# RHETORIC and STYLE

THOMAS DE QUINCEY

# Table of Contents

# RHETORIC and STYLE

## THOMAS DE QUINCEY





---

Proofed by JP MOURLON,
Paris, France

## RHETORIC.

Whately's *Elements of Rhetoric.*

No art, cultivated by man, has suffered more in the revolutions of taste and opinion than the art of rhetoric. There was a time when, by an undue extension of this term, it designated the whole cycle of accomplishments which prepared a man for public affairs. From that height it has descended to a level with the arts of alchemy and astrology, as holding out promises which consist in a mixed degree of impostures and of trifles. If we look into the prevailing theory of rhetoric, under which it meets with so degrading an estimate, we shall find that it fluctuates between two different conceptions, according to one of which it is an art of ostentatious ornament, and according to the other an art of sophistry. A man is held to play the rhetorician, when he treats a subject with more than usual gaiety of ornament; and perhaps we may add, as an essential element in the idea, with conscious ornament. This is one view of rhetoric; and, under this, what it accomplishes is not so much to persuade as to delight; not so much to win the assent, as to stimulate the attention, and captivate the taste. And even this purpose is attached to something separable and accidental in the *manner*.

But the other idea of rhetoric lays its foundation in something essential to the *matter*. This is that rhetoric of which Milton spoke, as able 'to dash maturest counsels, and to make the worse appear the better reason.' Now it is clear, that *argument* of some quality or other must be taken as the principle of this rhetoric; for those must be immature counsels indeed that could be dashed by mere embellishments of manner, or by artifices of diction and arrangement.

Here then we have in popular use two separate ideas of rhetoric, one of which is occupied with the general end of the fine arts; that is to say, intellectual pleasure. The other applies itself more specifically to a definite purpose of utility.

Such is the popular idea of rhetoric, which wants both unity and precision. If we seek these from the formal teachers of rhetoric, our embarrassment is not much relieved. All of them agree that rhetoric may be defined *the art of persuasion.* But if we inquire what is persuasion, we find them vague and indefinite, or even contradictory. To waive a thousand of others, Dr. Whately, in the work before us, insists upon the *conviction* of the understanding as ' an essential part of persuasion;' and, on the other hand, the author of the Philosophy of Rhetoric

is equally satisfied that there is no persuasion without an appeal to the passions. Here are two views. We, for our parts, have a third, which excludes both: where conviction begins, the field of rhetoric ends that is our opinion: and, as to the passions, we contend that they are not within the province of rhetoric, but of eloquence.

In this view of rhetoric and its functions we coincide with Aristotle; as indeed originally we took it up on a suggestion derived from him. But as all parties may possibly fancy a confirmation of their views in Aristotle, we shall say a word or two in support of our own interpretation of that author, which will surprise our Oxford friends. Our explanation involves a very remarkable detection, which will tax many thousands of books with error in a particular point supposed to be as well established as the hills. The question, indeed, whether a Congreve rocket, or a bomb, descending upon the schools of Oxford, would cause more consternation than the explosion of that novelty which we are going to discharge.

Many years ago, when studying the Aristotelian rhetoric at Oxford, it struck us that, by whatever name Aristotle might describe the main purpose of rhetoric, practically, at least, in his own treatment of it, he threw the whole stress upon finding such arguments for any given thesis as, without positively proving or disproving it, gave it a colorable support. We could not persuade ourselves that it was by accident that the topics, or general heads of argument, were never in an absolute and unconditional sense true but contained so much of plausible or colorable truth as is expressed in the original meaning of the word *probable*. A *ratio probabilis* , in the Latin use of the word *probabilis*, is that ground of assent not which the understanding can solemnly approve and abide by − but the very opposite to this; one which it can submit to for a moment, and countenance as within the limits of the plausible That this was the real governing law of Aristotle's procedure, it was not possible to doubt: but was it consciously known to himself? If so, how was it to be reconciled with his own formal account of the office of rhetoric, so often repeated, that it consisted in finding *enthymemes* ? What then was an *enthymeme*?

Oxford! thou wilt think us mad to ask. Certainly we knew, what all the world knows, that an *enthymeme* was understood to be a syllogism of which one proposition is suppressed major, minor, or conclusion. But what possible relation had *that* to rhetoric? Nature sufficiently prompts all men to that sort of ellipsis; and what impertinence in a teacher to build his whole system upon a solemn precept to do this or that, when the rack would not have forced any man to do otherwise! Besides, Aristotle had represented it as the fault of former systems, that they applied themselves exclusively to the treatment of the passions an object foreign to the purpose of the rhetorician, who, in some situations, is absolutely forbidden by law to use any such arts: whereas, says he, his true and universal weapon is the *enthymeme*, which is open to him everywhere. Now what opposition, or what relation of any kind, can be imagined between the system which he rejects and the one he adopts, if the *enthymeme* is to be understood as it usually has been? The rhetorician is not to address the passions, but what? to mind that, in all his arguments, he suppresses one of his propositions! And these follies are put into the mouth of Aristotle.

In this perplexity a learned Scottish friend communicated to us an *Essay of Facciolati's*, read publicly about a century ago, (Nov. 1724,) and entitled *De Enthymemate*, in which he maintains, that the received idea of the enthymeme is a total blunder, and triumphantly restores the lost idea.' Nego,' says he,' nego enthymema esse syllogismum mutilum, ut vulgo dialectici docent. Nego, inquam, et pernego enthymema enunciatione una et conclusione constare, quamvis ita in scholis omnibus finiatur, et a nobis ipsis finitum sit aliquando nolentibus extra locum lites suscipere.' *I deny peremptorily that an enthymeme consists of one premiss and the conclusion: although that doctrine has been laid down universally in the schools, and upon one occasion even by myself, as unwilling to move the question unseasonably.*

Facciolati is not the least accurate of logicians, because he happens to be the most elegant. Yet, we apprehend, that at such innovations, Smiglecius will stir in his grave; Keckermannus will groan; 'Dutch Burgersdyk' will snort; and English Crackenthorpius, (who has the honor to be an ancestor of Mr. Wordsworth's,) though buried for two centuries, will revisit the glimpses of the moon. And really, if the question were for a name, Heaven forbid that we should disturb the peace of logicians: they might have leave to say, as of the Strid in Wharfdale,

'It has borne that name a thousand years,

And shall a thousand more.'

But, whilst the name is abused, the idea perishes. Facciolati undoubtedly is right: nor is he the first who has observed the error. Julius Pacius, who understood Aristotle better than any man that ever lived, had long before remarked it. The arguments of Facciolati we shall give below; it will be sufficient here to state the result. An *enthymeme* differs from a syllogism, not in the accident of suppressing one of its propositions; either may do this, or neither; the difference is essential, and in the nature of the *matter* ; that of the syllogism being certain and apodeictic; that of the *enthymeme* probable, and drawn from the province of opinion.

This theory tallies exactly with our own previous construction of Aristotle's rhetoric, and explains the stress which he had laid at the outset upon *enthymemes*. Whatsoever is certain, or matter of fixed science, can be no subject for the rhetorician: where it is possible for the understanding to be convinced, no field is open for rhetorical persuasion. Absolute certainty, and fixed science, transcend and exclude opinion and probability. The province of rhetoric, whether meant for an influence upon the actions, or simply upon the belief, lies amongst that vast field of cases where there is a *pro* and a *con*, with the chance of right and wrong, true and false, distributed in varying proportions between them. There is also an immense range of truths, where there are no chances at all concerned, but the affirmative and the negative are both true; as, for example, the goodness of human nature and its wickedness; the happiness of human life and its misery; the charms of knowledge, and its hollowness; the fragility of human prosperity, in the eye of religious meditation, and its security, as estimated by worldly confidence and youthful hope. In all these cases the rhetorician exhibits his art by giving an impulse to one side, and by withdrawing the mind so steadily from all thoughts or images which support the other, as to leave it practically under the possession of this partial estimate.

Upon this theory, what relation to rhetoric shall we assign to style and the ornamental arts of composition? In some respect they seem liable to the same objection as that which Aristotle has urged against appeals to the passions; both are extra−essential, or [ *Greek here*]; they are subjective arts, not objective; that is, they do not affect the thing which is to be surveyed, but the eye of him who is to survey. Yet, in a feast, the epicure holds himself not more obliged to the cook for the venison, than to the physician who braces his stomach to enjoy. And any arts, which conciliate regard to the speaker, indirectly promote the effect of his arguments. On this account, and because (under the severest limitation of rhetoric) they are in many cases indispensable to the perfect interpretation of the thoughts; we may admit arts of style and ornamental composition as the ministerial part of rhetoric. But, with regard to the passions, as contended for by Dr. Campbell, it is a sufficient answer, that they are already preoccupied by what is called *Eloquence*.

Mr. Coleridge, as we have often heard, is in the habit of drawing the line with much philosophical beauty between rhetoric and eloquence. On this topic we were never so fortunate as to hear him: but if we are here called upon for a distinction, we shall satisfy our immediate purpose by a very plain and brief one. By Eloquence, we understand the overflow of powerful feelings upon occasions fitted to excite them. But Rhetoric is the art of aggrandizing and bringing out into strong relief, by means of various and striking thoughts, some aspect of truth which of itself is supported by no spontaneous feelings, and therefore rests upon artificial aids.

Greece, as may well be imagined, was the birthplace of Rhetoric; to which of the Fine Arts was it not? and here, in one sense of the word Rhetoric, the art had its consummation: for the theory, or *ars docens*, was taught with a fullness and an accuracy by the Grecian masters, not afterwards approached. In particular, it was so taught by Aristotle, whose system, we are disposed to agree with Dr. Whately, in pronouncing the best, as regards the primary purpose of a teacher; though otherwise, for elegance, and as a practical model in the art he was expounding, neither Aristotle, nor any less austere among the Greek rhetoricians, has any pretensions to measure himself with Quintilian. In reality, for a triumph over the difficulties of the subject, and as a lesson on the possibility of imparting grace to the treatment of scholastic topics, naturally as intractable as that of Grammar or

Prosody, there is no such *chef−d'œuvre* to this hour in any literature, as the *Institutions* of Quintilian. Laying this one case out of the comparison, however, the Greek superiority was indisputable.

Yet how is it to be explained, that with these advantages on the side of the Greek rhetoric as an *ars docens*, rhetoric as a practical art (the *ars utens*) never made any advances amongst the Greeks to the brilliancy which it attained in Rome? Up to a certain period, and throughout the palmy state of the Greek republics, we may account for it thus: Rhetoric, in its finest and most absolute burnish, may be called an *eloquentia umbratica* ; that is, it aims at an elaborate form of beauty, which shrinks from the strife of business, and could neither arise nor make itself felt in a tumultuous assembly. Certain features, it is well known, and peculiar styles of countenance, which are impressive in a drawing−room, become ineffective on a public stage. The fine tooling, and delicate tracery, of the cabinet artist is lost upon a building of colossal proportions. Extemporaneousness, again, a favorable circumstance to impassioned eloquence, is death to Rhetoric. Two characteristics indeed there were, of a Greek popular assembly, which must have operated fatally on the rhetoricians fervor, in the first place, and, secondly, the coarseness of a real interest. All great rhetoricians, in selecting their subject, have shunned the determinate cases of real life: and even in the single instance of a deviation from the rule that of the author (whoever he be) of the *Declamations* attributed to Quintilian, the cases are shaped with so romantic a generality, and so slightly circumstantiated, as to allow him all the benefit of pure abstractions.

We can readily understand, therefore, why the fervid oratory of the Athenian Assemblies, and the intense reality of its interest, should stifle the growth of Rhetoric: the smoke, tarnish, and demoniac glare of Vesuvius easily eclipse the pallid coruscations of the Aurora Borealis. And in fact, amongst the greater orators of Greece, there is not a solitary gleam of rhetoric: Isocrates may have a little, being (to say the truth) neither orator nor rhetorician in any eminent sense; Demosthenes has none. But when those great thunders had subsided, which reached 'to Macedon, and Artaxerxes' throne,' when the 'fierce democracy' itself had perished, and Greece had fallen under the common circumstances of the Roman Empire, how came it that Greek rhetoric did not blossom concurrently with Roman? Vegetate it did: and a rank crop of weeds grew up under the name of Rhetoric, down to the times of the Emperor Julian and his friend Libanius, (both of whom, by the way, were as worthless writers as have ever abused the Greek language.) But this part of Greek literature is a desert with no oasis. The fact is, if it were required to assign the two bodies of writers who have exhibited the human understanding in the most abject poverty, and whose works by no possibility emit a casual scintillation of wit, fancy, just thinking, or good writing, we should certainly fix upon Greek rhetoricians, and Italian critics. Amongst the whole mass there is not a page, that any judicious friend to literature would wish to reprieve from destruction. And in both cases we apprehend that the possibility of so much inanity is due in part to the quality of the two languages. The diffuseness and loose structure of Greek style unfit it for the closeness, condensation, and [*Greek here*] of rhetoric; the melodious beauty of the mere sounds, which both in the Italian and in the Greek are combined with much majesty, dwells upon the ear so delightfully, that in no other language is it so easy as in these two to write with little or no meaning, and to flow along through a whole wilderness of inanity, without particularly rousing the reader's disgust.

In the literature of Rome it is that we find the true El Dorado of rhetoric, as we might expect from the sinewy compactness of the language. Livy, and, above all preceding writers, Ovid, display the greatest powers of rhetoric in forms of composition, which were not particularly adapted to favor that talent. The contest of Ajax and Ulysses, for the arms of Achilles, in one of the latter Books of the *Metamorphoses*, is a *chef−d'œuvre* of rhetoric, considering its metrical form; for metre, and especially the flowing heroic hexameter, is no advantage to the rhetorician. The two Plinys, Lucan, (though again under the disadvantage of verse) Petronius Arbiter, and Quintilian, but above all, the Senecas, (for a Spanish cross appears to improve the quality of the rhetorician,) have left a body of rhetorical composition such as no modern nation has rivalled. Even the most brilliant of these writers, however, were occasionally surpassed, in particular bravuras of rhetoric, by several of the Latin Fathers, particularly Tertullian, Arnobius, St. Augustin, and a writer whose name we cannot at this moment recall. In fact, a little African blood operated as genially in this respect as Spanish, whilst an Asiatic cross was inevitably fatal. Partly from this cause, and partly because they wrote in an unfavorable language, the Greek Fathers are, one and

all, mere Birmingham rhetoricians. Even Gregory Nazianzen is so, with submission to Messieurs of the Port Royal, and other bigoted critics, who have pronounced him at the very top of the tree among the fine writers of antiquity. Undoubtedly, he has a turgid style of mouthy grandiloquence, (though often the merest bombast;) but for keen and polished rhetoric he is singularly unfitted, by inflated habits of thinking, by loitering diffuseness, and a dreadful trick of calling names. The spirit of personal invective is peculiarly adverse to the coolness of rhetoric. As to Chrysostom, and Basil, with less of pomp and swagger than Gregory, they have not at all more of rhetorical burnish and compression. Upon the whole, looking back through the dazzling files of the ancient rhetoricians, we are disposed to rank the Senecas and Tertullian as the leaders of the band: for St. Austin, in his *Confessions*, and wherever he becomes peculiarly interesting, is apt to be impassioned and fervent in a degree which makes him break out of the proper pace of rhetoric. He is matched to trot, and is continually breaking into a gallop. Indeed, his *Confessions* have in parts, particularly in those which relate to the death of his young friend, and his own frenzy of grief, all that real passion which is only imagined in the *Confessions* of Rousseau, under a preconception derived from his known character and unhappy life. By the time of the Emperor Justinian, or in the century between that time and the era of Mahomet, (A. D. 620,) which century we regard as the common crepusculum between ancient and modern history, all rhetoric, of every degree and quality, seems to have finally expired.

In the literature of modern Europe, rhetoric has been cultivated with success. But this remark applies only with any force to a period which is now long past; and it is probable, upon various considerations, that such another period will never revolve. The rhetorician's art, in its glory and power, has silently faded away before the stern tendencies of the age; and if, by any peculiarity of taste, or strong determination of the intellect, a rhetorician, *en grand costume*, were again to appear amongst us, it is certain that he would have no better welcome than a stare of surprise as a posture−maker or balancer, not more elevated in the general estimate, but far less amusing, than the opera−dancer or equestrian gymnast. No the age of Rhetoric, like that of Chivalry, is gone, and passed amongst forgotten things; and the rhetorician can have no more chance for returning, than the rhapsodist of early Greece, or the Troubador of romance. So multiplied are the modes of intellectual enjoyment in modern times, that the choice is absolutely distracted; and in a boundless theatre of pleasures, to be had at little or no cost of intellectual activity, it would be marvellous indeed, if any considerable audience could be found for an exhibition which presupposes a state of tense exertion on the part both of auditor and performer. To hang upon one's own thoughts as an object of conscious interest, to play with them, to watch and pursue them through a maze of inversions, evolutions, and harlequin changes, implies a condition of society either like that in the monastic ages, forced to introvert its energies from mere defect of books; (whence arose the scholastic metaphysics, admirable for its subtlety, but famishing the mind, whilst it sharpened its edge in one exclusive direction;) or, if it implies no absolute starvation of intellect, as in the case of the Roman rhetoric, which arose upon a considerable (though not very various) literature, it proclaims at least a quiescent state of the public mind, unoccupied with daily novelties, and at leisure from the agitations of eternal change.

Growing out of the same condition of society, there is another cause at work which will for ever prevent the resurrection of rhetoric, viz. the necessities of public business, its vast extent, complexity, fulness of details, and consequent vulgarity, as compared with that of the ancients. The very same cause, by the way, furnishes an answer to the question moved by Hume, in one of his *Essays*, with regard to the declension of eloquence in our deliberative assemblies. Eloquence, senatorial and forensic, at least, has languished under the same changes of society which have proved fatal to rhetoric. The political economy of the ancient republics, and their commerce, were simple and unelaborate the system of their public services, both martial and civil, was arranged on the most naked and manageable principles; for we must not confound the perplexity in our modern explanations of these things, with a perplexity in the things themselves. The foundation of these differences was in the differences of domestic life. Personal wants being few, both from climate and from habit, and, in the great majority of the citizens, limited almost to the pure necessities of nature; hence arose, for the mass of the population, the possibility of surrendering themselves, much more than with us, either to the one paramount business of the state war, or to a state of Indian idleness. Rome, in particular, during the ages of her growing luxury, must be regarded as a nation supported by other nations, by *largesses*, in effect, that is to say, by the plunder of conquest. Living, therefore, upon foreign alms, or upon corn purchased by the product of tribute or of spoils, a nation could

readily dispense with that expansive development of her internal resources, upon which modern Europe has been forced by the more equal distribution of power amongst the civilized world.

The changes which have followed in the functions of our popular assemblies, correspond to the great revolution here described. Suppose yourself an ancient Athenian, at some customary display of Athenian oratory, what will be the topics? Peace or war, vengeance for public wrongs, or mercy to prostrate submission, national honor and national gratitude, glory and shame, and every aspect of open appeal to the primal sensibilities of man. On the other hand, enter an English Parliament, having the most of a popular character in its constitution and practice, that is anywhere to be found in the Europe of this day; and the subject of debate will probably be a road−bill, a bill for enabling a coal−gas company to assume certain privileges against a competitor in oil gas; a bill for disfranchising a corrupt borough, or perhaps some technical point of form in the Exchequer bills' bill. So much is the face of public business vulgarized by details. The same spirit of differences extends to forensic eloquence. Grecian and Roman pleadings are occupied with questions of elementary justice, large and diffusive, apprehensible even to the uninstructed, and connecting themselves at every step with powerful and tempestuous feelings. In British trials, on the contrary, the field is foreclosed against any interest of so elevating a nature, because the rights and wrongs of the case are almost inevitably absorbed to an unlearned eye by the technicalities of the law, or by the intricacy of the facts.

But this is not always the case doubtless not; subjects for eloquence, and, therefore, eloquence, will sometimes arise in our senate, and our courts of justice. And in one respect our British displays are more advantageously circumstanced than the ancient, being more conspicuously brought forward into effect by their contrast to the ordinary course of business.

> 'Therefore are feasts so solemn and so rare,
>
> Since seldom coming, in the long year set,
>
> Like stones of worth they thinly placed are,
>
> Or captain jewels in the carcanet.' −
>
> [Shakspeare, Sonnet 52].

But still the objection of Hume remains unimpeached as to the fact, that eloquence is a rarer growth of modern than of ancient civil polity, even in those countries which have the advantage of free institutions. The letter of this objection is sustained, but substantially it is disarmed, so far as its purpose was to argue any declension on the part of Christian nations, by this explanation of ours, which traces the impoverished condition of civil eloquence to the complexity of public business.

But eloquence in one form or other is immortal, and will never perish so long as there are human hearts moving under the agitations of hope and fear, love and passionate hatred. And, in particular to us of the modern world, as an endless source of indemnification for what we have lost in the simplicity of our social systems, we have received a new dowry of eloquence, and *that* of the highest order, in the sanctities of our religion a field unknown to antiquity for the Pagan religions did not produce much poetry, and of oratory none at all.

On the other hand, that cause, which, operating upon eloquence, has but extinguished it under a single direction, to rhetoric has been unconditionally fatal. Eloquence is not banished from the public business of this country as useless, but as difficult, and as not spontaneously arising from topics such as generally furnish the staple of debate. But rhetoric, if attempted on a formal scale, would be summarily exploded as pure foppery, and trifling with time. Falstaff, on the field of battle, presenting his bottle of sack for a pistol, or Polonius with his quibbles, could not appear a more unseasonable *plaisanteur* than a rhetorician alighting from the clouds upon a public

assembly in Great Britain, met for the dispatch of business.

Under these malign aspects of the modern structure of society, a structure to which the whole world will be moulded as it becomes civilized, there can be no room for any revival of rhetoric in public speaking; and from the same and other causes, acting upon the standard of public taste, quite as little room in written composition.

In spite, however, of the tendencies to this consummation, which have been long maturing, it is a fact, that, next after Rome, England is the country in which rhetoric prospered most at a time when science was unborn as a popular interest, and the commercial activities of after−times were yet sleeping in their rudiments. This was in the period from the latter end of the sixteenth to the middle of the seventeenth century; and, though the English rhetoric was less true to its own ideal than the Roman, and often modulated into a higher key of impassioned eloquence, yet, unquestionably, in some of its qualities, it remains a monument of the very finest rhetorical powers.

Omitting Sir Philip Sidney, and omitting his friend, Lord Brooke, (in whose prose there are some bursts of pathetic eloquence, as there is of rhetoric in his verse, though too often harsh and affectedly obscure,) the first very eminent rhetorician in the English literature is Donne. Dr. Johnson inconsiderately classes him in company with Cowley, &c., under the title of *Metaphysical* Poets; but *Rhetorical* would have been a more accurate designation. In saying that, however, we must remind our readers, that we revert to the original use of the word *Rhetoric*, as laying the principal stress upon the management of the thoughts, and only a secondary one upon the ornaments of style. Few writers have shown a more extraordinary compass of powers than Donne; for he combined what no other man has ever done the last sublimation of dialectical subtlety and address with the most impassioned majesty. Massy diamonds compose the very substance of his poem on the Metempsychosis, thoughts and descriptions which have the fervent and gloomy sublimity of Ezekiel or Eschylus, whilst a diamond dust of rhetorical brilliances is strewed over the whole of his occasional verses and his prose. No criticism was ever more unhappy than that of Dr. Johnson's, which denounces all this artificial display as so much perversion of taste. There cannot be a falser thought than this; for, upon that principle, a whole class of compositions might be vicious, by conforming to its own ideal. The artifice and machinery of rhetoric furnishes in its degree as legitimate a basis for intellectual pleasure as any other; that the pleasure is of an inferior order, can no more attain the idea or model of the composition, than it can impeach the excellence of an epigram that it is not a tragedy. Every species of composition is to be tried by its own laws; and if Dr. Johnson had urged explicitly, (what was evidently moving in his thoughts,) that a metrical structure, by holding forth the promise of poetry, defrauds the mind of its just expectations, he would have said what is notoriously false. Metre is open to any form of composition, provided it will aid the expression of the thoughts; and the only sound objection to it is, that it has not done so. Weak criticism, indeed, is that which condemns a copy of verses under the ideal of poetry, when the mere substitution of another name and classification suffices to evade the sentence, and to reinstate the composition in its rights as rhetoric. It may be very true that the age of Donne gave too much encouragement to his particular vein of composition; that, however, argues no depravity of taste, but a taste erring only in being too limited and exclusive.

The next writers of distinction, who came forward as rhetoricians, were Burton in his *Anatomy of Melancholy*, and Milton in many of his prose works. They labor under opposite defects: Burton is too quaint, fantastic, and disjointed, Milton too slow, solemn, and continuous. In the one we see the flutter of a parachute; in the other the stately and voluminous gyrations of an ascending balloon. Agile movement, and a certain degree of fancifulness, are indispensable to rhetoric. But Burton is not so much fanciful as capricious; his motion is not the motion of freedom, but of lawlessness: he does not dance, but caper. Milton, on the other hand, *polonaises* with a grand Castilian air, in paces too sequacious and processional; even in his passages of merriment, and when stung into a quicker motion by personal disdain for an unworthy antagonist, his thoughts and his imagery still appear to move to the music of the organ.

In some measure it is a consequence of these peculiarities, and so far it is the more a duty to allow for them, that the rhetoric of Milton, though wanting in animation, is unusually superb in its coloring; its very monotony is derived from the sublime unity of the presiding impulse; and hence, it sometimes ascends into eloquence of the highest kind, and sometimes even into the raptures of lyric poetry. The main thing, indeed, wanting to Milton, was to have fallen upon happier subjects: for, with the exception of the 'Areopagitica,' there is not one of his prose works upon a theme of universal interest, or perhaps fitted to be the groundwork of a rhetorical display.

But, as it has happened to Milton sometimes to give us poetry for rhetoric, in one instance he has unfortunately given us rhetoric for poetry: this occurs in the *Paradise Lost*, where the debates of the fallen angels are carried on by a degrading process of gladiatorial rhetoric. Nay, even the councils of God, though not debated to and fro, are, however, expounded rhetorically. This is astonishing; for no one was better aware than Milton of the distinction between the *discursive* and *intuitive* acts of the mind, as apprehended by the old metaphysicians, and the incompatibility of the former with any but a limitary intellect. This indeed was familiar to all the writers of his day: but, as old Gifford has shown, by a most idle note upon a passage in Massinger, that it is a distinction which has now perished (except indeed in Germany),− we shall recall it to the reader's attention. An *intuition* is any knowledge whatsoever, sensuous or intellectual, which is apprehended *immediately*: a notion on the other hand, or product of the discursive faculty, is any knowledge whatsoever which is apprehended *mediately*. All reasoning is carried on discursively; that is, *discurrendo*, by running about to the right and the left, laying the separatenotices together, and thence mediately deriving some third apprehension. Now this process, however glorious a characteristic of the human mind as distinguishing it from the brute, is degrading to any supra−human intelligence, divine or angelic, by arguing limitation. God must not proceed by steps, and the fragmentary knowledge of accretion; in which case, at starting he has all the intermediate notices as so many bars between himself and the conclusion; and even at the penultimate or antepenultimate act, he is still short of the truth. God must *see* , he must *intuit*, so to speak; and all truth must reach him simultaneously, first and last, without succession of time, or partition of acts: just as light, before that theory had been refuted by the Satellites of Jupiter, was held not to be propagated in time, but to be here and there at one and the same indivisible instant. Paley, from mere rudeness of metaphysical skill, has talked of the *judgment* and the *judiciousness* of God: but this is profaneness, and a language unworthily applied even to an angelic being. To judge, that is to subsume one proposition under another, to be judicious, that is, to collate the means with the end, are acts impossible in the divine nature, and not to be ascribed, even under the license of a figure, to any being which transcends the limitations of humanity. Many other instances there are in which Milton is taxed with having too grossly sensualized his supernatural agents; some of which, however, the necessities of the action may excuse; and at the worst they are readily submitted to as having an intelligible purpose that of bringing so mysterious a thing as a spiritual nature or agency within the limits of the representable. But the intellectual degradation fixed on his spiritual beings by the rhetorical debates, is purely gratuitous, neither resulting from the course of the action, nor at all promoting it. Making allowances, however, for the original error in the conception, it must be granted that the execution is in the best style: the mere logic of the debate, indeed, is not better managed than it would have been by the House of Commons. But the colors of style are grave and suitable to afflicted angels. In the *Paradise Regained* , this is still more conspicuously true: the oratory there, on the part of Satan in the Wilderness, is no longer of a rhetorical cast, but in the grandest style of impassioned eloquence that can be imagined as the fit expression for the movements of an angelic despair; and in particular the speech, on being first challenged by our Saviour, beginning,

'T is true, I *am* that spirit unfortunate,'

is not excelled in sublimity by any passage in the poem.

Milton, however, was not destined to gather the *spolia opima* of English rhetoric: two contemporaries of his own, and whose literary course pretty nearly coincided with his own in point of time, surmounted all competition, and in that amphitheatre became the Protagonists. These were Jeremy Taylor and Sir Thomas Browne; who, if not absolutely the foremost in the accomplishments of art, were, undoubtedly, the richest, the most dazzling, and,

with reference to their matter, the most captivating of all rhetoricians. In them first, and, perhaps, (if we except occasional passages in the German John Paul Richter,) in them only, are the two opposite forces of eloquent passion and rhetorical fancy brought into an exquisite equilibrium, approaching, receding, attracting, repelling blending, separating chasing and chased, as in a fugue, and again lost in a delightful interfusion, so as to create a middle species of composition, more various and stimulating to the understanding than pure eloquence, more gratifying to the affections than naked rhetoric. Under this one circumstance of coincidence, in other respects their minds were of the most opposite temperament: Sir Thomas Browne, deep, tranquil, and majestic as Milton, silently premeditating, and' disclosing his golden couplets, as under some genial instinct of incubation: Jeremy Taylor, restless, fervid, aspiring, scattering abroad a prodigality of life, not unfolding but creating, with the energy, and the 'myriad−mindedness,' of Shakspeare. Where, but in Sir T. B., shall one hope to find music so Miltonic, an intonation of such solemn chords as are struck in the following opening bar of a passage in the ‘Urn−burial’ 'Now, since these bones have rested quietly in the grave, under the drums and tramplings of three conquests'? &c. What a melodious ascent as of a prelude to some impassioned requiem breathing from the pomps of earth, and from the sanctities of the grave! What a *fuctus decumanus* of rhetoric! Time expounded, not by generations or centuries, but by the vast periods of conquests and dynasties; by cycles of Pharaohs and Ptolemies, Antiochi, and Arsacides! And these vast successions of time distinguished and figured by the uproars which revolve at their inaugurations by the drums and tramplings rolling overhead upon the chambers of forgotten dead the trepidations of time and mortality vexing, at secular intervals, the everlasting Sabbaths of the grave! Show us, oh pedant, such another strain from the oratory of Greece or Rome! For it is not an [*Greek here*] or any such bravura, that will make a fit antiphony to this sublime rapture. We will not, however, attempt a descant upon the merits of Sir T. Browne, after the admirable one by Mr. Coleridge: and as to Jeremy Taylor, we would as readily undertake to put a belt about the ocean as to characterize him adequately within the space at our command. It will please the reader better that he should characterize himself, however imperfectly, by a few specimens selected from some of his rarest works; a method which will, at the same time, have the collateral advantage of illustrating an important truth in reference to this florid or Corinthian order of rhetoric, which we shall have occasion to notice a little further on:

> 'It was observed by a Spanish confessor, that in persons not very religious, the confessions which they made upon their death−beds, were the coldest, the most imperfect, and with less contrition than all which he had observed them to make in many years before. For, so the canes of Egypt, when they newly arise from their bed of mud, and slime of Nilus, start up into an equal and continual length, and uninterrupted but with few knots, and are strong and beauteous, with great distances and intervals; but, when they are grown to their full length, they lessen into the point of a pyramid, and multiply their knots and joints, interrupting the fineness and smoothness of its body. So are the steps and declensions of him that does not grow in grace. At first, when he springs up from his impurity by the waters of baptism and repentance, he grows straight and strong, and suffers but few interruptions of piety; and his constant courses of religion are but rarely intermitted, till they ascend up to a full age, or towards the ends of their life: then they are weak, and their devotions often intermitted, and their breaks are frequent, and they seek excuses, and labor for dispensations, and love God and religion less and less, till their old age, instead of a crown of their virtue and perseverance, ends in levity and unprofitable courses, light and useless as the tufted feathers upon the cane, every wind can play with it and abuse it, but no man can make it useful.'
>
> 'If we consider the price that the Son of God paid for the redemption of a soul, we shall better estimate of it, than from the weak discourses of our imperfect and unlearned philosophy. Not the spoil of rich provinces not the estimate of kingdoms not the price of Cleopatra's draught, not anything that was corruptible or perishing; for that, which could not one minute retard the term of its own natural dissolution, could not be a price for the redemption of one perishing soul. When

> God *made* a soul, it was only *faciamus hominem ad imaginem nostram*; he spake the word, and it was done. But, when man had lost his soul, which the spirit of God had breathed into him, it was not so soon *recovered*. It is like the resurrection, which hath troubled the faith of many, who are more apt to believe that God made a man from nothing, than that he can return a man from dust and corruption. But for this resurrection of the soul, for the re−implacing of the Divine image, for the reentitling it to the kingdoms of grace and glory, God did a greater work than the creation; He was fain to contract Divinity to a span; to send a person to die for us, who of himself could not die, and was constrained to use rare and mysterious arts to make him capable of dying: He prepared a person instrumental to his purpose, by sending his Son from his own bosom a person both God and man, an enigma to all nations and to all sciences; one that ruled over all the angels, that walked on the pavements of heaven, whose feet were clothed with stars; whose understanding is larger than that infinite space which we imagine in the uncircumscribed distance beyond the first orb of heaven; a person to whom felicity was as essential as life to God. This was the only person that was designed in the eternal decrees, to pay the price of a soul less than this person could not do it. Nothing less than an infinite excellence could satisfy for a soul lost to infinite ages; who was to bear the load of an infinite anger from the provocation of an eternal God. And yet, if it be possible that Infinite can receive degrees, this is but one half of the abyss, and I think the lesser.'
>
> 'It was a strange variety of natural efficacies, that manna should corrupt in twenty−four hours, if gathered upon Wednesday or Thursday, and that it should last till forty−eight hours, if gathered upon the even of the Sabbath; and that it should last many hundreds of years, when placed in the sanctuary by the ministry of the high−priest. But so it was in the Jews' religion; and manna pleased every palate, and it filled all appetites; and the same measure was a different proportion, it was much, and it was little; as if nature, that it might serve religion, had been taught some measures of infinity, which is everywhere and nowhere, filling all things, and circumscribel with nothing, measured by one omer, and doing the work of two; like the crowns of kings, fitting the brows of Nimrod and the most mighty warrior, and yet not too large for the temples of an infant prince.'
>
> '− His mercies are more than we can tell, and they are more than we can feel: for all the world, in the abyss of the Divine mercies, is like a man diving into the bottom of the sea, over whose head the waters run insensibly and unperceived, and yet the weight is vast, and the sum of them is immeasurable: and the man is not pressed with the burden, nor confounded with numbers: and no observation is able to recount, no sense sufficient to perceive, no memory large enough to retain, no understanding great enough to apprehend this infinity.'

