their way into the kennel. But the author of this bad prophecy and worse poetry could never have been the great Lope, who showed, on all occasions, a generous spirit, and whose literary success must have made such an assault unnecessary, and, in the highest degree, unmanly. On the contrary, we have evidence of a very different feeling, in the homage which he renders to the merits of his illustrious contemporary, in more than one passage of his acknowledged works, especially in his *Laurel de Apolo*, in which he concludes his poetical panegyric with the following touching conceit: —

> "Porque se diga que una mano herida,
> Pudo dar á su dueño eterna vida."

This poem was published by Lope in 1630, fourteen years after the death of his rival; notwithstanding Mr. Lockhart informs his readers, in his biographical preface to the *Don Quixote*, that "as Lope de Vega was dead (1615), there was no one to divide with Cervantes the literary empire of his country."

In the dedication of his ill-fated comedies, 1615 (for Cervantes, like most other celebrated novelists, found it difficult to concentrate his expansive vein within the compass of dramatic rules), the public was informed that "*Don Quixote* was already booted," and preparing for another sally. It may seem strange that the author, considering the great popularity of his hero, had not sent him on his adventures before. But he had probably regarded them as already terminated; and he had good reason to do so, since every incident in the first part, as it has been styled only since the publication of the second, is complete in itself, and the *Don*, although not actually

killed on the stage, is noticed as dead, and his epitaph transcribed for the reader. However this may be, the immediate execution of his purpose, so long delayed, was precipitated by an event equally unwelcome and unexpected. This was the continuation of his work by another hand.

The author's name, his *nom de guerre*, was Avellaneda, a native of Tordesillas. Adopting the original idea of Cervantes, he goes forward with the same characters, through similar scenes of comic extravagance, in the course of which he perpetrates sundry plagiarisms from the first part, and has some incidents so much resembling those in the second part, already written by Cervantes, that it has been supposed he must have had access to his manuscript. It is more probable, as the resemblance is but general, that he obtained his knowledge through hints, which may have fallen in conversation, from Cervantes in the progress of his own work. The spurious continuation had some little merit, and attracted, probably, some interest, as any work conducted under so popular a name could not have failed to do. It was, however, on the whole, a vulgar performance, thickly sprinkled with such gross scurrility and indecency, as was too strong even for the palate of that not-very-fastidious age. The public feeling may be gathered from the fact that the author did not dare to depart from his incognito, and claim the honours of a triumph. The most diligent inquiries have established nothing farther than that he was an Aragonese, judging from his diction, and, from the complexion of certain passages in the work, probably an ecclesiastic, and one of the swarm of small dramatists who felt themselves rudely handled by the criticism of Cervantes. The work was subsequently translated, or rather paraphrased, by Le Sage, who has more than once given a substantial value to gems of little price in Castilian literature by the brilliancy of his setting. The original work of Avellaneda, always deriving an interest from the circumstances of its production, has been reprinted in the present century, and is not difficult to be met with. To have thus coolly invaded an author's own property, to have filched from him the splendid, though unfinished creations of his genius, before his own face and while, as was publicly known, he was in the very process of completing them, must be admitted to be an act of unblushing effrontery, not surpassed in the annals of literature.

Cervantes was much annoyed, it appears, by the circumstance. The continuation of Avellaneda reached him probably, when on the fifty-ninth chapter of the second part. At least, from that time he begins to discharge his gall on the head of the offender, who, it should be added, had consummated his impudence by sneering, in his introduction, at the qualifications of Cervantes. The best retort of the latter, however, was the publication of his own book, which followed at the close of 1615.

The English novelist, Richardson, experienced a treatment not unlike that of the Castilian. His popular story of *Pamela* was continued by another and very inferior hand, under the title of

Pamela in High Life. The circumstance prompted Richardson to undertake the continuation himself; and it turned out, like most others, a decided failure. Indeed, a skilful continuation seems to be the most difficult work of art. The first effort of the author breaks, as it were, unexpectedly on the public, taking their judgments by surprise, and by its very success, creating a standard by which the author himself is subsequently to be tried. Before, he was compared with others; he is now to be compared with himself. The public expectation has been raised. A degree of excellence, which might have found favour at first, will now scarcely be tolerated. It will not even suffice for him to maintain his own level; he must rise above himself. The reader, in the meanwhile, has naturally filled up the blank, and insensibly conducted the characters and the story to a termination in his own way. As the reality seldom keeps pace with the ideal, the author's execution will hardly come up to the imagination of his readers; at any rate, it will differ from them, and so far be displeasing. We experience something of this disappointment in the dramas borrowed from popular novels, where the development of the characters by the dramatic author, and the new direction given to the original story in his hands, rarely fail to offend the taste and preconceived ideas of the spectator. To feel the force of this, it is only necessary to see *Guy Mannering*, *Rob Roy*, and other plays dramatized from the *Waverley Novels*.

Some part of the failure of such continuations is, no doubt, fairly chargeable, in most instances, on the author himself, who goes to his new task with little of his primitive buoyancy and vigour. He no longer feels the same interest in his own labours, which, losing their freshness, have become as familiar to his imagination as a thrice-told tale. The new composition has of course, a different complexion from the former, cold, stiff, and disjointed, like a bronze statue, whose parts have been separately put together, instead of being cast in one mould when the whole metal was in a state of fusion.

The continuation of Cervantes forms a splendid exception to the general rule. The popularity of his first part had drawn forth abundance of criticism, and he availed himself of it to correct some material blemishes in the design of the second, while an assiduous culture of the Castilian enabled him to enrich his style with greater variety and beauty.

He had now reached the zenith of his fame, and the profits of his continuation may have relieved the pecuniary embarrassments under which he had struggled. But he was not long to enjoy his triumph. Before his death, which took place in the following year, he completed his romance of *Persiles and Sigismunda*, the dedication to which, written a few days before his death, is strongly characteristic of its writer. It is addressed to his old patron, the Conde de Lemos, then absent from the country. After saying, in the words of the old Spanish proverb, that he had "*one foot in the stirrup*," in allusion to the distant journey on which he was soon to set out, he adds, "Yesterday I received the extreme unction; but now that the

shadows of death are closing around me, I still cling to life, from the love of it, as well as from the desire to behold you again. But if it is decreed otherwise (and the will of Heaven be done) your excellency will at least feel assured there was one person whose wish to serve you was greater than the love of life itself." After these reminiscences of his benefactor, he expresses his own purpose, should life be spared to complete several works he had already begun. Such were the last words of this illustrious man, breathing the same generous sensibility, the same ardent love of letters, and beautiful serenity of temper which distinguished him through life. He died a few days after, on the 23rd of April, 1616. His remains were laid, without funeral pomp, in the monastery of the Holy Trinity at Madrid. No memorial points out the spot to the eye of the traveller, nor is it known at this day. And, while many a costly construction has been piled on the ashes of the little great, to the shame of Spain be it spoken, no monument hat yet been erected in honour of the greatest genius she has produced. He has built, however, a monument for himself more durable than brass, or sculptured marble.

Don Quixote is too familiar to the reader to require any analysis; but we will enlarge on a few circumstances attending its composition but little known to the English scholar, which may enable him to form a better judgment for himself. The age of chivalry, as depicted in romances, could never, of course, have had any real existence; but the sentiments which are described as animating that age have been found more or less operative in different countries and different periods of society. In Spain especially this influence is to be discerned from a very early date. Its inhabitants may be said to have lived in a romantic atmosphere, in which all the extravagances of chivalry were nourished by their peculiar situation. Their hostile relations with the Moslem kept alive the full glow of religious and patriotic feeling. Their history is one interminable crusade. An enemy always on the borders, invited perpetual displays of personal daring and adventure. The refinement and magnificence of the Spanish Arabs throw a lustre over these contests, such as could not be reflected from the rude skirmishes with their Christian neighbours. Lofty sentiments, embellished by the softer refinements of courtesy, were blended in the martial bosom of the Spaniard, and Spain became emphatically the land of romantic chivalry.

The very laws themselves, conceived in this spirit, contributed greatly to foster it. The ancient code of Alfonso the Tenth, in the thirteenth century after many minute regulations for the deportment of the good knight, enjoins on him to "invoke the name of his mistress in the fight, that it may infuse new ardour into his soul, and preserve him from the commission of unknightly actions." Such laws were not a dead letter. The history of Spain shows that the sentiment of romantic gallantry penetrated the nation more deeply, and continued longer than in any other quarter of Christendom.

Foreign chroniclers, as well as domestic, of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, notice the frequent appearance of Spanish knights

in different courts of Europe, whither they had travelled, in the language of an old writer, "to seek honour and reverence" by their feats of arms. In the *Paston Letters*, written in the time of Henry the Sixth of England, we find a notice of a Castilian knight who presented himself before the court, and, with his mistress's favour around his arm, challenged the English cavaliers "to run a course of sharp spears with him for his sovereign lady's sake." Pulgar, a Spanish chronicler of the close of the sixteenth century, speaks of this roving knight-errantry as a thing of familiar occurrence among the young cavaliers of his day; and Oviedo, who lived somewhat later, notices the necessity under which every true knight found himself, of being in love, or *feigning to be so*, in order to give a suitable lustre and incentive to his achievements. But the most singular proof of the extravagant pitch to which these romantic feelings were carried in Spain occurs in the account of the jousts appended to the fine old chronicle of Alvaro de Luna, published by the Academy, in 1784. The principal champion was named Sueño de Quenones, who, with nine companions in arms, defended a pass at Orbigo, not far from the shrine of Compostella, against all comers, in the presence of King John the Second and his court. The object of this passage of arms, as it was called, was to release the knight from the obligation imposed on him by his mistress, of publicly wearing an iron collar round his neck every Thursday. The jousts continued for thirty days, and the doughty champions fought without shield or target, with weapons bearing points of Milan steel. Six hundred and twenty-seven encounters took place, and one hundred and sixty-six lances were broken, when the emprise was declared to be fairly achieved. The whole affair is narrated with becoming gravity, by an eye-witness, and the reader may fancy himself perusing the adventures of a Launcelot or an Amadis. The particulars of this tourney are detailed at length in Mills's *Chivalry* (vol. ii. chap. v.), where, however, the author has defrauded the successful champions of their full honours by incorrectly reporting the number of lances broken as only sixty-six.

The taste for these romantic extravagances naturally fostered a corresponding taste for the perusal of tales of chivalry. Indeed, they acted reciprocally on each other. These chimerical legends had once, also, beguiled the long evenings of our Norman ancestors; but, in the progress of civilization, had gradually given way to other and more natural forms of composition. They still maintained their ground in Italy, whither they had passed later, and where they were consecrated by the hand of genius. But Italy was not the true soil of chivalry, and the inimitable fictions of Borjardo, Pulci, and Ariosto were composed with that lurking smile of half-suppressed mirth which, far from a serious tone, could raise only a corresponding smile of incredulity in the reader.

In Spain, however, the marvels of romance were all taken in perfect good faith. Not that they were received as literally true; but the reader surrendered himself up to the illusion, and was moved to

admiration by the recital of deeds which, viewed in any other light than as a wild frolic of imagination, would be supremely ridiculous; for these tales had not the merit of a seductive style and melodious versification to relieve them. They were, for the most part, an ill-digested mass of incongruities, in which there were as little keeping and probability in the characters as the incidents, while the whole was told in that stilted "Hercles' vein," and with that licentiousness of allusion and imagery which could not fail to debauch both the taste and the morals of the youthful reader. The mind, familiarized with these monstrous, over-coloured pictures, lost all relish for the chaste and sober productions of art. The love of the gigantic and the marvellous indisposed the reader for the simple delineations of truth in real history. The feelings expressed by a sensible Spaniard of the sixteenth century, the anonymous author of the *Dialogo de las Lenguas*, probably represent those of many of his contemporaries. "Ten of the best years of my life," says he, "were spent no more profitably than in devouring these lies, which I did even while eating my meals; and the consequence of this depraved appetite was, that if I took in hand any true book of history, or one that passed for such, I was unable to wade through it."

The influence of this meretricious taste was nearly as fatal on the historian himself as on his readers, since he felt compelled to minister to the public appetite such a mixture of the marvellous in all his narrations as materially discredited the veracity of his writings. Every hero became a demigod, who put the labours of Hercules to shame; and every monk or old hermit was converted into a saint, who wrought more miracles, before and after death, that would have sufficed to canonize a monastery. The fabulous ages of Greece are scarcely more fabulous than the close of the Middle Ages in Spanish history, which compares very discreditably, in this particular, with similar periods in most European countries. The confusion of fact and fiction continues to a very late age; and as one gropes his way through the twilight of tradition, he is at a loss whether the dim objects are men or shadows. The most splendid names in Castilian annals—names incorporated with the glorious achievements of the land, and embalmed alike in the page of the chronicler and the song of the minstrel—names associated with the most stirring, patriotic recollections—are now found to have been the mere coinage of fancy. There seems to be no more reason for believing in the real existence of Bernardo del Carpio, of whom so much has been said and sung, than in that of Charlemagne's paladins, or of the Knights of the Round Table. Even the Cid, the national hero of Spain, is contended, by some of the shrewdest native critics of our own times, to be an imaginary being; and it is certain that the splendid fabric of his exploits, familiar as household words to every Spaniard, has crumbled to pieces under the rude touch of modern criticism. These heroes, it is true, flourished before the introduction of romances of chivalry; but the legends of their prowess have been multiplied beyond bounds, in consequence of the taste created by these romances, and an easy

faith accorded to them at the same time, such as would never have been conceded in any other civilized nation. In short, the elements of truth and falsehood became so blended, that history was converted into romance, and romance received the credit due only to history.

These mischievous consequences drew down the animadversion of thinking men, and at length provoked the interference of government itself. In 1543, Charles the Fifth, by an edict, prohibited books of chivalry from being imported into his American colonies, or being printed, or even read there. The legislation for America proceeded from the crown alone, which had always regarded the New World as its own exclusive property. In 1555, however, the cortes of the kingdom presented a *petition* (which requires only the royal signature to become at once a law), setting forth the manifold evils resulting from these romances. There is an air at once both of simplicity and solemnity in the language of this instrument which may amuse the reader: "Moreover, we say that it is very notorious what mischief has been done to young men and maidens, and other persons, by the perusal of books full of lies and vanities, like *Amadis*, and works of that description, since young people especially, from their natural idleness, resort to this kind of reading, and, becoming enamoured of passages of love or arms, or other nonsense which they find set forth therein, when situations at all analogous offer, are led to act much more extravagantly than they otherwise would have done. And many times the daughter, when her mother has locked her up safely at home, amuses herself with reading these books, which do her more hurt than she would have received from going abroad. All which redounds, not only to the dishonour of individuals, but to the great detriment of conscience, by diverting the affections from holy, true, and Christian doctrine, to those wicked vanities with which the wits, as we have intimated, are completely bewildered. To remedy this, we entreat your majesty that no book treating of such matters be henceforth permitted to be read, that those now printed be collected and burned, and that none be published hereafter without special license; by which measures your majesty will render great service to God as well as to these kingdoms," &c. &c.

Notwithstanding this emphatic expression of public disapprobation, these enticing works maintained their popularity. The Emperor Charles unmindful of his own interdict, took great satisfaction in their perusal. The royal *fêtes* frequently commemorated the fabulous exploits of chivalry, and Philip the Second, then a young man, appeared in these spectacles in the character of an adventurous knight-errant. Moratin enumerates more than seventy bulky romances, all produced in the sixteenth century, some of which passed through several editions, while many more works of the kind have, doubtless, escaped his researches. The last on his catalogue was printed in 1602, and was composed by one of the nobles at the court. Such was the state of things when Cervantes gave to the world the first part of his *Don Quixote;* and it was against prejudices which had so long bade defiance to public opinion and the law itself that he now aimed the delicate shafts of his irony. It was a perilous emprise.

To effect his end, he did not produce a mere humorous travesty, like several of the Italian poets, who, having selected some well-known character in romance, make him fall into such low dialogue and such gross buffoonery as contrast most ridiculously with his assumed name; for this, though a very good jest in its way, was but a jest, and Cervantes wanted the biting edge of satire. He was, besides, too much of a poet—was too deeply penetrated with the true spirit of chivalry not to respect the noble qualities which were the basis of it. He shows this in the *auto da fé* of the Don's library, where he spares the *Amadis de Gaula* and some others, the best of their kind. He had once himself, as he tells us, actually commenced a serious tale of chivalry.

Cervantes brought forward a personage, therefore, in whom were embodied all those generous virtues which belong to chivalry: disinterestedness, contempt of danger, unblemished honour, knightly courtesy, and those aspirations after ideal excellence which, if empty dreams, are the dreams of a magnanimous spirit. They are, indeed, represented by Cervantes as too ethereal for this world, and are successively dispelled as they come in contact with the coarse realities of life. It is this view of the subject which has led Sismondi, among other critics, to consider that the principal end of the author was "the ridicule of enthusiasm—the contrast of the heroic with the vulgar," and he sees something profoundly sad in the conclusions to which it leads. This sort of criticism appears to be over-refined. It resembles the efforts of some commentators to allegorize the great epics of Homer and Virgil, throwing a disagreeable mistiness over the story by converting mere shadows into substances, and substances into shadows.

The great purpose of Cervantes was, doubtless, that expressly avowed by himself, namely, to correct the popular taste for romances of chivalry. It is unnecessary to look for any other in so plain a tale, although, it is true, the conduct of the story produces impressions on the reader, to a certain extent, like those suggested by Sismondi. The melancholy tendency, however, is in a great degree, counteracted by the exquisitely ludicrous character of the incidents. Perhaps, after all, if we are to hunt for a moral as the key of the fiction, we may, with more reason, pronounce it to be the necessity of proportioning our undertakings to our capacities.

The mind of the hero, Don Quixote, is an ideal world, into which Cervantes has poured all the rich stores of his own imagination, the poet's golden dreams, high romantic exploits, and the sweet visions of pastoral happiness; the gorgeous chimeras of the fancied age of chivalry, which had so long entranced the world; splendid illusions which, floating before us like the airy bubbles which the child throws off from his pipe, reflect, in a thousand variegated tints, the rude objects around, until, brought into collision with these, they are dashed in pieces, and melt into air. These splendid images derive tenfold beauty from the rich, antique colouring of the author's language, skilfully imitated from the old romances, but which necessarily

escapes in the translation into a foreign tongue. Don Quixote's insanity operates both in mistaking the ideal for the real, and the real for the ideal. Whatever he has found in romances, he believes to exist in the world; and he converts all he meets with in the world into the visions of his romances. It is difficult to say which of the two produces the most ludicrous results.

For the better exposure of these mad fancies, Cervantes has not only put them into action in real life, but contrasted them with another character which may be said to form the reverse side of his hero's. Honest Sancho represents the material principle as perfectly as his master does the intellectual or ideal. He is of the earth, earthy. Sly, selfish, sensual, his dreams are not of glory, but of good feeding. His only concern is for his carcase. His notions of honour appear to be much the same with those of his jovial contemporary, Falstaff, as conveyed in his memorable soliloquy. In the sublime nightpiece which ends with the fulling-mills—truly sublime until we reach the *dénouement*—Sancho asks his master, "Why need you go about this adventure? It is main dark, and there is never a living soul sees us; we have nothing to do but to sheer off and get out of harm's way. Who is there to take notice of our flinching?" Can anything be imagined more exquisitely opposed to the true spirit of chivalry? The whole compass of fiction nowhere displays the power of contrast so forcibly as in these two characters: perfectly opposed to each other, not only in their minds and general habits, but in the minutest details of personal appearance.

It was a great effort of art for Cervantes to maintain the dignity of his hero's character in the midst of the whimsical and ridiculous distresses in which he has perpetually involved him. His infirmity leads us to distinguish between his character and his conduct, and to absolve him from all responsibility for the latter. The author's art is no less shown in regard to the other principal figure in the piece, Sancho Panza, who with the most contemptible qualities, contrives to keep a strong hold on our interest by the kindness of his nature and his shrewd understanding. He is far too shrewd a person, indeed, to make it natural for him to have followed so crackbrained a master, unless bribed by the promise of a substantial recompence. He is a personification, as it were, of the popular wisdom—a "bundle of proverbs," as his master somewhere styles him; and proverbs are the most compact form in which the wisdom of a people is digested. They have been collected into several distinct works in Spain, where they exceed in number those of any other, if not every other, country in Europe. As many of them are of great antiquity, they are of inestimable price with the Castilian purists, as affording rich samples of obsolete idioms and the various mutations of the language.

The subordinate portraits in the romance, though not wrought with the same care, are admirable studies of national character. In this view, the *Don Quixote* may be said to form an epoch in the history of letters as the original of that kind of composition, the Novel of Character, which is one of the distinguishing peculiarities

of modern literature. When well executed, this sort of writing rises to the dignity of history itself, and may be said to perform no insignificant part of the functions of the latter. History describes men less as they are than as they appear, as they are playing a part on the great political theatre—men in masquerade. It rests on state documents, which too often cloak real purposes under an artful veil of policy, or on the accounts of contemporaries blinded by passion or interest. Even without these deductions, the revolutions of states, their wars and their intrigues, do not present the only aspect, nor, perhaps, the most interesting under which human nature can be studied. It is man in his domestic relations, around his own fireside, where alone his real character can be truly disclosed; in his ordinary occupations in society, whether for purposes of profit or of pleasure; in his every-day manner of living, his tastes and opinions, as drawn out in social intercourse; it is in short, under all those forms which make up the interior of society that man is to be studied, if we would get the true form and pressure of the age—if, in short, we would obtain clear and correct ideas of the actual progress of civilization.

But these topics do not fall within the scope of the historian. He cannot find authentic materials for them. They belong to the novelist, who, indeed, contrives his incidents and creates his characters, but who, if true to his art, animates them with the same tastes, sentiments, and motives of action which belong to the period of his fiction. His portrait is not the less true because no individual has sat for it. He has seized the physiognomy of the times. Who is there that does not derive a more distinct idea of the state of society and manners in Scotland from the *Waverley Novels* than from the best of its historians? of the condition of the middle ages, from the single romance of *Ivanhoe*, than from the volumes of Hume or Hallam? In like manner, the pencil of Cervantes has given a far more distinct and a richer portraiture of life in Spain in the sixteenth century than can be gathered from a library of monkish chronicles.

Spain, which furnished the first good model of this kind of writing, seems to have possessed more ample materials for it than any other country except England. This is perhaps owing, in a great degree, to the freedom and originality of the popular character. It is the country where the lower classes make the nearest approach, in their conversation, to what is called humour. Many of the national proverbs are seasoned with it, as well as the *picaresco* tales, the indigenous growth of the soil, where, however, the humour runs rather too much to mere practical jokes. The free expansion of the popular characteristics may be traced, in part, to the freedom of the political institutions of the country before the iron hand of the Austrian Dynasty was laid on it. The long wars with the Moslem invaders called every peasant into the field, and gave him a degree of personal consideration. In some of the provinces, as Catalonia, the democratic spirit frequently rose to an uncontrollable height. In this free at-

mosphere the rich and peculiar traits of national character were unfolded. The territorial divisions which marked the Peninsula, broken up anciently into a number of petty and independent states, gave, moreover, great variety to the national portraiture. The rude Asturian, the haughty and indolent Castilian, the industrious Aragonese, the independent Catalan, the jealous and wily Andalusian, the effeminate Valensian, and magnificent Granadine, furnished an infinite variety of character and costume for the study of the artist. The intermixture of Asiatic races, to an extent unknown in any other European land, was favourable to the same result. The Jews and the Moors were settled in too great numbers, and for too many centuries, in the land, not to have left traces of their Oriental civilization. The best blood of the country has flowed from what the modern Spaniard —the Spaniard of the Inquisition—regards as impure sources; and a work, popular in the peninsula, under the name of *Tizon de España*, or "Brand of Spain," maliciously traces back the pedigrees of the noblest houses in the kingdom to a Jewish or Morisco origin. All these circumstances have conspired to give a highly poetic interest to the character of the Spaniards; to make them, in fact, the most picturesque of European nations, affording richer and far more various subjects for the novelist than other nations whose peculiarities have been kept down by the weight of a despotic government, or the artificial and levelling laws of fashion.

There is one other point of view in which the *Don Quixote* presents itself, that of its didactic import. It is not merely moral in its general tendency, though this was a rare virtue in the age in which it was written, but is replete with admonition and criticism, oftentimes requiring great boldness, as well as originality, in the author. Such for instance, are the derision of witchcraft, and other superstitions common to the Spaniards; the ridicule of torture, which, though not used in the ordinary courts, was familiar to the Inquisition; the frequent strictures on various departments and productions of literature. The literary criticism scattered throughout the work shows a profound acquaintance with the true principles of taste far before his time, and which has left his judgments of the writings of his countrymen still of paramount authority. In truth, the great scope of his work was didactic, for it was a satire against the false taste of his age. And never was there a satire so completely successful. The last romance of chivalry, before the appearance of the *Don Quixote*, came out in 1602. It was the last that was ever published in Spain. So completely was this kind of writing, which had bade defiance to every serious effort, now extinguished by the breath of ridicule,

> "That soft and summer breath, whose subtile power
> Passes the strength of storms in their most desolate hour.

It was impossible for any new author to gain an audience. The public had seen how the thunder was fabricated. The spectator had been behind the scenes, and witnessed of what cheap materials kings and queens were made. It was impossible for him, by any stretch of imagination, to convert the tinsel and painted baubles

which he had seen there into diadems and sceptres. The illusion had fled for ever.

Satire seldom survives the local or temporary interests against which it is directed. It loses its life with its sting. The satire of Cervantes is an exception. The objects at which it was aimed have long since ceased to interest. The modern reader is attracted to the book simply by its execution as a work of art, and, from want of previous knowledge, comprehends few of the allusions which gave such infinite zest to the perusal in its own day. Yet, under all these disadvantages, it not only maintains its popularity, but is far more widely extended, and enjoys far higher consideration, than in the life of its author. Such are the triumphs of genius!

Cervantes correctly appreciated his own work. He more than once predicted its popularity. "I will lay a wager," says Sancho, "that before long there will not be a chophouse, tavern, or barber's stall but will have a painting of our achievements." The honest squire's prediction was verified in his own day; and the author might have seen paintings of his work on wood and on canvas, as well as copper-plate engravings of it. Besides several editions of it at home, it was printed, in his own time, in Portugal, Flanders, and Italy. Since that period it has passed into numberless editions both in Spain and other countries. It has been translated into nearly every European tongue over and over again; into English ten times, into French eight, and others less frequently. We will close the present notice with a brief view of some of the principal editions, together with that at the head of our article.

The currency of the romance among all classes frequently invited its publication by incompetent hands; and the consequence was a plentiful crop of errors, until the original text was nearly despoiled of its beauty, while some passages were omitted, and foreign ones still more shamefully interpolated. The first attempt to retrieve the original from these harpies, who thus foully violated it, singularly enough, was made in England. Queen Caroline, the wife of George the Second, had formed a collection of books of romance, which she playfully named the "library of the sage Merlin." The romance of Cervantes alone was wanting; and a nobleman, Lord Carteret, undertook to provide her with a suitable copy at his own expense. This was the origin of the celebrated edition published by Tonson, in London, 1738, 4 tom. 4to. It contained the Life of the Author, written for it by the learned Mayans y Siscar. It was the first biography (which merits the name) of Cervantes; and it shows into what oblivion his personal history had already fallen, that no less than seven towns claimed each the honour of giving him birth. The fate of Cervantes resembled that of Homer.

The example thus set by foreigners excited an honourable emulation at home; and at length, in 1780, a magnificent edition, from the far-famed press of Ibarra, was published at Madrid, in 4 tom. 4to. under the auspices of the Royal Spanish Academy; which unlike many other literary bodies of sounding name, has contributed most

essentially to the advancement of letters, not merely by original memoirs, but by learned and very beautiful editions of ancient writers. Its *Don Quixote* exhibits a most careful revision of the text, collated from the several copies printed in the author's lifetime, and supposed to have received his own emendations. There is too good reason to believe that these corrections were made with a careless hand; at all events, there is a plentiful harvest of typographical blunders in these primitive editions.

Prefixed to the publication of the Academy is the Life of Cervantes, by Rios, written with uncommon elegance, and containing nearly all that is of much interest in his personal history. A copious analysis of the romance follows, in which a parallel is closely elaborated between it and the poems of Homer. But the romantic and the classical differ too widely from each other to admit of such an approximation; and the method of proceeding necessarily involves its author in infinite absurdities, which show an entire ignorance of the true principles of philosophical criticism, and which he would scarcely have fallen into had he given heed to the maxims of Cervantes himself.

In the following year, 1781, there appeared another edition in England deserving of particular notice. It was prepared by the Rev. Mr. Bowle, clergyman at Idemestone, who was so enamoured of the romance of Cervantes, that, after collecting a library of such works as could any way illustrate his author, he spent fourteen years in preparing a suitable commentary on him. There was ample scope for such a commentary. Many of the satirical allusions of the romance were misunderstood, as we have said, owing to ignorance of the books of chivalry at which they were aimed. Many incidents and usages, familiar to the age of Cervantes, had long since fallen into oblivion; and much of idiomatic phraseology had grown to be obsolete, and required explanation. Cervantes himself had fallen into some egregious blunders, which in his subsequent revision of the work he had neglected to set right. The reader will readily call to mind the confusion as to Sancho's Dapple, who appears and disappears, most unaccountably, on the scene, according as the author happens to remember or forget that he was stolen. He afterward corrected this in two or three instances, but left three or four others unheeded. To the same account must be charged numberless gross anachronisms. Indeed, the whole Second Part is an anachronism, since the author introduces his hero criticising his first part, in which his own epitaph is recorded.

Cervantes seems to have had a great distaste for the work of revision. Some of his blunders he laid at the printer's door, and others he dismissed with the remark, more ingenious than true, that they were like moles, which, though blemishes in themselves, added to the beauty of the countenance. He little dreamed that his lapses were to be watched so narrowly, that a catalogue was actually to be set down of all his repetitions and inconsistencies, and that each of his hero's sallies was to be adjusted by an accurate chronological

table like any real history. He would have been still slower to believe that in the middle of the eighteenth century a learned society, the Academy of Literature and Fine Arts at Troyes in Champagne, should have chosen a deputation of their body to visit Spain and examine the library of the Escurial, in order to obtain, if possible, the original MS. of that Arabian sage from whom Cervantes professed to have translated his romance. This was to be more mad than Don Quixote himself; yet this actually happened.

Bowle's edition was printed in six volumes quarto; the two last contained notes, illustrations, and index, *all, as well as the text, in Castilian.* Watt, in his laborious *Bibliotheca Britannica*, remarks that the book did not come up to the public expectation. If so, the public must have been very unreasonable. It was a marvellous achievement for a foreigner. It was the first attempt at a commentary on the *Quixote*, and, although doubtless exhibiting inaccuracies which a native might have escaped, has been a rich mine of illustration, from which native critics have helped themselves most liberally, and sometimes with scanty acknowledgment.

The example of the English critic led to similar labours in Spain, among the most successful of which may be mentioned the edition by Pellicer, which has commended itself to every scholar by its very learned disquisitions on many topics both of history and criticism. It also contains a valuable memoir of Cervantes, whose life has since been written, in a manner which leaves nothing farther to be desired, by Navarrete, well known by his laborious publication of documents relative to the early Spanish discoveries. His biography of the novelist comprehends all the information, direct and subsidiary, which can now be brought together for the elucidation of his personal or literary history. If Cervantes, like his great contemporary Shakspeare, has left few authentic details of his existence, the deficiency has been diligently supplied, in both cases, by speculation and conjecture.

There was still wanting a classical commentary on the *Quixote*, devoted to the literary execution of the work. Such a commentary has at length appeared from the pen of Clemencin, the accomplished secretary of the Spanish Academy of History, who had acquired a high reputation for himself by the publication of the sixth volume of its memoirs, the exclusive work of his own hand. In his edition of the romance, besides illuminating with rare learning many of the obscure points in the narrative, he has accompanied the text with a severe but enlightened criticism, which, while it boldly exposes occasional offences against taste or grammar, directs the eye to those latent beauties which might escape a rapid or an ordinary reader. We much doubt if any Castilian classic has been so ably illustrated. Unfortunately, the first part only was completed by the commentator, who died very recently. It will not be easy to find a critic equally qualified by his taste and erudition for the completion of the work.

The English, as we have noticed, have evinced their relish for Cervantes, not only by their critical labours, but by repeated transla-

tions. Some of these are executed with much skill, considering the difficulty of correctly rendering the idiomatic phraseology of humorous dialogue. The most popular versions are those of Motteux, Jarvis, and Smollett. Perhaps the first is the best of all. It was by a Frenchman, who came over to England in the time of James the Second. It betrays nothing of its foreign parentage, however, while its rich and racy diction and its quaint turns of expression are admirably suited to convey a lively and very faithful image of the original. The slight tinge of antiquity which belongs to the time is not displeasing, and comports well with the tone of knightly dignity which distinguishes the hero. Lockhart's notes and poetical versions of old Castilian ballads, appended to the recent edition of Motteux, have rendered it by far the most desirable translation. It is singular that the first classical edition of *Don Quixote*, the first commentary, and probably the best foreign translation, should have been all produced in England; and farther, that the English commentator should have written in Spanish, and the English translation have been by a Frenchman.

We now come to Mr. Sales's recent edition of the original, the first, probably, which has appeared in the New World, of the one-half of which the Spanish is the spoken language. There was great need of some uniform edition to meet the wants of our University, where much inconvenience has been long experienced from the discrepancies of the copies used. The only ones to be procured in this country are contemptible both in regard to printing and paper, and are defaced by the grossest errors. They are the careless manufacture of ill-informed Spanish booksellers, made to sell, and dear besides.

Mr. Sales has adopted a right plan for remedying these several evils. He has carefully formed his text on that of the last and most correct edition of the Academy and as he has stereotyped the work, any verbal errors may be easily rectified. The Academy has substituted the modern orthography for that of Cervantes, who, independently of the change which has gradually taken place in the language, seems to have had no uniform system himself. Mr. Sales has conformed to the rules prescribed by this high authority for regulating his orthography, accent, and punctuation. In some instances, only, he has adopted the ancient usage in beginning words with *f* instead of *h*, and retaining obsolete terminations of verbs, as *hablades* for *hablais*, *hablabades* for *hablabais*, *amades* for *amais*, *amabades* for *amabais*, &c., no doubt as better suited to the lofty tone of the good knight's discourses, who himself affected a reverence for the antique in his conversation to which his translators have not always sufficiently attended.

In one respect the present editor has made some alterations not before attempted, we believe, in the text of his original. We have already noticed the inaccuracies of the early copies of the *Don Quixote*, partly imputable to Cervantes himself, and in a greater degree, doubtless, to his printers. There is no way of rectifying such errors by collation with the author's manuscript, which has long since

disappeared. All that can now be done, therefore, is to point out the purer reading in a note, as Clemencin, Arrieta, and other commentators have done, or, as Mr. Sales has preferred, to introduce it into the body of the text. We will give one or two specimens of these alterations:

"Poco mas ó menos."—Tom. i. p. 141.

The reading in the old editions is "poco mas á menos," a phrase as unintelligible in Spanish now as its literal translation would be in English, although in use, it would seem from other authorities, in the age of Cervantes.

"Por tales os juzgué y tuve."—Tom. i. p. 104.

The old editions add "*siempre*," which clearly is incorrect, since *Don Quixote* is speaking of the present occasion.

"Don *Quijote* quedó admirado."—Tom. i. p. 143.

Other editions read "*El cual* quedó," &c. The use of the relative leaves the reader in doubt who is intended, and Mr. Sales, in conformity to Clemencin's suggestion, has made the sentence clear by substituting the name of the knight.

"Donde les *sucedieron* cosas," &c.—Tom. ii. p. 44.

In other editions, "*sucedió*;" bad grammar, since it agrees with a plural noun.

"En tan poco espacio de tiempo como ha que *estuvo* allá," &c. (tom. ii. p. 132), instead of "*está* allá," clearly the wrong tense, since the verb refers to past time.

It is unnecessary to multiply examples, a sufficient number of which have been cited to show on what principles the emendations have been made. They have been confined to the correction of such violations of grammar, or such inaccuracies of expression, as obscure or distort the meaning. They have been made with great circumspection, and in obedience to the suggestion of the highest authorities in the language. For the critical scholar, who would naturally prefer the primitive text with all its impurities, they were not designed. But they are of infinite value to the general reader and the student, who may now read this beautiful classic purified from those verbal blemishes, which, however obvious to a native, could not fail to mislead a foreigner.

Besides these emendations, Mr. Sales has illustrated the work by prefixing to it the admirable preliminary discourse of Clemencin, and by a considerable body of notes, selected and abridged from the most approved commentators; and as the object has been to explain the text to the reader, not to involve him in antiquarian or critical disquisitions, when his authorities have failed to do this, the editor has supplied notes of his own, throwing much light on matters least familiar to a foreigner. In this part of his work we think he might have derived considerable aid from Bowle, whom he does not appear to have consulted. The Castilian commentator, Arrieta, whom he liberally uses, is largely indebted to the English critic, who, as a

foreigner, moreover, has been led into many seasonable explanations that would be superfluous to a Spaniard.

We may notice another peculiarity in the present edition, that of breaking up the text into reasonable paragraphs, in imitation of the English translations; a great relief to the spirits of the reader, which are seriously damped, in the ancient copies, by the interminable waste of page upon page, without these convenient halting-places.

But our readers, we fear, will think we are running into an interminable waste of discussion. We will only remark, therefore, in conclusion, that the mechanical execution of the book is highly creditable to our press. It is, moreover, adorned with etchings by our American Cruikshank, Johnston—some of them original, but mostly copies from the late English edition of Smollett's translations. They are designed and executed with much spirit, and no doubt, would have fully satisfied honest Sancho, who predicted this kind of immortality for himself and his master.

We congratulate the public on the possession of an edition of the pride of Castilian literature from our own press, in so neat a form, and executed with so much correctness and judgment; and we trust that the ambition of its respectable editor will be gratified by its becoming, as it well deserves to be, the manual of the student in every seminary throughout the country where the noble Castilian language is taught.

SIR WALTER SCOTT.

APRIL, 1838.

THERE is no kind of writing, which has truth and instruction for its main object, so interesting and popular, on the whole, as biography. History, in its larger sense, has to deal with masses, which, while they divide the attention by the dazzling variety of objects, from their very generality, are scarcely capable of touching the heart. The great objects on which it is employed have little relation to the daily occupations with which the reader is most intimate. A nation, like a corporation, seems to have no soul, and its chequered vicissitudes may be contemplated rather with curiosity for the lessons they convey than with personal sympathy. How different are the feelings excited by the fortunes of an individual—one of the mighty mass, who in the page of history is swept along the current unnoticed and unknown! Instead of a mere abstraction, at once we see a being like ourselves, "fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, healed by the same means, warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer" as we are. We place ourselves in his position, and see the passing current of events with the same eyes. We become a party to all his little schemes—share in his triumphs—or mourn with him in the disappointment of defeat.

His friends become our friends. We learn to take an interest in their characters from their relation to him. As they pass away from the stage one after another, and as the clouds of misfortune, perhaps, or of disease, settle around the evening of his own day, we feel the same sadness that steals over us on a retrospect of earlier and happier hours. And, when at last we have followed him to the tomb, we close the volume, and feel that we have turned over another chapter in the history of life.

On the same principles, probably, we are more moved by the exhibition of those characters whose days have been passed in the ordinary routine of domestic and social life, than by those most intimately connected with the great public events of their age. What indeed, is the history of such men but that of the times? The life of Wellington or of Bonaparte is the story of the wars and revolutions of Europe. But that of Cowper, gliding away in the seclusion of rural solitude, reflects all those domestic joys, and, alas! more than the sorrows, which gather around every man's fireside and his heart. In this way the story of the humblest individual, faithfully recorded, becomes an object of lively interest. How much is that interest increased in the case of a man like Scott, who, from his own fireside, has sent forth a voice to cheer and delight millions of his fellowmen; whose life was passed within the narrow circle of his own village, as it were, but who, nevertheless, has called up more shapes and phantasies within that magic circle, acted more extraordinary parts and afforded more marvels for the imagination to feed on, than can be furnished by the most nimble-footed, nimble-tongued traveller, from Marco Polo down to Mrs. Trollope, and that literary Sinbad, Captain Hall.

Fortunate as Sir Walter Scott was in his life, it is not the least of his good fortunes that he left the task of recording it to one so competent as Mr. Lockhart, who, to a familiarity with the person and habits of his illustrious subject, unites such entire sympathy with his pursuits, and such fine tact and discrimination in arranging the materials for their illustration. We have seen it objected that the biographer has somewhat transcended his lawful limits in occasionally exposing what a nice tenderness for the reputation of Scott should have led him to conceal; but, on reflection, we are not inclined to adopt these views. It is difficult to prescribe any precise rule by which the biographer should be guided in exhibiting the peculiarities, and, still more, the defects of his subject. He should, doubtless, be slow to draw from obscurity those matters which are of a strictly personal and private nature, particularly when they have no material bearing on the character of the individual. But whatever the latter has done, said, or written to others, can rarely be made to come within this rule. A swell of panegyric, where everything is in broad sunshine, without the relief of a shadow to contrast it, is out of nature, and must bring discredit on the whole. Nor is it much better when a sort of twilight mystification is spread over a man's actions, until, as in the case of all biographies of Cowper previous to that of Southey, we are com-

pletely bewildered respecting the real motives of conduct. If ever there was a character above the necessity of any management of this sort, it was Scott's, and we cannot but think that the frank exposition of the minor blemishes which sully it, by securing the confidence of the reader in the general fidelity of the portraiture, and thus disposing him to receive, without distrust, those favourable statements in his history which might seem incredible, as they certainly are unprecedented, is, on the whole, advantageous to his reputation. As regards the moral effect on the reader, we may apply Scott's own argument for not always recompensing suffering virtue, at the close of his fictions, with temporal prosperity—that such an arrangement would convey no moral to the heart whatever, since a glance at the great picture of life would show that virtue is not always thus rewarded.

In regard to the literary execution of Mr. Lockhart's work, the public voice has long since pronounced on it. A prying criticism may discern a few of those contraband epithets and slipshod sentences, more excusable in *Young Peter's Letters to his Kinsfolk*, where, indeed, they are thickly sown, than in the production of a grave Aristarch of British criticism. But this is small game, where every reader of the least taste and sensibility must find so much to applaud. It is enough to say, that in passing from the letters of Scott, with which the work is enriched, to the text of the biographer, we find none of those chilling transitions which occur on the like occasions in more bungling productions; as, for example, in that recent one in which the unfortunate Hannah More is done to death by her friend Roberts. On the contrary, we are sensible only to a new variety of beauty in the style of composition. The correspondence is illumined by all that is needed to make it intelligible to a stranger, and selected with such discernment as to produce the clearest impression of the character of its author. The mass of interesting details is conveyed in language richly coloured with poetic sentiment, and, at the same time, without a tinge of that mysticism which, as Scott himself truly remarked, "will never do for a writer of fiction, no, nor of history, nor moral essays, nor sermons;" but which, nevertheless, finds more or less favour in our own community, at the present day, in each and all of these.

The second work which we have placed at the head of this article, and from which the last remark of Sir Walter's was borrowed, is a series of notices originally published in *Fraser's Magazine*, but now collected, with considerable additions, into a separate volume. Its author, Mr. Robert Pierce Gillies, is a gentleman of the Scotch bar, favourably known by translations from the German. The work conveys a lively report of several scenes and events, which, before the appearance of Lockhart's book, were of more interest and importance than they can now be, lost, as they are, in the flood of light which is poured on us from that source. In the absence of the sixth and last volume, however, Mr. Gillies may help us to a few particulars respecting the closing years of Sir Walter's life, that may have some novelty

—we know not how much to be relied on—for the reader. In the present notice of a work so familiar to most persons, we shall confine ourselves to some of those circumstances which contribute to form, or have an obvious connexion with, his literary character.