These passages are not cited with so vain a purpose as that of furnishing a sea−line for measuring the 'soundless deeps' of Jeremy Taylor, but to illustrate that one remarkable characteristic of his style which we have already noticed viz. the everlasting strife and fluctuation between his rhetoric and his eloquence, which maintain their alternations with a force and inevitable recurrence, like the systole and; diastole− the contraction and expansion of some living organ. For this characteristic he was indebted in mixed proportions to his own peculiar style of understanding, and the nature of his subject. Where the understanding is not active and teeming, but possessed by a few vast and powerful ideas, (which was the case of Milton,) there the funds of a varied rhetoric are wanting. On the other hand, where the understanding is all alive with the subtlety of distinctions, and nourished (as Jeremy Taylor's was) by casuistical divinity, the variety and opulence of the rhetoric is apt to be oppressive. But this tendency, in the case of Taylor, was happily checked and balanced by the commanding passion, intensity, and solemnity of his exalted theme, which gave a final unity to the tumultuous motions of his intellect. The only very obvious defects of Taylor were in the mechanical part of his art, in the mere *technique*; he writes like one who never revises, nor tries the effect upon his ear of his periods as musical wholes; and in the syntax and connection of the parts seems to have been habitually careless of slight blemishes.

Jeremy Taylor died in a few years after the Restoration. Sir Thomas Browne, though at that time nearly thirty years removed from the first surreptitious edition of his *Religio Medici* , lingered a little longer. But, when both were gone, it may be truly affirmed that the great oracles of rhetoric were finally silenced. South and Barrow, indeed, were brilliant dialecticians in different styles; but, after Tillotson, with his meagre intellect, his low key of feeling, and the smug and scanty draperies of his style, had announced a new era, English divinity ceased to be the racy vineyard that it had been in ages of ferment and struggle. Like the soil of Sicily, ( *vide* Sir H. Davy's *Agricultural Chemistry*,) it was exhausted for ever by the tilth and rank fertility of its golden youth.

Since then, great passions and high thinking have either disappeared from literature altogether, or thrown themselves into poetic forms which, with the privilege of a masquerade, are allowed to assume the spirit of past ages, and to speak in a key unknown to the general literature. At all events, no pulpit oratory of a rhetorical cast, for upwards of a century, has been able to support itself, when stripped of the aids of voice and action. Robert Hall and Edward Irving, when printed, exhibit only the spasms of weakness. Nor do we remember one memorable burst of rhetoric in the pulpit eloquence of the last one hundred and fifty years, with the exception of a fine oath ejaculated by a dissenting minister of Cambridge, who, when appealing for the confirmation of his words to the grandeur of man's nature, swore By this and by the other, and at length, 'By the *Iliad*, by the *Odyssey*' as the climax, in a long bead−roll of *speciosa miracula*, which he had apostrophized as monuments of human power. As to Foster, he has been prevented from preaching by a complaint affecting the throat; but, judging from the quality of his celebrated *Essays*, he could never have figured as a truly splendid rhetorician; for the imagery and ornamental parts of his *Essays* have evidently not grown up in the loom, and concurrently with the texture of the thoughts, but have been separately added afterwards, as so much embroidery or fringe.

Politics, meantime, however inferior in any shape to religion, as an ally of real eloquence, might yet, either when barbed by an interest of intense personality, or on the very opposite footing of an interest comprehensively national, have irritated the growth of rhetoric such as the spirit of the times allowed. In one conspicuous instance it did so; but generally it had little effect, as a cursory glance over the two last centuries will show.

In the reign of James I. the House of Commons first became the theatre of struggles truly national. The relations of the people and the crown were then brought to issue; and under shifting names, continued *sub judice* from that time to 1688; and from that time, in fact, a corresponding interest was directed to the proceedings of Parliament. But it was not until 1642 that any free communication was made of what passed in debate. During the whole of the Civil War, the speeches of the leading members upon all great questions were freely published in occasional pamphlets. Naturally they were very much compressed; but enough survives to show that, from the agitations of the times, and the religious gravity of the House, no rhetoric was sought, or would have been tolerated. In the reign of Charles II, judging from such records as we have of the most critical debates, (that preserved by Locke, for instance, through the assistance of his patron Lord Shaftesbury,) the general tone and standard of Parliamentary eloquence had taken pretty nearly its present form and level. The religious gravity had then given way; and the pedantic tone, stiffness, and formality of punctual divisions, had been abandoned for the freedom of polite conversation. It was not, however, until the reign of Queen Anne that the qualities and style of Parliamentary eloquence were submitted to public judgment; this was on occasion of the trial of Dr. Sacheverel, which was managed by members of the House of Commons. The Whigs, however, of that era had no distinguished speakers. On the Tory side, St. John (Lord Bolingbroke) was the most accomplished person in the house. His style may be easily collected from his writings, which have all the air of having been dictated without premeditation; and the effect of so much showy and fluent declamation, combined with the graces of his manner and person, may be inferred from the deep impression which they seem to have left upon Lord Chesterfield, himself so accomplished a judge, and so familiar with the highest efforts of the age of Mr. Pulteney and Lord Chatham. With two exceptions, indeed, to be noticed presently, Lord Bolingbroke came the nearest of all Parliamentary orators who have been particularly recorded, to the ideal of a fine rhetorician. It was no disadvantage to him that he was shallow, being so luminous and transparent; and the splendor of his periodic diction, with his fine delivery, compensated his defect in imagery. Sir Robert Walpole was another Lord Londonderry; like him, an excellent statesman, and a first−rate leader of the House of Commons, but in other

respects a plain unpretending man; and, like Lord Londonderry, he had the reputation of a blockhead with all eminent blockheads, and of a man of talents with those who were themselves truly such. 'When I was very young,' says Burke, 'a general fashion told me I was to admire some of the writings against that minister; a little more maturity taught me as much to despise them.' Lord Mansfield, 'the fluent Murray,' was, or would have been, but for the condensation of law, another Bolingbroke. 'How sweet an Ovid was in Murray lost!' says Pope; and, if the comparison were suggested with any studied propriety, it ascribes to Lord Mansfield the talents of a first−rate rhetorician. Lord Chatham had no rhetoric at all, any more than Charles Fox of the next generation: both were too fervent, too Demosthenic, and threw themselves too ardently upon the graces of nature. Mr. Pitt came nearer to the idea of a rhetorician, in so far as he seemed to have more artifice; but this was only in the sonorous rotundity of his periods, which were cast in a monotonous mould; for in other respects he would have been keenly alive to the ridicule of rhetoric in a First Lord of the Treasury.

All these persons, whatever might be their other differences, agreed in this that they were no jugglers, but really *were* that which they appeared to be, and never struggled for distinctions which did not naturally belong to them. But next upon the roll comes forward an absolute *charlatan* a *charlatan* the most accomplished that can ever have figured upon so intellectual a stage. This was Sheridan a mocking−bird through the entire scale, from the highest to the lowest note of the gamut; in fact, to borrow a coarse word, the mere impersonation of humbug. Even as a wit, he has been long known to be a wholesale plagiarist; and the exposures of his kind biographer, Mr. Moore, exhibit him in that line as the most hide−bound and sterile of performers, lying perdue through a whole evening for a casual opportunity, or by miserable stratagem creating an artificial one, for exploding some poor starveling jest; and, in fact, sacrificing to this petty ambition, in a degree never before heard of, the ease and dignity of his life. But it is in the character of a rhetorical orator that he, and his friends in his behalf, have put forward the hollowest pretensions. In the course of the Hastings trial, upon the concerns of paralytic *Begums*, and ancient *Rannies* , hags that, if ever actually existing, were no more to us and our British sympathies, than we to Hecuba, did Mr. Sheridan make his capital exhibition. The real value of his speech was never at any time misappreciated by the judicious; for his attempts at the grand, the pathetic, and the sentimental, had been continually in the same tone of falsetto and horrible fustian. Burke, however, who was the most double−minded person in the world, cloaked his contempt in hyperbolical flattery; and all the unhappy people, who have since written lives of Burke, adopt the whole for mere gospel truth. Exactly in the same vein of tumid inanity, is the speech which Mr. Sheridan puts into the mouth of Rolla the Peruvian. This the reader may chance to have heard upon the stage; or, in default of that good luck, we present him with the following fragrant twaddle from one of the Begummiads, which has been enshrined in the praises (*si quid sua carmina possunt*) of many worthy critics; the subject is *Filial Piety*. 'Filial piety,' (Mr. Sheridan said,) ' it was impossible by words to describe, but description. by words was unnecessary. It was that duty which they all felt and understood, and which required not the powers of language to explain. It was in truth more properly to be called a principle than a duty. It required not the aid of memory; it needed not the exercise of the understanding; it awaited not the slow deliberations, of reason; it flowed spontaneously from the fountain of our feelings; it was involuntary in our natures; it was a quality of our being, innate and coeval with life, which, though afterwards cherished as a passion, was independent of our mental powers; it was earlier than all intelligence in our souls; it displayed itself in the earliest impulses of the heart, and was an emotion of fondness that returned in smiles of gratitude the affectionate solicitudes, the tender anxieties, the endearing attentions experienced before memory began, but which were not less dear for not being remembered. It was the sacrament of nature in our hearts, by which the union of the parent and child was seated and rendered perfect in the community of love; and which, strengthening and ripening with life, acquired vigor from the understanding, and was most lively and active when most wanted.' Now we put it to any candid reader, whether the above Birmingham ware might not be vastly improved by one slight alteration, viz. omitting the two first words, and reading it as a conundrum. Considered as rhetoric, it is evidently fitted 'to make a horse sick;' but, as a conundrum in the *Lady's Magazine*, we contend that it would have great success.

How it aggravates the disgust with which these paste−diamonds are now viewed, to remember that they were paraded in the presence of Edmund Burke nay, (*credite posteri*!) in jealous rivalry of his genuine and priceless jewels. Irresistibly one is reminded of the dancing efforts of Lady Blarney and Miss Carolina Wilhelmina Skeggs,

against the native grace of the *Vicar of Wakefield* 's family: 'The ladies of the town strove hard to be equally easy, but without success. They *swam, sprawled, languished, and frisked*; but all would not do. The gazers, indeed, owned that it was fine; but neighbor Flamborough observed, that Miss Livy's feet seemed as pat to the music as its echo.' Of Goldsmith it was said, in his epitaph, *Nil tetigit quod non ornavit*: of the Drury−Lane rhetorician it might be said, with equal truth, *Nil tetigit quod non fuco adulteravit*. But avaunt, Birmingham! let us speak of a great man.

All hail to Edmund Burke, the supreme writer of his century, the man of the largest and finest understanding! Upon that word, *understanding*, we lay a stress: for oh! ye immortal donkeys, who have written 'about him and about him,' with what an obstinate stupidity have ye brayed away for one third of a century about that which ye are pleased to call his 'fancy.' Fancy in your throats, ye miserable twaddlers! as if Edmund Burke were the man to play with his fancy, for the purpose of separable ornament. He was a man of fancy in no other sense than as Lord Bacon was so, and Jeremy Taylor, and as all large and discursive thinkers are and must be: that is to say, the fancy which he had in common with all mankind, and very probably in no eminent degree, in him was urged into unusual activity under the necessities of his capacious understanding. His great and peculiar distinction was that he viewed all objects of the understanding under more relations than other men, and under more complex relations. According to the multiplicity of these relations, a man is said to have a *large* understanding; according to their subtilty, a *fine* one; and in an angelic understanding, all things would appear to be related to all. Now, to apprehend and detect moral relations, or to pursue them steadily, is a process absolutely impossible without the intervention of physical analogies. To say, therefore, that a man is a great thinker, or a fine thinker, is but another expression for saying that he has a *schematizing* (or, to use a plainer but less accurate expression, a figurative) understanding. In that sense, and for that purpose, Burke is figurative: but understood, as he *has* been understood by the long−eared race of his critics, not as thinking in and by his figures, but as deliberately laying them on by way of enamel or after−ornament, − not as *incarnating*, but simply as *dressing* his thoughts in imagery,− so understood, he is not the Burke of reality, but a poor fictitious Burke, modelled after the poverty of conception which belongs to his critics.

It is true, however, that, in some rare cases, Burke *did* indulge himself in a pure rhetorician's use of fancy; consciously and profusely lavishing his ornaments for mere purposes of effect. Such a case occurs, for instance, in that admirable picture of the degradation of Europe, where he represents the different crowned heads as bidding against each other at Basle for the favor and countenance of Regicide. Others of the same kind there are in his brilliant letter on the Duke of Bedford's attack upon him in the House of Lords: and one of these we shall here cite, disregarding its greater chance for being already familiar to the reader, upon two considerations; first, that it has all the appearance of being finished with the most studied regard to effect; and, secondly, for an interesting anecdote connected with it, which we have never seen in print, but for which we have better authority than could be produced perhaps for most of those which are. The anecdote is, that Burke, conversing with Dr. Lawrence and another gentleman on the literary value of his own writings, declared that the particular passage in the entire range of his works which had cost him the most labor, and upon which, as tried by a certain canon of his own, his labor seemed to himself to have been the most successful, was the following:

After an introductory paragraph which may be thus abridged −' The crown has considered me after long service. The crown has paid the Duke of Bedford by advance. He has had a long credit for any service which he may perform hereafter. He is secure, and long may he be secure, in his advance, whether he performs any services or not. His grants are engrafted on the public law of Europe, covered with the awful hoar of innumerable ages. They are guarded by the sacred rule of prescription. The learned professors of the *Rights of Man*, however, regard prescription not as a title to bar all other claim but as a bar against the possessor and proprietor. They hold an immemorial possession to be no more than an aggravated injustice.'

Then follows the passage in question:

> ' Such are *their* ideas; such *their* religion; and such *their* law. But as to *our* country and *our* race, as long as the well−compacted structure of our church and state, the sanctuary, the holy of holies of that ancient law, defended by reverence, defended by power, a fortress at once and a temple ( *Templum in modum arcis*), shall stand inviolate on the brow of the British Sion; as long as the British monarchy, not more limited than fenced by the orders of the state, shall, like the proud Keep of Windsor, rising in the majesty of proportion, and girt with the double belt of its kindred and coeval towers, as long as this awful structure shall oversee and guard the subjected land so long the mounds and dykes of the low, fat, Bedford level will have nothing to fear from all the pickaxes of all the levellers of France. As long as our sovereign lord the king, and his faithful subjects the lords and commons of this realm, the triple cord which no man can break; the solemn sworn constitutional frank−pledge of this nation; the firm guarantees of each other's being, and each other's rights; the joint and several securities, each in its place and order for every kind and every quality of property and of dignity, as long as these endure, so long the Duke of Bedford is safe; and we are all safe together; the high from the blights of envy, and the spoliation of rapacity; the low from the iron hand of oppression, and the insolent spurn of contempt. Amen! and so be it: and so it will be,
>
> "Dum domus Eneae Capitoli immobile saxum
>
> Accolet; imperiumque pater Romanus habebit."'

This was the sounding passage which Burke alleged as the chef−d'œuvre of his rhetoric; and the argument, upon which he justified his choice, is specious if not convincing. He laid it down as a maxim of composition, that every passage in a rhetorical performance, which was brought forward prominently, and relied upon as a *key* (to use the language of war) in sustaining the main position of the writer, ought to involve a thought, an image, and a sentiment: and such a synthesis he found in the passage which we have quoted. This criticism, over and above the pleasure which it always gives to hear a great man's opinion of himself, is valuable, as showing that Burke, because negligent of trivial inaccuracies, was not at all the less anxious about the larger proprieties and decorums: [for this passage, confessedly so labored, has several instances of slovenliness in trifles;] and that, in the midst of his apparent hurry, he carried out a jealous vigilance upon what he wrote, and the eye of a person practised in artificial effects.

An ally of Burke's upon East Indian politics, ought to have a few words of notice, not so much for any power that he actually had as a rhetorician, but because he is sometimes reputed such. This was Sir Philip Francis, who, under his early disguise of Junius, had such a success as no writer of libels ever will have again. It is our private opinion, that this success rested upon a great delusion which has never been exposed. The general belief is that Junius was read for his elegance; we believe no such thing. The pen of an angel would not, upon such a theme as personal politics, have upheld the interest attached to Junius, had there been no other cause in cooperation. Language, after all, is a limited instrument: and it must be remembered that Junius, by the extreme narrowness of his range, which went entirely upon matters of fact, and personal interests, still further limited the compass of that limited instrument. For it is only in the expression and management of general ideas, that any room arises for conspicuous elegance. The real truth is this: the interest in Junius travelled downwards; he was read in the lower ranks, because in London it speedily became known that he was read with peculiar interest in the highest. This was already a marvel; for newspaper patriots, under the signatures of Publicola, Brutus, and so forth, had become a jest and a by−word to the real, practical statesman; and any man at leisure to write for so disinterested a purpose as 'his country's good,' was presumed, of course, to write in a garret. But here for the first time a pretended patriot, a Junius Brutus, was anticipated with anxiety, and read with agitation. Is any man simple enough to believe that such a contagion could extend to cabinet ministers, and official persons overladen with public business, on so feeble an excitement as a little reputation in the art of constructing sentences with elegance; an elegance which, after all, excluded eloquence and every other *positive* quality of excellence? That this can have been believed, shows the readiness with which men swallow marvels. The real secret was this: Junius was read with the

profoundest interest by members of the cabinet, who would not have paid half−a−crown for all the wit and elegance of this world, simply because it was most evident that some traitor was amongst them; and that either directly by one of themselves, or through some abuse of his confidence by a servant, the secrets of office were betrayed. The circumstances of this breach of trust are now fully known; and it is readily understood why letters, which were the channel for those perfidies, should interest the ministry of that day in the deepest degree. The existence of such an interest, but not its cause, had immediately become known: it descended, as might be expected, amongst all classes: once excited, it seemed to be justified by the real merits of the letters; which merit again, illustrated by its effects, appeared a thousand times greater than it was; and, finally, this interest was heightened and sustained by the mystery which invested the author. How much that mystery availed in keeping alive the reputation of Junius, is clear from this fact, that, since the detection of Junius, the Letters have much declined in popularity; and ornamented editions of them are no longer the saleable article which they were some years ago.

In fact, upon any other principle, the continued triumph of Junius, and his establishment as a classical author, is a standing enigma. One talent, undoubtedly, he had in a rare perfection  the talent of sarcasm. He stung like a scorpion. But, besides that such a talent has a narrow application, an interest of personality cannot be other than fugitive, take what direction it may: and malignity cannot embalm itself in materials that are themselves perishable. Such were the materials of Junius. His vaunted elegance was, in a great measure, the gift of his subject: general terseness, short sentences, and a careful avoiding of all awkwardness of construction these were his advantages. And from these he would have been dislodged by a higher subject, or one that would have forced him out into a wider compass of thought. Rhetorician he was none, though he has often been treated as such; for, without sentiment, without imagery, without generalization, how should it be possible for rhetoric to subsist? It is an absolute fact, that Junius has not one principle, aphorism, or remark of a general nature in his whole armory not in a solitary instance did his barren understanding ascend to an abstraction, or general idea, but lingered for ever in the dust and rubbish of individuality, amongst the tangible realities of things and persons. Hence, the peculiar absurdity of that hypothesis which discovered Junius in the person of Burke. The opposition was here too pointedly ludicrous between Burke, who exalted the merest personal themes into the dignity of philosophic speculations, and Junius, in whose hands the very loftiest dwindled into questions of person and party.

Last of the family of rhetoricians, and in a form of rhetoric as florid as the age could bear, came Mr. Canning.' *Sufficit* ,' says a Roman author, *'in una civitate esse unum rhetorem*.' But, if more were in his age unnecessary, in ours they would have been intolerable. Three or four Mr. Cannings would have been found a nuisance: indeed, the very admiration which crowned his great displays, manifested of itself the unsuitableness of his style to the atmosphere of public affairs; for it was of that kind which is offered to a young lady rising from a brilliant performance on the piano−forte. Something, undoubtedly, there was of too juvenile an air, too gaudy a flutter of plumage, in Mr. Canning's more solemn exhibitions; but much indulgence was reasonably extended to a man, who, in his class, was so complete. He was formed for winning a favorable attention by every species of popular fascination: to the eye he recommended himself almost as much as the Bolingbroke of a century before: his voice, and his management of it, were no less pleasing: and upon him, as upon St. John, the air of a gentleman sate with a native grace. Scholarship and literature, as far as they belong to the accomplishments of a gentleman, he too brought forward in the most graceful manner: and, above all, there was an impression of honor, generosity, and candor, stamped upon his manner, agreeable rather to his original character, than to the wrench which it had received from an ambition resting too much on mere personal merits. What a pity that this 'gay creature of the elements' had not taken his place contentedly, where nature had assigned it, as one of the ornamental performers of the time! His station was with the lilies of the field, which toil not, neither do they spin. He should have thrown himself upon the admiring sympathies of the world as the most dazzling of rhetorical artists, rather than have challenged their angry passions in a vulgar scuffle for power. In that case he would have been alive at this hour he would have had a perpetuity of that admiration which to him was as the breath of his nostrils; and would not, by forcing the character of rhetorician into an incongruous alliance with that of trading politician, have run the risk of making both ridiculous.

In thus running over the modern history of rhetoric, we have confined ourselves to the literature of England: the rhetoric of the continent would demand a separate notice, and chiefly on account of the French pulpit orators. For, laying them aside, we are not aware of any distinct body of rhetoric properly so called in modern literature. Four continental languages may be said to have a literature regularly mounted in all departments, viz. the French, Italian, Spanish, and German; but each of these have stood under separate disadvantages for the cultivation of an ornamented rhetoric. In France, whatever rhetoric they have, (for Montaigne, though lively, is too gossiping for a rhetorician,) arose in the age of Louis XIV.; since which time, the very same development of science and public business, operated there and in England, to stifle the rhetorical impulses, and all those analogous tendencies in arts and in manners which support it. Generally it may be assumed that rhetoric will not survive the age of the ceremonious in manners, and the gorgeous in costume. An unconscious sympathy binds together the various forms of the elaborate and the fanciful, under every manifestation. Hence it is that the national convulsions by which modern France has been shaken, produced orators, Mirabeau, Isnard, the Abbé Maury, but no rhetoricians. Florian, Chateaubriand, and others, who have written the most florid prose that the modern taste can bear, are elegant sentimentalists, sometimes maudlin and semi−poetic, sometimes even eloquent, but never rhetorical. There is no eddying about their own thoughts; no motion of fancy self−sustained from its own activities; no flux and reflux of thought, half meditative, half capricious; but strains of feeling, genuine or not, supported at every step from the excitement of independent external objects.

With respect to the German literature, the case is very peculiar. A chapter upon German rhetoric would be in the same ludicrous predicament as Van Troil's chapter on the snakes of Iceland, which delivers its business in one summary sentence, announcing, that snakes in Iceland −there are none. Rhetoric, in fact, or any form of ornamented prose, could not possibly arise in a literature, in which prose itself had no proper existence till within these seventy years. Lessing was the first German who wrote prose with elegance; and even at this day, a decent prose style is the rarest of accomplishments in Germany. We doubt, indeed, whether any German has written prose with grace, unless he had lived abroad, (like Jacobi, who composed indifferently in French and German,) or had at least cultivated a very long acquaintance with English and French models. Frederick Schlegel has been led, by his comprehensive knowledge of other literatures, to observe this singular defect in that of his own country. Even he, however, must have fixed his standard very low, when he could praise, as elsewhere he does, the style of Kant. Certainly in any literature, where good models of prose existed, Kant would be deemed a monster of vicious diction, so far as regards the construction of his sentences. He does not, it is true, write in the hybrid dialect, which prevailed up to the time of our George the First, when every other word was Latin, with a, German inflexion; but he has in perfection that obtuseness which renders a German taste insensible to all beauty in the balancing and structure of periods, and to the art by which a succession of periods modify each other. Every German regards a sentence in the light of a package, and a package not for the mail−coach, but for the wagon, into which his privilege is to crowd as much as he possibly can. Having framed a sentence, therefore, he next proceeds to pack it, which is effected partly by unwieldy tails and codicils, but chiefly by enormous parenthetic involutions. All qualifications, limitations, exceptions, illustrations, are stuffed and violently rammed into the bowels of the principal proposition. That all this equipage of accessaries is not so arranged as to assist its own orderly development, no more occurs to a German as any fault, than that in a package of shawls or of carpets, the colors and patterns are not fully displayed. To him it is sufficient that they are *there*. And Mr. Kant, when he has succeeded in packing up a sentence which covers three close printed octavo pages, stops to draw his breath with the air of one who looks back upon some brilliant and meritorious performance. Under these disadvantages, it may be presumed that German rhetoric is a nonentity; but these disadvantages would not have arisen, had there been a German bar or a German senate, with any public existence. In the absence of all forensic and senatorial eloquence, no standard of good prose style nay, which is more important, no example of ambition directed to such an object has been at any time held up to the public mind in Germany; and the pulpit style has been always either rustically negligent, or bristling with pedantry.

These disadvantages with regard to public models of civil eloquence, have in part affected the Italians; the few good prose writers of Italy have been historians; and it is observable that no writers exist in the department of what are called *Moral Essayists* ; a class which, with us and the French, were the last depositaries of the rhetorical

faculty, when depressed to its lowest key. Two other circumstances may be noticed as unfavorable to an Italian rhetoric; one, to which we have adverted before, in the language itself which is too loitering for the agile motion, and the [*Greek here*] of rhetoric; and the other in the constitution of the national mind, which is not reflective, nor remarkably fanciful the two qualities most indispensable to rhetoric. As a proof of the little turn for reflection which there is in the Italian mind, we may remind the reader that they have no meditative or philosophic poetry, such as that of our Young, Cowper, &c.; a class of poetry which existed very early indeed in the English literature, (e. g. Sir T. Davies, Lord Brooke, Henry More, &c.;) and which, in some shape, has arisen at some stage of almost every European literature.

Of the Spanish rhetoric, a priori, we should have augured well: but the rhetoric of their pulpit in past times, which is all that we know of it, is vicious and unnatural; whilst, on the other hand, for eloquence profound and heart−felt, measuring it by those many admirable proclamations issued in all quarters of Spain during 1808−9, the national capacity must be presumed to be of the very highest order.

We are thus thrown back upon the French pulpit orators as the only considerable body of modern rhetoricians out of our own language. No writers are more uniformly praised; none are more entirely neglected. This is one of those numerous hypocrisies so common in matters of taste, where the critic is always ready with his good word, as the readiest way of getting rid of' the subject. To blame might be hazardous; for blame demands reasons; but praise enjoys a ready dispensation from all reasons and from all discrimination. Superstition, however, as it is, under which the French rhetoricians hold their reputation, we have no thought of attempting any disturbance to it in so slight and incidental a notice as this. Let critics by all means continue to invest them with every kind of imaginary splendor. Meantime let us suggest, as a judicious caution, that French rhetoric should be praised with a reference only to its own narrow standard: for it would be a most unfortunate trial of its pretensions, to bring so meagre a style of composition into a close comparison with the gorgeous opulence of the English rhetoric of the same century. Under such a comparison, two capital points of weakness would force themselves upon the least observant of critics first, the defect of striking imagery; and, secondly, the slenderness of the thoughts. The rhetorical manner is supported in the French writers chiefly by an abundance of *ohs* and *ahs* by interrogatories apostrophes and startling exclamations: all which are mere mechanical devices for raising the style; but in the substance of the composition, apart from its dress, there is nothing' properly rhetorical. The leading thoughts in all pulpit eloquence being derived from religion, and, in fact, the common inheritance of human nature, if they cannot be novel, for that very reason cannot be undignified: but, for the same reason, they are apt to become unaffecting and trite, unless varied and individualized by new infusions of thought and feeling. The smooth monotony of the leading religious topics, as managed by the French orators, under the treatment of Jeremy Taylor, receives at each turn of the sentence a new flexure or what may be called a separate *articulation***:** old thoughts are surveyed from novel stations and under various angles: and a field absolutely exhausted throws up eternally fresh verdure under the fructifying lava of burning imagery. *Human life*, for example, *is short human happiness is frail*: how trite, how obvious a thesis Yet, in the beginning of the *Holy Dying* , upon that simplest of themes how magnificent a descant! Variations the most original upon a ground the most universal, and a sense of novelty diffused over truths coeval with human life! Finally, it may be remarked of the imagery in the French rhetoric, that it is thinly sown, common−place, deficient in splendor, and, above all, merely ornamental; that is to say, it does no more than echo and repeat what is already said in the thought which it is brought to illustrate; whereas, in Jeremy Taylor, and in Burke, it will be found usually, to extend and amplify the thought, or to fortify it by some indirect argument of its truth. Thus, for instance, in the passage above quoted, from Taylor, upon the insensibility of man to the continual mercies of God, at first view the mind is staggered by the apparent impossibility that so infinite a reality, and of so continual a recurrence, should escape our notice; but the illustrative image, drawn from the case of a man standing at the bottom of the ocean, and yet insensible to that world of waters above him, from the uniformity and equality of its pressure, flashes upon us with a sense of something equally marvellous, in a case which we know to be a physical fact. We are thus reconciled to the proposition, by the same image which illustrates it.