Walter Scott was born at Edinburgh, August 15th, 1771. The character of his father, a respectable member of that class of attornies who in Scotland are called writers to the signet, is best conveyed to the reader by saying that he sat for the portrait of Mr. Saunders Fairford in *Redgauntlet*. His mother was a woman of taste and imagination, and had an obvious influence in guiding those of her son. His ancestors, by both father's and mother's side, were of "gentle blood," a position which, placed between the highest and the lower ranks in society, was extremely favourable, as affording facilities for communication with both. A lameness in his infancy—a most fortunate lameness for the world, if, as Scott says, it spoiled a soldier—and a delicate constitution, made it expedient to try the efficacy of country air and diet, and he was placed under the roof of his paternal grandfather at Sandy-Knowe, a few miles distant from the capital. Here his days were passed in the open fields, "with no other fellowship," as he says, "than that of the sheep and lambs;" and here, in the lap of nature,

"Meet nurse for a poetic child,"

his infant vision was greeted with those rude, romantic scenes which his own verses have since hallowed for the pilgrims from every clime. In the long evenings, his imagination, as he grew older, was warmed by traditionary legends of border heroism and adventure, repeated by the aged relative, who had herself witnessed the last gleams of border chivalry. His memory was one of the first powers of his mind which exhibited an extraordinary development. One of the longest of these old ballads, in particular, stuck so close to it, and he repeated it with such stentorian vociferation, as to draw from the minister of a neighbouring kirk the testy exclamation, "One may as well speak in the mouth of a cannon as where that child is."

On his removal to Edinburgh, in his eighth year, he was subjected to different influences. His worthy father was a severe martinet in all the forms of his profession, and, it may be added, of his religion, which he contrived to make somewhat burdensome to his more volatile son. The tutor was still more strict in his religious sentiments, and the lightest literary diversion in which either of them indulged was such as could be gleaned from the time-honoured folios of Archbishop Spottiswoode or worthy Robert Wodrow. Even here, however, Scott's young mind contrived to gather materials and impulses for future action. In his long arguments with Master Mitchell, he became steeped in the history of the Covenanters and the persecuted Church of Scotland, while he was still more rooted in his own Jacobite notions, early instilled into his mind by the tales of his relatives of Sandy-Knowe, whose own family had been out in the "affair of forty-five." Amid the professional and polemical

worthies of his father's library, Scott detected a copy of Shakspeare, and he relates with what glee he used to creep out of his bed, where he had been safely deposited for the night, and, by the light of the fire *in puris naturalibus*, pore over the pages of the great magician, and study those mighty spells by which he gave to airy fantasies the forms and substance of humanity. Scott distinctly recollected the time and the spot where he first opened a volume of Percy's *Reliques of English Poetry*; a work which may have suggested to him the plan and the purpose of the *Border Minstrelsy*. Every day's experience shows how much more actively the business of education goes on out of school than in it; and Scott's history shows equally that genius, whatever obstacles may be thrown in its way in one direction, will find room for its expansion in another, as the young tree sends forth its shoots most prolific in that quarter where the sunshine is permitted to fall on it.

At the High School, in which he was placed by his father at an early period, he seems not to have been particularly distinguished in the regular course of studies. His voracious appetite for books, however, of a certain cast, as romances, chivalrous tales, and worm-eaten chronicles scarcely less chivalrous, and his wonderful memory for such reading as struck his fancy, soon made him regarded by his fellows as a phenomenon of black-letter scholarship, which in process of time, achieved for him the cognomen of that redoubtable schoolman, Duns Scotus. He now also gave evidence of his powers of creation as well as of acquisition. He became noted for his own stories, generally bordering on the marvellous, with a plentiful seasoning of knight-errantry, which suited his bold and chivalrous temper. "Slink over beside me, Jamie," he would whisper to his schoolfellow Ballantyne, "and I'll tell you a story." Jamie was, indeed, destined to sit beside him during the greater part of his life.

The same tastes and talents continued to display themselves more strongly with increasing years. Having beaten pretty thoroughly the ground of romantic and legendary lore, at least so far as the English libraries to which he had access would permit, he next endeavoured, while at the university, to which he had been transferred from the high school, to pursue the same subject in the continental languages. Many were the strolls which he took in the neighbourhood, especially to Arthur's Seat and Salisbury Crags, where, perched on some almost inaccessible eyry, he might be seen conning over his Ariosto or Cervantes, or some other bard of romance, with some favourite companion of his studies, or pouring into the ears of the latter his own boyish legends, glowing with

> "achievements high,
> And circumstance of chivalry."

A critical knowledge of these languages he seems not to have obtained, and even in the French, made but an indifferent figure in conversation. An accurate acquaintance with the pronunciation and prosody of a foreign tongue is undoubtedly a desirable accomplishment; but

it is, after all, a mere accomplishment subordinate to the great purposes for which a language is to be learned. Scott did not, as is too often the case, mistake the shell for the kernel. He looked on language only as the key to unlock the foreign stores of wisdom, the pearls of inestimable price, wherever found, with which to enrich his native literature.

After a brief residence at the university, he was regularly indented as an apprentice to his father in 1786. One can hardly imagine a situation less congenial with the ardent, effervescing spirit of a poetic fancy, fettered down to a daily routine of drudgery scarcely above that of a mere scrivener. It proved, however, a useful school of discipline to him. It formed early habits of method, punctuality, and laborious industry; business habits, in short, most adverse to the poetic temperament, but indispensable to the accomplishment of the gigantic tasks which he afterwards assumed. He has himself borne testimony to his general diligence in his new vocation, and tells us that on one occasion he transcribed no less than a hundred and twenty folio pages at a sitting.

In the midst of these mechanical duties, he did not lose sight of the favourite objects of his study and meditation. He made frequent excursions into the Lowland as well as Highland districts in search of traditionary relics. These pilgrimages he frequently performed on foot. His constitution, now become hardy by severe training, made him careless of exposure, and his frank and warm-hearted manners—eminently favourable to his purposes, by thawing at once any feelings of frosty reserve which might have encountered a stranger—made him equally welcome at the staid and decorous manse, and at the rough but hospitable board of the peasant. Here was, indeed, the study of the future novelist; the very school in which to meditate those models of character and situation which he was afterward, long afterward, to transfer, in such living colours, to the canvas. "He was makin' himsell a' the time," says one of his companions, "but he didna ken, maybe, what he was about till years had passed. At first he thought o' little, I dare say, but the queerness and the fun." The honest writer to the signet does not seem to have thought it either so funny or so profitable; for on his son's return from one of these *raids* as he styled them, the old gentleman peevishly inquired how he had been living so long? "Pretty much like the young ravens," answered Walter; "I only wished I had been as good a player on the flute as poor George Primrose in the *Vicar of Wakefield*. If I had his art, I should like nothing better than to tramp like him from cottage to cottage over the world." "I doubt," said the grave clerk to the signet, "I greatly doubt, sir, you were born for nae better than a *gangrel scrapegut!*" Perhaps even the revelation, could it have been made to him, of his son's future literary glory, would scarcely have satisfied the worthy father, who probably would have regarded a seat on the bench of the Court of Sessions as much higher glory. At all events, this was not far from the judgment of Dominie Mitchell, who, in his notice of his illustrious pupil, "sincerely regrets

that Sir Walter's precious time was devoted to the *dulce* rather than the *utile* of composition, and that his great talents should have been wasted on such subjects!"

It is impossible to glance at Scott's early life without perceiving how powerfully all its circumstances, whether accidental or contrived, conspired to train him for the peculiar position he was destined to occupy in the world of letters. There never was a character in whose infant germ the mature and fully-developed lineaments might be more distinctly traced. What he was in his riper age, so he was in his boyhood. We discern the same tastes, the same peculiar talents, the same social temper and affections, and, in a great degree, the same habits—in their embryo state, of course, but distinctly marked—and his biographer has shown no little skill in enabling us to trace their gradual, progressive expansion, from the hour of his birth up to the full prime and maturity of manhood.

In 1792, Scott, whose original destination of a writer had been changed to that of an advocate—from his father's conviction, as it would seem, *of the superiority of his talents to the former station*—was admitted to the Scottish bar. Here he continued in assiduous attendance during the regular terms, but more noted for his stories in the outer house than his arguments in court. It may appear singular, that a person so gifted, both as a writer and as a *raconteur*, should have had no greater success in his profession. But the case is not uncommon: indeed, experience shows that the most eminent writers have not made the most successful speakers. It is not more strange than that a good writer of novels should not excel as a dramatic author. Perhaps a consideration of the subject would lead us to refer the phenomena in both cases to the same principle. At all events, Scott was an exemplification of both, and we leave the solution to those who have more leisure and ingenuity to unravel the mystery.

Scott's leisure, in the meantime, was well employed in storing his mind with German romance, with whose wild fictions, intrenching on the grotesque, he found at that time more sympathy than in later life. In 1796 he first appeared before the public as a translator of Bürger's well-known ballads, thrown off by him at a heat, and which found favour with the few into whose hands they passed. He subsequently adventured in Monk Lewis's crazy bark, *Tales of Wonder*, which soon went to pieces, leaving, however, among its surviving fragments the scattered contributions of Scott.

At last, in 1802, he gave to the world his first two volumes of the *Border Minstrelsy*, printed by his old schoolfellow Ballantyne, and which by the beauty of the typography, as well as literary execution, made an epoch in Scottish literary history. There was no work of Scott's after-life which showed the result of so much preliminary labour. Before ten years old, he had collected several volumes of ballads and traditions, and we have seen how diligently he pursued the same vocation in later years. The publication was admitted to be far more faithful, as well as skilfully collated, than its prototype, the

Reliques of Bishop Percy; while his notes contained a mass of antiquarian information relative to border life, conveyed in a style of beauty unprecedented in topics of this kind, and enlivened with a higher interest than poetic fiction. Percy's *Reliques* had prepared the way for the kind reception of the *Minstrelsy*, by the general relish—notwithstanding Dr. Johnson's protest—it had created for the simple pictures of a pastoral and heroic time. Burns had since familiarized the English ear with the Doric melodies of his native land; and now a greater than Burns appeared, whose first production, by a singular chance, came into the world in the very year in which the Ayrshire minstrel was withdrawn from it, as if nature had intended that the chain of poetic inspiration should not be broken. The delight of the public was farther augmented on the appearance of the third volume of the *Minstrelsy*, containing various imitations of the old ballad, which displayed the rich fashion of the antique, purified from the mould and rust by which the beauties of such weather-beaten trophies are defaced.

The first edition of the *Minstrelsy* consisting of eight hundred copies, went off, as Lockhart tells us, in less than a year; and the poet, on the publication of a second, received five hundred pounds sterling from Longman—an enormous price for such a commodity, but the best bargain, probably, that the bookseller ever made, as the subsequent sale has since extended to twenty thousand copies.

Scott was not in great haste to follow up his success. It was three years later before he took the field as an independent author, in a poem which at once placed him among the great original writers of his country. The *Lay of the Last Minstrel*, a complete expansion of the ancient ballad into an epic form, was published in 1805. It was opening a new creation in the realm of fancy. It seemed as if the author had transfused into his page the strong delineations of the Homeric pencil, the rude, but generous gallantry of a primitive period, softened by the more airy and magical inventions of Italian romance,* and conveyed in tones of natural melody, such as had not been heard since the strains of Burns. The book speedily found that unprecedented circulation which all his subsequent compositions attained. Other writers had addressed themselves to a more peculiar and limited feeling; to a narrower, and, generally a more select audience. But Scott was found to combine all the qualities of interest for every order. He drew from the pure springs which gush forth in every heart. His narrative chained every reader's attention by the

* "Mettendo lo Turpin, lo metto anch' io,"
says Ariosto, playfully, when he tells a particularly tough story.

"I cannot tell how the truth may be,
I say the tale as 'twas said to me,"
says the author of the "Lay" on a similar occasion. The resemblance might be traced much farther than mere forms of expression to the Italian, who like

"*the Ariosto of the North*,
Sung lay de-love, and war romance, and knightly worth."

stirring variety of its incidents, while the fine touches of sentiment with which it abounded, like wild-flowers, springing up spontaneously around, were full of freshness and beauty, that made one wonder others should not have stooped to gather them before.

The success of the *Lay* determined the course of its author's future life. Notwithstanding his punctual attention to his profession, his utmost profits for any one year of the ten he had been in practice had not exceeded two hundred and thirty pounds; and of late they had sensibly declined. Latterly, indeed, he had coquetted somewhat too openly with the Muse for his professional reputation. Themis has always been found a stern and jealous mistress, chary of dispensing her golden favours to those who are seduced into a flirtation with her more volatile sister.

Scott, however, soon found himself in a situation that made him independent of her favours. His income from the two offices to which he was promoted, of Sheriff of Selkirk, and Clerk of the Court of Sessions, was so ample, combined with what fell to him by inheritance and marriage, that he was left at liberty freely to consult his own tastes. Amid the seductions of poetry, however, he never shrunk from his burdensome professional duties; and he submitted to all their drudgery with unflinching constancy, when the labours of his pen made the emoluments almost beneath consideration. He never relished the idea of being divorced from active life by the solitary occupations of a recluse. And his official functions, however severely they taxed his time, may be said to have, in some degree, compensated him by the new scenes of life which they were constantly disclosing—the very materials of those fictions on which his fame and his fortune were to be built.

Scott's situation was eminently propitious to literary pursuits. He was married, and passed the better portion of the year in the country, where the quiet pleasures of his fireside circle, and a keen relish for rural sports, relieved his mind, and invigorated both health and spirits. In early life, it seems, he had been crossed in love; and, like Dante and Byron, to whom, in this respect, he is often compared, he had more than once, according to his biographer, shadowed forth in his verses the object of his unfortunate passion. He does not appear to have taken it very seriously, however, nor to have shown the morbid sensibility in relation to it discovered by both Byron and Dante, whose stern and solitary natures were cast in a very different mould from the social temper of Scott.

His next great poem was his *Marmion*, transcending, in the judgment of many, all his other epics, and containing, in the judgment of all, passages of poetic fire which he never equalled, but which, nevertheless, was greeted on its entrance into the world by a critique, in the leading journal of the day, of the most caustic and unfriendly temper. The journal was the *Edinburgh*, to which he had been a frequent contributor, and the reviewer was his intimate friend, Jeffrey. The unkindest cut in the article was the imputation of a neglect of Scottish character and feeling. "There is scarcely one

trait of true Scottish nationality or patriotism introduced into the whole poem; and Mr. Scott's only expression of admiration for the beautiful country to which he belongs is put, if we rightly remember, into the mouth of one of his Southern favourites." This of Walter Scott!

Scott was not slow, after this, in finding the political principles of the *Edinburgh* so repugnant to his own (and they certainly were as opposite as the poles), that he first dropped the journal, and next laboured with unwearied diligence to organize another, whose main purpose should be to counteract the heresies of the former. This was the origin of the *London Quarterly* more imputable to Scott's exertions than to those of any, indeed all other persons. The result has been, doubtless, highly serviceable to the interests of both morals and letters. Not that the new Review was conducted with more fairness, or, in this sense, *principle*, than its antagonist. A remark of Scott's own, in a letter to Ellis, shows with how much principle. "I have run up an attempt on *The Curse of Kehama* for the *Quarterly*. It affords cruel openings to the quizzers, and I suppose will get it roundly in the *Edinburgh Review*. I would have made a very different hand of it, indeed, had the order of the day been *pour déchirer*."

But although the fate of the individual was thus, to a certain extent, a matter of caprice, or, rather, prejudgment in the critic, yet the great abstract questions in morals, politics, and literature, by being discussed on both sides, were presented in a fuller, and, of course, fairer light to the public. Another beneficial result to letters was—and we shall gain credit, at least, for candour in confessing it—that it broke down somewhat of that divinity which hedged in the despotic *we* of the reviewer, so long as no rival arose to contest the sceptre. The claims to infallibility, so long and slavishly acquiesced in, fell to the ground when thus stoutly asserted by conflicting parties. It was pretty clear that the same thing could not be all black and all white at the same time. In short, it was the old story of pope and anti-pope; and the public began to find out that there might be hopes for the salvation of an author, though damned by the literary popedom. Time, by reversing many of its decisions, must at length have shown the same thing.

But to return. Scott showed how nearly he had been touched to the quick by two other acts not so discreet. These were the establishment of an *Annual Register*, and of the great publishing house of the Ballantynes, in which he became a silent partner. The last step involved him in grievous embarrassments, and stimulated him to exertions which required "a frame of adamant and soul of fire." At the same time, we find him overwhelmed with poetical, biographical, historical, and critical compositions, together with editorial labours of appalling magnitude. In this multiplication of himself in a thousand forms, we see him always the same, vigorous and effective. "Poetry," he says in one of his letters, "is a scourging crop, and ought not to be hastily repeated. Editing, therefore, may be considered as a green crop of turnips or pease, extremely useful to

those whose circumstances do not admit of giving their farm a summer fallow." It might be regretted, however, that he should have wasted powers fitted for so much higher culture on the coarse products of a kitchen garden, which might have been safely trusted to inferior hands.

In 1811, Scott gave to the world his exquisite poem, *The Lady of the Lake*. One of his fair friends had remonstrated with him on thus risking again the laurel he had already won. He replied with characteristic, and, indeed, prophetic spirit, "If I fail, *I will write prose all my life*. But if I succeed,

'Up wi' the bonnie blue bonnet,
The dirk and the feather an a'!'"

In his eulogy on Byron, Scott remarks, "There has been no reposing under the shade of his laurels, no living upon the resource of past reputation; none of that *coddling* and petty precaution which little authors call 'taking care of their fame.' Byron let his fame take care of itself." Scott could not have more accurately described his own character.

The *Lady of the Lake* was welcomed with an enthusiasm surpassing that which attended any other of his poems. It seemed like the sweet breathings of his native pibroch, stealing over glen and mountain, and calling up all the delicious associations of rural solitude, which beautifully contrasted with the din of battle and the shrill cry of the war-trumpet, that stirred the soul in every page of his *Marmion*. The publication of this work carried his fame as a poet to its most brilliant height. The post-horse duty rose to an extraordinary degree in Scotland, from the eagerness of travellers to visit the localities of the poem. A more substantial evidence was afforded in its amazing circulation, and, consequently, its profits. The press could scarcely keep pace with the public demand, and no less than fifty thousand copies of it have been sold since the date of its appearance. The successful author received more than two thousand guineas for his production. Milton received ten pounds for the two editions which he lived to see of his *Paradise Lost*. The Ayrshire bard had sighed for "a lass wi' a tocher." Scott had now found one, where it was hardly to be expected, in the Muse

While the poetical fame of Scott was thus at its zenith, a new star rose above the horizon, whose eccentric course and dazzling radiance completely bewildered the spectator. In 1812, *Childe Harold* appeared, and the attention seemed to be now called, for the first time, from the outward form of man and visible nature, to the secret depths of the soul. The darkest recesses of human passion were laid open, and the note of sorrow was prolonged in tones of agonized sensibility, the more touching as coming from one who was placed on those dazzling heights of rank and fashion which, to the vulgar eye at least, seem to lie in unclouded sunshine. Those of the present generation who have heard only the same key thrummed *ad nauseam* by the feeble imitators of his lordship, can form no idea of the effect produced when the chords were first swept by the master's fingers. It was

found impossible for the ear, once attuned to strains of such compass and ravishing harmony, to return with the same relish to purer, it might be, but tamer melody; and the sweet voice of the Scottish minstrel lost much of its power to charm, let him charm never so wisely. While *Rokeby* was in preparation, bets were laid on the rival candidates by the wits of the day. The sale of this poem, though great, showed a sensible decline in the popularity of its author. This became still more evident on the publication of *The Lord of the Isles:* and Scott admitted the conviction with his characteristic spirit and good nature. "'Well, James' (he said to his printer), 'I have given you a week—what are people saying about the *Lord of the Isles?*' I hesitated a little, after the fashion of Gil Blas, but he speedily brought the matter to a point. 'Come,' he said, 'speak out, my good fellow; what has put it into your head to be on so much ceremony *with me* all of a sudden? But I see how it is; the result is given in one word —*Disappointment.*' My silence admitted his inference to the fullest extent. His countenance certainly did look rather blank for a few seconds; in truth, he had been wholly unprepared for the event. At length he said, with perfect cheerfulness, 'Well, well, James, so be it; but you know we must not droop, for we can't afford to give over. Since one line has failed, we must stick to something else.'" This *something else* was a mine he had already hit upon, of invention and substantial wealth such as Thomas the Rhymer, or Michael Scott, or any other adept in the black art had never dreamed of.

Everybody knows the story of the composition of *Waverley*—the most interesting story in the annals of letters—and how, some ten years after its commencement, it was fished out of some old lumber in an attic, and completed in a few weeks for the press in 1814. Its appearance marks a more distinct epoch in English literature than that of the poetry of its author. All previous attempts in the same school of fiction—a school of English growth—had been cramped by the limited information or talent of the writers. Smollett had produced his spirited sea-pieces, and Fielding his warm sketches of country life, both of them mixed up with so much Billingsgate as required a strong flavour of wit to make them tolerable. Richardson had covered acres of canvas with his faithful family pictures. Mrs. Radcliffe had dipped up to the elbows in horrors; while Miss Burney's fashionable gossip, and Miss Edgeworth's Hogarth drawings of the prose—not the poetry—of life and character, had each and all found favour in their respective ways. But a work now appeared in which the author swept over the whole range of character with entire freedom as well as fidelity, ennobling the whole by high historic associations, and in a style varying with his theme, but whose pure and classic flow was tinctured with just so much of poetic colouring as suited the purposes of romance. It was Shakspeare in prose.

The work was published, as we know, anonymously. Mr. Gillies states, however, that, while in the press, fragments of it were communicated to "Mr. Mackenzie, Dr. Brown, Mrs. Hamilton, and

other *savans* or *savantes*, whose dicta on the merits of a new novel were considered unimpeachable." By their approbation "a strong body of friends was formed, and the curiosity of the public prepared the way for its reception." This may explain the rapidity with which the anonymous publication rose into a degree of favour, which, though not less surely, perhaps, it might have been more slow in achieving. The author jealously preserved his incognito, and, in order to heighten the mystification, flung off, almost simultaneously, a variety of works in prose and poetry, any one of which might have been the labour of months. The public for a moment was at fault. There seemed to be six Richmonds in the field. The world, therefore, was reduced to the dilemma of either supposing that half a dozen different hands could work in precisely the same style, or that one could do the work of half a dozen. With time, however, the veil wore thinner and thinner until at length, and long before the ingenious arguments of Mr. Adolphus, there was scarcely a critic so purblind as not to discern behind it the features of the mighty minstrel.

Constable had offered seven hundred pounds for the new novel. "It was," says Mr. Lockhart, "ten times as much as Miss Edgeworth ever realised from any of her popular Irish tales." Scott declined the offer, which had been a good one for the bookseller had he made it as many thousand. But it passed the art of necromancy to divine this.

Scott, once entered on this new career, followed it up with an energy unrivalled in the history of literature. The public mind was not suffered to cool for a moment, before its attention was called to another miracle of creation from the same hand. Even illness, that would have broken the spirits of most men, as it prostrated the physical energies of Scott, opposed no impediment to the march of composition. When he could no longer write he could dictate, and in this way, amid the agonies of a racking disease, he composed *The Bride of Lammermoor*, the *Legend of Montrose*, and a great part of *Ivanhoe*. The first, indeed, is darkened with those deep shadows that might seem thrown over it by the sombre condition of its author. But what shall we say of the imperturbable dry humour of the gallant Captain Dugald Dalgetty, of Drumthwacket, or of the gorgeous revelries of Ivanhoe—

> "Such sights as youthful poets dream,
> On summer eves by haunted stream"—

what shall we say of such brilliant day-dreams for a bed of torture? Never before had the spirit triumphed over such agonies of the flesh. "The best way," said Scott, in one of his talks with Gillies, "is, *if possible*, to triumph over disease, by setting it at defiance; somewhat on the same principle as one avoids being stung by boldly grasping a nettle."

The prose fictions were addressed to a much larger audience than the poems could be. They had attractions for every age and every class. The profits, of course, were commensurate. Arithmetic has never been so severely taxed as in the computation of Scott's produc-

tions and the proceeds resulting from them. In one year he received (or, more properly, was credited with, for it is somewhat doubtful how much he actually received,) fifteen thousand pounds for his novels, comprehending the first edition and the copyright. The discovery of this rich mine furnished its fortunate proprietor with the means of gratifying the fondest and even most chimerical desires. He had always coveted the situation of a lord of acres—a Scottish laird—where his passion for planting might find scope in the creation of whole forests—for everything with him was on a magnificent scale —and where he might indulge the kindly feelings of his nature in his benevolent offices to a numerous and dependent tenantry. The few acres of the original purchase now swelled into hundreds, and, for aught we know, thousands; for one tract alone we find incidentally noticed as costing thirty thousand pounds. "It rounds off the property so handsomely," he says, in one of his letters. There was always a corner to "round off." The mansion, in the mean time, from a simple cottage *ornée*, was amplified into the dimensions almost, as well as the bizarre proportions, of some old feudal castle. The furniture and decorations were of the costliest kind; the wainscots of oak and cedar; the floors tessellated with marbles, or woods of different dyes; the ceilings fretted and carved with the delicate tracery of a Gothic abbey; the storied windows blazoned with the richly-coloured insignia of heraldry, the walls garnished with time-honoured trophies, or curious specimens of art, or volumes sumptuously bound—in short, with all that luxury could demand or ingenuity devise; while a copious reservoir of gas supplied every corner of the mansion with such fountains of light as must have puzzled the genius of the *lamp* to provide for the less fortunate Aladdin.

Scott's exchequer must have been seriously taxed in another form by the crowds of visitors whom he entertained under his hospitable roof. There was scarcely a person of note, or to say truth, not of note, who visited that country, without paying his respects to the Lion of Scotland. Lockhart reckons up a full sixth of the British peerage who had been there within his recollection; and Captain Hall, in his amusing *Notes*, remarks that it was not unusual for a dozen or more coach loads to find their way into his grounds in the course of the day, most of whom found or forced an entrance into the mansion. Such was the heavy tax paid by his celebrity, and, we may add, his good nature; for, if the one had been a whit less than the other, he could never have tolerated such a nuisance.

The cost of his correspondence gives one no light idea of the demands made on his time, as well as purse, in another form. His postage for letters, independently of franks, by which a large portion of it was covered, amounted to a hundred and fifty pounds, it seems, in the course of the year. In this, indeed, should be included ten pounds for a pair of unfortunate *Cherokee Lovers*, sent all the way from our own happy land in order to be god-fathered by Sir Walter on the London boards. Perhaps the smart-money he had to pay, on this interesting occasion, had its influence in mixing up rather more acid

than was natural to him in his judgments of our countrymen. At all events, the Yankees find little favour on the few occasions on which he has glanced at them in his correspondence. "I am not at all surprised," he says in a letter to Miss Edgeworth, "I am not at all surprised at what you say of the Yankees. They are a people possessed of very considerable energy, quickened and brought into eager action by an honourable love of their country, and pride in their institutions; but they are as yet rude in their ideas of social intercourse, and totally ignorant, speaking generally, of all the art of good-breeding, which consists chiefly in a postponement of one's own petty wishes or comforts to those of others. By rude questions and observations, an absolute disrespect to other people's feelings, and a ready indulgence of their own, they make one feverish in their company, though perhaps you may be ashamed to confess the reason. But this will wear off, and is already wearing away. Men, when they have once got benches, will soon fall into the use of cushions. They are advancing in the lists of our literature, and they will not be long deficient in the *petite morale*, especially as they have, like ourselves, the rage for travelling." On another occasion, he does, indeed, admit having met with, in the course of his life, "four or five well-lettered Americans, ardent in pursuit of knowledge, and free from the ignorance and forward presumption which distinguish many of their countrymen." This seems hard measure, but perhaps we should find it difficult, among the many who have visited this country, to recollect as great a number of Englishmen—and Scotchmen to boot—entitled to a higher degree of commendation. It can hardly be that the well-informed and well-bred men of both countries make a point of staying at home; so we suppose we must look for the solution of the matter in the existence of some disagreeable ingredient, common to the characters of both nations, sprouting, as they do from a common stock, which remains latent at home, and is never fully disclosed till they get into a foreign climate. But as this problem seems pregnant with philosophical, physiological, and, for ought we know, psychological matter, we have not courage for it here, but recommend the solution to Miss Martineau, to whom it will afford a very good title for a new chapter in her next edition. The strictures we have quoted, however, to speak more seriously, are worth attending to, coming as they do from a shrewd observer, and one whose judgments, though here somewhat coloured, no doubt, by political prejudice, are, in the main, distinguished by a sound and liberal philanthropy. But were he ten times an enemy, we would say, "Fas est ab hoste doceri."

With the splendid picture of the baronial residence at Abbotsford, Mr. Lockhart closes all that at this present writing we have received of his delightful work in this country: and in the last sentence the melancholy sound of the "muffled drum" gives ominous warning of what we are to expect in the sixth and concluding volume. In the dearth of more authentic information, we will piece out our sketch with a few facts gleaned from the somewhat meagre bill of fare—

meagre by comparison with the rich banquet of the true Amphitryon —afforded by the *Recollections* of Mr. Robert Pierce Gillies.

The unbounded popularity of the *Waverley Novels* led to still more extravagant anticipations on the part both of the publishers and author. Some hints of a falling off, though but slightly, in the public favour, were unheeded by both parties, though, to say truth, the exact state of things was never disclosed to Scott, it being Ballantyne's notion that it would prove a damper, and that the true course was "to press on more sail as the wind lulled." In these sanguine calculations, not only enormous sums, or, to speak correctly, *bills* were given for what had been written; but the author's drafts, to the amount of many thousand pounds, were accepted by Constable in favour of works, the very embryos of which lay, not only unformed, but unimagined in the womb of time. In return for this singular accommodation, Scott was induced to endorse the drafts of his publisher, and in this way an amount of liabilities was incurred, which, considering the character of the house and its transactions, it is altogether inexplicable that a person in the independent position of Sir Walter Scott should have subjected himself to for a moment. He seems to have had entire confidence in the stability of the firm — a confidence to which it seems, from Mr. Gillies's account, not to have been entitled from the first moment of his connection with it. The great reputation of the house, however, the success and magnitude of some of its transactions, especially the publication of these novels, gave it a large credit, which enabled it to go forward with a great show of prosperity in ordinary times, and veiled its tottering state probably from Constable's own eyes. It is but the tale of yesterday. The case of Constable and Co. is, unhappily, a very familiar one to us. But when the hurricane of 1825 came on, it swept away all those buildings that were not founded on a rock, and those of Messrs. Constable, among others, soon became literally mere *castles in the air*— in plain English, the firm stopped payment. The assets were very trifling in comparison with the debts; and Sir Walter Scott was found on their paper to the frightful amount of one hundred thousand pounds!

His conduct on the occasion was precisely what was to have been anticipated from one who had declared on a similar, though much less appalling conjuncture, "I am always ready to make any sacrifices to do justice to my engagements, and would rather sell anything, or everything, than be less than a true man to the world." He put up his house and furniture in town at auction, delivered over his personal effects at Abbotsford, his plate, books, furniture, &c., to be held in trust for his creditors (the estate itself had been recently secured to his son on occasion of his marriage,) and bound himself to discharge a certain amount annually of the liabilities of the insolvent firm. He then, with his characteristic energy, set about the performance of his Herculean task. He took lodgings in a third-rate house in St. David's-street, saw but little company, abridged the hours usually devoted to his meals and his family, gave up his ordinary

exercise, and, in short, adopted the severe habits of a regular Grub-street stipendiary.

"For many years," he said to Mr. Gillies, "I have been accustomed to hard work, because I found it a pleasure; now, with all due respect for Falstaff's principle, 'nothing on compulsion,' I certainly will not shrink from work because it has become necessary."

One of his first tasks was his *Life of Bonaparte*, achieved in the space of thirteen months. For this he received fourteen thousand pounds about eleven hundred per month—not a bad bargain, either, as it proved, for the publishers. The first two volumes of the nine which make up the English edition were a *rifacimento* of what he had before compiled for the *Annual Register*. With every allowance for the inaccuracies, and the excessive expansion incident to such a flashing rapidity of execution, the work, taking into view the broad range of its topics, its shrewd and sagacious reflections, and the free, bold, and picturesque colouring of its narration, and, above all, considering *the brief time in which it was written*, is indisputably one of the most remarkable monuments of genius and industry—perhaps the most remarkable ever recorded.

Scott's celebrity made everything that fell from him, however trifling—the dewdrops from the lion's mane—of value. But none of the many adventures he embarked in, or, rather, set afloat, proved so profitable as the republication of his novels, with his notes and illustrations. As he felt his own strength in the increasing success of his labours, he appears to have relaxed somewhat from them, and to have again resumed somewhat of his ancient habits, and, in a mitigated degree, his ancient hospitality. But still his exertions were too severe, and pressed heavily on the springs of his health, already deprived by age of their former elasticity and vigour. At length, in 1831, he was overtaken by one of those terrible shocks of paralysis which seem to have been constitutional in his family, but which, with more precaution, and under happier auspices, might, doubtless, have been postponed, if not wholly averted. At this time he had, in the short space of little more than five years, by his sacrifices and efforts, discharged about two-thirds of the debt for which he was responsible: an astonishing result, wholly unparalleled in the history of letters! There is something inexpressibly painful in this spectacle of a generous heart thus courageously contending with fortune, bearing up against the tide with unconquerable spirit, and finally overwhelmed by it just within reach of shore.

The rest of his story is one of humiliation and sorrow. He was induced to take a voyage to the continent to try the effect of a more genial climate. Under the sunny sky of Italy, he seemed to gather new strength for a while; but his eye fell with indifference on the venerable monuments which, in better days, would have kindled all his enthusiam. The invalid sighed for his own home at Abbotsford. The heat of the weather and the fatigue of rapid travel brought on another shock, which reduced him to a state of deplorable imbecility. In this condition he returned to his own halls, where the sight of

early friends, and of the beautiful scenery, the creation, as it were, of his own hands, seemed to impart a gleam of melancholy satisfaction, which soon, however, sunk into insensibility. To his present situation might well be applied the exquisite verses which he indited on another melancholy occasion:—

"Yet not the landscape to mine eye
Bears those bright hues that once it bore;
Though Evening, with her richest dye,
Flames o'er the hills of Ettrick's shore.

"With listless look along the plain
I see Tweed's silver current glide,
And coldly mark the holy fane
Of Melrose rise in ruined pride.

"The quiet lake, the balmy air,
The hill, the stream, the tower, the tree,
Are they still such as once they were,
Or is the dreary change in me?"

Providence, in its mercy, did not suffer the shattered frame long to outlive the glorious spirit which had informed it. He breathed his last on the 21st of September, 1832. His remains were deposited, as he had always desired, in the hoary abbey of Dryburgh, and the pilgrim from many a distant clime shall repair to the consecrated spot so long as the reverence for exalted genius and worth shall survive in the human heart.

This sketch, brief as we could make it, of the literary history of Sir Walter Scott, has extended so far as to leave but little space for—what Lockhart's volumes afford ample materials for—his personal character. Take it for all and all, it is not too much to say that this character is probably the most remarkable on record. There is no man of historical celebrity that we now recall who combined, in so eminent a degree, the highest qualities of the moral, the intellectual, and the physical. He united in his own character what hitherto had been found incompatible. Though a poet, and living in an ideal world, he was an exact, methodical man of business; though achieving with the most wonderful facility of genius, he was patient and laborious; a mousing antiquarian, yet with the most active interest in the present, and whatever was going on around him; with a strong turn for a roving life and military adventure, he was yet chained to his desk more hours, at some periods of his life, than a monkish recluse; a man with a heart as capacious as his head; a Tory, brim full of Jacobitism, yet full of sympathy and unaffected familiarity with all classes, even the humblest; a successful author, without pedantry and without conceit; one, indeed, at the head of the republic of letters, and yet with a lower estimate of letters, as compared with other intellectual pursuits, than was ever hazarded before.

The first quality of his character, or rather, that which forms the basis of it, as of all great characters, was his energy. We see it, in his early youth, triumphing over the impediments of nature, and, in

spite of lameness, making him conspicuous in every sort of athletic exercise—clambering up dizzy precipices, wading through treacherous fords, and performing feats of pedestrianism that make one's joints ache to read of. As he advanced in life, we see the same force of purpose turned to higher objects. A striking example occurs in his organization of the journals and the publishing-house in opposition to Constable. In what Herculean drudgery did not this latter business, in which he undertook to supply matter for the nimble press of Ballantyne, involve him! while in addition to his own concerns, he had to drag along by his solitary momentum a score of heavier undertakings, that led Lockhart to compare him to a steam-engine, with a train of coal-waggons hitched to it. "Yes," said Scott, laughing, and making a crashing cut with his axe (for they were felling larches), "and there was a cursed lot of dung-carts, too."

We see the same powerful energies triumphing over disease at a later period, when nothing but a resolution to get the better of it enabled him to do so. "Be assured," he remarked to Mr. Gillies, "that if pain could have prevented my application to literary labour, not a page of *Ivanhoe* would have been written. Now if I had given way to mere feelings, and ceased to work, it is a question whether the disorder might not have taken a deeper root, and become incurable." But the most extraordinary instance of this trait is the readiness with which he assumed and the spirit with which he carried through, till his mental strength broke down under it, the gigantic task imposed on him by the failure of Constable.

It mattered little what the nature of the task was, whether it were organizing an opposition to a political faction, or a troop of cavalry to resist invasion, or a medley of wild Highlanders or Edinburgh cockneys to make up a royal puppet-show—a loyal celebration—for "his Most Sacred Majesty"—he was the master-spirit that gave the cue to the whole *dramatis personæ*. This potent impulse showed itself in the thoroughness with which he prescribed, not merely the general orders, but the execution of the minutest details, in his own person. Thus all around him was the creation, as it were, of his individual exertion. His lands waved with forests planted with his own hands, and, in process of time, cleared by his own hands. He did not lay the stones in mortar, exactly, for his whimsical castle, but he seems to have superintended the operation from the foundation to the battlements. The antique relics, the curious works of art, the hangings and furniture even, with which his halls were decorated, were specially contrived or selected by him; and, to read his letters at this time to his friend Terry, one might fancy himself perusing the correspondence of an upholsterer, so exact and technical is he in his instructions. We say this not in disparagement of his great qualities. It is only the more extraordinary; for, while he stooped to such trifles, he was equally thorough in matters of the highest moment. It was a trait of character.

Another quality, which, like the last, seems to have given the tone to his character, was his social or benevolent feelings. His heart

was an unfailing fountain, which not merely the distresses, but the joys of his fellow-creatures made to flow like water. In early life, and possibly sometimes in later, high spirits and a vigorous constitution led him occasionally to carry his social propensities into convivial excess; but he never was in danger of the habitual excess to which a vulgar mind—and sometimes, alas! one more finely tuned—abandons itself. With all his conviviality, it was not the sensual relish, but the social which acted on him. He was neither *gourmé* nor *gourmand;* but his social meetings were endeared to him by the free interchange of kindly feelings with his friends. La Bruyère says (and it is odd he should have found it out in Louis the Fourteenth's court), "the heart has more to do than the head with the pleasures, or, rather, promoting the pleasures of society;" "Un homme est d'un meilleur commerce dans la société par le cœur que par l'esprit." If report—the report of travellers—be true, we Americans, at least the New Englanders, are too much perplexed with the cares and crosses of life to afford many genuine specimens of this *bonhommie*. However this may be, we all, doubtless, know some such character, whose shining face, the index of a cordial heart, radiant with beneficent pleasure, diffuses its own exhilarating glow wherever it appears. Rarely, indeed, is this precious quality found united with the most exalted intellect. Whether it be that Nature, chary of her gifts, does not care to shower too many of them on one head; or that the public admiration has led the man of intellect to set too high a value on himself, or at least his own pursuits, to take an interest in the inferior concerns of others; or that the fear of compromising his dignity puts him "on points" with those who approach him; or whether, in truth, the very magnitude of his own reputation throws a freezing shadow over us little people in his neighbourhood—whatever be the cause, it is too true that the highest powers of mind are very often deficient in the only one which can make the rest of much worth in society—the power of pleasing.

Scott was not one of these little great. His was not one of those dark-lantern visages which concentrate all their light on their own path, and are black as midnight to all about them. He had a ready sympathy, a word of contagious kindness, or cordial greeting, for all. His manners, too, were of a kind to dispel the icy reserve and awe which his great name was calculated to inspire. His frank address was a sort of *open sesame* to every heart. He did not deal in sneers, the poisoned weapons which came not from the head, as the man who launches them is apt to think, but from an acid heart, or, perhaps, an acid stomach, a very common laboratory of such small artillery. Neither did Scott amuse the company with parliamentary harangues or metaphysical disquisitions. His conversation was of the narrative kind, not formal, but as casually suggested by some passing circumstance or topic, and thrown in by way of illustration. He did not repeat himself, however, but continued to give his anecdotes such variations, by rigging them out in a new "cocked hat and walking-cane," as he called it, that they never tired like the thrice-told tale of a

chronic *raconteur*. He allowed others, too, to take their turn, and thought with the Dean of St. Patrick's:

> "Carve to all, but just enough,
> Let them neither starve nor stuff:
> And, that you may have your due,
> Let your neighbours carve for you."

He relished a good joke, from whatever quarter it came, and was not over-dainty in his manner of testifying his satisfaction. "In the full tide of mirth, he did indeed laugh the heart's laugh," says Mr. Adolphus. "Give me an honest laugher," said Scott himself, on another occasion, when a buckram man of fashion had been paying him a visit at Abbotsford. His manners free from affectation or artifice of any sort, exhibited the spontaneous movements of a kind disposition, subject to those rules of good breeding which Nature herself might have dictated. In this way he answered his own purpose admirably as a painter of character, by putting every man in good humour with himself, in the same manner as a cunning portrait-painter amuses his sitters with such store of fun and anecdote as may throw them off their guard, and call out the happiest expressions of their countenances.

Scott in his wide range of friends and companions, does not seem to have been over-fastidious. In the instance of John Ballantyne, it has exposed him to some censure. In truth, a more worthless fellow never hung on the skirts of a great man; for he did not take the trouble to throw a decent veil over the grossest excesses. But then he had been the schoolboy friend of Scott; had grown up with him in a sort of dependence—a relation which begets a kindly feeling in the party that confers the benefits, at least. How strong it was in him may be inferred from his remark at his funeral. "I feel," said Scott, mournfully, as the solemnity was concluded, "feel as if there would be less sunshine for me from this day forth." It must be admitted, however, that his intimacy with little Rigdumfunnidos, whatever apology it may find in Scott's heart, was not very creditable to his taste.

But the benevolent principle showed itself not merely in words, but in the more substantial form of actions. How many are the cases recorded of indigent merit, which he drew from obscurity, and almost warmed into life by his own generous and most delicate patronage! Such were the cases, among others, of Leyden, Weber, Hogg. How often and how cheerfully did he supply such literary contributions as were solicited by his friends—and they taxed him pretty liberally—amid all the pressure of business, and at the height of his fame, when his hours were golden hours to him! In the more vulgar and easier forms of charity, he did not stint his hand, though, instead of direct assistance, he preferred to enable others to assist themselves; in this way fortifying their good habits, and relieving them from the sense of personal degradation.