In a single mechanical quality of good writing, that is, in the structure of their sentences, the French rhetoricians, in common with French writers generally of that age, are superior to ours. This is what in common parlance is expressed (though inaccurately) by the word *style*, and is the subject of the third part of the work before us. Dr. Whately, how6ver, somewhat disappoints us by his mode of treating it. He alleges, indeed, with some plausibility, that his subject bound him to consider style no further than as it was related to the purpose of persuasion. But besides that it is impossible to treat it with effect in that mutilated section −even within the limits assumed, we are not able to trace any outline of the law or system by which Dr. Whately has been governed in the choice of his topics: we find many very acute remarks delivered, but all in a desultory way, which leave the reader no means of judging how much of the ground has been surveyed, and how much omitted. We regret also that he has not addressed himself more specifically to the question of English style, a subject which has not yet received the comprehensive discussion which it merits. In the age of our great rhetoricians, it is remarkable that the English language had never been made an object of conscious attention. No man seems to have reflected that there was a wrong and a right in the choice of words− in the choice of phrases in the mechanism of sentences −or even in the grammar. Men wrote eloquently, because they wrote feelingly: they wrote idiomatically, because they wrote naturally, and without affectation: but if a false or acephalous structure of sentence, if a barbarous idiom, or an exotic word happened to present itself, no writer of the 17th century seems to have had any such scrupulous sense of the dignity belonging to his own language, as should make it a duty to reject it, or worth his while to re−model a line. The fact is, that verbal criticism had not as yet been very extensively applied even to the classical languages: the Scaligers, Casaubon, and Salmasius, were much more critics on things than critics philologically. However, even in that age, the French writers were more attentive to the cultivation of their mother tongue, than any other people. It is justly remarked by Schlegel, that the most worthless writers amongst the French, as to matter, generally take pains with their diction; or perhaps it is more true to say, that with equal pains, in their language it is more easy to write well than in one of greater compass. It is also true, that the French are indebted for their greater purity from foreign idioms, to their much more limited acquaintance with foreign literature. Still, with every deduction from the merit, the fact is as we have said; and it is apparent, not only by innumerable evidences in the *concrete*, but by the superiority of all their *abstract* auxiliaries in the art of writing. We English, even at this day, have no learned grammar of our language; nay, we have allowed the blundering attempt, in that department, of an imbecile stranger, to supersede the learned (however imperfect) works of our Wallis, Lowth, &c.; we have also no sufficient dictionary; and we have no work at all, sufficient or insufficient, on the phrases and idiomatic niceties of our language, corresponding to the works of Vaugelas and others, for the French.

Hence an anomaly, not found perhaps in any literature but ours, that the most eminent English writers do not write their mother tongue without continual violations of propriety. With the single exception of Mr. Wordsworth, who has paid an honorable attention to the purity and accuracy of his English, we believe that there is not one celebrated author of this day who has written two pages consecutively, without some flagrant impropriety in the grammar, (such as the eternal confusion of the preterite with the past participle, confusion of verbs transitive with intransitive, &c. &c.) or some violation more or less of the vernacular idiom. If this last sort of blemish does not occur so frequently in modern books, the reason is, that since Dr. Johnson's time, the freshness of the idiomatic style has been too frequently abandoned for the lifeless mechanism of a style purely bookish and artificial.

The practical judgments of Dr. Whately are such as will seldom be disputed. Dr. Johnson for his triads and his antithetic balances, he taxes more than once with a plethoric and tautologic tympany of sentence; and, in the following passage, with a very happy illustration:

> − 'Sentences, which might have been expressed as simple ones, are expanded into complex ones by the addition of clauses which add little or nothing to the sense; and which have been compared to the false handles and key−holes with which furniture is decorated, that serve no other purpose than to *correspond to the real ones.* Much of Dr. Johnson's writing is chargeable with this fault.'

We recollect a little biographic sketch of Dr. Johnson, published immediately after his death, in which, amongst other instances of desperate tautology, the author quotes the well known lines from the imitation of Juvenal

−'Let observation, with extensive view,

Survey mankind from China to Peru;'

and contends, with some reason, that this is saying in effect, ' *Let observation with extensive observation observe mankind extensively*.' Certainly Dr. Johnson was the most faulty writer in this kind of inanity that ever has played tricks with language. On the other hand, Burke was the least so; and we are petrified to find him described by Dr. Whately as a writer *'qui variare cupit rem prodigialiter unam,*' and as on that account offensive to good taste. The understanding of Burke was even morbidly impatient of tautology: progress and motion everlasting motion was a mere necessity of his intellect. We will venture to offer a king's ransom for one unequivocal case of tautology from the whole circle of Burke's writings. The *principium indiscernibilium,* upon which Leibnitz affirmed the impossibility of finding any two leaves of a tree that should be mere duplicates of each other, may be applied to Burke as safely as to nature; no two propositions, we are satisfied, can be found in him, which do not contain a larger variety than is requisite to their justification.

Speaking of the advantages for energy and effect in the license of arrangement open to the ancient languages, especially to the Latin, Dr. Whately cites the following sentence from the opening of the 4th Book of Q. Curtius:− *Darius tanti modo exercitus rex, qui, triumphantis magis quam dimicantis more, curru sublimis inierat prtelium, −per loca, quæ prope immensis agminibus compleverat, jam inania, et ingenti solitudine vasta fugiebat*.' The effect,' says he,' of the concluding verb, placed where it is, is most striking.' The sentence is far enough from a good one: but, confining ourselves to the sort of merit for which it is here cited, as a merit peculiar to the Latin, we must say that the very same position of the verb, with a finer effect, is attainable, and, in fact, often attained in English sentences: see, for instance, the passage in the Duke of Gloucester's soliloquy *Now is the winter of our discontent* and ending, *In the deep bosom of the ocean buried*. See also another at the beginning of Hooker's *Ecclesiastical Polity* on the thanklessness of the labor employed upon the *foundations* of truth, which, says he, like those of buildings, 'are in the bosom of the earth concealed.' The fact is, that the common cases of inversion, such as the suspension of the verb to the end, and the anticipation of the objective case at the beginning, are not sufficient illustrations of the Latin structure. All this can be done as well by the English. It is not mere power of inversion, but of self−intrication, and of self−dislocation, which mark the extremity of the artificial structure; that power by which a sequence of words, that naturally is directly consecutive, commences, intermits, and reappears at a remote part of the sentence, like what is called drake−stone on the surface of a river. In this power the Greek is almost as much below the Latin as all modern languages; and in this, added to its elliptic brevity of connection and transition, and to its wealth in abstractions 'the long−tailed words in *osity* and *ation*,' lie the peculiar capacities of the Latin for rhetoric.

Dr. W. lays it down as a maxim in rhetoric, that 'elaborate stateliness is always to be regarded as a worse fault than the slovenliness and languor which accompany a very loose style.' But surely this is a rash position: stateliness the most elaborate, in an absolute sense, is no fault at all; though it may happen to be so in relation to a given subject, or to any subject under given circumstances. 'Belshazzar the king made a great feast for a thousand of his lords.' Reading these words, who would not be justly offended in point of taste, had his feast been characterized by elegant simplicity? Again, at a coronation, what can be more displeasing to a philosophic taste than a pretended chastity of ornament, at war with the very purposes of a solemnity essentially magnificent? An imbecile friend of ours, in 1825, brought us a sovereign of a new, coinage, 'which' (said he) ' I admire, because it is so elegantly simple.' This, he flattered himself, was thinking like a man of taste. But mark how we sent him to the right about; 'and that, weak−minded friend, is exactly the thing which, a coin ought not to be: the duty of a golden coin is to be as florid as it can, rich with Corinthian ornaments, and as gorgeous as a peacock's tail.' So of rhetoric, imagine that you read these words of introduction, *'And on a set day, Tullius Cicero returned thanks to Caesar on behalf of Marcus Marcellus,*' what sort of a speech is reasonably to be expected? The whole purpose

being a festal and ceremonial one, thanksgiving its sole burden first and last, what else than the most 'elaborate stateliness?' If it were not stately, and to the very verge of the pompous, Mr. Wolf would have had one argument more than he had, and a better than any he has produced, for suspecting the authenticity of that thrice famous oration.

In the course of his dissertation on style, Dr. W., very needlessly, enters upon the thorny question of the *quiddity* , or characteristic difference, of poetry as distinguished from prose. We could much have wished that he had forborne to meddle with a *quaestio vexata* of this nature, both because, in so incidental and cursory a discussion, it could not receive a proper investigation; and because Dr. Whately is apparently not familiar with much of what has been written on that subject. On a matter so slightly discussed, we shall not trouble ourselves to enter farther, than to express our astonishment that a logician like Dr. Whately should have allowed himself to deliver so nugatory an argument as this which follows: −' Any composition in verse, (and none that is not,) is always called, whether good or bad, a poem, by all who have no favorite hypothesis to maintain.' And the inference manifestly is, that it is rightly so called. Now, if a man has taken up any fixed opinion on the subject, no matter whether wrong or right, and has reasons to give for his opinion, this man comes under the description of those who have a favorite hypothesis to maintain. It follows, therefore, that the only class of people whom Dr. Whately will allow as unbiassed judges on this question −a question not of fact, but of opinion are those who have, and who profess to have, no opinion at all upon the subject; or, having one, have no reasons for it. But, apart from this contradiction, how is it possible that Dr. Whately should, in any case, plead a popular usage of speech, as of any weight in a philosophic argument? Still more, how is it possible in *this* case, where the accuracy of the popular usage is the very thing in debate, so that if pleaded at all it must be pleaded as its own justification? Alms−giving and nothing but almsgiving is universally called *charity*, and mistaken for the charity of the Scriptures, by all who have no favorite hypothesis to maintain i. e. by all the inconsiderate. But Dr. Whately will hardly draw any argument from this usage in defence of that popular notion.

In speaking thus freely of particular passages in Dr. Whately's book, we are so far from meaning any disrespect to him, that, on the contrary, if we had not been impressed with the very highest respect for his talents, by the acuteness and originality which illuminate every part of his book, we could not have allowed ourselves to spend as much time upon the whole, as we have, in fact, spent upon single paragraphs. In reality, there is not a section of his work which has not furnished us with occasion for some profitable speculations; and we are, in consequence, most anxious to see his *Logic*, which treats a subject so much more important than *rhetoric*, and so obstinately misrepresented, that it would delight us much to anticipate a radical exposure of the errors on this subject, taken up from the days of Lord Bacon. It has not fallen in our way to quote much from Dr. Whately *totidem verbis*; our apology for which will be found in the broken and discontinuous method of treatment by short sections and paragraphs, which a subject of this nature has necessarily imposed upon him. Had it coincided with our purpose to go more into detail, we could have delighted our readers with some brilliant examples of philosophical penetration, applied to questions interesting from their importance or difficulty, with the happiest effect. As it is, we shall content ourselves with saying, that, in any elementary work, it has not been our fortune to witness a rarer combination of analytical acuteness, with severity of judgment; and when we add that these qualities are recommended by a scholar−like elegance of manner, we suppose it hardly necessary to add, that Dr. Whately's is incomparably the best book of its class, since the days of Campbell's *Philosophy of Rhetoric*.

[NOTE. In what is said at the beginning of this paper of the true meaning of the *enthymeme*, as determined by Facciolati, we must be understood with an exclusive reference to rhetoric. In logic the old acceptation cannot be disturbed.]

## STYLE.

AMONGST the never−ending arguments for thankfulness in the privilege of a British birth arguments more solemn even than numerous, and telling more when weighed than when counted, *pondere quam numero* three

aspects there are of our national character which trouble the uniformity of our feelings. A good son, even in such a case, is not at liberty to describe himself as 'ashamed' Some gentler word must be found to express the character of his distress. And, whatever grounds of blame may appear against his venerated mother, it is one of his filial duties to suppose either that the blame applies but partially, or, if it should seem painfully universal, that it is one of those excesses to which energetic natures are liable, through the very strength of their constitutional characteristics. Such things do happen. It is certain, for instance, that to the deep sincerity of British nature, and to that shyness or principle of reserve which is inseparable from self−respect, must be traced philosophically the churlishness and unsocial bearing, for which, at one time, we were so angrily arraigned by the smooth south of Europe. That facile obsequiousness, which attracts the inconsiderate in Belgians, Frenchmen, and Italians, is too generally a mixed product from impudence and insincerity. Want of principle and want of moral sensibility compose the original *fundus* of southern manners: and the natural product, in a specious hollowness of demeanor, has been afterwards propagated by imitation through innumerable people, who may have partaken less deeply, or not at all, in the original moral qualities that have moulded such a manner.

Great faults, therefore, may grow out of great virtues in excess. And this consideration should make us cautious even towards an enemy; much more when approaching so holy a question as the merits of our maternal land. Else, and supposing that a strange nation had been concerned in our judgment, we should declare ourselves mortified and humiliated by three expressions of the British character, too public to have escaped the notice of Europe. First, we writhe with shame when we hear of semi−delirious lords and ladies, sometimes theatrically costumed in caftans and turbans, proclaiming to the whole world as the law of their households that all nations and languages are free to enter their gates, with one sole exception directed against their British compatriots; that is to say, abjuring by sound of trumpet that land through which only they themselves have risen into consideration; spurning those for countrymen 'without whom,' (as M. Gourville had the boldness to tell Charles II.) 'without whom, by G− Sir, you yourself are nothing.' We all know who *they* are that have done this thing: we may know, if we inquire, how many conceited coxcombs are at this moment acting upon that precedent; in which, we scruple not to avow, is contained a fund of satire, more crying than any which Juvenal found in the worst days of Rome. And we may ask calmly Would not death, judicial death, have visited such an act amongst the ancient republics? Next, but with that indulgence which belongs to an infirmity rather than an error of the will, we feel ashamed for the obstinate obtuseness of our country, in regard to one and the most effective of the Fine Arts. It will be understood that we speak of music. In painting and in sculpture it is now past disputing, that if we are destined to inferiority at all, it is an inferiority only to the Italians and the ancient Greeks; an inferiority which, if it were even sure to be permanent, we share with all the other malicious nations around us. On that head we are safe. And in the most majestic of the Fine Arts, in poetry, we have a clear and vast pre−eminence as regards all nations; no nation but ourselves have equally succeeded in both forms of the higher poetry, epic and tragic. Whilst of meditative or philosophic poetry, (Young's, Cowper's, Wordsworth's,)− to say nothing of lyric we may affirm what Quinctilian says justly of Roman satire *'tota quidem nostra est* .' If, therefore, in every mode of composition through which the impassioned mind speaks, a nation has excelled its rivals, we cannot be allowed to suppose any general defect of sensibility as a cause of obtuseness with regard to music. So little, however, is the grandeur of this divine art suspected amongst us generally, that a man will write an essay deliberately for the purpose of putting on record his own preference of a song, to the most elaborate music of Mozart: he will glory in his shame, and, though speaking in the character of one confessing to a weakness, will evidently view himself in the light of a candid man, laying bare a state of feeling which is natural and sound, opposed to a class of false pretenders who, whilst servile to rules of artists, in reality contradict their own musical instincts, and feel little or nothing of what they profess. Strange that even the analogy of other arts should not open his eyes to the delusion he is encouraging! A song, an air, a tune that is, a short succession of notes revolving rapidly upon itself, how could that, by possibility, offer a field of compass sufficient for the development of great musical effects? The preparation pregnant with the future, the remote correspondence, the questions, as it were, which to a deep musical sense are asked in one passage, and answered in another; the iteration and ingemination of a given effect, moving through subtle variations that sometimes disguise the theme, sometimes fitfully reveal it, sometimes throw it out tumultuously to the daylight,− these and ten thousand forms of self−conflicting musical passion what room could they find, what opening, for utterance in so limited a field as an air or song? A hunting−box, a

park−lodge, may have a forest grace and the beauty of appropriateness; but what if a man should match such a bauble against the Pantheon, or against the minsters of York and Strasburg? A repartee may by accident be practically effective: it has been known to crush a party scheme, and an oration of Cicero's, or of Burke's, could have done no more: but what judgment would match the two against each other as developments of power? Let him who finds the maximum of his musical gratification in a song, be assured, by that one fact, that his sensibility is rude and undeveloped. Yet exactly upon this level is the ordinary state of musical feeling throughout Great Britain; and the howling wilderness of the psalmody in most parish churches of the land, countersigns the statement. There is, however, accumulated in London more musical science than in any capital of the world. This, gradually diffused, will improve the feeling of the country. And, if it should fail to do so, in the worst case we have the satisfaction of knowing, through Jean Jacques Rousseau, and by later evidences, that, sink as we may below Italy and Germany in the sensibility to this divine art, we cannot go lower than France. Here, however, and in this cherished obtuseness as to a pleasure so important for human life, and at the head of the physico−intellectual pleasures, we find a second reason for quarrelling with the civilization of our country. At the summit of civilization in other points, she is here yet uncultivated and savage.

A third point is larger. Here (properly speaking) our quarrel is co−extensive with that general principle in England, which tends in all things to set the matter above the manner, the substance above the external show; a principle noble in itself, but inevitably wrong wherever the manner blends inseparably with the substance.

This general tendency operates in many ways: but our own immediate purpose is concerned with it only so far as it operates upon style. In no country upon earth, were it possible to carry such a maxim into practical effect, is it a more determinate tendency of the national mind to value the *matter* of a book, not only as paramount to the *manner*, but even as distinct from it, and as capable of a separate insulation. What first gave a shock to such a tendency, must have been the unwilling and mysterious sense that, in some cases, the matter and the manner were so inextricably interwoven, as not to admit of this coarse bisection. The one was embedded, entangled, and interfused through the other, in a way which bade defiance to such gross mechanical separations. But the tendency to view the two elements as in a separate relation still predominates; and, as a consequence, the tendency to undervalue the accomplishment of style. Do we mean that the English, as a literary nation, are practically less sensible of the effects of a beautiful style? Not at all. Nobody can be insensible to these effects. And, upon a known fact of history, viz. the *exclusive* cultivation of popular oratory in England, throughout the 17th and 18th centuries, we might presume a peculiar and exalted sense of style amongst ourselves. Until the French Revolution, no nation of Christendom except England had any practical experience of popular rhetoric; any deliberative eloquence, for instance; any forensic eloquence that was made public; any democratic eloquence of the hustings; or any form whatever of public rhetoric beyond that of the pulpit. Through two centuries at least, no nation could have been so constantly reminded of the powers for good and evil which belong to style. Often it must have happened, to the mortification or joy of multitudes, that one man out of windy nothings has constructed an overwhelming appeal to the passions of his hearers, whilst another has thrown away the weightiest cause by his manner of treating it. Neither let it be said, that this might not arise from differences of style, but because the triumphant demagogue made use of fictions, and, therefore, that his triumph was still obtained by means of his matter, however hollow that matter might have proved upon investigation. That case, also, is a possible case; but often enough two orators have relied upon the same identical matter the facts, for instance, of the slave−trade and one has turned this to such good account by his arrangements, by his modes of vivifying dry statements, by his arts of illustration, by his science of connecting things with human feeling, that, he has left his hearers in convulsions of passion; whilst the other shall have used every tittle of the same matter without eliciting one scintillation of sympathy, without leaving behind one distinct impression in the memory, or planting one murmur in the heart.

In proportion, therefore, as the English people have been placed for two centuries and a quarter, (i. e. since the latter decennium of James the First's reign,) under a constant experience of popular eloquence thrown into all channels of social life, they must have had peculiar occasion to feel the effects of style. But to feel is not to feel consciously. Many a man is charmed by one cause who ascribes the effect to another. Many a man is fascinated

by the artifices of composition, who fancies that it is the subject which has operated so potently. And even for the subtlest of philosophers who keeps in mind the interpenetration of the style and the matter, it would be as difficult to distribute the true proportion of their joint action, as, with regard to the earliest rays of the dawn, it would be to say how much of the beauty lay in the heavenly light which chased away the darkness how much in the rosy color which that light entangled.

Easily, therefore, it may have happened, that, under the constant action and practical effects of style, a nation may have failed to notice the cause *as* the cause. And, besides the disturbing forces which mislead the judgment of the auditor in such a case, there are other disturbing forces which modify the practice of the speaker. That is good rhetoric for the hustings which is bad for a book. Even for the highest forms of popular eloquence, the laws of style vary much from the general standard. In the senate, and for the same reason in a newspaper, it is a virtue to reiterate your meaning: tautology becomes a merit: variation of the words, with a substantial identity of the sense and dilution of the truth, is oftentimes a necessity. A man who should content himself with a single condensed enunciation of a perplexed doctrine, would be a madman and a *felo−de−se*, as respected his reliance upon that doctrine. Like boys who are throwing the sun's rays into the eyes of a mob by means of a mirror, you must shift your lights and vibrate your reflexions at every possible angle, if you would agitate the popular mind extensively. Every mode of intellectual communication has its separate strength and separate weakness; its peculiar embarrassments, compensated by peculiar resources. It is the advantage of a book, that you can return to the past page if anything in the present depends upon it. But, return being impossible in the case of a spoken harangue, where each sentence perishes as it is born, both the speaker and the hearer become aware of a mutual interest in a much looser style, and a perpetual dispensation from the severities of abstract discussion. It is for the benefit of both, that the weightier propositions should be detained before the eye a good deal longer than the chastity of taste or the austerity of logic would tolerate in a book. Time must be given for the intellect to eddy about a truth, and to appropriate its bearings. There is a sort of previous lubrication, such as the boa−constrictor applies to any subject of digestion, which is requisite to familiarize the mind with a startling or a complex novelty. And this is obtained for the intellect by varying the modes of presenting it, now putting it directly before the eye, now obliquely, now in an abstract shape, now in the concrete; all which being the proper technical discipline for dealing with such cases, ought no longer to be viewed as a licentious mode of style, but as the just style in respect of those licentious circumstances. And the true art for such popular display is to contrive the best forms for appearing to say something new, when in reality you are but echoing yourself; to break up massy chords into running variations; and to mask, by slight differences in the manner, a virtual identity in the substance.

We have been illustrating a twofold neutralizing effect applied to the advantages, otherwise enjoyed by the English people, for appreciating the forms of style. What was it that made the populace of Athens and of Rome so sensible to the force of rhetoric and to the magic of language? It was the habit of hearing these two great engines daily worked for purposes interesting to themselves as citizens, and sufficiently intelligible to command their willing attention. The English amongst modern nations have had the same advantages, allowance being made for the much less intense concentration of the audience. In the ancient republics it was always the same city; and, therefore, the same audience, except in so far as it was spread through many generations. This has been otherwise in England; and yet, by newspaper reports, any great effect in one assize town, or electoral town, has been propagated to the rest of the empire, through the eighteenth and the present century. But all this, and the continual exemplification of style as a great agency for democratic effect, have not availed to win a sufficient *practical* respect, in England, for the arts of composition as essential to authorship. And the reason is, because, in the first place, from the intertexture of style and matter, from *the impossibility that the one should affect them otherwise than in connection with the other*, it has been natural for an audience to charge on the superior agent what often belonged to the lower. This in the first place; and, secondly, because *the modes of style appropriate to popular eloquence being essentially different from those of written composition*, any possible experience on the hustings, or in the senate, would *pro tanto* tend rather to disqualify the mind for appreciating the more chaste and more elaborate qualities of style fitted for books; and thus a real advantage of the English in one direction has been neutralized by two causes in another.

Generally and ultimately, it is certain, that our British disregard or inadequate appreciation of style, though a very lamentable fault, has had its origin in the manliness of the British character; in the sincerity and directness of the British taste; in the principle of *'esse quam videri*,' which might be taken as the key to much in our manner, much in the philosophy of our lives; and finally in that same love for the practical and the tangible which has so memorably governed the course of our higher speculations from Bacon to Newton. But, whatever may have been the origin of this most faulty habit, whatever mixed causes now support it, beyond all question it is, that such a habit of disregard or of slight regard applied to all the arts of composition does exist in the most painful extent, and is detected by a practised eye in every page of almost every book that is published.

If you could look anywhere with a right to expect continual illustrations of what is good in the manifold qualities of style, it should reasonably be amongst our professional authors; but as a body, they are distinguished by the most absolute carelessness in this respect. Whether in the choice of words and idioms, or in the construction of their sentences, it is not possible to conceive the principle of lazy indifference carried to a more revolting extremity. Proof lies before you, spread out upon every page, that no excess of awkwardness, or of inelegance, or of unrhythmical cadence, is. so rated in the tariff of faults as to balance, in the writer's estimate, the trouble of remoulding a clause, of interpolating a phrase, or even of striking the pen through a superfluous word. In our own experience it has happened, that we have known an author so laudably fastidious in this subtle art, as' to have recast one chapter of a series no less than seventeen times; so difficult was the ideal or model of excellence which he kept before his mind; so indefatigable was his labor for mounting to the level of that ideal. Whereas, on the other hand, with regard to a large majority of the writers now carrying forward the literature of the country from the last generation to the next, the evidence is perpetual not so much that they rest satisfied with their own random preconceptions of each clause or sentence, as that they never trouble themselves to form any such preconceptions. Whatever words tumble out under the blindest accidents of the moment, those are the words retained; whatever sweep is impressed by chance upon the motion of a period, that is the arrangement ratified. To fancy that men thus determinately careless as to the grosser elements of style would pause to survey distant proportions, or to adjust any more delicate symmetries of good composition, would be visionary. As to the links of connection, the transitions, and the many other functions of logic in good writing, things are come to such a pass, that what was held true of Rome in two separate ages, by two great rhetoricians, and of Constantinople in an age long posterior, may now be affirmed of England: the idiom of our language, the mother tongue, survives only amongst our women and children; not, Heaven knows, amongst our women who write books they are often painfully conspicuous for all that disfigures authorship; but amongst well−educated women not professionally given to literature. Cicero and Quinctilian, each for his own generation, ascribed something of the same pre−eminence to the noble matrons of Rome; and more than one writer of the lower empire has recorded of Byzantium, that in the nurseries of that city was found the last home for the purity of the ancient Greek. No doubt it might have been found also amongst the innumerable mob of that haughty metropolis, but stained with corruptions and vulgar abbreviations. Or wherever it might lurk, assuredly it was not amongst the noble, the officials, or the courtiers; else it was impossible that such a master of affectation as Nicetas Choniates, for instance, should have found toleration. But the rationale of this matter lies in a small compass: why are the local names, whenever they have resulted from the general good sense of a country, faithful to the local truth, grave, and unaffected? Simply because they are not inventions of any active faculty, but mere passive depositions from a real impression upon the mind. On the other hand, wherever there is an ambitious principle set in motion for name−inventing, there it is sure to terminate in something monstrous and fanciful. Women offend in such cases even more than men; because more of sentiment or romance will mingle with the names they impose. Sailors again err in an opposite spirit; there is no affectation in their names, but there is too painful an effort after ludicrous allusions to the gravities of their native land 'Big Wig Island,' or 'the Bishop and his Clerks:' or the name becomes a memento of real incidents, but too casual and personal to merit this lasting record of a name, such as *Point Farewell*, or *Cape Turn−again*. This fault applies to many of the Yankee[1] names, and to many more in the southern and western states of North America, where the earliest population has usually been of a less religious character; and, most of all, it applies to the names of the back settlements. These people live under influences the most opposite to those of false refinement: coarse necessities, elementary features of peril or embarrassment, primary aspects of savage nature, compose the scenery of their thoughts; and these are reflected

by their names. *Dismal Swamp* expresses a condition of unreclaimed nature, which must disappear with growing civilization. *Big Bone Lick* tells a tale of cruelty that cannot often be repeated. Buffaloes, like all cattle, derive medicinal benefit from salt; they come in droves for a thousand miles to lick the masses of rock salt. The new settlers observing this, lie in ambush to surprise them: twenty−five thousand noble animals, in one instance, were massacred for their hides. In the following year the usual crowds advanced; but the first who snuffed the tainted air wheeled round, bellowed, and 'recoiled' far into his native woods. Meantime the large bones remain to attest the extent of the merciless massacre. Here, as in all cases, there is a truth expressed; but again too casual and special. Besides that, from contempt of elegance, or from defect of art, the names resemble the seafaring nomenclature in being too rudely compounded.

As with the imposition of names, so with the use of the existing language, most classes stand between the pressure of two extremes of coarseness, of carelessness, of imperfect art, on the one hand, of spurious refinement and fantastic ambition upon the other. Authors have always been a dangerous class for any language. Amongst the myriads who are prompted to authorship by the coarse love of reputation, or by the nobler craving for sympathy, there will always be thousands seeking distinctions through novelties of diction. Hopeless of any audience through mere weight of matter, they will turn for their last resource to such tricks of innovation as they can bring to bear upon language. What care they for purity or simplicity of diction, if at any cost of either they can win a special attention to themselves? Now, the great body of women are under no such unhappy bias. If they happen to move in polished circles, or have received a tolerable education, they will speak their native language of necessity with truth and simplicity. And supposing them not to be professional writers, (as so small a proportion can be, even in France or England,) there is always something in the situation of women which secures a fidelity to the idiom. From the greater excitability of females, and the superior vivacity of their feelings, they will be liable to far more irritations from wounded sensibilities. It is for such occasions chiefly that they seek to be effective in their language. Now, there is not in the world so certain a guarantee for pure idiomatic diction, without tricks or affectation, as a case of genuine excitement. Real situations are always pledges of a real natural language. It is in counterfeit passion, in the mimical situations of novels, or in poems that are efforts of ingenuity, and no ebullitions of absolute unsimulated feeling, that female writers endeavor to sustain their own jaded sensibility, or to reinforce the languishing interest of their readers by extravagances of language. No woman in this world, under a movement of resentment from a false accusation, or from jealousy, or from confidence betrayed, ever was at leisure to practise vagaries of caprice in the management of her mother tongue; strength of real feeling shuts out all temptation to the affectation of false feeling.

Hence the purity of the female Byzantine Greek. Such caprices as they had took some other course, and found some other vent than through their mother tongue. Hence, also, the purity of female English. Would you desire at this day to read our noble language in its native beauty, picturesque from idiomatic propriety, racy in its phraseology, delicate yet sinewy in its composition steal the mail−bags, and break open all the letters in female handwriting. Three out of four will have been written by that class of women who have the most leisure and the most interest in a correspondence by the post that class who combine more of intelligence, cultivation, and of thoughtfulness, than any other in Europe the class of unmarried women above twenty−five an increasing class [2]; women who, from mere dignity of character, have renounced all prospects of conjugal and parental life, rather than descend into habits unsuitable to their birth. Women capable of such sacrifices, and marked by such strength of mind, may be expected to think with deep feeling, and to express themselves (unless where they have been too much biased by bookish connections) with natural grace. Not impossibly these same women, if required to come forward in some public character, might write ill and affectedly. They would then have their free natural movement of thought distorted into some accommodation to artificial standards, amongst which they might happen to select a bad one for imitation. But in their letters they write under the benefit of their natural advantages; not warped, on the one hand, into that constraint or awkwardness which is the inevitable effect of conscious exposure to public gaze; yet, on the other, not left to vacancy or the chills of apathy, but sustained by some deep sympathy between themselves and their correspondents.

So far as concerns idiomatic English, we are satisfied, from the many beautiful female letters which we have heard upon chance occasions from every quarter of the empire, that they, the educated women of Great Britain above all, the interesting class of women unmarried upon scruples of sexual honor and also (as in Constantinople of old) the nurseries of Great Britain, are the true and best depositaries of the old mother idiom. But we must not forget, that though this is another term for what is good in English, when we are talking of a human and a popular interest, there is a separate use of the language, as in the higher forms of history or philosophy, which ought not to be idiomatic. As respects that which is, it is remarkable that the same orders cling to the ancient purity of diction amongst ourselves who did so in pagan Rome viz. women, for the reasons just noticed, and *people of rank*. So much has this been the tendency in England, that we know a person of great powers, but who has in all things a one−sided taste, and is so much a lover of idiomatic English as to endure none else, who professes to read no writer since Lord Chesterfield. It is certain that this accomplished nobleman, who has been most unjustly treated from his unfortunate collision with a national favorite, and in part also from the laxity of his moral principles, where, however, he spoke worse than he thought, wrote with the ease and careless grace of a high−bred gentleman. But his style is not peculiar: it has always been the style of his order. After making the proper allowance for the continual new infusions into our peerage from the bookish class of lawyers, and for some modifications derived from the learned class of spiritual peers, the tone of Lord Chesterfield has always been the tone of our old aristocracy; a tone of. elegance and propriety, above all things free from the stiffness of pedantry or academic rigor, and obeying Cesar's rule of shunning *tanquam scopulum* any *insolens verbum*. It is, indeed, through this channel that the solicitudes of our British nobility have always flowed: other qualities might come and go according to the temperament of the individual; but what in all generations constituted an object of horror for that class, was bookish precision and professional peculiarity. From the free popular form of our great public schools, to which nine out of ten amongst our old nobility resorted, it happened unavoidably that they were not equally clear of popular vulgarities; indeed, from another cause, that could not have been avoided for it is remarkable that a connection, as close as through an umbilical cord, has always been maintained between the very highest orders of our aristocracy and the lowest of our democracy, by means of nurses. The nurses and immediate personal attendants of all classes come from the same sources, most commonly from the peasantry of the land; they import into all families alike, into the highest and the lowest, the coarsest expressions from the vernacular language of anger and contempt. Whence, for example, it was, that about five or six years ago, when a new novel circulated in London, with a private understanding that it was a juvenile effort from two very young ladies of the very highest rank, nobody who reflected at all could feel much surprise that one of the characters should express her self−esteem by the popular phrase that she did not 'think small beer of herself.' Equally in its faults and its merits, the language of high life has always tended to simplicity and the vernacular ideal, recoiling from every mode of bookishness. And in this, as in so many other instances, it is singular to note the close resemblance between polished England and polished Rome. Augustus Caesar was so little able to enter into any artificial forms or tortuous obscurities of ambitious rhetoric, that he could not so much as understand them. Even the old antique forms of language, where it happened that they had become obsolete, were to him disgusting. And probably the main bond of connection between himself and Horace was their common and excessive hatred of obscurity; from which quality, indeed, the very intellectual defects of both, equally with their good taste, alienated them to intensity.