But the place where his benevolent impulses found their proper theatre for expansion was his own home; surrounded by a happy fa-

mily, and dispensing all the hospitalities of a great feudal proprietor. "There are many good things in life," he says, in one of his letters, "whatever satirists and misanthropes may say to the contrary; but probably the best of all, next to a conscience void of offence (without which, by-the-by, they can hardly exist), are the quiet exercise and enjoyment of the social feelings, in which we are at once happy ourselves, and the cause of happiness to them who are dearest to us." Every page of the work, almost, shows us how intimately he blended himself with the pleasures and the pursuits of his own family, watched over the education of his children, shared in their rides, their rambles, and sports, losing no opportunity of kindling in their young minds a love of virtue, and honourable principles of action. He delighted, too, to collect his tenantry around him, multiplying holidays, when young and old might come together under his roof-tree, when the jolly punch was liberally dispensed by himself and his wife among the elder people, and the *Hogmanay* cakes and pennies were distributed among the young ones; while his own children mingled in the endless reels and hornpipes on the earthen floor, and the *laird* himself, mixing in the groups of merry faces, had "his private joke for every old wife or 'gausie carle,' his arch compliment for the ear of every bonny lass, and his hand and his blessing for the head of every little *Eppie Daidle* from Abbotstown or Broomylees." "Sir Walter," said one of his old retainers, "speaks to every man as if he were his blood relation." No wonder that they should have returned this feeling with something warmer than blood relations usually do. Mr. Gillies tells an anecdote of the Ettrick Shepherd, showing how deep a root such feelings, notwithstanding his rather odd way of expressing them, sometimes, had taken in his honest nature. "Mr. James Ballantyne, walking home with him one evening from Scott's, where, by-the-by, Hogg had gone uninvited, happened to observe, 'I do not at all like this illness of Scott's. I have often seen him look jaded of late, and am afraid it is serious.' 'Haud your tongue, or I'll gar you measure your length on the pavement!' replied Hogg. 'You fause, downhearted loon that you are; ye daur to speak as if Scott were on his death-bed! It cannot be—it *must* not be! I will not suffer you to speak that gait.' The sentiment was like that of Uncle Toby at the bedside of Le Fevre; and, at these words, the Shepherd's voice became suppressed with emotion."

But Scott's sympathies were not confined to his species, and if he treated them like blood relations, he treated his brute followers like personal friends. Every one remembers old Maida and faithful Camp, the "dear old friend," whose loss cost him a dinner. Mr. Gillies tells us that he went into his study on one occasion, when he was winding off his *Vision of Don Roderick*. "'Look here,' says the poet; 'I have just begun to copy over the rhymes that you heard to-day and applauded so much. Return to supper if you can; only don't be late, as you perceive we keep early hours, and Wallace will not suffer me to rest after six in the morning. Come, good dog, and help the poet.' At this hint, Wallace seated himself upright on a

chair next his master, who offered him a newspaper, which he directly seized, looking very wise, and holding it firmly and contentedly in his mouth. Scott looked at him with great satisfaction, for he was excessively fond of dogs. 'Very well,' said he; '*now* we shall get on.' And so I left them abruptly, knowing that my 'absence would be the best company.'" This fellowship extended much farther than to his canine followers, of which, including hounds, terriers, mastiffs, and mongrels, he had certainly a goodly assortment. We find, also, Grimalkin installed in a responsible post in the library, and out of doors pet hens, pet donkeys, and — tell it not in Judæa — a pet pig!

Scott's sensibilities, though easily moved and widely diffused, were warm and sincere. None shared more cordially in the troubles of his friends; but on all such occasions, with a true manly feeling, he thought less of mere sympathy than of the most effectual way for mitigating their sorrows. After a touching allusion in one of his epistles to his dear friend Erskine's death, he concludes, "I must turn to and see what can be done about getting some pension for his daughters." In another passage, which may remind one of some of the exquisite touches in Jeremy Taylor, he indulges in the following beautiful strain of philosophy: "The last three or four years have swept away more than half the friends with whom I lived in habits of great intimacy. So it must be with us

'When auce life's day draws near the gloamin,'"

and yet we proceed with our plantations and plans as if any tree but the sad cypress would accompany us to the grave, where our friends have gone before us. It is the way of the world, however, and must be so; otherwise life would be spent in unavailing mourning for those whom we have lost. It is better to enjoy the society of those who remain to us." His well-disciplined heart seems to have confessed the influence of this philosophy in his most ordinary relations. "I can't help it," was a favourite maxim of his, "and therefore will not think about it; for that, at least, *I can* help."

Among his admirable qualities must not be omitted a certain worldly sagacity or shrewdness, which is expressed as strongly as any individual trait can be in some of his portraits, especially in the excellent one of him by Leslie. Indeed, his countenance would seem to exhibit, ordinarily, much more of Dandie Dinmont's benevolent shrewdness than of the eye glancing from earth to heaven, which in fancy we assign to the poet, and which, in some moods, must have been his. This trait may be readily discerned in his business transactions, which he managed with perfect knowledge of character as well as of his own rights. No one knew better than he the market value of an article; and, though he underrated his literary wares as to their mere literary rank, he set as high a money value on them, and made as sharp a bargain as any of the *trade* could have done. In his business concerns, indeed, he managed rather too much, or, to speak more correctly, was too fond of mixing up mystery in his transactions, which, like most mysteries, proved of little service to their author. Scott's correspondence, especially with his son,

affords obvious examples of shrewdness, in the advice he gives as to his deportment in the novel situations and society into which the young cornet was thrown. Occasionally, in the cautious hints about etiquette and social observances, we may be reminded of that ancient "arbiter elegantiarum," Lord Chesterfield, though it must be confessed there is throughout a high moral tone, which the noble lord did not very scrupulously affect.

Another feature in Scott's character was his loyalty, which some people would extend into a more general deference to rank not royal. We do certainly meet with a tone of deference, occasionally, to the privileged orders (or, rather, privileged persons, as the king, or his own chief, for to the mass of stars and garters he showed no such respect), which falls rather unpleasantly on the ear of a Republican. But, independently of the feelings which rightfully belonged to him as the subject of a monarchy, and without which he must have been a false-hearted subject, his own were heightened by a poetical colouring, that mingled in his mind even with much more vulgar relations of life. At the opening of the regalia in Holyrood House, when the honest burgomaster deposited the crown on the head of one of the young ladies present, the good man probably saw nothing more in the dingy diadem than we should have seen—a headpiece for a set of men no better than himself, and, if the old adage of a "dead lion" holds true, not quite so good. But to Scott's imagination other views were unfolded. "A thousand years their cloudy wings expanded" around him, and, in the dim visions of distant times, he beheld the venerable line of monarchs who had swayed the councils of his country in peace and led her armies in battle. The "golden round" became in his eye the symbol of his nation's glory; and as he heaved a heavy oath from his heart, he left the room in agitation, from which he did not speedily recover. There was not a spice of affectation in this—for who ever accused Scott of affectation?—but there was a good deal of poetry, the poetry of sentiment.

We have said that this feeling mingled in the more common concerns of his life. His cranium, indeed, to judge from his busts, must have exhibited a strong development of the organ of veneration. He regarded with reverence everything connected with antiquity. His establishment was on the feudal scale; his house was fashioned more after the feudal ages than his own; and even in the ultimate distribution of his fortune, although the circumstance of having made it himself relieved him from any legal necessity of contravening the suggestions of natural justice, he showed such attachment to the old aristocratic usage as to settle nearly the whole of it on his eldest son.

The influence of this poetic sentiment is discernible in his most trifling acts, in his tastes, his love of the arts, his social habits. His museum, house, and grounds were adorned with relics, curious not so much from their workmanship as their historic associations. It was the ancient fountain from Edinburgh, the Tolbooth lintels, the blunderbuss and spleughan of Rob Roy, the drinking-cup of Prince

Charlie, or the like. It was the same in the arts. The tunes he loved were not the refined and complex melodies of Italy, but the simple notes of his native minstrelsy, from the bagpipe of John of Skye, or from the harp of his own lovely and accomplished daughter. So, also, in painting. It was not the masterly designs of the great Flemish and Italian schools that adorned his walls, but some portrait of Claverhouse, or of Queen Mary, or of "glorious old John." In architecture we see the same spirit in the singular "romance of stone and lime," which may be said to have been his own device, down to the minutest details of its finishing. We see it again in the joyous celebrations of his feudal tenantry, the good old festivals, the Hogmanay, the Kirn, &c., long fallen into desuetude, when the old Highland piper sounded the same wild pibroch that had so often summoned the clans together, for war or for wassail, among the fastnesses of the mountains. To the same source, in fine, may be traced the feelings of superstition which seemed to hover round Scott's mind like some "strange, mysterious dream," giving a romantic colouring to his conversation and his writings, but, rarely, if ever, influencing his actions. It was a poetic sentiment.

Scott was a Tory to the backbone. Had he come into the world half a century sooner, he would, no doubt, have made a figure under the banner of the Pretender. He was at no great pains to disguise his political creed; witness his jolly drinking-song on the acquittal of Lord Melville. This was verse; but his prose is not much more qualified. "As for Whiggery in general," he says, in one of his letters, "I can only say that, as no man can be said to be utterly overset until his rump has been higher than his head, so I cannot read in history of any free state which has been brought to slavery, until the rascal and uninstructed populace had had their short hour of anarchical government, which naturally leads to the stern repose of military despotism. . . . . With these convictions, I am very jealous of Whiggery under all modifications, and I must say my acquaintance with the total want of principle in some of its warmest professors does not tend to recommend it." With all this, however, his Toryism was not, practically, of that sort which blunts a man's sensibilities for those who are not of the same porcelain clay with himself. No man, Whig or Radical, ever had less of this pretension, or treated his inferiors with greater kindness, and even familiarity; a circumstance noticed by every visitor at his hospitable mansion who saw him strolling round his grounds, taking his pinch of snuff out of the mull of some "gray-haired old hedger," or leaning on honest Tom Purdie's shoulder, and taking sweet counsel as to the right method of thinning a plantation. But, with all this familiarity, no man was better served by his domestics. It was the service of love, the only service that power cannot command and money cannot buy.

Akin to the feelings of which we have been speaking, was the truly chivalrous sense of honour which stamped his whole conduct. We do not mean that Hotspur honour which is roused only by the drum and fife—though he says of himself, "I like the sound of a drum as well

as Uncle Toby ever did"—but that honour which is deep-seated in the heart of every true gentleman, shrinking with sensitive delicacy from the least stain, or imputation of a stain, on his faith. "If we lose everything else," writes he, on a trying occasion to a friend who was not so nice in this particular, "we will at least keep our honour unblemished." It reminds one of the pithy epistle of a kindred chivalrous spirit, Francis the First, to his mother, from the unlucky field of Pavia: "Tout est perdu, fors l'honneur." Scott's latter years furnished a noble commentary on the sincerity of his manly principles.

Little is said directly of his religious sentiments in the biography. They seem to have harmonized well with his political. He was a member of the English Church, a staunch champion of established forms, and a sturdy enemy to everything that savoured of the sharp tang of Puritanism. On this ground, indeed, the youthful Samson used to wrestle manfully with worthy Dominie Mitchell, who, no doubt, furnished many a screed of doctrine for the Reverend Peter Poundtext, Master Nehemiah Holdenough, and other lights of the covenant. Scott was no friend to cant under any form. But, whatever were his speculative opinions, in practice his heart overflowed with that charity which is the life-spring of our religion; and whenever he takes occasion to allude to the subject directly, he testifies a deep reverence for the truths of revelation, as well as for its Divine original.

Whatever estimate be formed of Scott's moral qualities, his intellectual were of a kind which well entitled him to the epithet conferred on Lope de Vega, "monstruo de naturaleza" (a miracle of nature). His mind scarcely seemed to be subjected to the same laws that control the rest of his species. His memory, as is usual, was the first of his powers fully developed. While an urchin at school, he could repeat whole cantos, he says, of Ossian and of Spenser. In riper years we are constantly meeting with similar feats of his achievement. Thus, on one occasion, he repeated, the whole of a poem in some penny magazine, incidentally alluded to, which he had not seen since he was a schoolboy. On another, when the Ettrick Shepherd was trying ineffectually to fish up from his own recollections some scraps of a ballad he had himself manufactured years before, Scott called to him, "Take your pencil, Jemmy, and I will tell it to you, word for word;" and he accordingly did so. But it is needless to multiply examples of feats so startling as to look almost like the tricks of a conjuror.

What is most extraordinary is, that while he acquired with such facility, that the bare perusal, or the repetition of a thing once to him, was sufficient, he yet retained it with the greatest pertinacity. Other men's memories are so much jostled in the rough and tumble of life, that most of the facts get sifted out nearly as fast as they are put in; so that we are in the same dilemma with those unlucky daughters of Danaus, of schoolboy memory, obliged to spend the greater part of the time in replenishing. But Scott's memory seemed to be hermetically sealed, suffering nothing once fairly in to

leak out again. This was of immense service to him when he took up the business of authorship, as his whole multifarious stock of facts, whether from books or observation, became, in truth, his stock-in-trade, ready furnished to his hands. This may explain in part — though it is not less marvellous — the cause of his rapid execution of works, often replete with rare and curious information. The labour, the preparation, had been already completed. His whole life had been a business of preparation. When he ventured, as in the case of *Rokeby* and of *Quentin Durward*, on ground with which he had not been familiar, we see how industriously he set about new acquisitions.

In most of the prodigies of memory which we have ever known, the overgrowth of that faculty seems to have been attained at the expense of all the others; but in Scott, the directly opposite power of the imagination, the inventive power, was equally strongly developed, and at the same early age; for we find him renowned for story-craft while at school. How many a delightful fiction, warm with the flush of ingenuous youth, did he not throw away on the ears of thoughtless childhood, which had they been duly registered, might now have amused children of a larger growth! We have seen Scott's genius in its prime and its decay. The frolic graces of childhood are alone wanting.

The facility with which he threw his ideas into language was also remarked very early. One of his first ballads, and a long one, was dashed off at the dinner-table. His *Lay* was written at the rate of a canto a week. *Waverley*, or rather the last two volumes of it, cost the evenings of a summer month. Who that has ever read the account can forget the movements of that mysterious hand, as described by the two students from the window of a neighbouring attic, throwing off sheet after sheet, with untiring rapidity, of the pages destined to immortality? Scott speaks pleasantly enough of this marvellous facility in a letter to his friend Morritt: "When once I set my pen to the paper, it will walk fast enough. I am sometimes tempted to leave it alone, and see whether it will not write as well without the assistance of my head as with it. A hopeful prospect for the reader."

As to the time and place of composition, he appears to have been nearly indifferent. He possessed entire power of abstraction, and it mattered little whether he were nailed to his clerk's desk, under the drowsy eloquence of some long-winded barrister, or dashing his horse into the surf on Portobello sands, or rattling in a postchaise, or amid the hum of guests in his overflowing halls at Abbotsford — it mattered not; the same well-adjusted little packet, "nicely corded and sealed," was sure to be ready, at the regular time, for the Edinburgh mail. His own account of his composition to a friend, who asked when he found time for it, is striking enough. "Oh," said Scott, "I lie *simmering* over things for an hour or so before I get up, and there's the time I am dressing to overhaul my half-sleeping, half-waking *projet de chapître;* and, when I get the paper before me, it commonly runs off pretty easily. Besides, I often take a doze in the

plantations, and while Tom marks out a dike or a drain as I have directed, one's fancy may be running its ain rigs in some other world." Never did this sort of simmering produce such a splendid bill of fare.

The quality of the [illegible] under such circumstances, is, in truth, the great miracle of the whole. The execution of so much work, as a mere feat of penmanship, would undoubtedly be very extraordinary, but as a mere scrivener's miracle, would be hardly worth recording. It is a sort of miracle that is every day performing under our own eyes, as it were, by Messrs. James, Bulwer, and Co., who, in all the various staples of "comedy, history, pastoral-comical, historical-pastoral," &c. supply their own market, and ours too, with all that can be wanted. In Spain, and in Italy also, we may find abundance of *improvisatori* and *improvisatrici*, who perform miracles of the same sort, in verse, too, in languages whose vowel terminations make it very easy for the thoughts to tumble into rhyme, without any malice prepense. Sir Stamford Raffles, in his account of Java, tells us of a splendid avenue of trees before his house, which in the course of a year shot up to the height of forty feet. But who shall compare the brief, transitory splendours of a fungus vegetation with the mighty monarch of the forest, sending his roots deep into the heart of the earth, and his branches, amid storm and sunshine, to the heavens? And is not the latter the true emblem of Scott? For who can doubt that his prose creations, at least, will gather strength with time, living on through succeeding generations, even when the language in which they are written, like those of Greece and Rome, shall cease to be a living language?

The only writer deserving, in these respects, to be named with Scott, is Lope de Vega, who, in his own day, held as high a rank in the republic of letters as our great contemporary. The beautiful dramas which he threw off for the entertainment of the capital, and whose success drove Cervantes from the stage, outstripped the abilities of an amanuensis to copy. His intimate friend, Montalvan, one of the most popular and prolific authors of the time, tells us that he undertook with Lope once to supply the theatre with a comedy—in verse, and in three acts, as the Spanish dramas usually were—at a very short notice. In order to get through his half as soon as his partner, he rose by two in the morning, and at eleven had completed it; an extraordinary feat, certainly, since a play extended to between thirty and forty pages, of a hundred lines each. Walking into the garden, he found his brother poet pruning an orange-tree. "Well, how do you get on?" said Montalvan. "Very well," answered Lope: "I rose betimes—at five; and after I got through, eat my breakfast; since which I have written a letter of fifty triplets, and watered the whole of the garden, which has tired me a good deal."

But a little arithmetic will best show the comparative fertility of Scott and Lope de Vega. It is so germain to the present matter, that we shall make no apology for transcribing here some computa-

tions from our last July number; and as few of our readers, we suspect, have the air-tight memory of Sir Walter, we doubt not that enough of it has escaped them by this time to excuse us from equipping it with one of those "cocked hats and walking-sticks" with which he furbished up an old story.

"It is impossible to state the results of Lope de Vega's labours in any form that will not powerfully strike the imagination. Thus, he has left twenty-one million three hundred thousand verses in print, besides a mass of manuscript. He furnished the theatre, according to the statement of his intimate friend Montalvan, with eighteen hundred regular plays, and four hundred *autos* or religious dramas — all acted. He composed, according to his own statement, more than one hundred comedies in the almost incredible space of twenty-four hours each; and a comedy averaged between two and three thousand verses, great part of them rhymed, and interspersed with sonnets, and other more difficult forms of versification. He lived seventy-two years; and supposing him to have employed fifty of that period in composition, although he filled a variety of engrossing vocations during that time, he must have averaged a play a week, to say nothing of twenty-one volumes quarto, of miscellaneous works, including five epics, written in his leisure moments, and all now in print!

"The only achievements we can recall in literary history bearing any resemblance to, though falling far short of this, are those of our illustrious contemporary, Sir Walter Scott. The complete edition of his works, recently advertised by Murray, with the edition of two volumes of which Murray has not the copyright, probably contains ninety volumes, small octavo. To these should farther be added a large supply of matter for the *Edinburgh Annual Register*, as well as other anonymous contributions. Of these, forty-eight volumes of novels, and twenty-one of history and biography, were produced between 1814 and 1831, or in seventeen years. These would give an average of four volumes a year, or one for every three months during the whole of that period; to which must be added twenty-one volumes of poetry and prose, previously published. The mere mechanical execution of so much work, both in his case and Lope de Vega's, would seem to be scarce possible in the limits assigned. Scott, too, was as variously occupied in other ways as his Spanish rival; and probably, from the social hospitality of his life, spent a much larger portion of his time in no literary occupation at all."

Of all the wonderful dramatic creations of Lope de Vega's genius, what now remains? Two or three plays only keep possession of the stage, and few, very few, are still read with pleasure in the closet. They have never been collected into a uniform edition, and are now met with in scattered sheets only on the shelves of some mousing bookseller, or collected in miscellaneous parcels in the libraries of the curious.

Scott, with all his facility of execution, had none of that pitiable affectation sometimes found in men of genius, who think that the possesion of this quality may dispense with regular, methodical habits

of study. He was most economical of time. He did not, like Voltaire, speak of it as "a terrible thing that so much time should be wasted in talking." He was too little of a pedant, and far too benevolent, not to feel that there are other objects worth living for than mere literary fame; but he grudged the waste of time on merely frivolous and heartless objects. "As for dressing when we are quite alone," he remarked one day to Mr. Gillies, whom he had taken home with him to a family dinner, "it is out of the question. Life is not long enough for such fiddle-faddle." In the early part of his life he worked late at night, but, subsequently, from a conviction of the superior healthiness of early rising, as well as the desire to secure, at all hazards, a portion of the day for literary labour, he rose at five the year round; no small effort, as any one will admit who has seen the pain and difficulty which a regular bird of night finds in reconciling his eyes to daylight. He was scrupulously exact, moreover, in the distribution of his hours. In one of his letters to his friend Terry, the player, replete, as usual, with advice that seems to flow equally from the head and the heart, he says, in reference to the practice of *daiddling* away one's time, "A habit of the mind it is which is very apt to beset men of intellect and talent, especially when their time is not regularly filled up, but left to their own arrangement. But it is like the ivy round the oak, and ends by limiting, if it does not destroy, the power of manly and necessary exertion. I must love a man so well, to whom I offer such a word of advice, that I will not apologise for it, but expect to hear you are become *as regular as a Dutch clock—hours, quarters, minutes, all marked and appropriated.*" With the same emphasis he inculcates the like habits on his son. If any man might dispense with them, it was surely Scott. But he knew that without them the greatest powers of mind will run to waste, and water but the desert.