The pure racy idiom of colloquial or household English, we have insisted, must be looked for in the circles of well−educated women not too closely connected with books. It is certain that books, in any language, will tend to encourage a diction too remote from the style of spoken idiom; whilst the greater solemnity, and the more ceremonial costume of regular literature must often demand such a non−idiomatic diction, upon mere principles of good taste. But why is it that in our day literature has taken so determinate a swing towards this professional language of books, as to justify some fears that the other extreme of the free colloquial idiom will perish as a living dialect? The apparent cause lies in a phenomenon of modern life, which, on other accounts also, is entitled to anxious consideration. It is in newspapers that we must look for the main reading of this generation; and in newspapers, therefore, we must seek for the causes operating upon the style of the age. Seventy years ago this tendency in political journals to usurp upon the practice of books, and to mould the style of writers, was noticed by a most acute observer, himself one of the most brilliant writers in the class of satiric sketchers and personal

historians that any nation has produced. Already, before 1770, the late Lord Oxford was in the habit of saying to any man who consulted him on the cultivation of style 'Style is it that you want? Oh, go and look into the newspapers for a style.' This was said half contemptuously and half seriously. But the evil has now become overwhelming. One single number of a London morning paper, which in half a century has expanded from the size of a dinner napkin to that of a breakfast tablecloth, from that to a carpet, and will soon be forced, by the expansions of public business, into something resembling the mainsail of a frigate, already is equal in printed matter to a very large octavo volume. Every old woman in the nation now reads daily a vast miscellany in one volume royal octavo. The evil of this, as regards the quality of knowledge communicated, admits of no remedy. Public business, in its whole unwieldy compass, must always form the subject of these daily chronicles. Nor is there much room to expect any change in the style. The evil effect of this upon the style of the age may be reduced to two forms. Formerly the natural impulse of every man was, spontaneously to use the language of life; the language of books was a secondary attainment not made without effort. Now, on the contrary, the daily composers of newspapers have so long dealt in the professional idiom of books, as to have brought it home to every reader in the nation who does not violently resist it by some domestic advantages. Time was, within our own remembrance, that if you should have heard, in passing along the street, from any old apple−woman such a phrase as 'I will *avail myself* of your kindness,' forthwith you would have shied like a skittish horse you would have run away in as much terror as any old Roman upon those occasions when *Bos Loquebatur*. At present you swallow such marvels as matters of course. The whole artificial dialect of books has come into play as the dialect of ordinary life. This is one form of the evil impressed upon our style by journalism; a dire monotony of bookish idiom has encrusted and stiffened all native freedom of expression, like some scaly leprosy or elephantiasis, barking and hide−binding the fine natural pulses of the elastic flesh. Another and almost a worse evil has established itself in the prevailing structure of sentences. Every man who has had any experience in writing, knows how natural it is for hurry and fullness of matter to discharge itself by vast sentences, involving clause within clause *ad infinitum* how difficult it is, and how much a work of time, to break up this huge *fasciculus* of cycle and epicycle into a graceful succession of sentences, long intermingled with short, each modifying the other, and arising musically by links of spontaneous connection. Now the plethoric form of period, this monster model of sentence, bloated with decomplex intercalations, and exactly repeating the form of syntax which distinguishes an act of Parliament, is the prevailing model in newspaper eloquence. Crude undigested masses of suggestion, furnishing rather raw materials for composition and jotting for the memory, than any formal developments of the ideas, describe the quality of writing which *must* prevail in journalism: not from defect of talents, which are at this day of that superior class which may be presumed from the superior importance of the function itself; but from the necessities of hurry and of instant compliance with an instant emergency, granting no possibility for revision, or opening for amended thought, which are evils attached to the flying velocities of public business.

As to structure of sentence, and the periodic involution, that scarcely admits of being exemplified in the conversation of those who do not write. But the choice of phraseology is naturally and easily echoed in the colloquial forms of those who surrender themselves to such an influence. To mark in what degree this contagion of bookishness has spread, and how deeply it has moulded the habits of expression in classes naturally the least likely to have been reached by a revolution so artificial in its character, we will report a single record from the memorials of our own experience. Some eight years ago, we had occasion to look for lodgings in a newly−built suburb of London. The mistress of the house, (with respect to whom we have nothing to report more than that she was in the worst sense a vulgar woman, that is, not merely a low. bred person so much might have been expected from her occupation but morally vulgar by the evidence of her own complex precautions against fraud, reasonable enough in so dangerous a capital, but not calling for the very ostentatious display of them which she obtruded upon us,) was in regular training, it appeared, as a student of newspapers. She had no children: the newspapers were her children. There lay her studies; that branch of learning constituted her occupation, from morning to night: and the following, were amongst the words which she this semi−barbarian poured from her cornucopia during the very few minutes of our interview; which interview was brought to an abrupt issue by mere nervous agitation upon our part. The words, as noted down within an hour of the occasion, and after allowing a fair time for our recovery, were these: first, 'Category;' secondly, 'predicament;' (where, by the way, from the twofold iteration of the idea Greek and Roman it appears that the old lady was 'twice armed;') thirdly,

'individuality;' fourthly, 'procrastination;' fifthly, 'speaking diplomatically, would not wish to commit herself;' sixthly, 'would spontaneously adapt the several modes of domestication to the reciprocal interests,' &c.; and finally, (which word it was that settled us; we heard it as we reached the topmost stair on the second floor; and, without further struggle against our instincts, round we wheeled, rushed down forty−five stairs, and exploded from the house with a fury causing us to impinge against an obese or protuberant gentleman, and calling for mutual explanations; a result which nothing could account for, but a steel bow, or mustachios on the lip of an elderly woman; meantime the fatal word was,) seventhly, 'anteriorly.' Concerning which word we solemnly depose and make affidavit, that neither from man, woman, nor book, had we ever heard it before this unique rencontre with this abominable woman on the staircase. The occasion which furnished the excuse for such a word was this: From the staircase window we saw a large shed in the rear of the house: apprehending some nuisance of 'manufacturing industry' in our neighborhood, 'What's that?' we demanded. Mark the answer: 'A shed; and anteriorly to the existing shed there was −.;' *what* there was, posterity must consent to have wrapt up in darkness, for there came on our nervous seizure, which intercepted further communication. But observe, as a point which took away any gleam of consolation from the case, the total absence of all *malapropos* picturesqueness, that might have defeated its deadly action upon the nervous system. No: it is due to the integrity of *her* disease, and to the completeness of our suffering, that we should attest the unimpeachable correctness of her words and of the syntax by which she connected them.

Now, if we could suppose the case that the old household idiom of the land were generally so extinguished amongst us as it was in this particular instance if we could imagine, as a *universal* result of journalism, that a coarse unlettered woman, having occasion to say, 'this or that stood in such a place before the present shed,' should take as a natural or current formula, 'anteriorly to the existing shed there stood,' &c. what would be the final effect upon our literature? Pedantry, though it were unconscious pedantry, once steadily diffused through a nation as to the very moulds of its thinking, and the general tendencies of its expression, could not but stiffen the natural graces of composition, and weave fetters about the free movement of human thought. This would interfere as effectually with our power of enjoying much that is excellent in our past literature, as it would with our future powers of producing. And such an agency has been too long at work amongst us, not to have already accomplished some part of these separate evils. Amongst women of education, as we have argued above, standing aloof from literature, and less uniformly drawing their intellectual sustenance from newspapers, the deadening effects have been partially counteracted. Here and there, amongst individuals, alive to the particular evils of the age, and watching the very set of the current, there may have been even a more systematic counteraction applied to the mischief. But the great evil in such cases is this that we cannot see the extent of the changes wrought or being wrought, from having ourselves partaken in them. *Tempora mutantur*; and naturally, if we could review them with the neutral eye of a stranger, it would be impossible for us not to see the extent of those changes. But our eye is not neutral: we also have partaken in the changes; et *nos mutamur in illis*. And this fact disturbs the power of appreciating those changes. Every one of us would have felt, sixty years ago, that the general tone and coloring of a style was stiff, bookish, pedantic, which, from the habituation of our organs, we now feel to be natural and within the privilege of learned art. Direct objective qualities it is always by comparison easy to measure; but the difficulty commences when we have to combine with this outer measurement of the object another corresponding measurement of the subjective or inner qualities by which we apply the measure; that is, when besides the objects projected to a distance from the spectator, we have to allow for variations or disturbances in the very eye which surveys them. The eye cannot see itself; we cannot project from ourselves, and contemplate as an object our own contemplating faculty, or appreciate our own appreciating power. Biases, therefore, or gradual warpings, that have occurred in our critical faculty as applied to style, we cannot allow for; and these biases will unconsciously mask, to our perceptions, an amount of change in the quality of popular style such as we could not easily credit.

Separately from this change for the worse in the drooping idiomatic freshness of our diction, which is a change that has been going on for a century, the other characteristic defect of this age lies in the tumid and tumultuary structure of our sentences. The one change has partly grown out of the other. Ever since a more bookish air was impressed upon composition without much effort by the Latinized and artificial phraseology, by forms of

expression consecrated to books, and by 'long−tailed words in *osity* and *ation*,' either because writers felt that already, in this one act of preference shown to the artificial vocabulary, they had done enough to establish a differential character of regular composition, and on that consideration thought themselves entitled to neglect the combination of their words into sentences and periods; or because there is a real natural sympathy between the Latin phraseology and a Latin structure of sentence; certain it is and remarkable, that our popular style, in the common limited sense of arrangement applied to words, or the syntaxes of sentences, has labored with two faults that might have been thought incompatible: it has been artificial, by artifices peculiarly adapted to the powers of the Latin language, and yet at the very same time careless and disordinate. There is a strong idea expressed by the Latin word *inconditus*, *disorganized*, or rather *unorganized* . Now, in spite of its artificial bias, that is the very epithet which will best characterize our newspaper style. To be viewed as susceptible of organization, such periods must already be elaborate and artificial; to be viewed as not having received it, such periods must be careless.

But perhaps the very best illustration of all this will be found in putting the case of English style into close juxtaposition with the style of the French and Germans our only very important neighbors. As leaders of civilization, as powers in an intellectual sense, there are but three nations in Europe England, Germany, France. As to Spain and Italy, outlying extremities, they are not moving bodies; they rest upon the past. Russia and North America are the two bulwarks of Christendom east and west. But the three powers at the *centre* are in all senses the motive forces of civilization. In all things they have the initiation; and they preside.

By this comparison we shall have the advantage of doing what the French express by *s'orienter* the Germans by *sich orientiren*. Learning one of our bearings on the compass, we shall be able to deduce the rest; and we shall be able to conjecture our valuation as respects the art, by finding our place amongst the artists.

With respect to French style, we can imagine the astonishment of an English author, practised in composition, and with no previous knowledge of French literature, who should first find himself ranging freely amongst a French library. That particular fault of style which in English books is all but universal, absolutely has not an existence in the French. Speaking rigorously and to the very letter of the case, we, upon a large experience in French literature, affirm, that it would be nearly impossible (perhaps strictly so) to cite an instance of that cumbrous and unwieldy style which disfigures English composition so extensively. Enough could not be adduced to satisfy the purpose of illustration. And to make a Frenchman sensible of the fault as a possibility, you must appeal to some *translated* model.

But why? The cause of this national immunity from a fault so common everywhere else, and so natural, when we look into the producing occasions, is as much entitled to our notice as the immunity itself. The fault is inevitable, as one might fancy, to two conditions of mind hurry in the first place, want of art in the second. The French must be liable to these disadvantages as much as their neighbors: by what magic is it that they evade them or neutralize them in the result? The secret lies here; beyond all nations, by constitutional vivacity, the French are a nation of talkers; and the model of their sentences is moulded by that fact. Conversation, which is a luxury for other nations, is for them a necessity; by the very law of their peculiar intellect and of its social training, they are colloquial. Hence it happens, that there are no such people endured or ever heard of in France as alloquial wits; people who talk *to* but not *with* a circle; the very finest of their *beaux esprits* must submit to the equities of conversation, and would be crushed summarily as monsters, if they were to seek a selfish mode of display, or a privilege of lecturing any audience of a *salon* who had met for purposes of *social* pleasure. *'De monologue*,' as Madame de Staël, in her broken English, described this mode of display when speaking of Coleridge, is so far from being tolerated in France as an accomplishment, that it is not even understood as a disease. This kind of what may be called irresponsible talk, when a man runs on *perpetuo tenore*, not accountable for any opinion to his auditors, open to no contradiction, has sometimes procured for a man in England the affix of *River* to his name: *Labitur et labetur in omne volubilis evuum*. But that has been in cases where the talking impulse was sustained by mere vivacity of animal spirits, without knowledge to support it, and liable to the full weight of Archbishop Huet's sarcasm −.that it was a diarrhea of garrulity, a *flux de bouche*. But in cases like that of Coleridge, where the

solitary display, if selfish, is still dignified by a pomp of knowledge, and a knowledge which you feel to have been fused and combined by the genial circumstances of the speaker's position in the centre of an admiring circle, we English do still recognise the *métier* of a professional talker as a privileged mode of social display. People are asked to come and hear such a performer, as you form a select party to hear Thalberg or Paganini. The thing is understood at least with us; right or wrong, there is an understanding amongst the company that you are not to interrupt the great man of the night. You may prompt him by a question; you may set him in motion; but to begin arguing against him would be felt as not less unseasonable, than to insist on whistling *Jim Crow* during the *bravuras* and *tours de force* of the great musical artists.

In France, therefore, from the intense adaptation of the national mind to real colloquial intercourse, for which reciprocation is indispensable, the form of sentence in use is adjusted to that primary condition; brief, terse, simple; shaped to avoid misunderstanding, and to meet the impatience of those who are waiting for their turn. People who write rapidly everywhere write as they talk: it is impossible to do otherwise. Taking a pen into his hand, a man frames his periods exactly as he would do if addressing an audience. So far the Englishman and the Frenchman are upon the same level. Suppose them, therefore, both preparing to speak: an Englishman in such a situation has no urgent motive for turning his thoughts to any other object than the prevailing one of the moment viz. how best to convey his meaning. That object weighs also with the Frenchman; but he has a previous, a paramount, object to watch the necessity of avoiding *des longueurs*, The rights, the equities of conversation are but dimly present to the mind of the Englishman. From the mind of a Frenchman they are never absent. To an Englishman, the right of occupying the attention of the company seems to inhere in *things* rather than in persons: if the particular subject under discussion should happen to be a grave one, then, in right of *that*, and not by any right of his own, a speaker will seem to an Englishman invested with the privilege of drawing largely upon the attention of a company. But to a Frenchman this right of participation in the talk is a *personal* right, which cannot be set aside by any possible claims in the subject: it passes by necessity to and fro, backwards and forwards, between the several persons who are present; and, as in the games of battledore and shuttlecock, or of 'hunt the slipper,' the momentary subject of interest never can settle or linger for any length of time in any one individual, without violating the rules of the sport, or suspending its movement. Inevitably, therefore, the structure of sentence must for ever be adapted to this primary function of the French national intellect the function of communicativeness, and to the necessities (for to the French they *are* necessities) of social intercourse.

Hence it is that in French authors, whatever may otherwise be the differences of their minds, or the differences of their themes, uniformly we find the periods short, rapid, unelaborate – Pascal or Helvétius, Condillac or Rousseau, Montesquieu or Voltaire, Buffon or Duclos, all alike are terse, perspicuous, brief. Even Mirabeau or Chateaubriand, so much modified by foreign intercourse, in this point adhere to their national models. Even Bossuet or Bourdaloue, where the diffusiveness and amplitude of oratory might have been pleaded as a dispensation, are not more licentious in this respect than their compatriots. One rise in every sentence, one gentle descent, that is the law for French composition; even too monotonously so and thus it happens that such a thing as a long or an involved sentence could not be produced from French literature, though a sultan were to offer his daughter in marriage to the man who should find it. Whereas now, amongst us English, not only is the too general tendency of our sentences towards hyperbolical length, but it will be found continually, that instead of one rise and one corresponding fall one *arsis* and one *thesis* there are many. Flux and reflux, swell and cadence, that is the movement for a sentence; but our modern sentences agitate us by rolling fires, after the fashion of those internal earthquakes that, not content with one throe, run along spasmodically like boys playing at what is called 'drake−stone.'

It is not often that a single fault can produce any vast amount of evil. But there are cases where it does; and this is one: the effect of weariness and of repulsion, which may arise from this single vice of unwieldy comprehensiveness in the structure of sentences, cannot better be illustrated than by a frank exposure of what often happens to ourselves, and (as we differ as to this case only by consciously noticing what all feel) must often happen to others. In the evening, when it is natural that we should feel a craving for rest, some book lies near us which is written in a style; clear, tranquil, easy to follow. Just at that moment comes in the wet newspaper,

dripping with the dewy freshness of its news; and even in its parliamentary memorials promising so much interest, that, let them be treated in what manner they may merely for the subjects, they are often commandingly attractive. The attraction indeed is but too potent, the interest but too exciting. Yet, after all, many times we lay aside the journal, and we acquiesce in the gentler stimulation of the book. Simply the news we may read; but the discussions, whether direct from the editor, or reported from the Parliament, we refuse or we delay. And why? It is the subject, perhaps you think, it is the great political question too agitating by the consequences it may happen to involve. No. All this, if treated in a winning style, we could bear. It is the effort, the toil, the exertion of mind requisite to follow the discussion through endless and labyrinthine sentences this it is which compels us to forego the journal, or to lay it aside until the next morning.

Those who are not accustomed to watch the effects of composition upon the feelings, or have had little experience in voluminous reading pursued for weeks, would scarcely imagine how much of downright physical exhaustion is produced by what is technically called the *periodic* style of writing: it is not the length, the [ *Greek here*], the paralytic flux of words; it is not even the cumbrous involution of parts within parts, separately considered, that bears so heavily upon the attention. It is the suspense, the holding−on, of the mind until what is called the [*Greek here*], or coming round of the sentence commences this it is which wears out the faculty of attention. A sentence, for example, begins with a series of *ifs*; perhaps a dozen lines are occupied with expanding the conditions under which something is affirmed or denied: here you cannot dismiss and have done with the ideas as you go along; all is hypothetic; all is suspended in air. The conditions are not fully to be understood until you are acquainted with the dependency; you must give a separate attention to each clause of this complex hypothesis, and yet, having done *that* by a painful effort, you have done nothing at all; for you must exercise a reacting attention through the corresponding latter section, in order to follow out its relations to all parts of the hypothesis which sustains it. In fact, under the rude yet also artificial character of newspaper style, each separate monster period is a vast arch, which, not receiving its keystone, not being locked into self−supporting cohesion, until you nearly reach its close, imposes of necessity upon the unhappy reader all the on s of its ponderous weight through the main process of its construction. The continued repetition of so Atlantean an effort soon overwhelms the patience of any reader, and establishes at length that habitual feeling which causes him to shrink from the speculations of journalists, or (which is more likely) to adopt a worse habit than absolute neglect, which we shall notice immediately.

Meantime, as we have compared ourselves on this important point with the French, let us now complete our promise, by noticing our relation in the same point to the Germans. Even on its own account, and without any view to our present purpose, the character of German prose is an object of legitimate astonishment. Whatever is bad in our own ideal of prose style, whatever is repulsive in our own practice, we see there carried to the most outrageous excess. Herod is outheroded, Sternhold is out−sternholded, with a zealotry of extravagance that really seems like wilful burlesque. Lessing, Herder, Paul Richter, and Lichtenberg, with some few beside, either prompted by nature or trained upon foreign models, have avoided the besetting sin of German prose. Any man of distinguished talent, whose attention has been once called steadily to this subject, cannot fail to avoid it. The misfortune of most writers has been, that, once occupied with the interest of *things,* and overwhelmed by the embarrassments of disputed *doctrines*, they never advert to any question affecting what they view, by comparison, as a trifle. The *to docendum*, the thing to be taught, has availed to obscure or even to annihilate for their eyes every anxiety as to the mode of teaching. And, as one conspicuous example of careless style acts by its authority to create many more, we need not wonder at the results, even when they reach a point of what may be called monstrous. Among ten thousand offenders, who carry their neglect of style even to that point, we would single out Immanuel Kant. Such is the value of his philosophy in some sections, and partially it is so very capable of a lucid treatment, intelligible to the plainest man of reflective habits, that within no long interval we shall certainly see him naturalized amongst ourselves; there are particular applications of his philosophy not contemplated by himself, for which we venture to predict that the Christian student will ultimately be thankful, when the elementary principles have been brought under a clear light of interpretation. Attention will then be forced upon his style, and facts will come forward not credible without experimental proof. For instance, we have lying before us at this moment his *Critik der Practischen Vernunft* in the unpirated edition of Hartnoch the respectable publisher of all Kant's great works. The text is therefore authentic: and being a 4th edition, (Riga, 1797,) must be

presumed to have benefited by the author's careful revision: we have no time for search, but on barely throwing open the book, we see a sentence at pp. 70, 71, exactly covering one whole octavo page of thirty−one lines, (each line averaging forty−five to forty−eight letters.) Sentences of the same calibre, some even of far larger *bore*, we have observed in this and other works of the same author. And it is not the fact taken as an occasional possibility, it is the prevailing character of his style, that we insist on as the most formidable barrier to the study of his writings, and to the progress of what will soon be acknowledged as important in his principles. A sentence is viewed by him, and by most of his countrymen, as a rude mould or elastic form admitting of expansion to any possible extent: it is laid down as a rude outline, and then by superstruction and episuperstruction it is gradually reared to a giddy altitude which no eye can follow. Yielding to his natural impulse of subjoining all additions, or exceptions, or modifications not in the shape of separate consecutive sentences, but as intercalations and stuffings of one original sentence, Kant might naturally enough have written a book from beginning to end in one vast hyperbolical sentence. We sometimes see an English Act of Parliament which does literally accomplish that end, by an artifice which in law has a purpose and a use. Instead of laying down a general proposition, which is partially false until it has received its proper restraints, the framer of the act endeavors to evade even this momentary falsehood by coupling the restraints with the very primary enunciation of the truth: e. g. A. shall be entitled, provided always that he is under the circumstances of e, or i, or o, to the right of X. Thus, even a momentary compliance with the false notion of an absolute unconditional claim to X. is evaded; a truth which is only a conditional truth, is stated as such from the first. There is, therefore, a theoretic use. But what is the practical result? Why, that when you attempt to read an Act of Parliament where the exceptions, the secondary exceptions to the exceptions, the limitations and the sublimitations, descend *seriatim*, by a vast scale of dependencies, the mind finds itself overtasked: the energy of the most energetic begins to droop; and so inevitable is that result, that Mr. Pitt, a minister unusually accomplished for such process by constitution of mind and by practice, publicly avowed his inability to follow so trying a conflict with technical embarrassments. He declared himself to be lost in the labyrinth of clauses: the Ariadne's clue was wanting for his final extrication: and he described his situation at the end with the simplicity natural to one who was no charlatan, and sought for no reputation by the tricks of a funambulist: In the crowd of things excepted and counter−excepted, he really ceased to understand the main point what it was that the law allowed, and what it was that it disallowed.'

We might have made our readers merry with the picture of German prose; but we must not linger.. It is enough to say, that it offers the counterpole to the French style. Our own popular style, and (what is worse) the *tendency* of our own, is to the German extreme. For those who read German there is this advantage that German prose, as written by the mob of authors, presents, as in a Brobdignagian mirror, the most offensive faults of our own.

But these faults are they in practice so wearisome and exhausting as we have described them? Possibly not; and, where that happens to be the case, let the reader ask himself if it is not by means of an evasion worse in its effects than any fault of style could ever prove in its most exaggerated form. Shrinking, through long experience, from the plethoric form of cumulation and 'periodic' writing in which the journalist supports or explains his views, every man who puts a business value upon his time, slips naturally into a trick of short. hand reading. It is more even by the effort and tension of mind required, than by the mere loss of time, that most readers are repelled from the habit of careful reading. An evil of modern growth is met by a modern remedy. Every man gradually learns an art of catching at the leading words, and the cardinal or hinge−joints of transition, which proclaim the general course of a writer's speculation. Now it is very true, and is sure to be objected that, where so much is certain to prove mere iteration and teasing tautology, little can be lost by this or any other process of abridgment. Certainly, as regards the particular subject concerned, there may be no room to apprehend a serious injury. Not there, not in any direct interest, but in a far larger interest indirect for the moment, but the most direct and absolute of all interests for an intellectual being, the reader suffers a permanent debilitation. He acquires a factitious propensity, he forms an incorrigible habit of desultory reading. Now, to say of a man's knowledge, that it will be shallow, or (which is worse than shallow) will be erroneous and insecure in its foundations, is to say little of such a habit: it is by reaction upon a man's faculties, it is by the effects reflected upon his judging and reasoning powers, that loose habits of reading tell eventually. And these are durable effects. Even as respects the minor purpose of information, better it is, by a thousand fold, to have read threescore of books (chosen judiciously) with severe attention, than to

have raced through the library of the Vatican at a newspaper pace. But, as respects the final habits acquired, habits of thinking coherently, and of judging soundly – better that a man should have not read one line throughout his life, than have travelled through the journals of Europe by this random process of 'reading short.'

Yet, by this Parthian habit of aiming at full gallop −.of taking flying shots at conspicuous marks, and, like Parthians also, directing their chance arrows whilst retreating, and revolting with horror from a direct approach to the object, thus it is, that the young and the flexible are trained amongst us under the increasing tyranny of journalism. A large part of the evil, therefore, belongs to style; for it is this which repels readers, and enforces the short−hand process of desultory reading. A large part of the evil, therefore, is of a nature to receive a remedy.

It is with a view to that practical part of the extensive evil, that we have shaped our present notice, of popular style, as made operative amongst ourselves. One single vice of periodic syntax, a vice unknown to the literature of Greece, and, until Paterculus, even of Rome, (although the language of Rome was so naturally adapted to that vice,) has with us counterbalanced all possible vices of any other order. Simply by the vast sphere of its agency for evil, in the habits of mind which it produces and supports., such a vice merits a consideration which would else be disproportionate. Yet, at the same time, it must not be forgotten, that if the most operative of all vices, after all it is but one. What are the others?

It is a fault, amongst many faults, of such works as we have on this subject of style that they collect the list of qualities, good or bad, to which composition is liable, not under any principle from which they might be deduced *a priori*, so as to be assured that all had been enumerated, but,− by a tentative groping, a mere conjectural estimate. The word *style* has with us a twofold meaning; one sense, the narrow one, expressing the mere *synthesis onomaton*, the syntaxis or combination of words into sentences; the other of far wider extent, and expressing all possible relations that can arise between thoughts and words the total effect of a writer, as derived from manner. Style may be viewed as an *organic* thing and as a *mechanic* thing. By organic, we mean that which, being acted upon, reacts and which propagates the communicated power without loss. By mechanic, that which, being impressed with motion, cannot throw it back without loss, and therefore soon comes to an end. The human body is an elaborate system of organs; it is sustained by organs. But the human body is exercised as a machine, and, as such, may be viewed in the arts of riding, dancing, leaping, &c., subject to the laws of motion and equilibrium. Now, the use of words is an organic thing, in so far as language is connected with thoughts, and modified by thoughts. It is a mechanic thing, in so far as words in combination, determine or modify each other. The science of style, as an organ of thought, of style in relation to the ideas and feelings, might be called the *organology* of style. The science of style, considered as a machine, in which words act upon words, and through a particular grammar, might be called the *mechanology* of style. It is of little importance by what name these two functions of composition are expressed. But it is of great importance not to confound the functions; that function by which style maintains a commerce with thought, and that by which it chiefly communicates with grammar and with words. A pedant only will insist upon the names but the distinction in the ideas, under some name, can be neglected only by the man who is careless of logic.

We know not how far we may be ever called upon to proceed with this discussion: if it should happen that we. were, an interesting field of questions would lie before us for the first part, (the organology.) It would lead us over the ground trodden by the Greek and Roman rhetoricians; and over those particular questions which have arisen by the contrast between the circumstances of the ancients and our own since the origin of printing. Punctuation, trivial as such an innovation may seem, was the product of typography; and it is interesting to trace the effects upon style even of that one slight addition to the resources of logic. Previously, a man was driven to depend for his security against misunderstanding upon the pure virtue of his syntax. Miscollocation or dislocation of related words disturbed the whole sense: its least effect was, to give no sense; often it gave a dangerous sense. Now, punctuation was an artificial machinery for maintaining the integrity of the sense against all mistakes of the writer; and, as one consequence, it withdrew the energy of men's anxieties from the natural machinery, which lay in just and careful arrangement. Another and still greater machinery of art for the purpose of maintaining the sense, and with the effect of relaxing the care of the writer, lay in the exquisitely artificial structure of the Latin

language, which, by means of its terminal forms, indicated the arrangement, and referred the proper predicate to the proper subject, spite of all that affectation or negligence could do to disturb the series of the logic or the succession of the syntax. Greek, of course, had the same advantage in kind, but not in degree; and thence rose some differences which have escaped all notice of rhetoricians. Here also would properly arise the question started by Charles Fox, (but probably due originally to the conversation of some far subtler friend, such as Edmund Burke,) how far the practice of foot−notes a practice purely modern in its *form* is reconcilable with the laws of just composition: and whether in virtue, though not in form, such foot−notes did not exist for the ancients, by an evasion we could point out. The question is clearly one which grows out of style in its relations to thought how far, viz., such an excrescence as a note argues that the sentence to which it is attached has not received the benefit of a full development for the conception involved; whether, if thrown into the furnace again and re−melted, it might not be so recast as to absorb the redundancy which had previously flowed over into a note. Under this head would fall not only all the differential questions of style and composition between us and the ancients, but also the questions of merit as fairly distributed amongst the moderns compared with each other. The French, as we recently insisted, undoubtedly possess one vast advantage over all other nations in the good taste which governs the arrangement of their sentences; in the simplicity (a strange pretension to make for anything French) of the modulation under which their thoughts flow; in the absence of all cumbrous involution, and in the quick succession of their periods. In reality this invaluable merit tends to an excess; and the *style coupé* as opposed to the *style soutenu*, flippancy opposed to gravity, the subsultory to the continuous, these are the two frequent extremities to which the French manner betrays men. Better, however, to be flippant, than, by a revolting form of tumor and perplexity, to lead men into habits of intellect such as result from the modern vice of English style. Still, with all its practical value, it is evident that the intellectual merits of the French style are but small. They are chiefly negative, in the first place; and, secondly, founded in the accident of their colloquial necessities. The law of conversation has prescribed the model of their sentences; and in that law there is quite as much of self−interest at work as of respect for equity. *Hanc venianm petimusque damusque vicissim*. Give and take is the rule, and he who expects to be heard must condescend to listen; which necessity, for both parties, binds over both to be brief. Brevity so won could at any rate have little merit; and it is certain that, for profound thinking, it must sometimes be a hindrance. In order to be brief, a man must take a short sweep of view: his range of thought cannot be extensive; and such a rule, applied to a general method of thinking, is fitted rather to aphorisms and maxims as upon a known subject, than to any process of investigation as upon a subject yet to be fathomed. Advancing still further into the examination of style as the organ of thinking, we should find occasion to see the prodigious defects of the French in all the higher qualities of prose composition. One advantage, for a practical purpose of life, is sadly counterbalanced by numerous faults, many of which are faults of *stamina*, lying not in any corrigible defects, but in such as imply penury of thinking, from radical inaptitude in the thinking faculty to connect itself with the feeling, and with the creative faculty of the imagination. There are many other researches belonging to this subtlest of subjects, affecting both the logic and the ornaments of style, which would fall under the head of organology. But for instant practical use, though far less difficult for investigation, yet, for that reason, far more tangible and appreciable, would be all the suggestions proper to the other head of mechanology. Half a dozen rules for evading the most frequently recurring forms of awkwardness, of obscurity, of misproportion, and of double meaning, would do more to assist a writer in practice, laid under some necessity of hurry, than volumes of general disquisition. It makes us blush to add, that even grammar is so little of a perfect attainment amongst us, that with two or three exceptions, (one being Shakspeare, whom some affect to consider as belonging to a semi−barbarous age,) we have never seen the writer, through a circuit of prodigious reading, who has not sometimes violated the accidence or the syntax of English grammar.

Whatever becomes of our own possible speculations, we shall conclude with i1rsisting on the growing necessity of style as a practical interest of daily life. Upon subjects of public concern, and in proportion to that concern, there will always be a suitable (and as letters extend, a growing) competition. Other things being equal, or appearing to be equal, the determining principle for the public choice will lie in the style. Of a German book, otherwise entitled to respect, it was said *er lässt sich nicht lesen*, it does not permit itself to be read: such and so repulsive was the style. Among ourselves, this has long been true of newspapers: they do not suffer themselves to be read *in extenso*, and they are read short with what injury to the mind may be guessed. The same style of

reading, once largely practised, is applied universally. To this special evil an improvement of style would apply a special redress. The same improvement is otherwise clamorously called for by each man's interest of competition. Public luxury, which is gradually consulted by everything else, must at length be consulted in style.

## PART II.

It is a natural resource, that whatsoever we find it difficult to investigate as a result, we endeavor to follow as a growth; failing analytically to probe its nature, historically we seek relief to our perplexities by tracing its origin. Not able to assign the elements of its theory, we endeavor to detect them in the stages of its development. Thus, for instance, when any feudal institution (be it Gothic, Norman, or Anglo−Saxon) eludes our deciphering faculty, from the imperfect records of its use and operation, then we endeavor conjecturally to amend our knowledge, by watching the circumstances in which that institution arose; and from the necessities of the age, as indicated by facts which have survived, we are sometimes able to trace, through all their corresponding stages of growth, the natural succession of arrangements which such necessities would be likely to prescribe.

This mode of oblique research, where a more direct one is denied, we find to be the only one in our power. And, with respect to the liberal arts, it is even more true than with respect to laws or institutions; because remote ages, widely separated, differ much more in their pleasures than they can ever do in their social necessities. To make property safe and life sacred that is everywhere a primary purpose of law. But the intellectual amusements of men are so different, that the very purposes and elementary functions of these amusements are different. They point to different ends as well as different means. The drama, for instance, in Greece, connects itself with religion; in other ages, religion is the power most in resistance to the drama. Hence, and because the elder and ruder ages are most favorable to a ceremonial and mythological religion, we find the tragedy of Greece defunct before the literary age arose. Aristotle's era may be taken as the earliest era of refinement and literary development. But Aristotle wrote his *Essay on the Greek Tragedy* just a century after the *chefs d'œuvre* of that tragedy had been published.

If, therefore, it is sometimes requisite for the proper explanation even of a law or legal usage, that we should go to its history, not looking for a sufficient key to its meaning in the mere analogies of our own social necessities, much more will that be requisite in explaining an art or a mode of intellectual pleasure. Why it was that the ancients had no landscape painting, is a question deep almost as the mystery of life, and harder of solution than all the problems of jurisprudence combined. What causes moulded the tragedy of the ancients could hardly be guessed, if we did not happen to know its history and mythologic origin. And with respect to what is called *Style*, not so much as a sketch as an outline as a hint could be furnished towards the earliest speculations upon this subject, if we should overlook the historical facts connected with its earliest development.

What was it that first produced into this world that celebrated thing called *Prose*? It was the bar, it was the hustings, it was the *Bema* [*Greek here*]. What Gibbon and most historians of the Mussulmans have rather absurdly called the pulpit of the Caliphs, should rather be called the *rostrum*, the Roman military *suggestus*, or Athenian *bema*. The fierce and generally illiterate Mahometan harangued his troops; preach he could not; he had no subject for preaching[3]. Now this function of man, in almost all states of society, the function of public haranguing was for the Pagan man, who had no printing−press, more of a mere necessity, through every mode of public life, than it is for the modern man of Christian light: for as to the modern man of Mahometan twilight, his perfect bigotry denies him this characteristic resource of Christian energies. Just four centuries have we of the Cross propagated our light by this memorable invention; just four centuries have the slaves of the Crescent clung to their darkness by rejecting it. Christianity signs her name; Islamism makes her mark. And the great doctors of the Mussulmans, take their stand precisely where Jack Cade took *his* a few years after printing had been discovered. Jack and they both make it felony to be found with a spelling−book, and sorcery to deal with syntax.

Yet with these differences, all of us alike, Pagan, Mussulman, Christian, have practised the arts of public speaking

as the most indispensable resource of public administration and of private intrigue. Whether the purpose were to pursue the interests of legislation, or to conduct the business of jurisprudence, or to bring the merits of great citizens pathetically before their countrymen; or (if the state were democratic enough) oftentimes to explain the conduct of the executive government oftentimes, also, to prosecute a scheme of personal ambition; whether the audience were a mob, a senate, a judicial tribunal, or an army; equally (though not in equal degrees) for the Pagan of twenty−five hundred years back, and for us moderns, the arts of public speaking, and consequently of prose as opposed to metrical composition, have been the capital engine the one great intellectual machine of civil life.

This, to some people, may seem a matter of course; 'would you have men speak in rhyme?' We answer, that when society comes into a state of refinement, the total uses of language are developed in common with other arts; but originally, and whilst man was in his primitive condition of simplicity, it must have seemed an unnatural, nay an absurd, thing to speak in prose. For in those elder days, the sole justifying or exciting cases for a public harangue, would be cases connected with impassioned motives. Rare they would be, as they had need to be, where both the ‘hon. gentleman' who moves, and his 'hon. friend' who seconds, are required to speak in Trimeter Iambic. Hence the necessity that the oracles should be delivered in verse. Who ever heard of a prose oracle? And hence, as Grecian taste expanded, the disagreeable criticisms whispered about in Athens as to the coarse quality of the verses that proceeded from Delphi. It was like bad Latin from Oxford. Apollo himself, to turn out of his own temple, in the very age of Sophocles, such Birmingham hexameters as sometimes astonished Greece, was like our English court keeping a Stephen Duck, the thresher, for the national poet−laureate, at a time when Pope was fixing an era in the literature. Metre fell to a discount in such learned times. But, in itself, metre must always have been the earliest vehicle for public enunciations of truth among men, for these obvious reasons:¡. That, if metre rises above the standard of ordinary household life, so must any truth of importance and singularity enough to challenge a public utterance. 2. That, because religious communications will always have taken a metrical form, by a natural association of feeling, whatsoever is invested with a privileged character will seek something of a religious sanction, by assuming the same external shape; and 3. That expressions, or emphatic verbal forms, which are naturally courted for the sake of pointed effect, receive a justification from metre, as being already a departure from common usage to begin with, whereas, in plain prose, they would appear so many affectations. Metre is naturally and necessarily adopted in cases of impassioned themes, for the very obvious reason, that rhythmus is both a cause of impassioned feeling, an ally of such feeling, and a natural effect of it; but upon other subjects not impassioned, metre is also a subtle ally, because it serves to introduce, and to reconcile with our sense of propriety, various arts of condensation, of antithesis, and other rhetorical effects, which, without the metre (as a key for harmonizing them) would strike the feelings as unnatural, or as full of affectation. Interrogations, for example, passionate ejaculations, &c., seem no more than natural, when metre (acting as a key) has attuned and prepared the mind for such effects. The metre raises the tone of coloring, so as to introduce richer tints, without shocking or harshly jarring upon the presiding key, when without this semi−conscious pitching of the expectations, the sensibility would have been revolted. Hence, for the very earliest stages of society, it will be mere nature that prompts men to metre: it is a mode of inspiration it is a promise of something preternatural; and less than preternatural cannot be any possible emergency that should call for a public address. Only great truths could require a man to come forward as a spokesman: he is then a sort of interpreter between God and man, his creature.

At first, therefore, it is mere nature which prompts metre. Afterwards, as truth begins to enlarge itself as truth loses something of its sanctity by descending amongst human details that mode of exalting it, and of courting attention, is dictated by artifice, which originally was a mere necessity of nature raised above herself. For these reasons, it is certain that men, challenging high authentic character, will continue to speak by metre for many generations after it has ceased to be a mere voice of habitual impulse. Whatsoever claims an oracular authority, will take the ordinary external form of an oracle. And after it has ceased to be a badge of inspiration, metre will be retained as a badge of professional distinction; Pythagoras, for instance, within five centuries of Christ, Thales or Theognis, will adopt metre out of a secondary prudence; Orpheus and the elder Sibyl, out of an original necessity. &

Those people are, therefore, mistaken who imagine that prose is either a natural or a possible form of composition in early states of society. It is such truth only as ascends from the earth, not such as descends from heaven, which can ever assume an unmetrical form. Now, in the earliest states of society, all truth that has any interest or importance for man will connect itself with heaven. If it does not originally come forward in that sacred character, if it does not borrow its importance from its sanctity; then, by an inverse order, it will borrow a sanctity from its importance. Even agricultural truth, even the homeliest truths of rural industry, brought into connection with religious inspiration, will be exalted (like the common culinary utensils in the great vision of the Jewish prophet) and transfigured into vessels of glorious consecration. All things in this early stage of social man are meant mysteriously, have allegoric values; and week−day man moves amongst glorified objects. So that if any doctrine, principle, or system of truth, should call for communication at all, infallibly the communication will take the tone of a revelation; and the holiness of a revelation will express itself in the most impassioned form perhaps with accompaniments of music, but certainly with metre.

Prose, therefore, strange as it may seem to say so, was something of a discovery. If not great invention, at least great courage would be required for the man who should first swim without the bladders of metre. It is all very easy talking, when you and your ancestors, for fifty generations back, have talked prose. But that man must have had *triplex ces* about his *praecordia,* who first dared to come forward with pure prose to a people who had never heard anything but metre. It was like the case of the first physician who dared to lay aside the ample wig and gold−headed cane. All the Jovian terrors of his professional being laid aside, he was thrown upon his mere natural resources of skill and good sense. Who was the first lion−hearted man that ventured to make sail in this frail boat of prose? We believe the man's name is reputed to have been Pherecydes. But as nothing is less worth remembering than the mere hollow shell of a name, where all the pulp and the kernel is gone, we shall presume Herodotus to have been the first respectable artist in prose. And, what was this worthy man's view of prose? From the way in which he connected his several books or 'fyttes' with the names of the muses, and from the romantic style of his narratives, as well as from his using a dialect which had certainly become a poetic dialect, in literary Greece, it is pretty clear that Herodotus stood, and meant to stand, on that isthmus between the regions of poetry and blank unimpassioned prose, which in modern literature is occupied by such works as *Mort d'Arthur*. In Thucydides, we see the first exhibition of stern philosophic prose. And, considering the very brief interval between the two writers, who stand related to each other, in point of time, pretty much as Dryden and Pope, it is quite impossible to look for the solution of their characteristic differences in the mere graduations of social development. Pericles, as a young man, would most certainly ask Herodotus to dinner, if business or curiosity ever drew that amiable writer to Athens. As an elderly man, Pericles must often have seen Thucydides at his levees; although by that time the sacrifice of his 'social pleasure ill exchanged for power,' may have abridged his opportunity of giving 'feeds' to literary men. But will anybody believe that the mere advance of social refinement, within the narrow period of one man's public life, could bring about so marvellous a change, as that the friend of his youth should natu. rally write very much in the spirit of Sir John Mandeville, and the friend of his old age, like Machiavel or Gibbon? No, no; the difference between these two writers does not reflect the different aspects of literary Greece at two eras so slightly removed, too great to be measured by that scale; as though those of the picturesque Herodotus were a splendid semibarbarous generation, those of the meditative Thucydides, speculative, political, experimental, but we must look to subjective differences of taste and temperament in the men. The men, by nature, and by powerful determination of original sensibility, belong to different orders of intellect. Herodotus was the Froissart of antiquity. He was the man that should have lived to record the Crusades. Thucydides, on the other hand, was obviously the Tacitus of Greece, who (had he been privileged to benefit by some metempsychosis dropping him into congenial scenes of modern history) would have made his election for the wars of the French League, or for our Parliamentary war, or for the colossal conflicts which grew out of the French Revolution. The one was the son of nature, fascinated by the mighty powers of chance or of tragic destiny, as they are seen in elder times moulding the form of empires, or training the currents of revolutions. The other was the son of political speculation, delighting to trace the darker agencies which brood in the mind of man the subtle motives, the combinations, the plots which gather in the brain of dark viziers, when entrusted with the fate of millions, and the nation−wielding tempests which move at the bidding of the orator.

But these subjective differences were not all; they led to objective differences, by determining each writer's mind to a separate object. Does any man fancy that these two writers imagined, each for himself, the same audience? Or again, that each represented his own audience as addressed from the same station? The earlier of the two, full of those qualities which fit a man for producing an effect as an artist, manifestly comes forward in a theatrical character, and addresses his audience from a theatrical station. Is it readers whom he courts? No, but auditors. Is it the literary body whom he addresses a small body everywhere? No, but the public without limitation. Public! but what public? Not the public of Lacedaemon, drunk with the gloomy insolence of self−conceit not the public of Athens, amiably vain, courteous, affable, refined: No, it is the public of universal Hellas, an august congress representing the total civilization of the earth: so that of any man not known at Olympia, prince, emperor, whatever he might call himself, if he were not present in person or by proxy, you might warrantably affirm that he was *homo ignorabilis* a person of whose existence nobody was bound to take notice; a man to be ignored by a grand jury. This representative *champ de Mai* Herodotus addressed. And in what character did he address it? What character did he ascribe to the audience? What character did he assume to himself? Them he addressed sometimes in their general character of human beings; but still having a common interest in a central net−work of civilization, investing a certain ring−fence, beginning in Sicily and Carthage, whence it ran round through Lybia, Egypt, Syria, Persia, the Ionian belt or zone, and terminating in the majestic region of *Men* the home of liberty the Pharos of truth and intellectual power the very region in which they were all at that moment assembled. There was such a collective body dimly recognised at times by the ancients, as corresponds to our modern Christendom, and having some unity of possible interest by comparison with the unknown regions of Scythias, Indias, and Ethiopias, lying in a far wider circle beyond; regions that, from their very obscurity, and from the utter darkness of their exterior relations, must at times have been looked to with eyes of anxiety as permanently harboring that possible deluge of savage eruption which, about one hundred and fifty years after, did actually swallow up the Grecian colony of Bactria, (or Bokhara,) as founded by Alexander; swallowed it so suddenly and so effectually, that merely the blank fact of its tragical catastrophe has reached posterity. It was surprised probably in one night, like Pompeii by Vesuvius; or, like the planet itself by Noah's flood. Or more nearly its fate resembled those starry bodies which have been seen, traced, recorded, fixed in longitude and latitude for generations; and then suddenly are observed to be missing by some of our wandering telescopes that keep watch and ward over the starry heavens. The agonies of a perishing world have been going on; but all is bright and silent in the heavenly host. Infinite space has swallowed up the infinite agonies. Perhaps the only record of Bactria was the sullen report of some courier from Susa, who would come back with his letters undelivered; simply reporting that on reaching such a ferry on some nameless river, or such an outpost upon a heath, he found it in possession of a fierce unknown race the ancestors of future Afghans or Tartars.

Such a catastrophe, as menacing by possibility the whole of civilization, and under that hypothetical peril as giving even to Greece herself an interest in the stability even of Persia her great enemy, a great resisting mass interjacent between Greece and the unknown enemies to the far north−east or east, could not but have mixed occasionally with Greek anticipations for the future; and in a degree quite inappreciable by us who know the geographical limits of Asia. To the ancients, these were by possibility, in a strict sense, infinite. The terror from the unknown Scythians of the world was certainly vague and indistinct; but, if that disarmed the terror or broke its sting, assuredly the very same cause would keep it alive: for the peril would often swell upon the eye, merely from its uncertain limits. Far oftener, however, those glorious certainties revolved upon the Grecian imagination which presented Persia in the character of her enemy, than those remote possibilities which might connect her as a common friend against some horrid enemy from the infinite deserts of Asia. In this character it was that Herodotus at times addressed the assembled Greece, at whose bar he stood. That the intensity of this patriotic idea intermitted at times; that it was suffered to slumber through entire books; this was but an artist's management which caused it to swell upon the ear all the more sonorously, more clamorously, more terrifically, when the lungs of the organ filled once more with breath, when the trumpet stop was opened, and the '*foudroyant*' style of the organist commenced the hailstone chorus from Marathon. Here came out the character in which Herodotus appeared. The *Iliad* had taken Greece as she was during the building of the first temple at Jerusalem in the era of David and Solomon a thousand years before Christ. The eagle's plume in her cap at that era was derived from Asia. It was the Troad, it was Asia that in those days constituted the great enemy of Greece. Greece universal had

been confederated against the Asia of that day, and, after an Iliad of woes, had triumphed. But now another era of five hundred years has passed since Troy. Again there has been an universal war raging between Greece and a great foreign potentate. Again this enemy of Greece is called Asia. But what Asia? The Asia of the Iliad was a petty maritime Asia. But Asia now means Persia; and Persia, taken in combination with its dependencies of Syria and Egypt, means the world, a [*Greek here*]. The frontier line of the Persian empire 'marched' or confined with the Grecian; but now so vast was the revolution effected by Cyrus, that, had not the Persians been withheld by their dismal bigotry from cultivating maritime facilities, the Greeks must have sunk under the enormous power now brought to bear upon them. At one blow the whole territory of what is now Turkey in Asia, viz. the whole of Anatolia and of Armenia, had been extinguished as a neutral and interjacent force for Greece. At one blow, by the battle of Thymbra, the Persian armies had been brought nearer by much more than a thousand miles to the gates of Greece.

That danger it is necessary to conceive, in order to to conceive that subsequent triumph. Herodotus −whose family and nearest generation of predecessors must have trembled after the thoughtless insult offered to Sardis, under the expectation of the vast revenge prepared by the great king must have had his young imagination filled and dilated with the enormous display of Oriental power, and been thus prepared to understand the terrific collisions of the Persian forces with those of Greece. He had heard in his travels how the glorious result was appreciated in foreign lands. He came back to Greece with a twofold freight of treasures. He had two messages for his country. One was a report of all that was wonderful in foreign lands; all that was interesting from its novelty or its vast antiquity; all that was regarded by the natives for its sanctity, or by foreigners with amazement, as a measure of colossal power in mechanics. And these foreign lands, we must remember, constituted the total world to a Greek. Rome was yet in her infant days, unheard of beyond Italy. Egypt and the other dependencies of Persia composed the total map south of Greece. Greece, with the Mediterranean islands, and the eastern side of the Adriatic, together with Macedon and Thrace, made up the world of Europe. Asia, which had not yet received the narrow limitation imposed upon that word by Rome, was co−extensive with Persia; and it might be divided into Asia *cis*−Tigritana, and Asia *trans* −Tigritana; the Euxine and the Caspian were the boundaries to the north; and to one advancing further, the Oxus was the northern boundary, and the Indus the eastern. The Punjab, as far as the river Sutlege, that is, up to our present British cantonments at Ludiana, was indistinctly supposed to be within the jurisdiction of the Great King. Probably he held the whole intervening territory of the late Runjeet Singh, as now possessed by the Sikhs. And beyond these limits all was a mere path of ideal splendor, or a dull repetition of monotonous barbarism.

The report which personal travels enabled Herodotus to make of this extensive region, composing neither more nor less than the total map of the terraqueous globe as it was then supposed to exist, (all the rest being a mere Nova Zembla in their eyes,) was one of two revelations which the great traveller had to lay at the feet of Greece. The other was a connected narrative of their great struggle with the King of Persia. The earth bisected itself into two parts  Persia and Greece. All that was not Persia was Greece: all that was not Greece was Persia. The Greek traveller was prepared to describe the one section to the other section; and having done this, to relate in a connected shape the recent tremendous struggle of the one section with the other. Here was Captain Cook fresh from his triple circumnavigation of the world: here was Mungo Park fresh from the Niger and Timbuctoo: here was Bruce, fresh from the coy fountains of the Nile: here was Phipps, Franklin, Parry, from the Arctic circle: here was Leo Africanus from Moorish palaces: here was Mandeville from Prester John, from the Chain of Tartary, and from the golden cities of Hindostan; from Agra and Lahore of the Great Mogul. This was one side of the medal; and on the other was the patriotic historian who recorded what all had heard by fractions, but none in the whole series. Now, if we consider how rare was either character in ancient times, how difficult it was to travel where no license made it safe, where no preparations in roads, inns, carriages, made it convenient; that even five centuries in advance of this era, little knowledge was generally circulated of any region, unless so far as it. had been traversed by the Roman legions; considering the vast credulity of the audience assembled a gulf capable of swallowing mountains; and, on the other hand, that here was a man fresh from the Pyramids and the Nile, from Tyre, from Babylon, and the temple of Belus a traveller who had gone in with his sickle to a harvest yet untouched that this same man, considered as an historian, spoke of a struggle with which the earth was still

agitated; that the people who had triumphed so memorably in this war, happened to be the same people who were then listening; that the leaders in this glorious war, whose names had already passed into spiritual powers, were the fathers of the present audience; combining into one picture all these circumstances one must admit that no such meeting between giddy expectation, and the very excess of power to meet its most clamorous calls, is likely to have occurred before or since upon this earth. Hither had assembled people from the most inland and most illiterate parts of Greece; people that would have settled a pension for life upon any man who would have described to them so much as a crocodile or *ichneumon*. To these people, the year of his public recitation would be the meridian year of their lives. He saw that the whole scene would become almost a dramatic work of art; in the mere gratification of their curiosity, the audience might be passive and neutral; in the history of the war, they became almost actors, as in a dramatic scene. This scenical position could not escape the traveller−historian. His work was recited with the exaggeration that belongs to scenic art. It was read probably with gesticulations by one of those thundering voices, which Aristophanes calls a 'damnable' voice, from its ear−piercing violence.

Prose

is a thing so well known to all of us, most of our 'little accounts' from shoemakers, dress−makers, &c. being made out in prose  most of our sorrows and of our joys having been communicated to us through prose, and very few indeed through metre, (unless on St. Valentine's day,) that its further history, after leaving its original Olympic cradle, must be interesting to everybody. Who were they that next took up the literary use of Prose? Confining our notice to people of celebrity, we may say that the House of Socrates (*Domus Socratica* is the expression of Horace), were those who next attempted to popularize Greek prose; viz. the old gentleman himself, the founder of the concern, and his two apprentices, Plato and Xenophon. We acknowledge a sneaking hatred towards the whole household, founded chiefly on the intense feeling we entertain that all three were humbugs. We own the stony impeachment. Aristotle, who may be looked upon as literary grandson to Socrates, is quite a different person. But for the rest we cherish a sentimental (may we call it a Platonic?) disgust. As relates to the style, however, in which they have communicated their philosophy, one feature of peculiarity is too remarkable to pass without comment. Some years ago, in one of our four or five *Quarterly Reviews*, (*Theological* it was, *Foreign* , or else *Westminster*,) a critical opinion was delivered with respect to a work of Coleridge's, which opens a glimpse into the true philosophy of prose composition. It was not a very good−natured opinion in that situation, since it was no more true of Coleridge than it is of every other man who adopts the same aphoristic form of expression for his thoughts; but it was eminently just. Speaking of Coleridge's 'Aphorisms,' the reviewer observed that this detached and insulated form of delivering thoughts was, in effect, an evasion of all the difficulties connected with composition. Every man, as he walks through the streets, may contrive to jot down an independent thought; a short−hand memorandum of a great truth. So far as that purpose is concerned, even in tumultuous London,

> 'Purae sunt platere, nihil ut meditantibus obstet
>
> .'

Standing on one leg you may accomplish this. The labor of composition begins when you have to put your separate threads of thought into a loom; to weave them into a continuous whole; to connect, to introduce them; to blow them out or expand them; to carry them to a close. All this evil is evaded by the aphoristic form. This one remark, we repeat, lifts up a corner of that curtain which hangs over the difficult subjects of style and composition. Indicating what is not in one form, it points to what is in others. It was an original remark, we doubt not, to the reviewer. But it is too weighty and just to have escaped meditative men in former times; and accordingly the very same remark will be found one hundred and fifty years ago expanded in the *Huetiana*.

But what relation has this remark to the House of Socrates? Did *they* write by aphorisms? No, certainly; but they did what labors with the same radical defect, considered in relation to the true difficulties of composition. Let us dedicate a paragraph to these great dons of literature. If we have any merely English scholars amongst our readers, it may be requisite first to inform them that Socrates himself wrote nothing. He was too much occupied

with his talking *'ambitiosa loquela*.' In this respect, Socrates differed, as in some others that we could mention, from the late Mr. Coleridge who found time both for talking and for writing at the least ten volumes octavo. From the pupils of Socrates it is that we collect his pretended philosophy; and as there were only two of these pupils who published, and as one of them intensely contradicts the other, it would be found a hard matter at. *Nisi Prius* to extract any verdict as to what it was that constituted the true staple of the Socratic philosophy. We fear that any jury, who undertook that question, would finally be carted to the bounds of the county, and shot into the adjacent county like a ton of coals. For Xenophon uniformly introduces the worthy hen−pecked philosopher as prattling innocent nothings, more limpid than small beer; whilst Plato never lets him condescend to any theme below those of Hermes Trismegistus, or Thomas Aquinas. One or other must be a liar. And the manner of the philosopher, under these two Boswellian reporters, is not less different than his matter: with Xenophon, he reminds us much of an elderly hen, superannuated a little, performing 'the hen's march,' and clucking vociferously; with Plato, he seems much like a deep−mouthed hound in a chase after some unknown but perilous game; much as such a hound is described by Wordsworth ranging over the airial heights of Mount Righi, his voice at times muffled by mighty forests, and then again swelling as he emerges upon the Alpine breezes; whilst the vast intervals between the local points from which the intermitting voice ascends, proclaim the storm−like pace at which he travels. In Plato, there is a gloomy grandeur at times from the elementary mysteries of man's situation and origin, snatches of music from some older and Orphic philosophy, which impress a vague feeling of solemnity towards the patriarch of the school, though you can seldom trace his movement through all this high and vapory region; you would be happy, therefore, to believe that there had been one word of truth in ascribing such colloquies to Socrates; but how can that be, when you recollect the philosophic vappa of Xenophon, seems to pass the deciphering power of Œdipus.

Now, this body of inexplicable discord between the two evangelists of Socrates, as to the whole sources from which he drew his philosophy, as to the very wells from which he raised it, and the mode of mediating the draught, makes it the more worthy of remark that both should have obstinately adopted the same disagreeable form of composition. Both exhibit the whole of their separate speculations under the form of dialogue. lt is always Socrates and Crito, or Socrates and Phaedrus, or Socrates and Ischomachus; in fact, Socrates and some man of straw or good−humored nine−pin set up to be bowled down as a matter of course. How inevitably the reader feels his fingers itching, to take up the cudgels instead of Crito for one ten minutes! Had we been favored with an interview, we can answer for it that the philosopher should not have had it all his own way: there should have been a 'scratch' at least between us; and instead of waiting to see Crito punished without delivering one blow that would 'have made a dent in a pound of butter,' posterity should have formed a ring about us, crying out ' Pull baker, pull devil' according as the accidents of the struggle went this way or that. If dialogue must be the form, at least it should not have been collusive dialogue.. Whereas, with Crito and the rest of the men who were in training for the part of disputants, it was a matter of notoriety that, if they presumed to put in a sly thrust under the ribs of the philosopher, those about Socrates, [*Greek here*], would kick them into the kennel. It was a permanent 'cross' that was fought throughout life between Socrates and his obsequious antagonists.

As Plato and Xenophon must have hated each other with a theological hatred, it is a clear case that they would not have harmonized in anything if they had supposed it open to evasion. They would have got another atmosphere had it been possible. Diverging from each other in all points beside, beyond doubt they would have diverged as to this form of dialogue, had they not conceived that it was essential to the business of philosophy. It is plain from this one fact, how narrow was the range of conception which the Socratic school applied to the possible modes of dealing with polemic truth. They represented the case thus: Truth, they fancied, offered itself by separate units, by moments, (to borrow a word from dynamics,) by what Cicero calls *'apices rerum'* and *'punctiunculme*.' Each of these must be separately examined. It was like the *items* in a disputed account. There must be an auditor to check and revise each severally for itself. This process of auditing could only be carried on through a brisk dialogue. The philosopher in monologue was like a champion at a tournament with nobody to face him. He was a chess−player with no opponent. The game could not proceed. But how mean and limited a conception this was, which lay as a basis for the whole Socratic philosophy, becomes apparent to any man who considers any ample body of truth, whether polemic truth−or not, in all its proportions. Take Warburton's *Divine Legation of Moses*;

and imagine a Socratic man dealing with that. How does Warburton establish that Moses held such a legation? Hle lays down a syllogism, the *major* of which asserts a general law with regard to false or unsound religions, viz. that no such religion could sustain itself, or rear itself, to any height or duration without the aid of a particular doctrine, viz. the doctrine of a resurrection. This is the *major*; then for his *minor*. Warburton maintains, that the Mosaic religion *did* sustain itself without that doctrine. Whence the conclusion follows formally that, having accomplished what was hopeless for a merely human invention, the Mosaic dispensation could not have been such a human invention; that it enjoyed a secret support from God; and that Moses was truly what he represented himself God's ambassador. Consider how little the Platonic and Xenophontic mode of philosophizing would apply to this case. You may see fit to deny the entire major proposition of the bishop, and yet you may find it impossible to quarrel with the separate arguments, with each of them or with all of them, on which the major is built. All may be unexceptionable; and yet, when the record is closed, you may see cause to say, 'Bishop, your materials are good; but they are not strong enough to support the weighty column which you have built upon them.' But, this is an objection which cannot be made until you have heard him to the end. You must suspend; whereas the Socratic man never *does* suspend. A man who brings an alphabet of reasons, which are professedly to avail cumulatively in proof of his thesis, will not consider himself answered because you object to P or Q amongst his arguments. 'My proofs are separate and independent,' he replies;' it is my glory that I can afford to give you a pawn or so, and yet win the game.' Another mode of proceeding against the bishop would be this: − You might concede his major, and utterly deny, as many men *have* denied, his minor. But whether you see cause to go against the upper or lower proposition; against the rule, or against the subsumption under the rule; equally you find that the Socratic mode of process is quite unavailing, or availing only by accident. And even this is not by any means the worst case supposable. Here, by the supposition, you have a long train of arguments, which may be valid as a cumulus, notwithstanding that, Socratically, you might find this or that in particular to be a hollow nut. And again, such a train may be supposed, to which, Socratically, you force an assent *seriatim and articulatim* ; all the items, what the Romans called the *nomina* in a creditor's account, are unimpeachable; and yet, as a whole, as the 'tottle of a whole,' you protest against them as insufficient for the *probandum*. They are good; but not good for so much. They are available, and for the length of a mile, suppose; but they do not reach the three miles of the object in question. In the first case, Socrates negatives some of the parts, and yet he cannot negative the result. He is partially victorious, and yet is beaten as to the whole. In the second case, Socrates affirms all the parts, and yet cannot affirm the result. He is universally victorious in the detail, and yet is beaten upon the whole question. Yet, in all this, we repeat the Socratic weakness is not adequately exposed. There is a far larger and subtler class of cases where the arguments for and against are not susceptible of this separate valuation. One is valid only through and by a second, which second again is involved in a third; and so on. Thus by way of a brief instance, take all the systems of political economy which have grown up since Turgot and Quesnel. They are all polemic that, is, all have moulded themselves in hostility to some other ideas all had their birth in opposition. But it would be impossible to proceed Socratically with any one of them. If you should attempt to examine Ricardo sentence by sentence, or even chapter by chapter, his apologist would loudly resist such a process as inapplicable. You must hold on  you must keep fast hold of certain principles until you have time to catch hold of certain others seven or eight, suppose; and then from the whole taken in continuation, but not from any one as an insulated principle, you come into a power of adjudicating upon the pretensions of the whole theory. The doctrine of value, for example could you understand that taken apart? could you value it apart? As a Socratic logician, could you say of it either *affirmatur* or *negatur* , until you see it coming round and revolving in the doctrines of rent, profits, machinery, &c., which are so many functions of value; and which doctrines first react with a weight of verification upon the other?