Some of the literary opinions of Scott are singular, considering, too, the position he occupied in the world of letters. "I promise you," he says, in an epistle to an old friend, "my oaks will outlast my laurels; and I pique myself more on my compositions for manure than on any other compositions to which I was ever accessary." This may seem *badinage;* but he repeatedly, both in writing and conversation, places literature, as a profession, below other intellectual professions, and especially the military. The Duke of Wellington, the representative of the last, seems to have drawn from him a very extraordinary degree of deference, which we cannot but think smacks a little of that strong relish for gunpowder which he avows in himself.

It is not very easy to see on what this low estimate of literature rested. As a profession, it has too little in common with more active ones, to afford much ground for running a parallel. The soldier has to do with externals; and his contests and triumphs are over matter in its various forms, whether of man or material nature. The poet deals with the bodiless forms of air, of fancy lighter than air. His business is contemplative; the other's is active, and depends for its

success on strong moral energy and presence of mind. He must, indeed, have genius of the highest order to effect his own combinations, anticipate the movements of his enemy, and dart with eagle eye on his vulnerable point. But who shall say that this practical genius, if we may so term it, is to rank higher in the scale than the creative power of the poet, the spark from the mind of divinity itself?

The orator might seem to afford better ground for comparison, since, though his theatre of action is abroad, he may be said to work with much the same tools as the writer. Yet how much of his success depends on qualities other than intellectual! "Action," said the father of eloquence, "action, action, are the three most essential things to an orator." How much depends on the look, the gesture, the magical tones of voice, modulated to the passions he has stirred; and how much on the contagious sympathies of the audience itself, which drown everything like criticism in the overwhelming tide of emotion! If any one would know how much, let him, after patiently standing—

> "till his feet throb,
> And his head thumps, to feed upon the breath
> Of patriots bursting with heroic rage,"

read the same speech in the columns of a morning newspaper, or in the well-concocted report of the orator himself. The productions of the writer are subjected to a fiercer ordeal. He has no excited sympathies of numbers to hurry his readers along over his blunders. He is scanned in the calm silence of the closet. Every flower of fancy seems here to wither under the rude breath of criticism; every link in the chain of argument is subjected to the touch of prying scrutiny, and if there be the least flaw in it, it is sure to be detected. There is no tribunal so stern as the secret tribunal of a man's own closet, far removed from all the sympathetic impulses of humanity. Surely there is no form in which *intellect* can be exhibited to the world so completely stripped of all adventitious aids as the form of written composition. But, says the practical man, let us estimate things by their utility. "You talk of the poems of Homer," said a mathematician, "but, after all, what do they *prove?*" A question which involves an answer somewhat too voluminous for the tail of an article. But if the poems of Homer were, as Heeren asserts, the principal bond which held the Grecian states together, and gave them a national feeling, they "prove" more than all the arithmeticians of Greece—and there were many cunning ones in it—ever proved. The results of military skill are indeed obvious. The soldier, by a single victory, enlarges the limits of an empire; he may do more—he may achieve the liberties of a nation, or roll back the tide of barbarism ready to overwhelm them. Wellington was placed in such a position, and nobly did he do his work; or rather, he was placed at the head of such a gigantic moral and physical apparatus as enabled him to do it. With his own unassisted strength, of course, he could have done nothing. But it is on his own solitary resources that the great writer is to rely. And yet who

shall say that the triumphs of Wellington have been greater than those of Scott, whose works are familiar as household words to every fireside in his own land, from the castle to the cottage; have crossed oceans and deserts, and, with healing on their wings, found their way to the remotest regions; have helped to form the character, until his own mind may be said to be incorporated into those of hundreds of thousands of his fellow-men? Who is there that has not, at some time or other, felt the heaviness of his heart lightened, his pains mitigated, and his bright moments of life made still brighter by the magical touches of his genius? And shall we speak of his victories as less real, less serviceable to humanity, less truly glorious than those of the greatest captain of his day? The triumphs of the warrior are bounded by the narrow theatre of his own age; but those of a Scott or a Shakspeare will be renewed with greater and greater lustre in ages yet unborn, when the victorious chieftain shall be forgotten, or shall live only in the song of the minstrel and the page of the chronicler.

But, after all, this sort of parallel is not very gracious, nor very philosophical, and, to say truth, is somewhat foolish. We have been drawn into it by the not random, but very deliberate and, in our poor judgment, very disparaging estimate by Scott of his own vocation; and, as we have taken the trouble to write it, our readers will excuse us from blotting it out. There is too little ground for the respective parties to stand on for a parallel. As to the pedantic *cui bono* standard, it is impossible to tell the final issues of a single act; how can we then hope to understand those of a course of action? As for the *honour* of different vocations, there never was a truer sentence than the stale one of Pope—stale now, because it is so true—

"Act well your part—there all the honour lies."

And it is the just boast of our own country, that in no civilized nation is the force of this philanthropic maxim so nobly illustrated as in ours—thanks to our glorious institutions.

A great cause, probably, of Scott's low estimate of letters was the facility with which he wrote. What costs us little we are apt to prize little. If diamonds were as common as pebbles, and gold-dust as any other, who would stoop to gather them? It was the prostitution of his muse, by-the-by, for this same gold-dust, which brought a sharp rebuke on the poet from Lord Byron, in his *English Bards:*

"For this we spurn Apollo's venal son;"

a coarse cut, and the imputation about as true as most satire—that is, not true at all. This was indited in his lordship's earlier days, when he most chivalrously disclaimed all purpose of bartering his rhymes for gold. He lived long enough, however, to weigh his literary wares in the same money-balance used by more vulgar manufacturers; and, in truth, it would be ridiculous if the produce of the brain should not bring its price in this form as well as any other. There is little danger, we imagine, of finding too much gold in the bowels of Parnassus.

Scott took a more sensible view of things. In a letter to Ellis, written soon after the publication of *The Minstrelsy*, he observes, "People may say this and that of the pleasure of fame, or of profit, as a motive of writing, I think the only pleasure, is in the actual exertion and research; and I would no more write upon any other terms than I would hunt merely to dine upon hare soup. At the same time, if credit and profit came unlooked for, I would no more quarrel with them than with the soup." Even this declaration was somewhat more magnanimous than was warranted by his subsequent conduct. The truth is, he soon found out, especially after the Waverley vein had opened, that he had hit on a gold-mine. The prodigious returns he got gave the whole thing the aspect of a speculation. Every new work was an adventure, and the proceeds naturally suggested the indulgence of the most extravagant schemes of expense, which, in their turn, stimulated him to fresh efforts. In this way the "profits" became, whatever they might have been once, a principal incentive to, as they were the recompence of, exertion. His productions were cash articles, and were estimated by him more on the Hudibrastic rule of "the real worth of a thing," than by any fanciful standard of fame. He bowed with deference to the judgment of the booksellers, and trimmed his sails dexterously as the "*aura popularis*" shifted. "If it is na weil bobbit," he writes to his printer, on turning out a less lucky novel, "we'll bobbit again." His muse was of that school who seek the greatest happiness of the greatest number. We can hardly imagine him invoking her like Milton:—

> "Still govern thou my song,
> Urania, and fit audience find, though few."

Still less can we imagine him, like the blind old bard, feeding his soul with visions of posthumous glory, and spinning out epics for five pounds apiece.

It is singular that Scott, although he set as high a money value on his productions as the most enthusiastic of the "trade" could have done, in a literary view should have held them so cheap. "Whatever others may be," he said, "I have never been a partisan of my own poetry; as John Wilkes declared, that, 'in the height of his success, he had himself never been a Wilkite.'" Considering the poet's popularity, this was but an indifferent compliment to the taste of his age. With all this disparagement of his own productions, however, Scott was not insensible to criticism. He says somewhere that, "if he had been conscious of a single vulnerable point in himself, he would not have taken up the business of writing!" but, on another occasion, he writes, "I make it a rule never to read the attacks made upon me;" and Captain Hall remarks, "He never reads the criticisms on his books; this I know, from the most unquestionable authority. Praise, he says, gives him no pleasure, and censure annoys him." Madame de Graffigny says, also, of Voltaire, "that he was altogether indifferent to praise, but the least word from his

enemies drove him crazy." Yet both these authors banquetted on the sweets of panegyric as much as any who ever lived. They were in the condition of an epicure whose palate has lost its relish for the dainty fare in which it has been so long revelling, without becoming less sensible to the annoyances of sharper and coarser flavours. It may afford some consolation to humble mediocrity, to the less fortunate votaries of the muse, that those who have reached the summit of Parnassus are not much more contented with their condition than those who are scrambling among the bushes at the bottom of the mountain. The fact seems to be, as Scott himself intimates more than once, that the joy is in the chase, whether in the prose or the poetry of life.

But it is high time to terminate our lucubrations, which, however imperfect and unsatisfactory, have already run to a length that must trespass on the patience of the reader. We rise from the perusal of these delightful volumes with the same sort of melancholy feeling with which we wake from a pleasant dream. The concluding volume, of which such ominous presage is given in the last sentence of the fifth, has not yet reached us; but we know enough to anticipate the sad catastrophe it is to unfold of the drama. In those which we have seen, we have beheld a succession of interesting characters come upon the scene and pass away to their long home. "Bright eyes now closed in dust, gay voices for ever silenced," seem to haunt us, too, as we write. The imagination reverts to Abbotsford—the romantic and once brilliant Abbotsford—the magical creation of *his* hands. We see its halls radiant with the hospitality of *his* benevolent heart; thronged with pilgrims from every land, assembled to pay homage at the shrine of genius; echoing to the blithe music of those festal holidays when young and old met to renew the usages of the good old times.

"These were its charms, but all these charms are fled."

Its courts are desolate, or trodden only by the foot of the stranger. The stranger sits under the shadows of the trees which his hand planted. The spell of the enchanter is dissolved; his wand is broken; and the mighty minstrel himself now sleeps in the bosom of the peaceful scenes embellished by his taste, and which his genius has made immortal.

CHATEAUBRIAND'S ENGLISH LITERATURE.

October, 1839.

There are few topics of greater attraction, or, when properly treated, of higher importance, than literary history. For what is it but a faithful register of the successive steps by which a nation has advanced in the career of civilization? Civil history records the crimes and the follies, the enterprises, discoveries, and triumphs, it

may be, of humanity. But to what do all these tend, or of what moment are they in the eye of the philosopher, except as they accelerate or retard the march of civilization? The history of literature is the history of the human mind. It is, as compared with other histories, the intellectual as distinguished from the material—the informing spirit, as compared with the outward and visible.

When such a view of the mental progress of a people is combined with individual biography, we have all the materials for the deepest and most varied interest. The life of the man of letters is not always circumscribed by the walls of a cloister; and was not, even in those days when the cloister was the familiar abode of science. The history of Dante and of Petrarch is the best commentary on that of their age. In later times, the man of letters has taken part in all the principal concerns of public and social life. But, even when the story is to derive its interest from personal character, what a store of entertainment is supplied by the eccentricities of genius—the joys and sorrows, not visible to vulgar eyes, but which agitate his finer sensibilities as powerfully as the greatest shocks of worldly fortune would a hardier and less visionary temper! What deeper interest can romance afford than is to be gathered from the melancholy story of Petrarch, Tasso, Alfieri, Rousseau, Byron, Burns, and a crowd of familiar names, whose genius seems to have been given them only to sharpen their sensibility to suffering? What matter if their sufferings were, for the most part, of the imagination? They were not the less real to *them*. They lived in a world of imagination, and, by the gift of genius, unfortunate to its proprietor, have known how, in the language of one of the most unfortunate, "to make madness beautiful" in the eyes of others.

But, notwithstanding the interest and importance of literary history, it has hitherto received but little attention from English writers. No complete survey of the treasures of our native tongue has been yet produced, or even attempted. The earlier periods of the poetical development of the nation have been well illustrated by various antiquaries. Warton has brought the history of poetry down to the season of its first vigorous expansion—the age of Elizabeth. But he did not penetrate beyond the magnificent vestibule of the temple. Dr. Johnson's *Lives of the Poets* have done much to supply the deficiency in this department. But much more remains to be done to afford the student anything like a complete view of the progress of poetry in England. Johnson's work, as every one knows is conducted on the most capricious and irregular plan. The biographies were dictated by the choice of the bookseller. Some of the most memorable names in British literature are omitted to make way for a host of minor luminaries, whose dim radiance, unassisted by the critic's magnifying lens, would never have penetrated to posterity. The same irregularity is visible in the proportion he has assigned to each of his subjects; the principal figures, or what should have been such, being often thrown into the background, to make room for some subordinate person whose story was thought to have more interest.

Besides these defects of plan, the critic was certainly deficient in sensibility to the more delicate, the minor beauties of poetic sentiment. He analyzes verse in the cold-blooded spirit of a chemist, until all the aroma, which constituted its principal charm, escapes in the decomposition. By this kind of process, some of the finest fancies of the Muse, the lofty dithyrambics of Gray, the ethereal effusions of Collins, and of Milton too, are rendered sufficiently vapid. In this sort of criticism, all the effect that relies on *impressions*, goes for nothing. Ideas are alone taken into the account, and all is weighed in the same hard, matter-of-fact scales of common sense, like so much solid prose. What a sorry figure would Byron's Muse make. subjected to such an ordeal! The doctor's taste in composition, to judge from his own style, was not of the highest order. It was a style, indeed, of extraordinary power, suited to the expression of his original thinking, bold, vigorous, and glowing with all the lustre of pointed antithesis. But the brilliancy is cold, and the ornaments are much too florid and overcharged for a graceful effect. When to these minor blemishes we add the graver one of an obliquity of judgment, produced by inveterate political and religious prejudice, which has thrown a shadow over some of the brightest characters subjected to his pencil, we have summed up a fair amount of critical deficiencies. With all this, there is no one of the works of this great and good man in which he has displayed more of the strength of his mighty intellect, shown a more pure and masculine morality, more sound principles of criticism in the abstract, more acute delineation of character, and more gorgeous splendour of diction. His defects, however, such as they are, must prevent his maintaining with posterity that undisputed dictatorship in criticism which was conceded to him in his own day. We must do justice to his errors as well as to his excellences, in order that we may do justice to the characters which have come under his censure. And we must admit that his work, however admirable as a gallery of splendid portraits, is inadequate to convey anything like a complete or impartial view of English poetry.

The English have made but slender contributions to the history of foreign literatures. The most important, probably, are Roscoe's works, in which literary criticism, though but a subordinate feature, is the most valuable part of the composition. As to anything like a general survey of this department, they are wholly deficient. The deficiency, indeed, is likely to be supplied, to a certain extent, by the work of Mr. Hallam, now in progress of publication; the first volume of which—the only one which has yet issued from the press—gives evidence of the same curious erudition, acuteness, honest impartiality, and energy of diction which distinguish the other writings of this eminent scholar. But the extent of his work, limited to four volumes, precludes anything more than a survey of the most prominent features of the vast subject he has undertaken.

The Continental nations, under serious discouragements, too, have been much more active than the British in this field. The Spani-

ards can boast a general history of letters, extending to more than twenty volumes in length, and compiled with sufficient impartiality. The Italians have several such. Yet these are the lands of the Inquisition, where reason is hood-winked, and the honest utterance of opinion has been recompensed by persecution, exile, and the stake. How can such a people estimate the character of compositions which, produced under happier institutions, are instinct with the spirit of freedom? How can they make allowance for the manifold eccentricities of a literature where th ught is allowed to expatiate in all the independence of individual caprice? How can they possibly, trained to pay such nice deference to outward finish and mere verbal elegance, have any sympathy with the rough and homely beauties which emanate from the people and are addressed to the people?

The French, nurtured under freer forms of government, have contrived to comé under a system of literary laws scarcely less severe. Their first great dramatic production gave rise to a scheme of critical legislation, which has continued ever since to press on the genius of the nation in all the higher walks of poetic art. Amid all the mutations of state, the tone of criticism has remained essentially the same to the present century, when, indeed, the boiling passions and higher excitements of a revolutionary age have made the classic models on which their literature was cast appear somewhat too frigid, and a warmer colouring has been sought by an infusion of English sentiment. But this mixture, or, rather, confusion of styles, neither French nor English, seems to rest on no settled principles, and is, probably, too alien to the genius of the people to continue permanent.

The French, forming themselves early on a foreign and antique model, were necessarily driven to rules, as a substitute for those natural promptings which have directed the course of other modern nations in the career of letters. Such rules, of course, while assimilating them to antiquity, drew them aside from sympathy with their own contemporaries. How can they, thus formed on an artificial system, enter into the spirit of other literatures so uncongenial with their own?

That the French continued subject to such a system, with little change to the present age, is evinced by the example of Voltaire, a writer whose lawless ridicule

> "like the wind,
> Blew where it listed, laying all things prone,"

but whose revolutionary spirit made no serious changes in the principles of the national criticism. Indeed, his commentaries on Corneille furnish evidence of a willingness to contract still closer the range of the poet, and to define more accurately the laws by which his movements were to be controlled. Voltaire's history affords an evidence of the truth of the Horatian maxim, "*naturam expellas*," &c. In his younger days he passed some time, as is well known, in England, and contracted there a certain relish for the strange models which came under his observation. On his return

he made many attempts to introduce the foreign school with which he had become acquainted to his own countrymen. His vanity was gratified by detecting the latent beauties of his barbarian neighbours, and by being the first to point them out to his countrymen. It associated him with names venerated on the other side of the Channel, and at home transferred a part of their glory to himself. Indeed, he was not backward in transferring as much as he could of it, by borrowing on his own account, where he could venture, *manibus plenis*, and with very little acknowledgment. The French at length became so far reconciled to the monstrosities of their neighbours, that a regular translation of Shakspeare, the lord of the British pandemonium, was executed by Letourneur, a scholar of no great merit,—but the work was well received. Voltaire, the veteran, in his solitude of Ferney, was roused by the applause bestowed on the English poet in his Parisian costume, to a sense of his own imprudence. He saw, in imagination, the altars which had been raised to him, as well as to the other master-spirits of the national drama, in a fair way to be overturned, in order to make room for an idol of his own importation. "Have you seen," he writes, speaking of Letourneur's version, "his abominable trash? Will you endure the affront put upon France by it? There are no epithets bad enough, nor fools-caps, nor pillories enough in all France for such a scoundrel. The blood tingles in my old veins in speaking of him. What is the most dreadful part of the affair is the monster has his party in France; and, to add to my shame and consternation, it was I who first sounded the praises of *this Shakspeare;* I who first showed the pearls, picked here and there from his overgrown dungheap. Little did I anticipate that I was helping to trample under foot, at some future day, the laurels of Racine and Corneille to adorn the brows of a barbarous player,—this drunkard of a Shakspeare." Not content with this expectoration of his bile, the old poet transmitted a formal letter of remonstrance to D'Alembert, which was read publicly, as designed, at a regular *séance* of the academy. The document, after expatiating at length on the blunders, vulgarities, and indecencies of the English bard, concludes with this appeal to the critical body he was addressing: "Paint to yourselves, gentlemen, Louis the Fourteenth in his gallery at Versailles, surrounded by his brilliant court: a tatterdemalion advances, covered with rags, and proposes to the assembly to abandon the tragedies of Racine for a mountebank, full of grimaces, with nothing but a lucky hit, now and then to redeem them."

At a later period, Ducis, the successor of Voltaire, if we remember right, in the academy, a writer of far superior merit to Letourneur, did the British bard into much better French than his predecessor; though Ducis, as he takes care to acquaint us, "did his best to efface those startling impressions of horror which would have damned his author in the polished theatres of Paris!" Voltaire need not have taken the affair so much to heart. Shakspeare, reduced within the compass, as much as possible, of the rules, with all his eccentricities and peculiarities—all that made him English, in fact—smoothed

away, may be tolerated, and to a certain extent countenanced, in the "polished theatres of Paris." But this is not

> "Shakspeare, *Nature's* child,
> Warbling his native wood-notes wild."

The Germans are just the antipodes of their French neighbours. Coming late on the arena of modern literature, they would seem to be particularly qualified for excelling in criticism by the variety of styles and models for their study supplied by other nations. They have, accordingly, done wonders in this department, and have extended their critical wand over the remotest regions, dispelling the mists of old prejudice, and throwing the light of learning on what before was dark and inexplicable. They certainly are entitled to the credit of a singularly cosmopolitan power of divesting themselves of local and national prejudice. No nation has done so much to lay the foundations of that reconciling spirit of criticism, which, instead of condemning a difference of taste in different nations as a departure from it, seeks to explain such discrepancies by the peculiar circumstances of the nation, and thus from the elements of discord, as it were, to build up a universal and harmonious system. The exclusive and unfavourable views entertained by some of their later critics respecting the French literature, indeed, into which they have been urged, no doubt, by a desire to counteract the servile deference shown to that literature by their countrymen of the preceding age, forms an important exception to their usual candour.

As general critics, however, the Germans are open to grave objections. The very circumstances of their situation, so favourable, as we have said, to the formation of a liberal criticism, have encouraged the taste for theories and for system-building, always unpropitious to truth. Whoever broaches a theory has a hard battle to fight with conscience. If the theory cannot conform to the facts, so much the worse for the facts, as some wag has said; they must, at all events, conform to the theory. The Germans have put together hypotheses with the facility with which children construct card-houses, and many of them bid fair to last as long. They show more industry in accumulating materials than taste or discretion in their arrangement. They carry their fantastic imagination beyond the legitimate province of the muse into the sober fields of criticism. Their philosophical systems, curiously and elaborately devised, with much ancient lore and solemn imaginings, may remind one of some of those venerable English cathedrals where the magnificent and mysterious Gothic is blended with the clumsy Saxon. The effect, on the whole, is grand, but grotesque withal.

The Germans are too often sadly wanting in discretion, or, in vulgar parlance, taste. They are perpetually overlooking the modesty of nature. They are possessed by a cold-blooded enthusiasm, if we may say so—since it seems to come rather from the head than the heart—which spurs them on over the plainest barriers of common sense, until even the right becomes the wrong. A striking example

of these defects is furnished by the dramatic critic Schlegel, whose *Lectures* are, or may be, familiar to every reader, since they have been reprinted in the English version in this country. No critic, not even a native, has thrown such a flood of light on the characteristics of the sweet bard of Avon. He has made himself so intimately acquainted with the peculiar circumstances of the poet's age and country, that he has been enabled to speculate on his productions as those of a contemporary. In this way he has furnished a key to the mysteries of his composition, has reduced what seemed anomalous to system, and has supplied Shakspeare's own countrymen with new arguments for vindicating the spontaneous suggestions of feeling on strictly philosophical principles. Not content with this important service, he, as usual, pushes his argument to extremes, vindicates obvious blemishes as necessary parts of a system, and calls on us to admire, in contradiction to the most ordinary principles of taste and common sense. Thus, for example, speaking of Shakspeare's notorious blunders in geography and chronology, he coolly tells us, "I undertake to prove that Shakspeare's anachronisms are, for the most part, committed purposely, and after great consideration." In the same vein, speaking of the poet's villanous puns and quibbles, which, to his shame, or, rather, that of his age, so often bespangle with tawdry brilliancy the majestic robe of the Muse, he assures us that "the poet here probably, as everywhere else, has followed principles which will bear a strict examination." But the intrepidity of criticism never went farther than in the conclusion of this same analysis, where he unhesitatingly assigns several apocryphal plays to Shakspeare, gravely informing us that the last three, *Sir John Oldcastle—A Yorkshire Tragedy—and Thomas Lord Cromwell*, of which the English critics speak with unreserved contempt, "are not only unquestionably Shakspeare's but, in his judgment, rank among the best and ripest of his works!" The old bard, could he raise his head from the tomb, where none might disturb his bones, would exclaim, we imagine, "*Non tali auxilio!*" It shows a tolerable degree of assurance in a critic thus to dogmatize on nice questions of verbal resemblance which have so long baffled the natives of the country, who, on such questions, obviously can be the only competent judges. It furnishes a striking example of the want of discretion noticeable in so many of the German scholars. With all these defects, however, it cannot be denied that they have widely extended the limits of rational criticism, and, by their copious stores of erudition, furnished the student with facilities for attaining the best points of view for a comprehensive survey of both ancient and modern literature.

The English have had advantages, on the whole, greater than those of any other people, for perfecting the science of general criticism. They have had no academies to bind the wing of genius to the earth by their thousand wire-drawn subtleties. No inquisition has placed its burning seal upon the lip, and thrown its dark shadow over the recesses of the soul. They have enjoyed the inestimable

privilege of thinking what they pleased, and of uttering what they thought. Their minds, trained to independence, have had no occasion to shrink from encountering any topic, and have acquired a masculine confidence, indispensable to a calm appreciation of the mighty and widely-diversified productions of genius, as unfolded under the influences of as widely-diversified institutions and national character. Their own literature, with chameleon-like delicacy, has reflected all the various aspect of the nation in the successive stages of its history. The rough, romantic beauties and gorgeous pageantry of the Elizabethan age, the stern, sublime enthusiasm of the Commonwealth, the cold [illegible] of Queen Anne, and the tumultuous movements and ardent sensibilities of the present generation, all have been reflected as in a mirror, in the current of English literature, as it has flowed down through the lapse of ages. It is easy to understand what advantages this cultivation of all these different styles of composition at home must give the critic in divesting himself of narrow and local prejudice, and in appreciating the genius of foreign literatures, in each of which some one or other of these different styles has found favour. To this must be added the advantages derived from the structure of the English language itself, which, compounded of the Teutonic and the Latin, offers facilities for a comprehension of other literatures not afforded by those languages, as the German and the Italian, for instance, almost exclusively derived from but one of them.

With all this, the English, as we have remarked, have made fewer direct contributions to general literary criticism than the continental nations, unless, indeed, we take into the account the periodical criticism, which has covered the whole field with a light skirmishing, very unlike any systematic plan of operations. The good effect of this *guerilla* warfare may well be doubted. Most of these critics for the nonce (and we certainly are competent judges on this point) come to their work with little previous preparation. Their attention has been habitually called, for the most part, in other directions, and they throw off an accidental essay in the brief intervals of other occupation. Hence their views are necessarily often superficial, and sometimes contradictory, as may be seen from turning over the leaves of any journal where literary topics are widely discussed; for whatever consistency may be demanded in politics or religion, very free scope is offered, even in the same journal, to literary speculation. Even when the article may have been the fruit of a mind ripened by study and meditation on congenial topics, it too often exhibits only the partial view suggested by the particular and limited direction of the author's thoughts in this instance. Truth is not much served by this irregular process; and the general illumination, indispensable to a full and fair survey of the whole ground, can never be supplied from such scattered and capricious gleams, thrown over it at random.

Another obstacle to a right result is founded in the very constitution of review-writing. Miscellaneous in its range of topics, and addressed to a miscellaneous class of readers, its chief reliance for success, in

competition with the thousand novelties of the day, is in the temporary interest it can excite. Instead of a conscientious discussion and cautious examination of the matter in hand, we too often find an attempt to stimulate the popular appetite by piquant sallies of wit, by caustic sarcasm, or by a pert, dashing confidence, that cuts the knot it cannot readily unloose. Then, again, the spirit of periodical criticism would seem to be little favourable to perfect impartiality. The critic, shrouded in his secret tribunal, too often demeans himself like a stern inquisitor, whose business is rather to convict than to examine. Criticism is directed to scent out blemishes instead of beauties. "*Judex damnatur cum nocens absolvitur*" is the bloody motto of a well-known British periodical, which, under this piratical flag, has sent a broadside into many a gallant bark that deserved better at its hands.

When we combine with all this the spirit of patriotism, or, what passes for such with nine-tenths of the world, the spirit of national vanity, we shall find abundant motives for a deviation from a just, impartial estimate of foreign literatures. And if we turn over the pages of the best-conducted English journals, we shall probably find ample evidence of the various causes we have enumerated. We shall find, amid abundance of shrewd and sarcastic observation, smart skirmish of wit, and clever antithesis, a very small infusion of sober, dispassionate criticism; the criticism founded on patient study and on strictly philosophical principles; the criticism on which one can safely rely as the criterion of good taste, and which, however tame it may appear to the jaded appetite of the literary lounger, is the only one that will attract the eye of posterity.

The work named at the head of our article will, we suspect, notwithstanding the author's brilliant reputation, never meet this same eye of posterity. Though purporting to be, in its main design, an Essay on English Literature, it is, in fact, a multifarious compound of as many ingredients as entered into the witches' cauldron, to say nothing of a gallery of portraits of dead and living, among the latter of whom M. de Chateaubriand himself is not the least conspicuous. "I have treated of everything," he says, truly enough in his preface, "the present, the past, the future." The parts are put together in the most grotesque and disorderly manner, with some striking coincidences, occasionally, of characters and situations and some facts not familiar to every reader. The most unpleasant feature in the book is the doleful lamentation of the author over the evil times on which he has fallen. He has, indeed, lived somewhat beyond his time, which was that of Charles the Tenth, of pious memory—the good old time of apostolicals and absolutists, which will not be likely to revisit France again very soon. Indeed, our unfortunate author reminds one of some weather-beaten hulk which the tide has left high and dry on the strand, and whose signals of distress are little heeded by the rest of the convoy, which have trimmed their sails more dexterously, and sweep merrily on before the breeze. The present work affords glimpses, occasionally, of the author's happier style, which

has so often fascinated us in his earlier productions. On the whole, however, it will add little to his reputation, nor, probably, much subtract from it. When a man has sent forth a score or two of octavoes into the world, and as good as some of M. de Chateaubriand's, he can bear up under a poor one now and then. This is not the first indifferent work laid at his door, and, as he promises to keep the field for some time longer, it will probably not be the last.

We pass over the first half of the first volume to come to the Reformation, the point of departure, as it were, for modern civilization. Our author's views in relation to it, as we might anticipate, are not precisely those we should entertain.

"In a religious point of view," he says, "the Reformation is leading insensibly to indifference, or the complete absence of faith; the reason is, that the independence of the mind terminates in two gulfs, doubt and incredulity.

"By a very natural reaction, the Reformation at its birth, rekindled the dying flame of Catholic fanaticism. It may thus be regarded as the indirect cause of the massacre of St. Bartholomew, the disturbances of the League, the assassination of Henry the Fourth, the murders in Ireland, and of the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, and the *dragonnades!*"—Vol. i. p. 193.

As to the tendency of the Reformation towards doubt and incredulity, we know that free inquiry, continually presenting new views as the sphere of observation is enlarged, may unsettle old principles without establishing any fixed ones in their place, or, in other words, lead to scepticism; but we doubt if this happens more frequently than under the opposite system, inculcated by the Romish Church, which, by precluding examination, excludes the only ground of rational belief. At all events, scepticism, in the former case, is much more remediable than in the latter; since the subject of it, by pursuing his inquiries, will, it is to be hoped, as truth is mighty, arrive at last at a right result; while the Romanist, inhibited from such inquiry, has no remedy. The ingenious author of *Doblado's Letters from Spain* has painted in the most affecting colours the state of such a mind, which, declining to take its creed at the bidding of another, is lost in a labyrinth of doubt without a clue to guide it. As to charging on the Reformation the various enormities with which the above extract concludes, the idea is certainly new. It is, in fact, making the Protestants guilty of their own persecution, and Henry the Fourth of his own assassination; quite an original view of the subject, which, as far as we know, has hitherto escaped the attention of historians.

A few pages farther, and we find the following information respecting the state of Catholicism in our own country:

"Maryland, a Catholic and very populous state, made common cause with the others, and *now most of the Western States are Catholic*. The progress of this communion in the United States of America exceeds belief. There it has been invigorated in its evangelical aliment, popular liberty, *while other communions decline in profound indifference.*"—Vol. i. p. 201.

We were not aware of this state of things. We did indeed know that the Roman Church had increased much of late years, especially in the Valley of the Mississippi: but so have other communions, as the Methodist and Baptist, for example, the latter of which comprehends five times as many disciples as the Roman Catholic. As to the population of the latter in the West, the whole number of Catholics in the Union does not amount, probably, to three-fourths of the number of inhabitants in the single western State of Ohio. The truth is, that, in a country where there is no established or favoured sect, and where the clergy depend on voluntary contribution for their support, there must be constant efforts at proselytism, and a mutation of religious opinion, according to the convictions, or fancied convictions of the converts. What one denomination gains another loses, till roused, in its turn, by its rival, new efforts are made to retrieve its position, and the equilibrium is restored. In the meantime, the population of the whole country goes forward with giant strides, and each sect boasts, and boasts with truth, of the hourly augmentation of its numbers. Those of the Roman Catholics are swelled, moreover, by a considerable addition from emigration, many of the poor foreigners, especially the Irish, being of that persuasion. But this is no ground of triumph, as it infers no increase to the sum of Catholicism, since what is thus gained in the New World is lost in the Old.

Our author pronounces the Reformation hostile to the arts, poetry, eloquence, elegant literature, and even the spirit of military heroism. But hear his own words:

"The Reformation, imbued with the spirit of its founder, declared itself hostile to the arts. It sacked tombs, churches, and monuments, and made in France and England, heaps of ruins." . . . .

"The beautiful in literature will be found to exist in a greater or less degree, in proportion as writers have approximated to the genius of the Roman Church." . . . .

"If the Reformation restricted genius in poetry, eloquence, and the arts, it also checked heroism in war, for heroism is imagination in the military order."—Vol. i. pp. 194-207.

This is a sweeping denunciation; and, as far as the arts of design are intended, may probably be defended. The Romish worship, its stately ritual and gorgeous ceremonies, the throng of numbers assisting, in one form or another, at the service, all required spacious and magnificent edifices, with the rich accessories of sculpture and painting, and music also, to give full effect to the spectacle. Never was there a religion which addressed itself more directly to the senses. And, fortunately for it, the immense power and revenues of its ministers enabled them to meet its exorbitant demands. On so splendid a theatre, and under such patronage, the arts were called into life in modern Europe, and most of all in that spot which represented the capital of Christendom. It was there, amid the pomp and luxury of religion, that those beautiful structures rose, with those exquisite creations of the chisel and the pencil, which embodied in themselves all the elements of ideal beauty.

But, independently of these external circumstances, the spirit of Catholicism was eminently favourable to the artist. Shut out from free inquiry—from the Scriptures themselves—and compelled to receive the dogmas of his teachers upon trust, the road to conviction lay less through the understanding than the heart. The heart was to be moved the affections and sympathies to be stirred, as well as the senses to be dazzled. This was the machinery by which alone could an effectual devotion to the faith be maintained in an ignorant people. It was not, therefore, Christ as a teacher delivering lessons of practical wisdom and morality that was brought before the eye, but Christ filling the offices of human sympathy, ministering to the poor and sorrowing, giving eyes to the blind, health to the sick, and life to the dead. It was Christ suffering under persecution, crowned with thorns, lacerated with stripes, dying on the cross. These sorrows and sufferings were understood by the dullest soul, and told more than a thousand homilies. So with the Virgin. It was not that sainted mother of the Saviour whom Protestants venerate, but do not worship; it was the Mother of God, and entitled, like him, to adoration. It was a woman, and, as such, the object of those romantic feelings which would profane the service of the Deity, but which are not the less touching as being in accordance with human sympathies. The respect for the Virgin, indeed, partook of that which a Catholic might feel for his tutelar saint and his mistress combined. Orders of chivalry were dedicated to her service; and her shrine was piled with more offerings and frequented by more pilgrimages than the altars of the Deity himself. Thus, feelings of love, adoration, and romantic honour, strangely blended, threw a halo of poetic glory around their object, making it the most exalted theme for the study of the artist. What wonder that this subject should have called forth the noblest inspirations of his genius? What wonder that an artist like Raphael should have found in the simple portraiture of a woman and a child the materials for immortality?

It was something like a kindred state of feeling which called into being the arts of ancient Greece, when her mythology was comparatively fresh, and faith was easy; when the legends of the past, familiar as Scripture story at a later day, gave a real existence to the beings of fancy, and the artist, embodying these in forms of visible beauty, but finished the work which the poet had begun.

The Reformation brought other trains of ideas, and with them other influences on the arts, than those of Catholicism. Its first movements were decidedly hostile, since the works of art, with which the temples were adorned, being associated with the religion itself, became odious as the symbols of idolatry. But the spirit of the Reformation gave thought a new direction even in the cultivation of art. It was no longer sought to appeal to the senses by brilliant display, or to waken the sensibilities by those superficial emotions which find relief in tears. A sterner, deeper feeling was roused. The mind was turned within, as it were, to ponder on the import of existence and its future destinies; for the chains were withdrawn

from the soul, and it was permitted to wander at large in the regions of speculation. Reason took the place of sentiment—the useful of the merely ornamental. Facts were substituted for forms, even the ideal forms of beauty. There were to be no more Michael Angelos and Raphaels; no glorious Gothic temples which consumed generations in their building. The sublime and the beautiful were not the first objects proposed by the artist. He sought truth—fidelity to nature. He studied the characters of his species as well as the forms of imaginary perfection. He portrayed life as developed in its thousand peculiarities before his own eyes, and the ideal gave way to the natural. In this way, new schools of painting, like that of Hogarth, for example, arose, which, however inferior in those great properties for which we must admire the masterpieces of Italian art, had a significance and a philosophic depth which furnished quite as much matter for study and meditation.

A similar tendency was observable in poetry, eloquence, and works of elegant literature. The influence of the Reformation here was undoubtedly favourable, whatever it may have been on the arts. How could it be otherwise on literature, the written expression of thought, in which no grace of visible forms and proportions, no skill of mechanical execution, can cheat the eye with the vain semblance of genius? But it was not until the warm breath of the Reformation had dissolved the icy fetters which had so long held the spirit *of man in bondage that the genial current of the soul was permit*ted to flow, that the gates of reason were unbarred, and the mind was permitted to taste of the tree of knowledge, forbidden tree no longer. Where was the scope for eloquence when thought was stifled in the very sanctuary of the heart; for out of the fulness of the heart the mouth speaketh.

There might, indeed, be an elaborate attention to the outward forms of expression, an exquisite finish of verbal arrangement, the dress and garniture of thought. And, in fact, the Catholic nations have surpassed the Protestant in attention to verbal elegance and the soft music of numbers, to nice rhetorical artifice and brilliancy of composition. The poetry of Italy and the prose of France bear ample evidence how much time and talent have been expended on this beauty of outward form, the rich vehicle of thought. But where shall we find the powerful reasoning, various knowledge, and fearless energy of diction which stamp the oratory of Protestant England and America? In France, indeed, where prose has received a higher polish and classic elegance than in any other country, pulpit eloquence has reached an uncommon degree of excellence; for though much was excluded, the avenues to the heart, as with the painter and the sculptor were still left open to the orator. If there has been a deficiency in this respect in the English Church, which all will not admit, it arises probably from the fact that the mind, unrestricted, has been occupied with reasoning rather than rhetoric, and sought to clear away old prejudices and establish new truths, instead of wakening a transient sensibility, or dazzling the imagination with poetic flights

of eloquence. That it is the fault of the preacher at all events, and not of Protestantism, is shown by a striking example under our own eyes, that of our distinguished countryman, Dr. Channing, whose style is irradiated with all the splendours of a glowing imagination, showing, as powerfully as any other example, probably, in English prose, of what melody and compass the language is capable under the touch of genius instinct with genuine enthusiasm. Not that we would recommend this style, grand and beautiful as it is, for imitation. We think we have seen the ill effects of this already in more than one instance. In fact, no style should be held up as a model for imitation. Dr. Johnson tells us, in one of those oracular passages somewhat threadbare now, that "whoever wishes to attain an English style, familiar but not coarse, and elegant but not ostentatious, must give his days and nights to the volumes of Addison." With all deference to the great critic, who, by the formal cut of the sentence just quoted, shows that he did not care to follow his own prescription, we think otherwise. Whoever would write a good English style, we should say, should acquaint himself with the mysteries of the language as revealed in the writings of the best masters, but should form his own style on nobody but himself. Every man, at least every man with a spark of originality in his composition, has his own peculiar way of thinking, and, to give it effect, it must find its way out in its own peculiar language. Indeed, it is impossible to separate language from thought in that delicate blending of both which is called style; at least, it is impossible to produce the same effect with the original by any copy, however literal. We may imitate the structure of a sentence, but the ideas which gave it its peculiar propriety we cannot imitate. The forms of expression that suit one man's train of thinking no more suit another's than one man's clothes will suit another. They will be sure to be either too large or too small, or, at all events, not to make what gentlemen of the needle call a *good fit*. If the party chances, as is generally the case, to be rather under size, and the model is over size, this will only expose his own littleness the more. There is no case more in point than that afforded by Dr. Johnson himself. His brilliant style has been the ambition of every schoolboy, and of some children of larger growth, since the days of the *Rambler*. But the nearer they come to it the worse. The beautiful is turned into the fantastic, and the sublime into the ridiculous. The most curious example of this within our recollection is the case of Dr. Symmons, the English editor of Milton's prose writings, and the biographer of the poet. The little doctor has maintained throughout his ponderous volume a most exact imitation of the great doctor, his sesquipedalian words, and florid rotundity of period. With all this cumbrous load of brave finery on his back, swelled to twice his original dimensions, he looks for all the world, as he is, like a mere bag of wind—a scare-crow, to admonish others of the folly of similar depredations.

But to return. The influence of the Reformation on elegant

literature was never more visible than in the first great English school of poets, which came soon after it, at the close of the sixteenth century. The writers of that period displayed a courage, originality, and truth highly characteristic of the new revolution, which had been introduced by breaking down the old landmarks of opinion, and giving unbounded range to speculation and inquiry. The first great poet, Spenser, adopted the same vehicle of imagination with the Italian bards of chivalry, the romantic epic; but instead of making it, like them, a mere revel of fancy with no farther object than to delight the reader by brilliant combinations, he moralized his song, and gave it a deeper and more solemn import by the mysteries of allegory, which, however prejudicial to its effect as a work of art, showed a mind too intent on serious thoughts and inquiries itself to be content with the dazzling but impotent coruscations of genius, that serve no other end than that of amusement.

In the same manner, Shakspeare and the other dramatic writers of the time, instead of adopting the formal rules recognized afterward by the French writers, their long rhetorical flourishes, their exaggerated models of character, and ideal forms, went freely and fearlessly into all the varieties of human nature, the secret depths of the soul, touching on all the diversified interests of humanity—for he might touch on all without fear of persecution—and thus making his productions a storehouse of philosophy, of lessons of practical wisdom, deep, yet so clear that he who runs may read.