These, unless parried, are knock−down blows to the Socratic, and therefore to the Platonic philosophy, if treated as a *modus philosophandi*; and if that philosophy is treated as a body of doctrines apart from any modus or *ratio docendi*, we should be glad to hear what they are. For we never could find any either in Plato or Xenophon, which are insisted on as essential. Accidental hints and casual suggestions cannot be viewed as doctrines in that sense which is necessary to establish a separate school. And all the German Tiedemanns and Tennemanns, the tedious men and the tenpenny−men, that have written their twelve or their eighteen volumes *viritim* upon Plato, will find it hard to satisfy their readers unless they make head against these little objections; because these objections seem

to impeach the very *method* of the 'Socraticae Chartae,' and except as the authors or illustrators of a method, the Socratici are no school at all.

But are not we travelling a little out of our proper field, in attacking this method? Our business was with this method considered as a *form of style*, not considered as a *form of logic*. True, O rigorous reader. Yet digressions and moderate excursions have a license. Besides which, on strict consideration, doubts arise whether we *have* been digressing. For whatsoever acted as a power on Greek prose, through many ages, whatsoever gave it a bias towards any one characteristic excess, becomes important in virtue of its relations to our subject. Now, the form of dialogue so obstinately maintained by the earliest philosophers, who used prose as the vehicle of their teaching, had the unhappy effect of impressing from the earliest era of Attic literature a colloquial taint upon the prose literature of that country. The great authority of Socrates, maintained for ages by all sorts of fables, naturally did much to strengthen this original twist in the prose style. About fifty years after the death of Socrates, the writings of Aristotle were beginning to occupy the attention of Greece; and in them we see as resolute a departure from the dialogue form as in his elders of the same house the adherence to that form had been servile and bigoted. His style, though arid from causes that will hereafter be noticed, was much more dignified, or at least more grave and suitable to philosophic speculation than that of any man before him. Contemporary with the early life of Socrates was a truly great man, Anaxagoras, the friend and reputed preceptor of Pericles. It is probable he may have written in the style of Aristotle. Having great systematic truths to teach, such as solved existing phenomena, and not such as raised fresh phenomena for future solution, he would naturally adopt the form of continuous exposition. Nor do we at this moment remember a case of any very great man who had any real and novel truth to communicate, having adopted the form of dialogue, excepting only the case of Galileo. Plato, indeed, like Galileo, demanded geometry as a qualification in his students that is, in those who paid him a [tSax.zToov] or fee for the privilege of personally attending his conversations: but he demanded no such qualification in his readers; or else we can assure him that very few copies of his *Opera Omnia* would have been sold in Athens. This low qualification it was for the readers of Plato, and still more for those of Xenophon, which operated to diffuse the reputation of Socrates. Besides, it was a rare thing in Greece to see two men sounding the trumpet on behalf of a third. And we hope it is not ungenerous to suspect, that each dallied with the same purpose as our Chatterton and Macpherson, viz. to turn round on the public when once committed and compromised by some unequivocal applause, saying, 'Gentlemen of Athens, this idol Socrates is a phantom of my brain: as respects the philosophy ascribed to him, I am Socrates.'

But in what mode does the conversational taint, which we trace to the writings of the Socratici, enforced by the imaginary martyrdom of Socrates, express itself? In what forms of language? By what peculiarities? By what defects of style? We will endeavor to explain. One of the Scaligers (if we remember it was the elder,) speaking of the Greek article [C, −, To,] called it *loquacissimae gentis flabellum*. Now, *pace superbissimi viri,* this seems nonsense; because the use of the article was not capricious, but grounded in the very structure and necessities of the Greek language. Garrulous or not, the poor men were obliged by the philosophy of their tongue to use the article in certain situations. And, to say the truth, these situations were very much the same as in English. Allowing for a few cases of proper names, participles, or adjectives postponed to their substantives, &c., the two general functions of the article were,¡, to individualize, as, e. g. 'It is not any sword that will do, I will have *the* sword of my father;' and 2, the very opposite function, viz. to generalize in the highest degree a use which our best English grammars wholly overlook as e. g.' Let the sword give way to the gown;' not that particular sword, but every sword, where each is used as a representative symbol of the corresponding professions. '*The* peasant presses on the kibes *of the* courtier,' where the class is indicated by the individual. In speaking again of diseases, and the organs affected, we usually accomplish this generalization by means of the definite article. We say, 'He suffered from a headache;' but also we say, 'from *the* headache;' and invariably we say, 'He died of *the* stone,' &c. And though we fancy it a peculiarity of the French language to say, *'* Le *cœur lui étoit navré de douleur,*' yet we ourselves say,' The heart was affected in his case.' In all these uses of the definite article, there is little real difference between the Greek language and our own. The main difference is in the negative use in the meaning implied by the absence of the article, which, with the Greeks, expresses our article a, but with us is a form of generalization. In all this there was nothing left free to the choice. And Scaliger had no right to find any

illustration of Greek levity in what was unavoidable.

But what *we* tax as undignified in the Greek prose style, as a badge of garrulity, as a taint from which the Greek prose never cleansed itself, are all those forms of lively colloquialism, with the fretfulness, and hurry, and demonstrative energy of people unduly excited by bodily presence and by ocular appeals to their sensibility. Such a style is picturesque no doubt; so is the Scottish dialect of low life as first employed in novels by Sir Walter Scott: that dialect greatly assisted the characteristic expression: it furnished the benefit of a Doric dialect; but what man in his senses would employ it in a grave work, and speaking in his own person? Now, the colloquial expletives, so profusely employed by Plato, his [*Greek here*], his [*Greek here*], &c., the forms of his sentences, the forms of his transitions, and other intense peculiarities of the chattering man, as opposed to the meditating man, have crept over the face of Greek literature; and though some people think every thing holy which is printed in Greek characters, we must be allowed to rank these forms of expression as mere vulgarities. Sometimes, in Westmoreland, if you chance to meet an ancient father of his valley, one who is thoroughly vernacular in his talk, being unsinged by the modern furnace of revolution, you may have a fancy for asking him how far it is to the next town. In which case, you will receive for answer pretty nearly the following words: 'Why like, it's gaily nigh like, to four mile like.' Now, if the pruriency of your curiosity should carry you to torment and vex this aged man, by pressing a special investigation into this word *like*, the only result is likely to be that you will kill *him*, and do yourself no good. Call it an expletive, indeed! a filling up! Why, to him it is the only indispensable part of the sentence; the sole fixture. It is the balustrade which enables him to descend the stairs of conversation, without falling overboard; and if the word were proscribed by Parliament, he would have no resource but in everlasting silence. Now, the expletives of Plato are as gross, and must have been, to the Athenian, as unintelligible as those of the Westmoreland peasant. It is true the value, the effect to the feelings, was secured by daily use, and by the position in the sentence. But so it is to the English peasant. *Like* in his use is a modifying, a restraining particle, which forbids you to understand any thing in a dangerous, unconditional, sense. But then, again, the Greek particle of transition, that eternal [*Greek here*], and the introductory formula of.[*Greek here*] and [*Greek here*], however earnestly people may fight for them, because in fact Greek, is now past mending. The [*Greek here*] is strictly equivalent to the *whereby* of a sailor; 'whereby I went to London; whereby I was robbed; whereby I found the man that robbed me.' All relations, all modes of succession or transition are indicated by one and the same particle. This could arise, even as a license, only in the laxity of conversation. But the most offensive indication of the conversational spirit, as *presiding* in Greek prose, is to be found in the morbid energy of oaths scattered over the face of every prose composition which aims at rhetorical effect. The literature is deformed with a constant roulade of 'by Jove,' 'by Minerva,' &c., as much as the conversation of high−bred Englishmen in the reign of Charles II. In both cases, this habit belonged to a state of transition; and if the prose literature of Greece had been cultivated by a succession of authors as extended as that of England, it would certainly have outworn this badge of spurious energy. That it did not, is a proof that the Greek literature did not reach the consummation of art.

## PART III.

Reader, you are beginning to suspect us. 'How long do we purpose to detain people?' For anything that appears, we may be designing to write on to the twentieth century; for twice thirty years. 'And *whither* are we going?' Towards what object? which is as urgent a quaere as *how far*. Perhaps we may be leading you into treason; or (which indeed is pretty much the same thing) we may be paving the way to 'Repeal.' You feel symptoms of doubt and restiveness; and, like Hamlet with his father's ghost, you will follow us no further unless we explain what it is that we are in quest of.

Our course, then, for the rest of our progress, the outline of our method, will pursue the following objects. We shall detain you a little longer on the Grecian prose literature; and we shall pursue that literature within the gates of Latium. What was the Grecian idea of *style*, what the Roman, will appear as a deduction from this review. With respect to the Greeks, we shall endeavor to show that they had not arrived at a full expanded consciousness of the separate idea expressed by *style*; and, in order to account for this failure, we shall point out the deflexion the

bias which was impressed upon the Greek speculations in this particular, by the tendency of their civil life. *That* was made important in the eyes of the speculative critic, which was indispensable for the actual practitioner; *that* was indispensable for the actual practitioner, which was exacted by the course of public ambition. The political aspirant, who needed a command of fluent eloquence, sought for so much knowledge (and no more) as promised to be available in his own particular mode of competition. The speculative critic, or professional master of rhetoric, offered just so much information (and no more) as was likely to be sought by his clients. Each alike cultivated no more than experience showed him would be demanded. But in Rome, and for a reason, perhaps, which will appear worth pausing upon, a subtler conception of style was formed; though still far from being perfectly developed. The Romans, whether worse orators or not than the Grecians, were certainly better rhetoricians. And Cicero, the mighty master of language for the Pagan world, whom we shall summon as our witness, will satisfy us that, in this research at least, the Roman intellect was more searching, and pressed nearer to the undiscovered truth than the Grecian.

From a particular passage in the *De Oratore*, which will be cited for the general purpose here indicated of proving a closer approximation on the part of Roman thinkers, than had previously been made to the very heart of this difficult subject, we shall take occasion to make a still nearer approach for ourselves. We shall endeavor to bring up our reader to the fence, and persuade him, if possible, to take the leap which still remains to be taken in this field of Style. But as we have reason to fear that he will 'refuse' it, we shall wheel him round and bring him up to it from another quarter. A gentle touch of the spur may then, perhaps, carry him over. Let not the reader take it to heart that we here represent him under the figure of a horse, and ourselves, in a nobler character, as riding him, and that we even take the liberty of proposing to spur him. Anything may be borne in metaphor. Figuratively, one may kick a man without offence. There are no limits to allegoric patience. But no matter, who takes the leap, or how, a leap there is, which must be taken in the course of these speculations on Style, before the ground will be open for absolute advance. Every man who has studied and meditated the difficulties of style, must have had a sub−conscious sense of a bar in his way, at a particular point of the road, thwarting his free movement: he could not have evaded such a sense but by benefit of extreme shallowness. That bar, which we shall indicate, must be cleared away, thrown down, or surmounted. And then the prospect will lie open to a new map, and a perfect map, of the whole region. It will then become possible for the first time to overlook the whole geography of the adjacencies. An entire theory of the difficulties being before the student, it will, at length, be possible to aid his efforts by ample practical suggestions. Of these we shall ourselves offer the very plainest, viz. those which apply to the mechanology of style. For these there will be an easy opening: they will not go beyond the reasonable limits disposable for a single subject in a literary journal. As to the rest, which would (Germanly speaking) require a 'strong' octavo for their full exposition, we shall hold ourselves to have done enough in fulfilling the large promise we have made the promise of marking out for subsequent cultivation and development all the possible subdivisions and sections amongst the resources of the rhetorician; all the powers which he can employ, and therefore all the difficulties which he needs to study; the arts by which he can profit, and, in correspondence with them, the obstacles by which he will be resisted. Were this done, we should no longer see those incoherent sketches which are now circulating in the world upon questions of taste, of science, of practical address, as applied to the management of style and rhetoric: the public ear would no longer be occupied by feeble Frenchmen Rollin, Rapin, Batteux, Bonhours, Du Bos, and *id genus omne*; nor by the elegant but desultory Blair; nor by scores of others who bring an occasional acuteness or casual information to this or that subsection of their duty, whilst (taken as general guides) they are universally insufficient No; but the business of rhetoric, the management of our mother−tongue in all offices to which it can be applied, would become as much a matter of systematic art, as regular a subject for training and mechanic discipline, as the science of discrete quantity in Arithmetic, or of continuous quantity in Geometry. But will not *that* be likely to impress a character of mechanic monotony upon style, like the miserable attempts at reforming handwriting? Look at them; touch them; or, if you are afraid of soiling your fingers, hold them up with the tongs; they reduce all characteristic varieties of writing to one form of blank identity, and *that* the very vilest form of scribbling which exists in Europe, viz. to the wooden scratch (as if traced with a skewer) universally prevailing amongst French people. Vainly would Aldorisius apply his famous art, (viz. the art of deciphering a man's character from handwriting,) to the villanous scrawls which issue from this modern laboratory of pseudo−calligraphy. All pupils under *these* systems write alike: the

predestined thief is confounded with the patriot or martyr; the innocent young girl with the old hag that watches country wagons for victims. In the same indistinguishable character, so far as this reforming process is concerned, would Joseph Hume sign a motion for retrenching three half−crowns per annum from the orphan daughter of a man who had died in battle; and Queen Adelaide write a subscription towards a fresh church for carrying on war, from generation to generation, upon sin and misery.

Now, if a mechanic system of training for Style would have the same levelling effects as these false calligraphies, better by far that we should retain our old ignorance. If art is to terminate in a killing monotony, welcome the old condition of inartificial simplicity! So say you, reader: aye, but so say we. This does not touch us: The mechanism we speak of will apply to no meritorious qualities of style, but to its faults, and, above all, to its awkwardnesses; in fact, to all that now constitutes the *friction* of style; the needless joltings and retardations of our fluent motion. As to the motion itself, in all that is positive, in its derivation, in its exciting impulses, in its speed, and its characteristic varieties, it will remain unaffected. The modes of human feeling are inexhaustible; the forms by which feeling connects itself with thought are indefeasibly natural; the channels through which both impress themselves upon language are infinite. All these are imperturbable by human art: they are past the reach of mechanism: you might as well be afraid that some steam−engine − Atlas, suppose, or Samson, (whom the Germans call Simpson,) should perfidiously hook himself to the earth's axis, and run away with us to Jupiter. Let Simpson do his worst, we defy him. And so of style: in that sense, under which we all have an interest in its free movements, it will for ever remain free. It will defy art to control it. In that sense, under which it ever can be mechanized, we have all an interest in wishing that it should be so. Our final object therefore is a meritorious one, with no intermixture of evil. This being explained, and our course onwards having been mapped out, let us now proceed with our work, first recapitulating in direct juxtaposition with each other the points of our future movement:

1. Greek and Latin literature we shall examine only for the sake of appraising or deducing the sort of ideas which they had upon the subject of style. It will appear that these ideas were insufficient. At the best they were tentative. 2. From them, however, may be derived a hint, a dim suggestion, of the true question in arrear; and, universally, that goes a great way towards the true answer. *'Dimidium facti*,' says the Roman proverb, *'qui bene caepit, habit*.' To have made a good beginning is one half of the work. *Prudens interrogatio*, says a wise modern; to have shaped your question skilfully, is, in that sense, and with a view to the answer, a good beginning. 3. Having laid this foundation towards an answer, we shall then attempt the answer itself. 4. After which, that is, after removing to the best of our power such difficulties to the *higher understanding* as beset the subject of style, rhetoric, composition, having (if we do not greatly delude ourselves) removed the one great bar to a right theory of style, or a practical discipline of style, we shall leave to some future work of more suitable dimensions the filling up of our outline. Ourselves we shall confine to such instant suggestions practical, popular, broadly intelligible, as require no extensive preparation to introduce them on the author's part; no serious effort to understand them on the reader's. Whatever is more than this will better suit with the variable and elastic proportions of a separate book, than with the more rigid proportions of a miscellaneous journal.

Coming back, then, for hasty purposes, to Greek literature, we wish to direct the reader's eye upon a remarkable phenomenon in the history of that literature, and subsequently of all human genius; not so remarkable, but that multitudes must have noticed it, and yet remarkable enough to task a man's ingenuity in accounting for it. The earliest known occasion, on which this phenomenon drew a direct and strong gaze upon itself, was in a little historical sketch composed by a Roman officer during the very opening era of Christianity. We speak of the *Historia Romana*,. written and published about the very year of the Crucifixion by [Yelleius] Paterculus in the court of Tiberius Caesar, the introduction to which presents us with a very interesting outline of general history. The style is sometimes clumsy and unwieldy, but nervous, masculine, and such as became a soldier. In higher qualities, in thoughtfulness, and the spirit of finer observation, it is far beyond the standard of a mere soldier; and it shows, in common with many other indications lying on the face of Roman society at that era, how profoundly the great struggles that had recently convulsed the world must have terminated in that effect which followed in the wake of the French Revolution; viz. in a vast stimulation to the meditative faculties of man. The agitation, the

frenzy, the sorrow of the times, reacted upon the human intellect, and forced men into meditation. Their own nature was held up before them in a sterner form. They were compelled to contemplate an ideal of man, far more colossal than is brought forward in the tranquil aspects of society; and they were often engaged, whether they would or not, with the elementary problems of social philosophy. Mere danger forced a man into thoughts which else were foreign to his habits. Mere necessity of action forced him to decide. Such changes went along with the Reformation; such changes went along with the French Revolution; such changes went along with the great recasting of Roman society under the two earliest Caesars. In every page of Paterculus we read the swell and agitation of waters subsiding from a deluge. Though a small book, it is tumid with revolutionary life. And something also is due, no doubt, to the example of the mighty leader in the Roman Revolution, to the intellectual and literary tastes diffused by him−

'The foremost man of all this world,'

who had first shown the possibility of uniting the military leader's truncheon with the most brilliant stylus of the rhetorician. How wonderful and pleasing to find such accomplishments of accurate knowledge, comprehensive reading, and study, combined with so searching an intellect, in a man situated as Paterculus, reared amongst camps, amidst the hurry of forced marches, and under the privations of solitary outposts. The old race of hirsute centurions how changed! how perfectly regenerated by the influence of three Caesars in succession applying a paternal encouragement to literature.

Admiring this man so much, we have paused to review the position in which he stood. Now, recurring to that remark, (amongst so many original remarks,) by which, in particular, he connects himself with our subject, we may venture to say that, if it was a very just remark for *his* experience, it is far more so for ours. What he remarked, what he founded upon a review of two nations and two literatures we may now countersign by an experience of eight or nine. His remark was upon the tendency of intellectual power to gather in clusters; its unaccountable propensity (he thought it such) to form into separate insulated groups. This tendency he illustrates first in two cases of Grecian literature. Perhaps that might have been an insufficient basis for a general theory. But it occurred to Paterculus in confirmation of his doctrine, that the very same tendency had reappeared in his native literature. The same phenomenon had manifested itself, and, more than once, in the history of Roman intellect; the same strong nisus of great wits to gather and crystallize about a common nucleus. That marked gregariousness in human genius had taken place amongst the poets and orators of Rome, which had previously taken place amongst the poets, orators, and artists of Greece. What importance was attached by Paterculus to this interesting remark, what stress he laid upon its appreciation by the reader, is evident from the emphatic manner in which he introduces it, as well as from the conscious disturbance of the symmetry which he incurs rather than suppress it. These are his words: 'Notwithstanding that this section of my work has considerably outrun the proportions of that model which I had laid down for my guidance, and although perfectly aware that, in circumstances of hurry so unrelenting, which like a revolving wheel or the eddy of rapid waters, allows me no respite or pause, I am summoned rather to omit what is necessary than to court what is redundant; still, I cannot prevail on myself to forbear from uttering and giving a pointed expression to a thought which I have often revolved in my mind, but to this hour have not been able satisfactorily to account for in theory: (*nequeo tamen temperare mihi quin rem saepe agitatam animo meo, neque ad liquidum ratione perductam, signem stylo*.') Having thus bespoke the reader's special attention, the writer goes on to ask if any man can sufficiently wonder on observing that eminent genius, in almost every mode of its development, (*eminentissima cujusque professionis ingenia*,) had gathered itself into the same narrow ring−fence of a single generation. Intellects that in each several department of genius were capable of distinguished execution, ( *cujusque clari operis capacia ingenia*,) had sequestrated themselves from the great stream and succession of their fellow−men into a close insulated community of time, and into a corresponding stage of proficiency measured on their several scales of merit[4] ,(*in similitudinem et temporum et profectuum semetipsa ab aliis separaverunt*.) Without giving all the exemplifications by which Paterculus has supported this thesis, we shall cite two.: *Una (neque multorum annorum spatio divisa) aetas per divini spiritus viros, Eschylum, Sophoclem, Euripidem, illustravit Tragœdiam*. Not that this trinity of poets was so contemporary as brothers are; but they were contemporary as youthful uncles in relation to elderly nephews: _Eschylus was

viewed as a senior by Sophocles, Sophocles by Euripides; but, all might by possibility have met together (what a constellation!) at the same table. Again, says Paterculus, *Quid ante Isocratem, quid post ejus auditores, clarum in oratoribus ftit*? Nothing of any distinction in oratory *before* Isocrates, nothing *after* his personal audience. So confined was that orbit within which the perfection of Greek tragedy, within which the perfection of Greek eloquence revolved. The same law, the same strong tendency, he insists, is illustrated in the different schools of Greek comedy; and again of Greek philosophy. Nay, it is more extensively illustrated amongst Greek artists in general:' *Hoc idem evenisse grammaticis, plastis, pictoribus, scalptoribus, quisquis temporum institerit notis reperiet* .'

From Greece Paterculus translates the question to his own country in the following pointed manner: summing up the whole doctrine, and re−affirming it in a form almost startling and questionable by its rigor−' *Adeo artatum angustiis temporum*,' so punctually concentrated was all merit within the closest limits of time,' *ut nemo memorid dignus, alter ab altero videri nequiverint* :' no man of any consideration but he might have had ocular cognisance of all others in his own field who attained to distinction. He adds −' *Neque hoc in Graecis quam in Romanis evenit magis*.'

His illustrations from the Roman literature we do not mean to follow: one only, as requisite for our purpose, we cite: ' *Oratio, ac vis forensis, perfectumquae prosce eloquentice decus (pace P. Crassi et Gracchorum dixerim) ita universa sub principe operis sui erupit Tullio, ut mirari nemineom possis nisi aut ab illo visum, aut qui ilium viderit*.' This is said with epigrammatic point: the perfection of prose, and the brilliancy of style as an artificial accomplishment, was so identified with Cicero's generation, that no distinguished artist, none whom you could greatly admire, but might be called his contemporary; none so much his senior, but Cicero might have seen *him* none so much his junior, but he might have seen Cicero. It is true that Crassus, in Cicero's infancy, and the two Gracchi, in the infancy of Crassus, (neither of whom, therefore, could have been seen by Cicero,) were memorably potent as orators; in fact, for tragical results to themselves, (which, by the way, was the universal destiny of great *Roman* orators;) and nobody was more sensible of their majestic pretensions, merely as orators, than Cicero himself, who has, accordingly, made Crassus and Antony predominant speakers in his splendid dialogues *De Oratore*. But they were merely demoniac powers, not artists. And with respect to these early orators, (as also with respect to some others, whose names we have omitted,) Paterculus has made a special reservation. So that he had not at all overlooked the claims of these great men; but he did not feel that any real exception to his general law was created by orators, who were indeed wild organs of party rage or popular frenzy, but who wilfully disdained to connect themselves with the refinements of literature. Such orators did not regard themselves as intellectual, but as political, powers. Confining himself to oratory, and to the perfection of prose composition, written or spoken, in the sense of great literary accomplishments, beginning in natural power but perfected by art, Paterculus stands to his assertion that this mode of human genius had so crowded its development within the brief circuit of Cicero's life, (threescore years and three,) as that the total series of Roman orators formed a sort of circle, centring in that supreme orator's person, such as, in modern times, we might call an electrical circle; each link of the chain having been either electrified by Cicero, or having electrified *him*. Seneca, with great modesty, repeats the very same assertion in other words:' *Quicquid Romana facundia habuit, quod in. solenti Grceciae aut opponat aut praeferat, circa Ciceronem effloruit*.' A most ingenuous and self−forgetting homage in him; for a nobler master of thinking than himself, Paganism has not to show, nor when the cant of criticism has done its worst a more brilliant master of composition. And were his rule construed literally, it would exclude the two Plinys, the two Senecas, Tacitus, Quinctilian, and others from the matricula of Roman eloquence. Not one of these men could have seen Cicero; all were divided by more than one generation; and yet, most unquestionably, though all were too reasonable to have fancied themselves any match for the almighty orator in public speaking, yet not one but was an equally accomplished artist in written composition, and under a law of artificial style far more difficult to manage.

However, with the proper allowances for too unmodified a form of expression, we must allow that the singular phenomenon first noticed by Paterculus, as connecting itself with the manifestations of human genius, is sufficiently established by so much of human history as even he had witnessed. For, if it should be alleged that

political changes accounted for the extinction of oral eloquence, concurrently with the death of Cicero, still there are cases more than enough, even in the poetry of both Greece and Rome, to say nothing of the arts, which bear out the general fact of human genius coming forward by insulated groups and clusters; or, if Pagan ages had left that point doubtful, we have since witnessed Christian repetitions of the truth on the very widest scale. The Italian age of Leo X. in the fifteenth century, the French age of Louis XIV in the seventeenth century, the German age, commencing with Kant, Wieland, Goethe, in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries all illustrate the tendency to these intermitting paroxysms of intellectual energy. The lightning and the storm seem to have made the circuit of the whole European heavens, to have formed vortices successively in every civilized land, and to have discharged themselves, by turns, from every quarter of the atmosphere. In our own country there have been three such gatherings of intellectual power:¡st, the age of Shakspeare, Spenser, and the great school of dramatists that were already dying out in the latter days of Ben Jonson, (1636,) and were finally extinguished by the great civil commotions beginning in 1642; 2dly, the age of Queen Anne and George I.; 3dly, the age commencing with Cowper, partially roused, perhaps, by the American war, and afterwards so powerfully stimulated (as was the corresponding era of Kant and Wieland) by the French Revolution. This last volcanic eruption of the British genius has displayed enormous power and splendor. Let malice and the base detraction of contemporary jealousy say what it will, greater originality of genius, more expansive variety of talent, never was exhibited than in our own country since the year 1793. Every mode of excellence, except only dramatic excellence, (in which we have nothing modern to place by the side of Schiller's *Wallenstein*,) has been revealed in dazzling lustre. And he that denies it may he be suffocated by his own bilious envy!

But the point upon which we wish to fix the reader's attention, in citing this interesting observation of the Roman officer, and the reason for which we have cited it at all, is not so much for the mere fact of these spring−tides occurring in the manifestations of human genius, intermitting pulses (so to speak) in human energies, as the psychological peculiarity which seems to affect the cycle of their recurrences. Paterculus occupies himself chiefly with the *causes* of such phenomena; and one main cause he suggests as lying in the emulation which possesses men when once a specific direction has been impressed upon the public competitions. This, no doubt, is one of the causes. But a more powerful cause, perhaps, lies in a principle of union than in any principle of division amongst men viz. in the principle of sympathy. The great Italian painters, for instance, were doubtless evoked in such crowds by the action of this principle. To hear the buzz of idolizing admiration settling for years upon particular works of art and artists, kindles something better than merely the ambition and rivalship of men; it kindles feelings happier and more favorable to excellence viz. genial love and comprehension of the qualities fitted to stir so profound and lasting an emotion. This contagion of sympathy runs electrically through society, searches high and low for congenial powers, and suffers none to lurk unknown to the possessor. A vortex is created which draws into its suction whatever is liable to a similar action. But, not to linger upon this question of causes, what we wish to place under the reader's eye is rather the peculiar type which belongs to these revolutions of national intellect, according to the place which each occupies in the order of succession. Possibly it would seem an overrefinement if we were to suggest that the odd terms in the series indicate creative energies, and the even terms reflective energies; and we are far enough from affecting the honors of any puerile hypothesis. But, in a general way, it seems plausible and reasonable, that there will be alternating successions of power in the first place, and next of reaction upon that power from the reflective faculties. It does seem natural, that first of all should blossom the energies of creative power; and, in the next era of the literature, when the consciousness has been brightened to its own agencies, will be likely to come forward the reagencies of the national mind on what it has created. The period of meditation will succeed to the period of production. Or, if the energies of creation are again partially awake, finding themselves forestalled, as regards the grander passions, they will be likely to settle upon the feebler elements of manners. Social differences will now fix the attention by way of substitute for the bolder differences of nature. Should a third period, after the swing of the pendulum through an arch of centuries, succeed for the manifestation of the national genius, it is possible that the long interval, since the inaugural era of creative art, will have so changed all the elements of society, and the aspects of life, as to restore the mind to much of its infant freedom; it may no longer feel the captivity of an imitative spirit in dealing with the very same class of creations as exercised its earliest powers. The original national genius may now come forward in perfectly new forms without the sense of oppression from inimitable models. The hoar of ages may have withdrawn some of

these models from active competition. And thus it may not be impossible that oscillations between the creative and reflective energies of the mind might go on through a cycle of many ages.

In our own literature we see this scheme of oscillations illustrated. In the Shakspeare period we see the fullness of life and the enormity of power throwing up a tropical exuberance of vegetation. A century afterwards we see a generation of men, lavishly endowed with genius, but partly degraded by the injurious training of a most profligate era growing out of great revolutionary convulsions,, and partly lowered in the tone of their aspirations by a despair of rivalling the great creations of their predecessors. We see them universally acquiescing in humbler modes of ambition; showing sometimes a corresponding merit to that of their greatest forefathers, but merit (if sometimes equal) yet equal upon a lower scale. Thirdly. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries we see a new birth of original genius, of which it is not lawful to affirm any absolute inferiority, even by comparison with the Shakspearian age of Titans. For whatsoever is strictly and thoroughly original, being *sui generis*, cannot be better or worse than any other model of excellence which is also original. One animal structure, compared with another of a different class, is equally good and perfect. One valley, which is no copy of another, but has a separate and peculiar beauty, cannot be compared for any purpose of disadvantage with another. One poem, which is composed upon a law of its own, and has a characteristic or separate beauty of its own, cannot be inferior to any other poem whatsoever. The class, the order, may be inferior; the scale may be a lower one; but the individual work, the degree of merit marked upon the scale, must be equal if only the poem is equally original. In all such cases, understand, ye miserable snarlers at contemporary merit, that the puerile *goût de comparaison* (as La Bruyère calls it) is out of place; universally you cannot affirm any *imparity*, where the ground is preoccupied by *disparity*. Where there is no parity of principle, there is no basis for comparison.

Now, passing, with the benefit of these explanations, to Grecian literature, we may observe that there were in that field of human intellect no more than two developments of power from first to last. And, perhaps, the unlearned reader (for it is to the praise and honor of a powerful journal, that it has the unlearned equally with the learned amongst its readers) will thank us for here giving him, in a very few words, such an account of the Grecian literature in its periods of manifestation, and in the relations existing between these periods that he shall not easily forget them.