But the spirit of the Reformation did not descend in all its fulness on the Muse till the appearance of Milton. That great poet was in heart as thoroughly a Reformer, and in doctrine much more thoroughly so than Luther himself. Indignant at every effort to crush the spirit, and to cheat it, in his own words, "of that liberty which rarefies and enlightens it like the influence of heaven," he proclaimed the rights of man as a rational, immortal being, undismayed by menace and obloquy, amid a generation of servile and unprincipled sycophants. The blindness which excluded him from the things of earth opened to him more glorious and spiritualized conceptions of heaven, and aided him in exhibiting the full influence of those sublime truths which the privilege of free inquiry in religious matters had poured upon the mind. His muse was as eminently the child of Protestantism as that of Dante, who resembled him in so many traits of character, was of Catholicism. The latter poet, coming first among the moderns, after the fountains of the great deep, which had so long overwhelmed the world, were broken up, displayed, in his wonderful composition, all the elements of modern institutions as distinguished from those of antiquity. He first showed the full and peculiar influence of Christianity on literature, but it was Christianity under the form of Catholicism. His subject, spiritual in its design, like Milton's, was sustained by all the auxiliaries of a visible and material existence. His passage through the infernal abyss is a series of tragic pictures of human woe, suggesting greater refinements of cruelty than were ever imagined by a heathen poet. Amid

all the various forms of mortal anguish, we look in vain for the mind as a means of torture. In like manner, in ascending the scale of celestial being, we pass through a succession of brilliant *fêtes*, made up of light, music, and motion, increasing in splendour and velocity, till all are lost and confounded in the glories of the Deity. Even the pencil of the great master, dipped in these gorgeous tints of imagination, does not shrink from the attempt to portray the outlines of Deity itself. In this he aspired to what many of his countrymen in the sister arts of design have since attempted, and, like him, have failed; for who can hope to give form to the Infinite? In the same false style Dante personifies the spirits of evil, including Satan himself. Much was doubtless owing to the age, though much, also, must be referred to the genius of Catholicism, which, appealing to the senses, has a tendency to materialize the spiritual, as Protestantism, with deeper reflection, aims to spiritualize the material. Thus Milton, in treading similar ground, borrows his illustrations from intellectual sources, conveys the image of the Almighty by his attributes, and, in the frequent portraiture which he introduces of Satan, suggests only vague conceptions of form, the faint outlines of matter, as it were, stretching vast over many a rood, but towering sublime by the unconquerable energy of will - the fit representative of the principle of evil. Indeed, Milton has scarcely anything of what may be called scenic decorations to produce a certain stage effect. His actors are few, and his action nothing. It is only by their intellectual and moral relations—by giving full scope to the

> "Cherub contemplation—
> He that soars on golden wing,
> Guiding the fiery-wheeled throne"

that he has prepared for us visions of celestial beauty and grandeur which never fade from our souls.

In the dialogue with which the two poets have seasoned their poems, we see the action of the opposite influences we have described. Both give vent to metaphysical disquisition, of learned sound, and much greater length than the reader would desire; but in Milton it is the free discussion of a mind trained to wrestle boldly on abstrusest points of metaphysical theology, while Dante follows in the same old barren footsteps which had been trodden by the schoolmen. Both writers were singularly bold and independent. Dante asserted that liberty which should belong to the citizen of every free state; that civil liberty which had been sacrificed in his own country by the spirit of faction. But Milton claimed a higher freedom; a freedom of thinking and of giving utterance to thought, uncontrolled by human authority. He had fallen on evil times; but he had a generous confidence that his voice would reach to posterity, and would be a guide and a light to the coming generations. And truly has it proved so; for in his writings we find the germs of many of the boasted discoveries of our own day in government and education, so that he may be fairly considered as the morning star of that higher civilization which distinguishes our happier era.

Milton's poetical writings do not seem, however, to have been held in that neglect by his contemporaries which is commonly supposed. He had attracted too much attention as a political controversialist, was too much feared for his talents, as well as hated for his principles, to allow anything which fell from his pen to pass unnoticed. Although the profits went to others, he lived to see a second edition of *Paradise Lost*, and this was more than was to have been fairly anticipated of a composition of this nature, however well executed, falling on such times. Indeed, its sale was no evidence that its merits were comprehended, and may be referred to the general reputation of its author; for we find so accomplished a critic as Sir William Temple, some years later, omitting the name of Milton in his roll of writers who have done honour to modern literature, a circumstance which may, perhaps, be imputed to that reverence for the ancients which blinded Sir William to the merits of their successors. How could Milton be understood in his own generation, in the grovelling, sensual court of Charles the Second? How could the dull eyes, so long fastened on the earth endure the blaze of his inspired genius? It was not till time had removed him to a distance that he could be calmly gazed on, and his merits fairly contemplated. Addison, as is well known, was the first to bring them into popular view, by a beautiful specimen of criticism that has permanently connected his name with that of his illustrious subject. More than half a century later, another great name in English criticism, perhaps the greatest in general reputation, Johnson, passed sentence of a very different kind on the pretensions of the poet. A production more discreditable to the author is not to be found in the whole of his voluminous works; equally discreditable, whether regarded in an historical light, or as a sample of literary criticism. What shall we say of the biographer who, in allusion to that affecting passage where the blind old bard talks of himself as "in darkness and with dangers compass'd round," can coolly remark that "this darkness, had his eyes been better employed, might undoubtedly have deserved compassion?" Or what of the critic who can say of the most exquisite effusion of Doric minstrelsy that our language boasts, "surely no man could have fancied that he read *Lycidas* with pleasure, had he not known the author;" and of *Paradise Lost* itself, that "its perusal is a duty rather than a pleasure?" Could a more exact measure be afforded than by this single line of the poetic sensibility of the critic, and his unsuitableness for the office he had here assumed? His *Life of Milton* is a humiliating testimony of the power of political and religious prejudices to warp a great and good mind from the standard of truth, in the estimation, not merely of contemporary excellence, but of the great of other years, over whose frailties Time might be supposed to have drawn his friendly mantle.

Another half century has elapsed, and ample justice has been rendered to the fame of the poet by two elaborate criticisms: the one in the *Edinburgh Review*, from the pen of Mr. Macaulay; the other by Dr. Channing, in the *Christian Examiner*, since republish-

ed in his own works; remarkable performances, each in the manner highly characteristic of its author, and which have contributed, doubtless, to draw attention to the prose compositions of their subject, as the criticism of Addison did to his poetry. There is something gratifying in the circumstance that this great advocate of intellectual liberty should have found his most able and eloquent expositor among us, whose position qualifies us, in a peculiar manner, for profiting by the rich legacy of his genius. It was but discharging a debt of gratitude.

Chateaubriand has much to say about Milton, for whose writings, both prose and poetry, notwithstanding the difference of their sentiments on almost all points of politics and religion, he appears to entertain the most sincere reverence. His criticisms are liberal and just; they show a thorough study of his author; but neither the historical facts nor the reflections will suggest much that is new on a subject now become trite to the English reader.

We may pass over a good deal of skimble-skamble stuff about men and things, which our author may have cut out of his commonplace-book, to come to his remarks on Sir Walter Scott, whom he does not rate so highly as most critics.

"The illustrious painter of Scotland," he says, "seems to me to have created a false class; he has, in my opinion, confounded history and romance. The novelist has set about writing historical romances, and the historian romantic histories."—Vol. ii. p. 306.

We should have said on the contrary, that he had improved the character of both; that he had given new value to romance by building it on history, and new charms to history by embellishing it with the graces of romance.

To be more explicit. The principal historical work of Scott is the *Life of Napoleon*. It has, unquestionably, many of the faults incident to a dashing style of composition, which precluded the possibility of compression and arrangement in the best form of which the subject was capable. This, in the end, may be fatal to the perpetuity of the work, for posterity will be much less patient than our own age. He will have a much heavier load to carry, inasmuch as he is to bear up under all of his own time, and ours too. It is very certain, then, some must go by the board; and nine sturdy volumes, which is the amount of Sir Walter's English edition, will be somewhat alarming. Had he confined himself to half the quantity, there would have been no ground for distrust. Every day, nay, hour, we see, ay, and feel, the ill effects of this rapid style of composition, so usual with the best writers of our day. The immediate profits which such writers are pretty sure to get, notwithstanding the example of M. Chateaubriand, operate like the dressing improvidently laid on a naturally good soil, forcing out noxious weeds in such luxuriance as to check, if not absolutely to kill, the more healthful vegetation. Quantities of trivial detail find their way into the page, mixed up with graver matters. Instead of that skilful preparation by which all the avenues verge at last to one point, so as to leave a distinct impression—an impression of unity—on the

reader, he is hurried along zigzag, in a thousand directions, or round and round, but never, in the cant of the times, "going ahead" an inch. He leaves off pretty much where he set out, except that his memory may be tolerably well stuffed with facts, which, from want of some principle of cohesion, will soon drop out of it. He will find himself like a traveller who has been riding through a fine country, it may be, by moonlight, getting glimpses of everything, but no complete well-illuminated view of the whole (*"quale per incertam lunam,"* &c.); or, rather, like the same traveller, whizzing along in a locomotive so rapidly as to get even a glimpse fairly of nothing, instead of making his tour in such a manner as would enable him to pause at what was worth his attention, to pass by night over the barren and uninteresting, and occasionally to rise to such elevations as would afford the best points of view for commanding the various prospect.

The romance writer labours under no such embarrassments. He may, undoubtedly, precipitate his work, so that it may lack proportion, and the nice arrangement required by the rules which, fifty years ago, would have condemned it as a work of art. But the criticism of the present day is not so squeamish, or, to say truth, pedantic. It is enough for the writer of fiction if he give pleasure; and this, everybody knows, is not effected by the strict observance of artificial rules. It is of little consequence how the plot is entangled, or whether it be untied or cut, in order to extricate the *dramatis personæ*. At least, it is of little consequence compared with the true delineation of character. The story is serviceable only as it affords a means for the display of this; and if the novelist but keep up the interest of his story and the truth of his characters, we easily forgive any dislocations which his light vehicle may encounter from too heedless motion. Indeed, rapidity of motion may, in some sort, favour him, keeping up the glow of his invention, and striking out as he dashes along sparks of wit and fancy, that give a brilliant illumination to his track. But in history there must be another kind of process—a process at once slow and laborious. Old parchments are to be ransacked, charters and musty records to be deciphered, and stupid, worm-eaten chroniclers, who had much more of passion, frequently, to blind, than good sense to guide them, must be sifted and compared. In short, a sort of Medea-like process is to be gone through, and many an old bone is to be boiled over in the caldron before it can come out again clothed in the elements of beauty. The dreams of the novelist—the poet of prose—on the other hand, are beyond the reach of art, and the magician calls up the most brilliant forms of fancy by a single stroke of his wand.

Scott, in his history, was relieved, in some degree, from this necessity of studious research, by borrowing his theme from contemporary events. It was his duty, indeed, to examine evidence carefully, and sift out contradictions and errors. This demanded shrewdness and caution, but not much previous preparation and study. It demanded, above all, candour; for it was his business not to make out a case

for a client, but to weigh both sides, like an impartial judge, before summing up the evidence, and delivering his conscientious opinion. We believe there is no good ground for charging Scott with having swerved from this part of his duty. Those who expected to see him deify his hero, and raise altars to his memory, were disappointed; and so were those, also, who demanded that the tail and cloven hoof should be made to peep out beneath the imperial robe. But this proves his impartiality. It would be unfair, however, to require the degree of impartiality which is to be expected from one removed to a distance from the theatre of strife, from those national interests and feelings which are so often the disturbing causes of historic fairness. An American, no doubt, would have been, in this respect, in a more favourable point of view for contemplating the European drama. The ocean, stretched between us and the Old World, has the effect of time, and extinguishes, or, at least, cools the hot and angry feelings which find their way into every man's bosom within the atmosphere of the contest. Scott was a Briton, with all the peculiarities of one—at least of a North Briton; and the future historian, who gathers materials from his labours, will throw these national predilections into the scale in determining the probable accuracy of his statements. These are not greater than might occur to any man, and allowance will always be made for them on the ground of a general presumption; so that a greater degree of impartiality, by leading to false conclusions in this respect, would scarcely have served the cause of truth better with posterity. An individual who felt his reputation compromised may have joined issue on this or that charge of inaccuracy, but no such charge has come from any of the leading journals in the country, which would not have been slow to expose it, and which would not, considering the great popularity, and, consequently, influence of the work, have omitted, as they did, to notice it at all, had it afforded any obvious ground of exception on this score. Where, then, is the romance which our author accuses Sir Walter of blending with history?

Scott, was, in truth, master of the picturesque. He understood, better than any historian since the time of Livy, how to dispose his lights and shades so as to produce the most striking result. This property of romance he had a right to borrow. This talent is particularly observable in the animated parts of his story—in his battles, for example. No man ever painted those terrible scenes with greater effect. He had a natural relish for gunpowder; and his mettle roused, like that of the war-horse, at the sound of the trumpet. His acquaintance with military science enabled him to employ a technical phraseology, just technical enough to give a knowing air to his descriptions, without embarrassing the reader by a pedantic display of unintelligible jargon. This is a talent rare in a civilian. Nothing can be finer than many of his battle-pieces in his *Life of Bonaparte*, unless, indeed, we except one or two in his *History of Scotland*: as the fight of Bannockburn, for example, in which Burns's "Scots, wha hae," seems to breathe in every line.

It is when treading on Scottish ground that he seems to feel all his strength. "I seem always to step more firmly," he said to some one, "when on my own native heather." His mind was steeped in Scottish lore, and his bosom warmed with a sympathetic glow for the age of chivalry. Accordingly, his delineations of this period, whether in history or romance, are unrivalled; as superior in effect to those of most compilers, as the richly-stained glass of the feudal ages is superior in beauty and brilliancy of tints to a modern imitation. If this be borrowing something from romance, it is, we repeat, no more than what is lawful for the historian, and explains the meaning of our assertion that he has improved history by the embellishments of fiction.

Yet after all, how wide the difference between the province of history and of romance, under Scott's own hands, may be shown by comparing his account of Mary's reign in his *History of Scotland*, with the same period in the novel of *The Abbot*. The historian must keep the beaten track of events. The novelist launches into the illimitable regions of fiction, provided only that his historic portraits be true to their originals. By due attention to this, fiction is made to minister to history, and may, in point of fact, contain as much real truth—truth of character, though not of situation. "The difference between the historian and me," says Fielding, "is, that with him everything is false but the names and dates, while with me nothing is false but these." There is, at least, as much truth in this as in most witticisms.

It is the great glory of Scott, that, by nice attention to costume and character in his novels, he has raised them to historic importance, without impairing their interest as works of art. Who now would imagine that he could form a satisfactory notion of the golden days of Queen Bess, that had not read *Kenilworth?* or of Richard Cœur-de-Lion and his brave paladins, that had not read *Ivanhoe?* Why, then, it has been said, not at once incorporate into regular history all these traits which give such historical value to the novel? Because, in this way, the strict truth which history requires would be violated. This cannot be. The fact is, History and Romance are too near akin ever to be lawfully united. By mingling them together, a confusion is produced, like the mingling of day and night, mystifying and distorting every feature of the landscape. It is enough for the novelist if he be true to the spirit; the historian must be true, also, to the letter. He cannot coin pertinent remarks and anecdotes to illustrate the characters of his drama. He cannot even provide them with suitable costumes. He must take just what Father Time has given him, just what he finds in the records of the age, setting down neither more nor less. Now the dull chroniclers of the old time rarely thought of putting down the smart sayings of the great people they biographize, still less of entering into minute circumstances of personal interest. These were too familiar to contemporaries to require it, and, therefore they waste their breath on more solemn matters of state, all important in their generation, but not worth a rush in

the present. What would the historian not give, could he borrow those fine touches of nature with which the novelist illustrates the characters of his actors—natural touches, indeed, but, in truth, just as artificial as any other part—all coined in the imagination of the writer? There is the same difference between his occupation and that of the novelist that there is between the historical and the portrait painter. The former necessarily takes some great subject, with great personages, all strutting about in gorgeous state attire, and air of solemn tragedy, while his brother-artist insinuates himself into the family groups, and picks out natural, familiar scenes and faces, laughing or weeping, but in the charming undress of nature. What wonder that novel-reading should be so much more amusing than history?

But we have already trespassed too freely on the patience of our readers, who will think the rambling spirit of our author contagious. Before dismissing him, however, we will give a taste of his quality by one or two extracts, not very germane to English literature, but about as much so as a great part of the work. The first is a poetical sally on Bonaparte's burial-place, quite in Monsieur Chateaubriand's peculiar vein.

"The solitude of Napoleon, in his exile and his tomb, has thrown another kind of spell over a brilliant memory. Alexander did not die in sight of Greece; he disappeared amid the pomp of distant Babylon. Bonaparte did not close his eyes in the presence of France; he passed away in the gorgeous horizon of the torrid zone. The man who had shown himself in such powerful reality, vanished like a dream; his life, which belonged to history, co-operated in the poetry of his death. He now sleeps for ever, like a hermit or a paria beneath a willow, in a narrow valley, surrounded by steep rocks, at the extremity of a lonely path. The depth of the silence which presses upon him can only be compared to the vastness of that tumult which had surrounded him. Nations are absent; their throng has retired. The bird of the tropics, harnessed to the car of the sun, as Buffon magnificently expresses it, speeding his flight downward from the planet of light, rests alone, for a moment, over the ashes, the weight of which has shaken the equilibrium of the globe.

"Bonaparte crossed the ocean to repair to his final exile, regardless of that beautiful sky which delighted Columbus, Vasco de Gama, and Camoëns. Stretched upon the ship's stern, he perceived not that unknown constellations were sparkling over his head. His powerful glance, for the first time, encountered their rays. What to him were stars which he had never seen from his bivouacs, and which had never shone over his empire? Nevertheless, not one of them has failed to fulfil its destiny: one half of the firmament spread its light over his cradle, the other half was reserved to illuminate his tomb."—Vol. ii. p. 185, 186.

The next extract relates to the British statesman, William Pitt:

"Pitt, tall and slender, had an air at once melancholy and sarcastic. His delivery was cold, his intonation monotonous his action scarcely perceptible. At the same time, the lucidness and the fluency of his thoughts, the logic of his arguments, suddenly irradiated with

flashes of eloquence, rendered his talent something above the ordinary line.

"I frequently saw Pitt walking across St. James's Park from his own house to the palace. On his part, George the Third arrived from Windsor, after drinking beer out of a pewter pot with the farmers of the neghbourhood; he drove through the mean courts of his mean habitation in a gray chariot, followed by a few of the horse-guards. This was the master of the kings of Europe, as five or six merchants of the city are the masters of India. Pitt, dressed in black, with a steel-hilted sword by his side, and his hat under his arm, ascended, taking two or three steps at a time. In his passage he only met with three or four emigrants, who had nothing to do. Casting on us a disdainful look, he turned up his nose and his pale face, and passed on.

"At home, this great financier kept no sort of order: he had no regular hours for his meals or for sleep. Over head and ears in debt, he paid nobody, and never could take the trouble to cast up a bill. A *valet de chambre* managed his house. Ill-dressed, without pleasure, without passion, greedy of power, he despised honours, and would not be anything more than William Pitt.

"In the month of June, 1822, Lord Liverpool took me to dine at his country-house. As we crossed Putney Heath, he showed me the small house where the son of Lord Chatham, the statesman who had had Europe in his pay, and distributed with his own hand all the treasures of the world, died in poverty."—Vol. ii. pp. 277, 278.

The following extracts show the changes that have taken place in English manners and society, and may afford the "whiskered pandour" of our own day an opportunity of contrasting his style of dandyism with that of the preceding generation:

"Separated from the continent by a long war, the English retained their manners and their national character till the end of the last century. All was not yet machine in the working classes—folly in the upper classes. On the same pavements where you now meet squalid figures and men in frock coats, you were passed by young girls with white tippets, straw hats tied under the chin with a riband, with a basket on the arm, in which was fruit or a book: all kept their eyes cast down; all blushed when one looked at them. Frock coats, without any other, were so unusual in London in 1793, that a woman, deploring with tears the death of Louis the Sixteenth, said to me, 'But, my dear sir, is it true that the poor king was dressed in a frock coat when they cut off his head?'

"The gentlemen-farmers had not yet sold their patrimony to take up their residence in London; they still formed, in the House of Commons, that independent fraction which, transferring their support from the opposition to the ministerial side, upheld the ideas of order and propriety. They hunted the fox and shot pheasants in autumn, ate fat goose at Michaelmas, greeted the sirloin with shouts of 'Roast beef for ever!' complained of the present, extolled the past, cursed Pitt and the war which doubled the price of port wine, and went to bed drunk, to begin the same life again on the following day.

They felt quite sure that the glory of Great Britain would not perish so long as 'God save the King' was sung, the rotten boroughs maintained, the game-laws enforced, and hares and partridges could be sold by stealth at market, under the names of lions and ostriches."—Vol. ii. pp. 279, 280.

"In 1822, at the time of my embassy to London, the fashionable was expected to exhibit, at the first glance, an unhappy and unhealthy man; to have an air of negligence about his person, long nails, a beard neither entire nor shaven, but as it grown for a moment unawares, and forgotten during the preoccupations of wretchedness; hair in disorder; a sublime, mild, wicked eye; lips compressed in disdain of human nature; a Byronian heart, overwhelmed with weariness and disgust of life.

"The dandy of the present day must have a conquering, frivolous, insolent look. He must pay particular attention to his toilet, wear mustaches, or a beard trimmed into a circle like Queen Elizabeth's ruff, or like the radiant disc of the sun. He shows the proud independence of his character by keeping his hat upon his head, by lolling upon sofas, by thrusting his boots into the faces of the ladies seated in admiration upon chairs before him. He rides with a cane, which he carries like a taper, regardless of the horse, which he bestrides, as it were by accident. His health must be perfect, and he must always have five or six felicities upon his hands. Some radical dandies, who have advanced the farthest towards the future, have a pipe. But, no doubt, all this has changed, even during the time that I have taken to describe it."—Vol. ii., pp. 303, 304

The avowed purpose of the present work, singular as it may seem from the above extracts, is to serve as an introduction to a meditated translation of Milton into French, since wholly, or in part, completed by M. Chateaubriand, who thinks, truly enough, that Milton's "political ideas make him a man of our own epoch." When an exile in England, in his early life, during the troubles of the Revolution, our author earned an honourable subsistence by translating some of Milton's verses; and he now proposes to render the bard and himself the same kind office by his labours on a more extended scale. Thus he concludes: "I again seat myself at the table of my poet. He will have nourished me in my youth and my old age. It is nobler and safer to have recourse to glory than to power." Our author's situation is an indifferent commentary on the value of literary fame, at least on its pecuniary value. No man has had more of it in his day. No man has been more alert to make the most of it by frequent, reiterated appearance before the public—whether in full dress or dishabille, yet always before them; and now, in the decline of life, we find him obtaining a scanty support by "French translation and Italian song." We heartily hope that the bard of *Paradise Lost* will do better for his translator than he did for himself, and that M. de Chateaubriand will put more than five pounds in his pocket by his literary labour.