There were, in illustration of the Roman aide−de−camp's[5] doctrine, two groups or clusters of Grecian wits; two depositions or stratifications of the national genius: and these were about a century apart. What makes them specially rememberable is the fact that each of these brilliant clusters had gathered separately about that man as central pivot, who, even apart from this relation to the literature, was otherwise the leading spirit of his age. It is important for our purpose it will be interesting, even without that purpose, for the reader to notice the distinguishing character, or marks, by which the two clusters are separately recognised; the marks, both personal and chronological. As to the personal distinctions, we have said that in each case severally the two men, who offered the nucleus to the gathering, happened to be otherwise the most eminent and splendid men of the period. Who were they? The one was PERICLES, the other was ALEXANDER OF MACEDON. Except Themistocles, who may be ranked as senior to Pericles by just one generation, (or thirty−three years[6],) in the whole deduction of Grecian annals no other public man, statesman, captain−general, administrator of the national resources, can be mentioned as approaching to these two men in splendor of reputation, or even in real merit. Pisistratus was too far back: Alcibiades, who might (chronologically speaking) have been the son of Pericles, was too unsteady, and (according to Mr. Coleridge's coinage) 'unreliable;' or, perhaps, in more correct English, too *'unrelyuponable*.'

Thus far our purpose prospers. No man can pretend to forget two such centres as Pericles for the elder group, or Alexander of Macedon, (the 'strong he−goat' of Jewish prophecy,) for the junior. Round these two *foci*, in two different but adjacent centuries, gathered the total starry heavens the galaxy, the Pantheon of Grecian intellect. All that Greece produced of awful solemnity in her tragic stage, of riotous mirth and fancy in her comic stage, of power in her eloquence, of wisdom in her philosophy; all that has since tingled in the ears of twenty−four centuries, of her prosperity in the arts, her sculpture, her architecture, her painting, her music everything, in short, excepting only her higher mathematics, which waited for a further development which required the incubation of

the musing intellect for yet another century revolved like two neighboring planetary systems about these two solar orbs, Two mighty vortices, Pericles and Alexander the Great, drew into strong eddies about themselves all the glory and the pomp of Greek literature, Greek eloquence, Greek wisdom, Greek art. Next, that we may still more severely search the relations in all points between the two systems, let us assign the chronological *locus* of each: because that will furnish another element towards the exact distribution of the chart representing the motion and the oscillations of human genius. Pericles had a very long administration. He was Prime Minister of Athens for upwards of one entire generation. He died in the year 429 before Christ, and in a very early stage of that great Peloponnesian war, which was the one sole intestine war for Greece, affecting every nook and angle in the land. Now, in this long public life of Pericles, we are at liberty to fix on any year as his chronological locus. On good reasons, not called for in this place, we fix on the year 444. This is too remarkable to be forgotten. *Four, four, four*, what at some games of cards is called a *'prial*,' (we presume, by an elision of the first vowel a, for *parial*,) forms an era which no man can forget. It was the fifteenth year before the death of Pericles, and not far from the bisecting year of his political life. Now, passing to the other system, the *locus* of Alexander is quite as remarkable, as little liable to be forgotten when once indicated, and more easily determined, because selected from a narrower range of choice. The exact chronological locus of Alexander the Great is 333 years before Christ. Everybody knows how brief was the career of this great man: it terminated in the year 320 before Christ. But the *annus mirabilis* of his public life, the most effective and productive year throughout his oriental anabasis, was the year 333 before Christ. Here we have another *'prial*,' a prial of threes, for the *locus* of Alexander.

Thus far the elements are settled, the chronological longitude and latitude of the two great planetary systems into which the Greek literature breaks up and distributes itself: 444 and 333 are the two central years for the two systems: allowing, therefore, an interspace of 111 years between the *foci* of each. It is thought by some people, that all those stars which you see glittering so restlessly on a keen frosty night in a high latitude, and which seem to have been sown broadcast with as much carelessness as grain lies on a threshing floor −here showing vast zaarrahs of desert blue sky; there again lying close, and to some eyes presenting

'The beauteous semblance of a flock at rest,'

are in fact all gathered into zones or *strata* ; that our own wicked little earth, (with the whole of our peculiar solar system,) is a part of such a zone; and that all this perfect geometry of the heavens, these radii in the mighty wheel, would become apparent, if we, the spectators, could but survey it from the true centre; which centre may be far too distant for any vision of man, naked or armed, to reach. However that may be, it is most instructive to see how many apparent scenes of confusion break up into orderly arrangement, when you are able to apply an *a priori* principle of organization to their seeming chaos. The two vortices of the Greek literature are now separated; the chronological *loci* of their centres are settled. And next, we request the reader thoughtfully to consider who *they* are of whom the elder system is composed.

In the centre, as we have already explained, is Pericles the great practical statesman; and that orator of whom (amongst so many that vibrated thunderbolts) it was said peculiarly that he thundered and lightened as if he held this Jovian attribute by some individual title. We spare you Milton's magnificent description from the *Paradise Regained* of such an orator 'wielding at will that fierce democracy,' partly because the closing line in its reference 'to *Macedon* and Artaxerxes' throne,' too much points the homage to Demosthenes; but still more, because by too trivial a repetition of splendid passages, a serious injury is done to great poets. Passages of great musical effect, metrical bravuras, are absolutely vulgarized by too perpetual a parroting and the care of Augustus Cuesar, *ne nomen suum obsolefieret*[7], that the majesty of his name should not be vulgarized by bad poets, is more seriously needed in our days on behalf of great poets, to protect them from trivial or too parrot−like a citation.

Passing onwards from Pericles, you find that all the rest in *his* system were men in the highest sense creative; absolutely setting the very first examples, each in his peculiar walk of composition; themselves without previous models, and yet destined every man of them to become models for all after−generations; themselves without fathers or mothers, and yet having all posterity for their children. First come the three men *divini spiritus*, under a

heavenly *afflatus,* Eschylus Sophocles Euripides, the creators of Tragedy out of a village mummery. Next comes Aristophanes, who breathed the breath of life into Comedy. Then comes the great philosopher Anaxagoras, who first theorized successfully upon man and the world. Next come, whether great or not, the still more famous philosophers Socrates, Plato, Xenophon. Then comes, leaning upon Pericles, as sometimes Pericles leaned upon *him,* the divine artist, Phidias[8]; and behind this immortal man walk Herodotus and Thucydides. What a procession to Eleusis would these men have formed; what a frieze, if some great artist could arrange it as dramatically as Chaucer has arranged the *Pilgrimage to Canterbury* .

It will be granted that this is unmasking a pretty strong battery of great guns for the Athens of Pericles. Now, let us step on a hundred years forward. We are now within hail of Alexander; and a brilliant consistory of Grecian men, *that* is, by which he is surrounded. There are now exquisite masters of the more refined Comedy; there are, again, great philosophers, for all the great schools are represented by able successors; and above all others, there is the one philosopher who played with men's minds (according to Lord Bacon's comparison) as freely as ever his princely pupil with their persons there is Aristotle. There are great orators, and, above all others, there is that orator whom succeeding generations (wisely or not) have adopted as the representative name for what is conceivable in oratorical perfection there is Demosthenes. Aristotle and Demosthenes are in themselves bulwarks of power; many hosts lie in those two names. For artists, again, to range against Phidias, there is Lysippus the sculptor, and there is Apelles the painter. For great captains and masters of strategic art, there is Alexander himself, with a glittering cortege of general officers, well qualified to wear the crowns which they will win, and to head the dynasties which they will found. Historians there are now, as in that former age. And, upon the whole, it cannot be denied that the 'turn−out' is showy and imposing.

Before coming to that point, that is, before comparing the second 'deposit' (geologically speaking) of Grecian genius with the first, let us consider what it was (if anything) that connected them. Here, reader, we would wish to put a question. Saving your presence, Did you ever see what is called a dumb−bell? We have; and know it by more painful evidence than that of sight.

You, therefore, oh reader! if personally cognisant of dumb−bells, we shall remind if not, we shall inform that it is a cylindrical bar of iron, issuing at each end in a globe of the same metal, and usually it is sheathed in green baize; but, perfidiously so, if that covering is meant to deny or to conceal the fact of those heart−rending thumps which it inflicts upon one's too confiding fingers every third *ictus*. By the way, we have a vague remembrance that the late Mr. Thurtell the same who was generally censured for murdering, the late Mr. Weare once in a dark lobby attempted to murder a friend by means of a dumb−bell; in which he showed his judgment we mean in his choice of tools; for otherwise, in attempting to murder his friend, he was to blame. Now, reader, it is under this image of the dumb−bell we couch an allegory. Those globes at each end, are the two systems or separate clusters of Greek literature; and that cylinder which connects them, is the long man that ran into each system − binding the two together. Who was that? It was Isocrates. *Great* we cannot call him in conscience; and, therefore, by way of compromise, we call him *long*, which, in one sense, he certainly was; for he lived through four−and−twenty Olympiads, each containing four solar years. He narrowly escaped being a hundred years old; and though that did not carry him from centre to centre, yet, as each system might be supposed to protend a radius each way of twenty years, he had, in fact, a full personal cognisance (and pretty equally) of the two systems, remote as they were, which composed the total world of Grecian genius. Two circumstances have made this man interesting to all posterity; so that people, the most remote and different in character, (Cicero, for instance, and Milton,) have taken a delight in his memory. One is, that the school of rhetoric in Athens, which did not finally go down till the reign of Justinian, and, therefore, lasted above nine hundred and forty years without interruption, began with him. He was, says Cicero *De Orat*., *'Pater eloquentire*;' and elsewhere he calls him *'Communis magister oratorum*.' True, he never practised himself, for which he had two reasons 'my lungs,' he tells us himself, 'are weak;' and secondly, 'I am naturally, as well as upon principle, a coward.' There he was right. A man would never have seen twenty−four Olympiads who had gone about brawling and giving 'jaw,' as Demosthenes and Cicero did. You see what *they* made of it. The other feature of interest in this long man is precisely that fact, viz. that he *was* long. Everybody looks with kindness upon the snowy−headed man who saw the young prince Alexander of Macedon

within four years of his starting for Persia; and personally knew most of those that gave lustre to the levees of Pericles. Accordingly, it is for this quality of length that Milton honors him with a touching memorial; for Isocrates was 'that old man eloquent' of Milton's sonnet, whom the battle of Chaeronea, 'fatal to liberty, killed with report.' This battle, by which Philip overthrew the last struggles of dying independence in Greece, occurred in the year 338 before Christ. Philip was himself assassinated two years later. Consequently, had Isocrates pulled out, like Caoutchouc, a little longer, he might have seen the silver shields, or Macedonian life−guards, embarking for Persia. In less than five years from that same battle, 'fatal to liberty,' Alexander was taking fatal liberties with Persia, and tickling the catastrophe of Darius. There were just seventy good years between the two expeditions the Persian *anabasis* of Cyrus the younger, and the Persian *anabasis* of Alexander; but Isocrates knew personally many officers and *savans*[9] in both.

Others, beside Cicero and Milton, have taken a deep interest in Isocrates; and, for the very circumstance we have been noticing, his *length*, combined with the accident of position which made that length effective in connecting the twofold literature of Greece. Had he been '*long* 'in any other situation than just in that dreary desert between the oasis of Pericles and the oasis of Alexander, what good would that have done us? 'A wounded snake' or an Alexandrine verse would have been as useful. But he, feeling himself wanted, laid his length down like a railroad, exactly where he could be useful with his positive pole towards Pericles, and his negative pole towards Alexander. Even Gibbon even the frosty Gibbon condescends to be pleased with this seasonable application of his two termini: ‘Our sense,' says he, in his 40th chapter, 'of the dignity of human nature is exalted [10] by the simple recollection, that Isocrates was the companion of Plato and Xenophon; that he assisted, perhaps with the historian Thucydides, at the first representations of the CEdipus of Sophocles and the Iphigenia of Euripides.' So far in relation to the upper terminus of the long man; next, with reference to the lower terminus, Gibbon goes on:−' And that his pupils, Easchines and Demosthenes, contended for the crown of patriotism in the presence of Aristotle, the master of Theophrastus, who taught at Athens with the founders of the Stoic and Epicurean sects.'

Now then, reader, you are arrived at that station from which you overlook the whole of Greek literature, as a few explanations will soon convince you. Where is Homer, where is Hesiod? You ask where is Pindar? Homer and Hesiod lived a thousand years B. C., or, by the lowest computations, near nine hundred. For anything that we know, they may have lived with Tubal Cain. At all events, they belong to no power or agency that set in motion the age of Pericles, or that operated on that age. Pindar, again, was a solitary emanation of some unknown influences, at Thebes, more than five hundred years B. C. He may be referred to the same era as Pythagoras. These are all that can be cited *before* Pericles.

Next, for the ages *after* Alexander, it is certain that Greece Proper was so much broken in spirit by the loss of her *autonomy* dating from that era as never again to have rallied sufficiently to produce a single man of genius; not, one solitary writer, who acted as a power upon the national mind. Callimachus was nobody, and not decidedly Grecian. Theocritus, a man of real genius in a limited way, is a Grecian in that sense only according to which an Anglo−American is an Englishman. Besides, that one swallow does not make a summer. Of any other writers, we possess only a few fragments: and of Anacreon, who must have been a poet of original power, from the very extended influence of his writings, we do not certainly know that we have any remains at all. Of those which pass under his name, not merely the authorship, but the era is very questionable indeed. Plutarch and Lucian, the unlearned reader must understand that both belong to *post* Christian ages. And for all the Greek emigrants who may have written histories, such as we now value for their matter more than for their execution, one and all they belong too much to Roman civilization, that we should ever think of connecting them with native Greek literature[11]. Polybius in the days of the second Scipio, Dion Cassius, and Appian, in the acme of Roman civility, are no more Grecian authors, because they wrote in Greek, than the Emperor Marcus Antoninus, or Julian, were other than Romans, because, from monstrous coxcombry, they chose to write in Greek their barren memoranda. As well might Gibbon be thought not an Englishman, or Leibnitz not a German; because the former, in composing the first draft of his essay on literature, and the latter in composing his *Theodicée*, used the French language. The motive in all these cases was analogous: amongst the Greek writers, it was the affectation of reaching a particular body of educated men, a learned class, to the exclusion of the uninstructed multitude. With

the affectors of French, the wish was, to reach a particular body of thinkers, with whose feelings they had a special sympathy from personal habituation to their society, and to whose prejudices, literary or philosophic, they had adapted their train of argument.

No: the Greek literature ends at the point we have fixed, viz., with the era of Alexander. No power, no heart−subduing agency, was ever again incarnated in any book, system of philosophy, or other model of creative energy, growing upon Grecian soil or from Grecian roots. Creation was extinct the volcano was burned out. What books appeared at scattered intervals, during the three centuries still remaining before the Christian era, lie under a reproach, one and all, which perhaps has not been perceived. From the titles and passing notices of their objects, or mode of dealing with their objects, such as we derive from Cicero and many others, it is evident that they were merely professional books; text−books for lectures addressed to students, or polemic works addressed to competitors. Chairs of rhetoric and philosophy had now been founded in Athens. A great university, the resort of students from all nations, was established, and, in a sense sufficient to insure the perpetual succession of these corporate bodies, was endowed. Books, therefore, and laboring with the same two opposite defects, as are unjustly charged upon the schoolmen of the middle ages, viz., dullness from absolute monotony, and visionariness from the aerial texture of the speculations, continued to be written in discharge of professional obligations, or in pursuit of professional interest. The *summum bonum* was discussed until it had become the capital affliction of human patience; the *summum malum* of human life. Beyond these there was no literature; and these products of dreaming indolence, which terminated in making the very name of Greek philosopher, and Greek rhetorician, a jest and a byword amongst the manlier Romans, no more constituted a literature than a succession of academic studies from the pupils of a royal institution can constitute a school of fine arts.

Here, therefore, at this era of Alexander, 333 B. C., when every Greek patriot had reason to say of his native literature, *'Venimus ad summum fortunce'* we have seen the best of our days we must look for the Greek ideas of style, and the Greek theories of composition, in the uttermost development that either *could* have received. In the earlier system of Greek intellectual strength in the era of Pericles, the powers of style would be most comprehensively exercised. In the second system, in the era of Alexander, the light of conscious recognition and direct examination would be most effectually applied. The first age furnished the power the second furnished the science. The first brought the concrete model − the second brought the abstracting skill; and between them the whole compass of Greek speculation upon this point would be brought to a focus. Such being the state of preparation, what was the result?

## PART IV.

' *Such being the state of preparation, what was the result*?' These were the words which concluded our last essay. There had been two manifestations of the Grecian intellect, revelations in two separate forms, the first having gathered about Pericles in the year 444 B. C., the second about Alexander the Great in 333 B. C.; the first being a pure literature of creative power, the second, in a great measure, of reflective power; the first fitted to call out the differences of style, the second to observe, classify, and discuss them: under these circumstances of favorable preparation, what had been the result? Where style exists in strong coloring as a practice or art, we reasonably expect that style should soon follow as a theory as a science explaining; that art, tracing its varieties, and teaching its rules. To use ancient distinctions, where the *'rhetorica utens'* has been cultivated with eminent success, (as in early Greece it had,) it is but natural to expect many consequent attempts at a *'rhetorica docens*.' And especially, it is natural to do so in a case where the theorizing intellect had been powerfully awakened. What, therefore, we ask again, had been in fact the result?

We must acknowledge that it had fallen far below the reasonable standard of our expectations. Greece, it is true, produced a long series of works on rhetoric; many of which, though not easily met with[12], survive to this day: and one which stands first in order of time viz. the great work of Aristotle is of such distinguished merit, that some eminent moderns have not scrupled to rank it as the very foremost legacy, in point of psychological knowledge,

which Pagan literature has bequeathed to us. Without entering upon so large a comparison as that, we readily admit the commanding talent which this work displays. But it is under an equivocal use of the word 'rhetoric' that the *Rhetoric* of Aristotle could ever have been classed with books treating of style. There is in fact a complex distinction to which the word rhetoric is liable: 1st, it means the *rhetorica utens*, as when we praise the rhetoric of Seneca or Sir Thomas Browne; not meaning anything which they taught, but something which they practised; not a doctrine which they delivered, but a machinery of composition which they employed. 2dly, it means the *rhetorica docens*, as when we praise the rhetoric of Aristotle or Hermogenes; writers far enough from being rhetorical by their own style of writing, but writers who professedly taught others to be rhetorical. 3dly, the *rhetorica utens* itself is subdivided into two meanings, so wide apart that they have very little bearing on each other: one being applied to the art of persuasion, the dexterous use of plausible topics for recommending any opinion whatever to the favor of an audience: this is the Grecian sense universally; the other being applied to the art of composition the art of treating any subject ornamentally, gracefully, affectingly. There is another use of the word rhetoric distinct from all these, and hitherto, we believe, not consciously noticed: of which at some other time.

Now, this last subdivision of the word rhetoric, viz. 'Rhetoric considered as a practising art *rhetorica utens* ,' which is the sense exclusively indicated by our modern use of the term, is not at all concerned in the rhetoric of Aristotle. It is rhetoric as a mode of moral persuasion, as a technical system for obtaining a readiness in giving to the false a coloring of plausibility, to the doubtful a coloring of probability, or in giving to the true, when it happens to be obscure, the benefit of a convincing exposition this it is which Aristotle undertakes to teach: and not at all the art of ornamental composition. In fact, it is the whole body of public *extempore* speakers whom he addresses, not the body of deliberate writers in any section whatever. And therefore, whilst conceding readily all the honor which is claimed for that great man's *Rhetoric*, by this one distinction as to what it was that he meant by rhetoric, we evade at once all necessity for modifying our general proposition; viz. that style in our modern sense, as a theory of composition, as an art of constructing sentences and weaving them into coherent wholes, was not effectually cultivated amongst the Greeks. It was not so well understood, nor so distinctly contemplated in the light of a separate accomplishment, as afterwards among the Romans. And we repeat, that this result from circumstances *prima facie* so favorable to the very opposite result, is highly remarkable. It is so remarkable, that we shall beg permission to linger a little upon those features in the Greek literature, which most of all might seem to have warranted our expecting from Greece the very consummation of this delicate art. For these same features, which would separately have justified that expectation, may happen, when taken in combination with others, to account for its disappointment.

There is, then, amongst the earliest phenomena of the Greek literature, and during its very inaugural period, one which of itself and singly furnishes a presumption for expecting an exquisite investigation of style. It lies in the fact, that two out of the three great tragic poets carried his own characteristic quality of style to a morbid excess; to such an excess as should force itself, and in fact *did* force itself, into popular notice. Had these poets all alike exhibited that sustained an equable tenor of tragic style which we find in Sophocles, it is not probable that the vulgar attention would have been fixed by its character. Where a standard of splendor is much raised, provided all parts are simultaneously raised on the same uniform scale, we know by repeated experience in many modes of display, whether in dress, in architecture, in the embellishment of rooms, &c., that this raising of the standard is not perceived with much vivacity; and that the feelings of the spectator are soon reconciled to alterations that are harmonized. It is always by some want of uniformity, some defect in following out the scale, that we become roused to conscious observation of the difference between this and our former standards. We exaggerate these differences in such a case, as much as we undervalue them in a case where all is symmetrical. We might expect, therefore, beforehand, that the opposite characteristics as to style of Eschylus and Euripides, would force themselves upon the notice of the Athenian populace; and, in fact, we learn from the Greek scholiasts on these poets, that this effect did really follow. These scholiasts, indeed, belong to a later age. But we know by traditions which they have preserved, and we know from Aristotle himself, the immediate successor of the great tragic poets, (indirectly we know also from the stormy ridicule of Aristophanes, who may be viewed as contemporary with those poets,) that Eschylus was notorious to a proverb amongst the very mob, for the stateliness, pomp, and

towering character of his diction; whilst Euripides was equally notorious, not merely for a diction in a lower key, more household, more natural, less elaborate, but also for cultivating such a diction by study and deliberate preference. Having such great models of contrasting style to begin with, having the attention converged upon these differences by the furious merriment of Aristophanes, less than a Grecian wit would have felt a challenge n all this to the investigation of style, as a great organ of difference between man and man, between poet and poet.

But there was a more enduring reason, in the circumstances of Greece, for entitling us to expect from her the perfect theory of style. It lay in those accidents of time and place which obliged Greece to spin most of her speculations, like a spider, out of her own bowels. Now, for such a kind of literature style is, generally speaking, paramount; for a literature less self−evolved, style is more liable to neglect. Modern nations have labored under the very opposite disadvantage. The excess of external materials has sometimes oppressed their creative power, and sometimes their meditative power. The exuberance of *objective* knowledge that knowledge which carries the mind to materials existing out of itself, such as natural philosophy, chemistry, physiology, astronomy, geology, where the mind of the student goes for little, and the external object for much has had the effect of weaning men from subjective speculation, where the mind is all in all, and the alien object next to nothing; and in that degree has weaned them from the culture of style. Now, on the other hand, if you suppose a man in the situation of Baron Trenck at Spandau, or Spinosa in the situation of Robinson Crusoe at Juan Fernandez, or a contemplative monk of the thirteenth century in his cell you will perceive that unless he were a poor feeble−minded creature like Cowper's Bastile prisoner, thrown by utter want of energy upon counting the very nails of his dungeon in all permutations and combinations rather than quit the external world, he must in his own defence, were it only as a relief from gnawing thoughts, cultivate some subjective science; that is, some branch of knowledge which, drawing everything from the mind itself, is independent of external resources. Such a science is found in the relations of man to God, that is in theology; in the determinations of space, that is in geometry; in the relations of existence or being universally to the human mind, otherwise called metaphysics or ontology; in the relations of the mind to itself, otherwise called logic. Hence it was that the scholastic philosophy evolved itself, like a vast spider's loom, between the years 1100 and 1400. Men shut up in solitude with the education oftentimes of scholars with a life of leisure but with hardly any books, and no means of observation were absolutely forced, if they would avoid lunacy, from energies unoccupied with any object, to create an object out of those very energies: they were driven by mere pressure of solitude, and sometimes of eternal silence, into raising vast a6rial Jacob's ladders of vapory metaphysics, just as endless as those meteorologic phenomena which technically bear that name just as sublime and aspiring in their tendency upwards and sometimes (but not always, wicked critic!) just as unsubstantial. In this land of the practical and the ponderable, we so little understand or value such abstractions, though once our British schoolmen took the lead in these subtleties, that we confound their very natures and names. Most people with us mean by metaphysics, what is properly called psychology. Now, these two are so far from being the same thing, that the former could be pursued (and, to say the truth, was, in fact, under Aristotle created) by the monk in his unfurnished cell, where nothing ever entered but moonbeams. Whereas psychology is but in part a subjective science; in some proportion it is also *objective*, depending on multiplied experience, or on multiplied records of experience. Psychology, therefore, *could* not have been cultivated extensively by the schoolmen; and in fact would not have been cultivated at all, but for the precedent of Aristotle. He, who laid the foundation of their metaphysics, which have nothing to do with man, had also written a work on man; viz. on the human soul, besides other smaller works on particular psychological phenomena (such as dreaming.) Hence, through mere imitation, arose the short sketches of psychology amongst the schoolmen. Else *their* vocation lay to metaphysics, and that vocation arose entirely out of their circumstances solitude, scholarship, and no books.. Total extinction there was for them of all objective materials, and therefore, as a consequence inevitable, reliance on the solitary energies of their own minds. Like Christabel's chamber lamp, and the angels from which it was suspended, all was the invention of the unprompted artist.

'All made out of the carver's brain.'

Models he had none before him, for printed books were yet sleeping in futurity, and the gates of a grand asceticism were closed upon the world of life. We moderns, indeed, fancy that the necessities of the Romish

church the mere instincts of self−protection in Popery were what offered the bounty on this air−woven philosophy; and partly that is true; but it is most certain that all the bounties in this world would have failed to operate effectually, had they not met with those circumstances in the silent life of monasteries, which favored the growth of such a self−spun metaphysical divinity. Monastic life predisposed the restlessness of human intellect to move in that direction. It was one of the few directions compatible with solitude and penury of books. It was the only one that opened an avenue at once to novelty and to freedom of thought. Now, then, precisely what the monastic life of the schoolmen was, in relation to philosophy, the Greece of Pericles had been in relation to literature. What circumstances, what training, or predisposing influences existed for the monk in his cell; the same (or such as were tantamount) existed for the Grecian wit in the atmosphere of Athens. Three great agencies were at work, and unconsciously moulding the efforts of the earliest schoolmen about the opening of the Crusades, and of the latest, some time after their close; three analogous agencies, the same in virtue, though varied in circumstances, gave impulse and guidance to the men of Greece, from Pericles, at the opening of Greek literature, to Alexander of Macedon, who witnessed its second harvest. And these agencies were: −1st. Leisure in excess, with a teeming intellect: the burden, under a new−born excitement, of having nothing to do. 2d. Scarcity, without an absolute famine, of books; enough to awake the dormant cravings, but not enough to gratify them without personal participation in the labors of intellectual creation. 3d. A revolutionary restlessness, produced by the recent establishment of a new and growing public interest.

The two first of these agencies, for stimulating intellects already roused by agitating changes, are sufficiently obvious; though few, perhaps, are aware to what extent idleness prevailed in Pagan Greece, and even in Rome, under the system of household slavery, and under the bigoted contempt of commerce. But, waiving that point, and, for the moment, waiving also the degree of scarcity which affected books at the era of Pericles, we must say one word as to the two great analogous public interests which had formed themselves separately, and with a sense of revolutionary power, for the Greeks on the one hand, and for the schoolmen on the other. As respected the Grecians, and especially the Athenians, this excitement lay in the sentiment of nationality which had been first powerfully organized by the Persian war. Previously to that war the sentiment no doubt smouldered obscurely; but the, oriental invasion it was which kindled it into a torrent of flame. And it is interesting to remark, that the very same cause which fiused and combined these scattered tribes into the unity of Hellas, viz. their common interest in making head against an awful invader, was also the cause which most of all separated them into local parties by individual rivalship, and by characteristic services. The arrogant Spartan, mad with a French−like self−glorification, boasted for ever of his little Thermopylae. Ten years earlier the far sublimer display of Athenian Marathon, to say nothing of after services at Salamis, or elsewhere, had placed Attica at the summit of the Greek family. No matter whether selfish jealousy would allow that pre−eminence to be recognised, doubtless it was felt. With this civic pre−eminence arose concurrently for Athens the development of an intellectual pre−eminence. On this we need say nothing. But even here, although the pre−eminence was too dazzling to have been at any time overlooked, yet, with some injustice in every age to Athens, her light has been recognised, but not what gave it value  the contrasting darkness of all around her. This did not escape Paterculus, whose understanding is always vigilant.' We talk,' says he,' of *Grecian* eloquence, or *Grecian* poetry, when we should say *Attic*: for who has ever heard of Theban orators, of Lacedemonian artists, or Corinthian poets[13]?' Eschylus, the first great author of Athens, (for Herodotus was not Athenian,) personally fought in the Persian war. Consequently the two modes of glory for Athens were almost of simultaneous emergence. And what we are now wishing to insist on, is, that precisely by and through this great unifying event, viz. the double inroad of Asia militant upon Greece, Greece first became generally and reciprocally known to Greece herself: that Greece was then first arranged and cast, as it were, dramatically, according to her capacities, services, duties; that a general consciousness was then diffused of the prevailing relations in which each political family stood to the rest; and that, in the leading states, every intellectual citizen drew a most agitating excitement from the particular character of glory which had settled upon his own tribe, and the particular station which had devolved upon it amongst the champions of civilization.

That was the *positive* force acting upon Athens. Now, reverting to the monkish schoolmen, in order to complete the parallel, what was the corresponding force acting upon *them*? Leisure, and want of books, were accidents

common to both parties to the scholastic age and to the age of Pericles. These were the *negative* forces; concurring with others to sustain a movement once begun, but incapable of giving the original impulse. What was the active, the *affirmative* force, which effected for the scholastic monks that unity and sense of common purposes, which had been effected for the Greeks by the sudden development of a Grecian interest opposed to a Persian of a civilized interest, under sudden peril, opposed to the barbarism of the universal planet?

What was there for the race of monkish schoolmen, laboring through three centuries, in the nature of a known palpable interest, which could balance so grand a principle of union and of effort, as this acknowledged guardianship of civilization had suddenly unfolded, like a banner, for the Greeks during the infancy of Pericles [14]? What *could* there be of corresponding grandeur?

Beforehand, this should have seemed impossible. But, in reality, a far grander mode of interest had arisen for the schoolmen; grander, because more indefinite; more indefinite, because spiritual. It was this: The Western or Latin Church had slowly developed her earthly power. As an edifice of civil greatness, throughout the western world, she stood erect and towering. In the eleventh century, beyond all others, she had settled her deep foundations. The work thus far was complete. But blank civil power, though indispensable, was the feeblest of her arms; and, taken separately, was too frail to last, besides that it was liable to revolutions. The authority by which chiefly she ruled, had ruled, and hoped to rule, was spiritual; and with the growing institutions of the age, embodying so much of future resistance, it was essential that this spiritual influence should be founded on a subtle philosophy  difficult to learn, difficult to refute; as also that many dogmas already established, such as tradition, by way of prop to infallibility, should receive a far ampler development. The Latin church, we must remember, was not yet that church of Papal Rome, in the maturity of its doctrines and its pretensions, which it afterwards became. And when we consider how vast a *benefactrix* this church had been to early Christendom, when moulding and settling its foundations, as also in what light she must have appeared to her own pious children, in centuries where as yet only the first local breezes of opposition had begun to whisper amongst the Albigenses, &c., we are bound, in all candor, to see that a sublimer interest could not have existed for any series of philosophers, than the profound persuasion, that by marrying metaphysics to divinity, two sciences even separately so grand: and by the pursuit of labyrinthine truth, they were building up an edifice reaching to the heavens the great spiritual fortress of the Catholic church.

Here let us retrace the course of our speculations, lest the reader should suppose us to be wandering.

First, for the sake of illustrating more vividly the influences which acted on the Greece of Pericles, we bring forward another case analogously circumstanced, as moulded by the same causes; − 1. The same condition of intellect under revolutionary excitement: 2. The same penury of books: 3. The same chilling gloom from the absence of female charities; the consequent reaction of that oppressive ennui, which Helvetius fancied, amongst all human agencies, to be the most potent stimulant for the intellect: 4. The same (though far different) enthusiasm and elevation of thought, from disinterested participation in forwarding a great movement of the age; for the one side, involving the glory of their own brilliant country, and concurrent with civilization; for the other, co−extensive with all spiritual truth and all spiritual power.

Next, we remark, that men living permanently under such influences, must, of mere necessity, resort to that order of intellectual pursuits which requires little aid *ab extrv*; that order, in fact, which philosophically is called 'subjective,' as drawing much from our own proper selves, or little (if anything) from extraneous objects.

And then, thirdly, we remark, that such pursuits are peculiarly favorable to the culture of style. In fact, they force that culture. A man who has absolute facts to communicate from some branch of study, external to himself, as physiology, suppose, or anatomy, or astronomy, is careless of style; or, at least, he may be so, because he is independent of style; for what he has to communicate, neither readily admits, nor much needs, any graces in the mode of communication; the matter transcends and oppresses the manner. The matter tells without any manner at all. But he who has to treat a vague question, such as Cicero calls a *quaestio infinita*, where everything is to be

finished out of his own peculiar feelings, or his own way of viewing things, (in contradistinction to a *quaestio finita* , where determinate data from without, already furnish the main materials,) soon finds that the manner of treating it not only transcends the matter, but very often, and in a very great proportion, is the matter. In very many subjective exercises of the mind, as, for instance, in that class of poetry which has been formally designated by this epithet, (meditative poetry, we mean, in opposition to the Homeric, which is intensely objective,) the problem before the writer is to project his own inner mind; to bring out consciously what yet lurks by involution in many unanalyzed feelings; in short, to pass through a prism, and radiate into distinct elements, what previously had been even to himself but dim and confused ideas, intermixed with each other. Now, in such cases, the skill with which detention or conscious arrest is given to the evanescent, external projection to what is internal, outline to what is fluxionary, and body to what is vague all this depends entirely on the command over language, as the one sole means of embodying ideas. And, in such cases, the style, or, in the largest sense, manner, is confluent with the matter. But, at all events, even by those who are most impatient of any subtleties, or what they consider 'metaphysical' distinctions, thus much must be conceded viz. that those who rest upon external facts, tangible realities, and circumstantial details, in short, generally upon the objective, whether in a case of narration or of argument, must for ever be less dependent upon style, than those who have to draw upon their own understandings and their own peculiar feelings for the furniture and matter of their composition. A single illustration will make this plain. It is an old remark, and, in fact, a subject of continual experience, that lawyers fail as public speakers in the House of Commons. Even Erskine, the greatest of modern advocates, was nobody as a senator; and the 'fluent Murray,' two generations before him, had found his fluency give way under that mode of trial. But why? How was it possible that a man's fluency in one chamber of public business, should thus suddenly be defeated and confounded in another? The reason is briefly expressed in Cicero's distinction between a *quaestio finita* and a *quaestio infinita*. In the courts of law, the orator was furnished with a brief; an abstract of facts; downright statements upon oath; circumstances of presumption; and, in short, a whole volume of topics external to his own mind. Sometimes, it is true, the advocate would venture a little out to sea, *proprio marti*: in a case of *crim. con.,* for instance, he would attempt a little picture of domestic happiness drawn from his own funds. But he was emboldened to do this from his certain knowledge, that in the facts of his brief he had always a hasty retreat in case of any danger that he should founder. If the little picture prospered, it was well: if not, if symptoms of weariness began to arise in the audience, or of hesitation in himself, it was but to cut the matter short, and return to the *terra firma* of his brief, when all again was fluent motion. Besides that each separate transition, and the distribution of the general subject, offered themselves spontaneously in a law case; the logic was given as well as the method. Generally speaking, the, mere order of chronology dictated the succession and arrangement of the topics. Now, on the other hand, in a House of Commons' oration, although sometimes there may occur statements of facts and operose calculations, still these are never more than a text, at the very best, for the political discussion, but often no more than a subsequent illustration or proof attached to some one of its heads. The main staple of any long speech must always be some general view of national policy; and, in Cicero's language, such a view must always be *infinita* that is, not determined *ab extra*, but shaped and drawn from the funds of one's own understanding. The facts are here subordinate and ministerial; in the case before a jury, the facts are all in all. The forensic orator satisfies his duty, if he does but take the facts exactly as they stand in his brief, and place them before his audience in that order, and even (if he should choose it) in those words. The parliamentary orator has no opening for facts at all, but as he himself may be able to create such an opening by some previous expositions of doctrine or opinion, of the probable or the expedient. The one is always creeping along shore the other is always out at sea. Accordingly, the degrees of anxiety which severally affect the two cases, is best brought to the test in this one question *'What shall I say next*?' an anxiety besetting orators like that which besets poor men in respect to their children's daily bread. 'This moment it is secured; but, alas ! for the next!' Now, the judicial orator finds an instant relief: the very points of the case are numbered; and, if he cannot find more to say upon No. 7, he has only to pass on, and call up No. 8. Whereas, the deliberative orator, in a senate or a literary meeting, finds himself always in this situation that having reached with difficulty that topic which we have supposed to be No. 7, one of three cases uniformly occurs: either he does not perceive any No. 8 at all; or, secondly, he sees a distracting choice of No. 8's the ideas to which he might next pass are many, but he does not see whither they will lead him; or, thirdly, he sees a very fair and promising No. 8, but cannot in any way discover, offhand, how he is to effect a transition to this new topic. He cannot, with the rapidity requisite, modulate out of the one key

into the other. His anxiety increases, utter confusion masters him, and he breaks down.

We have made this digression by way of seeking, in a well known case of public life, an illustration of the difference between a subjective and an objective exercise of the mind. It is the sudden translation from the one exercise to the other, which, and which only, accounts for the failure of advocates when attempting senatorial efforts. Once used to depend on memorials or briefs of facts, or of evidence not self−derived, the advocate, like a child in leading−strings, loses that command over his own internal resources, which otherwise he might have drawn from practice. In fact, the advocate, with his brief lying before him, is precisely in the condition of a parliamentary speaker, who places a written speech or notes for a speech in his hat. This trick has sometimes been practised: and the consternation which would befall the orator in the case of such a hat−speech being suddenly blown away, precisely realizes the situation of a *nisi prius* orator when first getting on his legs in the House of Commons. He has swum with bladders all his life: suddenly he must swim without them.

This case explains why it is, that all subjective branches of study favor the cultivation of style. Whatsoever is entirely independent of the mind, and external to it, is generally equal to its own enunciation. Ponderable facts and external realities are intelligible in almost any language: they are self−explained and self−sustained. But the more closely any exercise of mind is connected with what is internal and individual in the sensibilities, that is, with what is philosophically termed *subjective*, precisely in that degree, and the more subtly, does the style or the embodying of the thoughts cease to be a mere separable ornament, and in fact the more does the manner, as we expressed it before, become confluent with the matter. In saying this, we do but vary the form of what we once heard delivered on this subject by Mr. Wordsworth: his remark was by far the weightiest thing we ever heard on the subject of style; and it was this That it is in the highest degree unphilosophic to call language or diction 'the dress of thoughts;' and what was it then that he would substitute? Why this: he would call it 'the incarnation of thoughts.' Never, in one word, was so profound a truth conveyed. Mr. Wordsworth was thinking, doubtless, of poetry like his own; viz. that which is eminently meditative. And the truth is apparent on consideration: for, if language were merely a dress, then you could separate the two: you could lay the thoughts on the left hand, the language on the right. But, generally speaking, you can no more deal thus with poetic thoughts, than you can with soul and body. The union is too subtle; the intertexture too ineffable, each co−existing not merely *with* the other, but each in and *through* the other. An image, for instance, a single word, often enters into a thought as a constituent part. In short, the two elements are not united as a body with a separable dress, but as a mysterious incarnation. And thus, in what proportion the thoughts are subjective, in that some proportion does their very essence become identical with the expression, and the style become confluent with the matter.

The Greeks, by want of books, philosophical instruments, and innumerable other aids to all objective researches, being thrown more exclusively than we upon their own unaided minds, cultivated logic, ethics, metaphysics, psychology all thoroughly subjective studies. The schoolmen, in the very same situation, cultivated precisely the same field of knowledge. The Greeks, indeed, added to their studies that of geometry; for the inscription over the gate of the Academy (Let no one enter who is not instructed in geometry) sufficiently argues that this science must have made some progress in the days of Pericles, when it could thus be made a general qualification for admission to a learned establishment within thirty years after his death. But geometry is partly an objective, partly a subjective study. With this exception, the Greeks and the monastic schoolmen trode the very same path.

Consequently, in agreement with our principle, both ought to have found themselves in circumstances favorable to the cultivation of style. And it is certain that they did. As an *art*, as a practice, it was felicitously pursued in both cases. It is true that the harsh, ascetic mode of treating philosophy by the schoolmen, generated a corresponding barrenness, aridity and repulsiveness, in the rigid forms of their technical language. But however offensive to genial sensibilities, this diction was a perfect thing in its kind; and, to do it justice, we ought rather to compare it with the exquisite language of algebra, equally irreconcilable to all standards of aesthetic beauty; but yet for the three qualities of elliptical rapidity, (that rapidity which constitutes what is meant by elegance in mathematics,) of absolute precision and of simplicity, this algebraic language is unrivalled amongst human inventions. On the other hand, the Greeks, whose objects did not confine them to these austere studies, carried out

their corresponding excellence in style upon a far wider and indeed a comprehensive scale. Almost all modes of style were exemplified amongst *them*. Thus, we endeavor to show that the subjective pursuits of the Greeks and the schoolmen ought to have favored a command of appropriate diction; and afterwards that it did.

But, fourthly, we are entitled to expect that wherever style exists in great development as a practice, it will soon be investigated with corresponding success as a theory. If fine music is produced spontaneously in short snatches by the musical sensibility of a people, it is a matter of certainty that the science of composition, that counterpoint, that thorough−bass, will soon be cultivated with a commensurate zeal. This is matter of such obvious inference, that in any case where it fails, we look for some extraordinary cause to account for it. Now in Greece, with respect to style, the inference *did* fail. Style, as an art, was in a high state of culture: style, as a science, was nearly neglected. How is this to be accounted for? It arose naturally enough out of one great phenomenon in the condition of ancient times, and the relation which that bore to literature, and to all human exertion of the intellect.

Did the reader ever happen to reflect on the great idea of *Publication*? An idea we call it; because, even in our own times, with all the mechanic aids of steam−presses, &c., this object is most imperfectly approached, and is destined, perhaps, for ever to remain an unattainable ideal; useful (like all ideals) in the way of regulating our aims, but also as a practicable object not reconcilable with the limitation of human power. For it is clear that, if books were multiplied by a thousand−fold, and truth of all kinds were carried to the very fireside of every family, nay, placed below the eyes of every individual, still the purpose of any universal publication would be defeated and utterly confounded, were it only by the limited opportunities of readers. One condition of publication defeats another. Even so much as a general publication is a hopeless idea. Yet, on the other hand, publication, in some degree, and by some mode, is a sine qua non condition for the generation of literature. Without a larger sympathy than that of his own personal circle, it is evident that no writer could have a motive for those exertions and previous preparations, without which excellence is not attainable in any art whatsoever.

Now, in our own times, it is singular, and really philosophically curious, to remark the utter blindness of writers, readers, publishers, and all parties whatever interested in literature, as to the trivial fraction of publicity which settles upon each separate work. The very multiplication of books has continually defeated the object in a growing progression. Readers have increased, the engines of publication have increased; but books, increasing in a still greater proportion, have left as the practical result an average quotient of publicity for each book, taken apart, continually decreasing. And if the whole world were readers, probably the average publicity for each separate work would reach a minimum such would be the concurrent increase of books. But even this view of the case keeps out of sight the most monstrous forms of this phenomenon. The inequality of the publication has the effect of keeping very many books absolutely without a reader. The majority of books are never opened; five hundred copies may be printed, or half as many more; of these, it may happen, that five are carelessly turned over. Popular journals, again, which carry a promiscuous miscellany of papers into the same number of hands, as a stage−coach must convey all its passengers at the same rate of speed, dupe the public with a notion that here at least all are read. Not at all. One or two are read from the interest attached to their subjects. Occasionally one is read a little from the ability with which it treats a subject not otherwise attractive. 'The rest have a better chance certainly than books, because they are at any rate placed under the eye and in the hand of readers. But this is no more than a variety of the same case. A hasty glance may be taken by one in a hundred at the less attractive papers; but reading is out of the question. Then, again, another delusion, by which all parties disguise the truth, is, the absurd belief that, not being read at present, a book may, however, be revived hereafter. Believe it not! This is possible only with regard to books that demand to be studied, where the merit is slowly discovered. Every month, every day indeed, produces its own novelties, with the additional zest that they are novelties. Every future year, which will assuredly fail in finding time for its own books, how should it find time for defunct books? No, no every year buries its own literature. Since Waterloo, there have been added upwards of fifty thousand books and pamphlets to the shelves of our native literature, taking no account of foreign importations. Of these fifty thousand, possibly two hundred still survive: possibly twenty will survive for a couple of centuries; possibly five or− six thousand may have been indifferently read: the rest not so much as opened. In this hasty sketch of a calculation, we assume a single copy to represent a whole edition. But in order to have the total sum of copies

numerically neglected since Waterloo, it will be requisite to multiply forty−four thousand by five hundred at the least, but probably by a higher multiplier. At the very moment of writing this by way of putting into a brighter light the inconceivable blunder as to publicity habitually committed by sensible men of the world let us mention what we now see before us in a public journal. Speaking with disapprobation of a just but disparaging expression applied to the French war−mania by a London morning paper, the writer has described it as likely to irritate the people of France. O, genius of arithmetic! The offending London journal has a circulation of four thousand copies daily and it is assumed that thirty−three millions, of whom assuredly not twenty−five individuals will ever see the English paper as a visible object, nor five ever read the passage in question, are to be maddened by one word in a colossal paper laid this morning on a table amongst fifty others, and to−morrow morning pushed off that table by fifty others of more recent date. How are such delusions possible? Simply from the previous delusion, of ancient standing, connected with printed characters: what is printed seems to every man invested with some fatal character of publicity such as cannot belong to mere MS.; whilst in the mean time, out of every thousand printed pages, one at the most, but at all events a very small proportion indeed, is in any true sense more public when printed than previously as a manuscript; and that one, even that thousandth part, perishes as effectually in a few days to each separate reader, as the words perish in our daily conversation. Out of all that we talk, or hear others talk, through the course of a year, how much remains on the memory at the closing day of December? Quite as little, we may be sure, survives from most people's reading. A book answers its purpose by sustaining the intellectual faculties in motion through the current act of reading; and a general deposition or settling takes effect from the sum of what we read; even that, however, chiefly according to the previous condition in which the book finds us for understanding it, and referring them to heads under some existing arrangement of our knowledge. Publication is an idle term applied to what is not published: and nothing is *published* which is not made known *publicly* to the understanding as well as to the eye: whereas, for the enormous majority of what is printed, we cannot say so much as that it is made known to the eyes.

For what reason have we insisted on this unpleasant view of a phenomenon incident to the limitation of our faculties, and apparently without remedy? Upon another occasion it might have been useful to do so, were it only to impress upon every writer the vast importance of compression. Simply to retrench one word from each sentence, one superfluous epithet, for example, would probably increase the disposable time of the public by one twelfth part; in other words, would add another month to the year, or raise any sum of volumes read from eleven to twelve hundred. A mechanic operation would effect *that* change: but, by cultivating a closer logic and more severe habits of thinking, perhaps two sentences out of each three might be pruned away; and the amount of possible publication might thus be increased in a threefold degree. A most serious duty therefore, and a duty which is annually growing in solemnity, appears to be connected with the culture of an unwordy diction; much more, however, with the culture of clear thinking; that being the main key to good writing, and consequently to fluent reading.

But all this, though not unconnected with our general theme, is wide of our immediate purpose. The course of our logic at this point runs in the following order. The Athenians, from causes assigned, ought to have consummated the whole science and theory of style. But they did not. Why? Simply from a remarkable deflexion or bias given to their studies by a difficulty connected with *publication*. For some modes of literature the Greeks *had* a means of publication, for many they had *not*. That one difference, as we shall show, disturbed the just valuation of style.

Some mode of publication must have existed for Athens, that is evident. The mere *fact* of a literature proves it. For without public sympathy how can a literature arise? or public sympathy without a regular organ of publication? What poet would submit to the labors of his most difficult art, if he had no reasonable prospect of a large audience, and somewhat of a permanent audience to welcome and adopt his productions?

Now then, in the Athens of Pericles, what *was* the audience, how composed, and how ensured, on which the literary composer might rely? By what channel, in short, did the Athenian writer calculate on a *publication*?

This is a very interesting question; and, as regards much in the civilization of Greece, both for what it caused and what it prevented, is an important question. In the elder days, in fact we may suppose through the five hundred years from the Trojan expedition to Pisistratus and Solon, all *publication* was effected through two classes of men the public reciters and the public singers. Thus no doubt it was, that the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* were sent down to the hands of Pisistratus, who has the traditional reputation of having first arranged and revised these poems. These reciters or singers to the harp, would probably rehearse one entire book of the *Iliad* at every splendid banquet. Every book would be kept in remembrance and currency by the peculiar local relations of particular states or particular families to ancestors connected with Troy. This mode of publication, however, had the disadvantage, that it was among the arts ministerial to sensual enjoyment. And it is some argument for the extensive diffusion of such a practice in the early times of Greece, that both in the Greece of later times, and, by adoption from her, in the Rome of cultivated ages, we find the [*Greek here*] as commonly established by way of a dinner appurtenance that is, exercises of display addressed to the ear, recitations of any kind with and without music−not at all less frequently than [*Greek here],* or the corresponding display to the eye, (dances or combats of gladiators.) These were doubtless inheritances from the ancient usages of Greece, modes of publication resorted to long before the Olympic games, by the mere necessitous cravings for sympathy; and kept up long after that institution, as in itself too brief and rare in its recurrence to satisfy the necessity.

Such was the earliest effort of publication, and in its feeble infancy; for this, besides its limitation in point of audience, was confined to narrative poetry. But when the ideal of Greece was more and more exalted by nearer comparison with barbarous standards, after the sentiment of patriotism had coalesced with vindictive sentiments, and when towering cities began to reflect the grandeur of this land as in a visual mirror, these cravings for publicity became more restless and irrepressible. And at length in the time of Pericles, concurrently with the external magnificence of the city, arose for Athens two modes of publication, each upon a scale of gigantic magnitude.

What were these? The *Theatre* and the *Agora* or Forum; publication by the Stage, and publication by the Hustings. These were the extraordinary modes of publication which arose for Athens; one by a sudden birth, like that of Minerva, in the very generation of Pericles; the other slowly maturing itself from the generation of Pisistratus, which preceded that of Pericles by a hundred years. This double publication, scenic and forensic, was virtually, and for all the loftier purposes of publication, the press of Athens. And however imperfect a representative this may seem of a typographical publication, certain it is that in some important features the Athenian publication had separate advantages of its own. It was a far more effective and correct publication, in the first place; enjoying every aid of enforcing accompaniment, from voice, gesture, scenery, music; and suffering in no instance from false reading or careless reading. Then secondly, it was a far wider publication; each drama being read (or heard, which is a far better thing) by twenty−five or thirty thousand persons, counterbalancing at least forty editions, such as we on an average publish, each oration being delivered with just emphasis, to perhaps seven thousand. But why, in this mention of a stage or hustings publication, as opposed. to a publication by the printing−press, why was it, we are naturally admonished to ask, that the Greeks had no press? The ready answer will be, because the art of printing had not been discovered. But that is an error, the detection of which we owe to the present Archbishop of Dublin. The art of printing *was* discovered. It had been discovered repeatedly. The art which multiplied the legends upon a coin or medal, (a work which the ancients performed by many degrees better than we moderns, for we make it a mechanic art, they a fine art,) had in effect anticipated the art of printing. It was an art, this typographic mystery, which awoke and went back to sleep many times over, from mere defect of materials. Not the defect of typography as an art, but the defect of *paper* as a material for keeping this art in motion *there* lay the reason, as Dr. Whately most truly observes, why printed books had no existence amongst the Greeks of Pericles, or afterwards amongst the Romans of Cicero. And why was there no paper? The common reason applying to both countries was, the want of linen rags; and that want arose from the universal habit of wearing woollen garments. In this respect, Athens and Rome were on the same level. But for Athens, the want was driven to a further extremity by the slenderness of her commerce with Egypt, whence only any substitute could have been drawn.

Even for Rome itself, the scarcity of paper ran through many degrees. Horace, the poet, was amused with the town of Equotuticum for two reasons; as incapable of entering into hexameter verse, from its prosodial quantity, (*versu quod dicere non est*,) and because it purchased water, (*vannit vilissima rerum aqua*:) a circumstance in which it agrees with the well known Clifton, above the hot wells of Bristol, where water is bought by the shilling's worth. But neither Horatian Equotuticum, nor Bristolian Clifton, can ever have been as' hard up for water as the Mecca caravan. And the differences were as great, in respect to the want of paper, between the Athens of Pericles or Alexander, and the Rome of Augustus Cuesar. Athens had bad poets, whose names have come down to modern times: but Athens could no more have afforded to punish bad authors by sending their works to grocers

> − *in vicum vendentem pus et odores,*
>
> Et piper, et quicquid chartis amicitur ineptis,'

than London, because gorged with the wealth of two Indies, can afford to pave her streets with silver. This practice of applying unsaleable authors to the ignoble uses of retail dealers in petty articles, must have existed in Rome for some time before it could have attracted the notice of Horace, and upon some considerable scale as a known public usage, before it could have roused any echoes of public mirth as a satiric allusion, or have had any meaning and sting.

In that one revelation of Horace, we see a proof how much paper had become more plentiful. It is true, that so long as men dressed in woollen materials, it was impossible to look for a *cheap* paper. Maga might have been printed at Rome very well for ten guineas a copy. Paper was dear, undoubtedly; but it could be had. On the other hand, how desperate must have been the bankruptcy at Athens in all materials for receiving the record of thoughts, when we find a polished people having no better tickets or cards for conveying their sentiments to the public than shells? Thence came the very name for civil banishment, viz. *ostracism*, because the votes were marked on an *ostracon*, or marine shell. Again, in another great and most splendid city, you see men reduced to *petalism*, or marking their votes by the petals of shrubs. Elsewhere, as indeed many centuries nearer to our own times, in Constantinople, bull's hide was used for the same purpose.

Well might the poor Greeks adopt the desperate expedient of white plastered walls as the best memorandum−book for a man who had thoughts occurring to him in the night−time. Brass only, or marble, could offer any lasting memorial for thoughts; and upon what material the parts were written out for the actors on the Athenian stage, or how the elaborate revisals of the text could be carried on, is beyond our power of conjecture.

In this appalling state of embarrassment for the great poet or prose writer, what consequences would naturally arise? A king's favorite and friend like Aristotle might command the most costly materials. For instance, if you look back from this day to 1800, into the advertising records or catalogues of great Parisian publishers, you will find more works of excessive luxury, costing from a thousand *francs* for each copy, all the way up to as many *guineas*, in each separate period of fifteen years, than in the whole forty among the wealthier and more enterprising publishers of Great Britain. What is the explanation? Can the very moderate incomes of the French gentry afford to patronize works which are beyond the purses of our British aristocracy, who, besides, are so much more of a reading class? Not so: the patronage for these Parisian works of luxury is not domestic, it is exotic: chiefly from emperors and kings; from great national libraries; from rich universities; from the grandees of Russia, Hungary, or Great Britain; and generally from those who, living in splendid castles or hotels, require corresponding furniture, and therefore corresponding books; because to such people books are necessarily furniture; since upon the principles of good taste, they must correspond with the splendor of all around them. And in the age of Alexander, there were already purchasers enough among royal houses, or the imitators of such houses, to encourage costly copies of attractive works. Aristotle was a privileged man. But in other less favored cases, the strong yearnings for public sympathy were met by blank impossibilities. Much martyrdom, we feel assured, was then suffered by poets. Thousands, it is true, perish in our days, who have never had a solitary reader. But still, the existence in print gives a delusive feeling that they have been read. They are standing in the

market all day, and somebody, unperceived by themselves, may have thrown an eye upon their wares. The thing is possible. But for the ancient writer there was a sheer physical impossibility that any man should sympathize with what he never could have seen, except under the two conditions we have mentioned.

These two cases there were of exemption from this dire physical resistance; two conditions which made publication possible: and under the horrible circumstances of sequestration for authors in general, need it be said, that to benefit by either advantage was sought with such a zeal as, in effect, extinguished all other literature? If a man could be a poet for the stage, a *scriptor scenicus,* in that case he obtained a hearing. If a man could be admitted as an orator, as a regular *demagogus,* from the popular *bema,* or hustings, in that case he obtained a hearing. If his own thoughts were a torment to him, until they were reverberated from the hearts and flashing eyes and clamorous sympathy of a multitude; thus only an outlet was provided, a mouth was opened, for the volcano surging within his brain. The vast theatre was an organ of publication; the political forum was an organ of publication. And on this twofold arena a torch was applied to that inflammable gas, which exhaled spontaneously from so excitable a mind as the mind of the Athenian.

Need we wonder, then, at the torrent−like determination with which Athenian literature, from the era 444 B. C., to the era 333 B. C., ran headlong into one or other channel the scenical poetry or the eloquence of the hustings? For an Athenian in search of popular applause, or of sympathy, there was no other avenue to either; unless, indeed, in the character of an artist, or of a leading soldier: but too often, in this latter class, it happened that mercenary foreigners had a preference. And thus it was, that during that period when the popular cast of government throughout Greece awakened patriotic emulation, scarcely anything is heard of in literature (allowing for the succession to philosophic chairs, which made it their pride to be private and exclusive) except dramatic poetry on the one hand, comic or tragic, and political oratory on the other.

As to this last avenue to the public ear, how it was abused, in what excess it became the nuisance and capital scourge of Athens, there needs only the testimony of all contemporary men who happened to stand aloof from that profession, or all subsequent men even of that very profession, who were not blinded by some corresponding interest in some similar system of delusion. Euripides and Aristophanes, contemporary with the earliest practitioners of name and power on that stage of jugglers, are overrun with expressions of horror for these public pests. 'You have every qualification,' says Aristophanes to an aspirant− 'that could be wished for a public orator, [*Greek here*] a voice like seven devils −.[*Greek here*] − you are by nature a scamp [*Greek here*] you are up to snuff in the business of the forum.' From Euripides might be gathered a small volume, relying merely upon so much of his works as yet survives, in illustration of the horror which possessed him for this gang of public misleaders

− [*Greek here*.]

'This is what overthrows cities, admirably organized, and the households of men −your superfine harangues.' Cicero, full four centuries later, looking back to this very period from Pericles to Alexander, friendly as he was by the *esprit de corps* to the order of orators, and professionally biased to uphold the civil uses of eloquence; yet, as an honest man, cannot deny that it was this gift of oratory, hideously abused, which led to the overthrow of Athens, and the ruin of Grecian liberty: ' *Illa vetus Gracia, qua quondam opibus, imperio gloria floruit, hoc uno malo conciditlibertate immoderate ac licentid concionum*.' Quinctilian, standing on the very same ground of professional prejudice, all in favor of public orators, yet is forced into the same sorrowful confession. In one of the Declamations ascribed to him, he says −' *Civitaturn status scimus ab oratoribus esse conversos;'* and in illustration, he adds the example of Athens*:'sive illam Atheniensium civitatem, (quondam late principem,) intueri placeat, accisas ejus vires animadverte. mus vitio concionantium*.' Root and branch, Athens was laid prostrate by her wicked radical orators; for radical, in the elliptic phrase of modern politics, they were almost to a man; and in this feature above all others, (a feature often scornfully exposed by Euripides,) those technically known as of [*Greek here*] the speaking men, and as or,[*Greek here*] [15] the misleaders of the mob, offer a most suitable ancestry for the modern leaders of radicalism that with their base, fawning flatteries of the people, they mixed up

the venom of vipers against their opponents and against the aristocracy of the land.

[*Greek here*]

‘Subtly to wheedle the people with honeyed words dressed to its palate' this had been the ironical advice of the scoffing Aristophanes. That practice made the mob orator contemptible to manly tastes rather than hateful. But the sacrifice of independence − the 'pride which licks the dust' is the readiest training for all uncharitableness and falsehood towards those who seem either rivals for the same base purposes, or open antagonists for nobler. And accordingly it is remarked by Euripides, that these pestilent abusers of the popular confidence would bring a mischief upon Athens before they had finished, equally by their sycophancies to the mob, and by their libels of foreign princes. Hundreds of years afterwards, a Greek writer, upon reviewing this most interesting period of one hundred and eleven years, from Pericles to Alexander, sums up and repeats the opinion of Euripides in this general representative portrait of Attic oratory, with respect to which we wish to ask, can any better delineation be given of a Chartist, or generically of a modern Jacobin?−[*Greek here* ] 'The mob−leader dupes the multitude with false doctrines, whilst delivering things soothing to their credulous vanity.' This is one half of his office sycophancy to the immediate purse−' holders, and poison to the sources of truth the other half is expressed with the same spirit of prophecy as regards the British future [*Greek here* .], 'and by lying calumnies he utterly alienates their affections from their own native aristocracy.'

Now this was a base pursuit, though somewhat relieved by the closing example of Demosthenes, who, amidst much frailty, had a generous nature; and he showed it chiefly by his death, and in his lifetime, to use Milton's words, by uttering many times 'odious truth,' which, with noble courage, he compelled the mob to hear. But one man could not redeem a national dishonor. It was such, and such it was felt to be. Men, therefore, of elevated natures, and men of gentle pacific natures, equally revolted from a trade of lies, as regarded the audience, and of strife, as regarded the competitors. There remained the one other pursuit of scenical poetry; and it hardly needs to be said, what crowding there was amongst all the energetic minds of Athens into one or other of these pursuits the one for the unworldly and idealizing, the other for the coarsely ambitious. These, therefore, became the two quasi professions of Athens; and at the same time, in a sense more exclusive than can now be true of our professions, became the sole means of publication for truth of any class, and a publication by many degrees more certain, more extensive, and more immediate, than ours by the press.

The Athenian theatre published an edition of thirty thousand copies in one day, enabling, in effect, every male citizen capable of attending, from the age of twenty to sixty, together with many thousands of domiciled aliens, to read the drama, with the fullest understanding of its sense and poetic force that could be effected by natural powers of voice and action, combined with all possible auxiliaries of art, of music, of pantomimic dancing; and the whole carried home to the heart by visible and audible sympathy in excess. This, but in a very inferior form, as regarded the adjuncts of art, and the scale of the theatre, and the mise en scene, was precisely the advantage of Charles I. for appreciating Shakspeare.

It was a standing reproach of the Puritans adopted even by Milton, a leaden shaft feathered and made buoyant by *his* wit, that the king had adopted that stage poet as the companion of his closet retirements. So it would have been a pity, if these malignant persecutors of the royal solitude should have been liars as well as fanatics. Doubtless, as king, and in his afflictions, this storm−vexed man did read Shakspeare. But that was not the original way in which he acquired his acquaintance with the poet. A Prince of Wales, what between public claims and social claims, finds little time for reading, after the period of childhood; that is, at any period when he can comprehend a great poet. And it was as Prince of Wales that Charles prosecuted his studies of Shakspeare. He saw continually at Whitehall, personated by the best actors of the time, illustrated by the stage management, and assisted by the mechanic displays of Inigo Jones, all the principal dramas of Shakspeare actually performed. That was publication with an Athenian advantage. A thousand copies of a book may be brought into public libraries, and not one of them opened. But the three thousand copies of a play, which Drury Lane used to publish in one night, were in the most literal sense as well as in spirit read, properly punctuated by the speakers, made intelligible by voice and

action, endowed with life and emphasis: in short, on each successive performance, a very large edition of a fine tragedy was published in the most impressive shape; not merely with accuracy, but with a mimic reality that forbade all forgetting, and was liable to no inattention.

Now, if Drury Lane published a drama for Shakspeare by three thousand copies in one night, the Athenian theatre published ten times that amount for Sophocles. And this mode of publication in Athens not co−operating (as in modern times) with other modes, but standing out in solitary conspicuous relief, gave an unnatural bounty upon that one mode of poetic composition: as the hustings did upon one mode of prose composition. And those two modes, being thus cultivated to the utter exclusion of all others not benefitting by that bounty of publication, gave an unnatural bias to the national style; determined, in effect, upon too narrow a scale the operative ideal of composition  and finally made the dramatic artist and the mob orator the two sole intellectual professions for Athens. Hence came a great limitation of style in practice: and hence, for reasons connected with these two modes of composition, a general neglect of style as a didactic theory.