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ART. I.—*Three Sermons upon Human Nature, being the first, second, and third of fifteen Sermons preached at the Rolls Chapel.* By Joseph Butler, LL.D., late Lord Bishop of Bristol; as published in two volumes at Glasgow, in 1769.

DURING a long period after the commencement of philosophical inquiries concerning morals, it seems to have been taken for granted, that all motives to action in men, as in mere animals, originate in regard for self, and the natural tendency of all sensitive beings to self-preservation. The appetites, the desires, and even in most instances the social affections were resolved into modifications of self-love. The instinctive pursuit of self-gratification was the principle to which all action must be reduced; and somewhere in that sort of transmuted essence the elements of morals were presumed to reside. No sentiment was entertained, by some of the most popular philosophers, of the reality of moral distinctions. Law and morality were considered as mere suggestions of interest, changing with circumstances. And by those who, with Grotius, recoiled from this revolting degradation of man's moral nature, the highest point of approximation towards a satisfactory theory of morals was the

the management of our benevolent operations. The year past has also been to a considerable extent a year of revivals, especially in our large cities, as Troy, Albany, New York, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Cincinnati, Mobile, New Orleans, and others. About one hundred churches, it is believed, have shared in these special manifestations of divine mercy. As these, however, constitute but one eighteenth of the whole number of our churches, there is reason for humility and lamentation, as well as for gratitude, in the above statement. The Assembly also lament that the violation of the Sabbath prevails so extensively in many parts of our country, and enjoin upon all the ministers, sessions and members of the church to use their best endeavours to counteract this evil. With regard to the subject of temperance, fear is entertained lest that important interest is in some parts of our church on the decline, though it seems to be gaining ground in others; and the opinion is expressed that its partial decline is to be ascribed more to the culpable apathy of its friends, than to the opposition of its enemies.

Jas. W. Alexander.

ART. VII.—*Critical and Miscellaneous Essays, by T. Babington Macaulay.* Boston: Weeks, Jordan & Company, 1840. 2 vols. 12mo. pp. 456 & 496.

To the religious world, Mr. Macaulay is chiefly known as the son of the late Zachary Macaulay, by whom the Christian Observer was founded and for many years edited, and who during a long life devoted his powers to the abolition of the Slave Trade. To political inquirers, the younger Macaulay is distinguished for his parliamentary services, his civil trusts in India, and his place in the Cabinet. But with men of letters, and we suppose it may be said with posterity, he will be remembered as one of the most brilliant and effective writers among the Edinburgh Reviewers. It may be questioned whether any of that formidable corps have brandished the satiric thong with more trenchant strokes, or any scattered the gems of literature more widely, or any brought out greater wealth from the deep mines of recondite erudition. Mackintosh was more methodical, philosophic and accurate, but he was cold and stiff in the comparison. Sid-

ney Smith, certainly a congenial spirit in many respects, is more comic, off-hand, nonchalant and demolishing; but not more witty and far less learned. Brougham, who writes on every topic and is said to know every thing, rises to a height both of argument and invective, which his compeers dare not attempt, but he is always inelegant in his strength, often ill-natured, and sometimes dull. Jeffrey is in our judgment inferior to no writer of the age. Always natural, always pellucid as crystal, he is never languid or remiss. It would be difficult to find a more witty or a more argumentative writer; but his logic and his pleasantry are inseparable strands of the same cord. His elegance is such as never betrays the touch of art, for he has never written a sentence after a rhetorical recipe. No author is more exempt from mannerism. Macaulay has more fire, more *abandon*, and yet more art; being a happy admixture of all the rest, lying somewhere between Smith and Jeffrey; graver and loftier than the one, though less chaste and classic and terse and argumentative than the other.

We owe our thanks to the Boston editor and publishers of this Collection. It is produced with that external elegance for which Boston stands alone in this hemisphere. We applaud the spirit which would maintain a literary commnnity between the old and the new world, and we have only to regret that in seeking such an end the genuine English orthography of a great scholar should in some words have been degraded into the schoolmaster-spelling which has been invenin New England. The thought of collecting the Reviews of such a writer was a happy one, and has been carried into effect with regard to several of the other eminent men whom we have named. It is probable that no one of the group has in proportion to the number of his contributions produced so many which have had immediate and continued popularity. The articles on Milton, Byron, Hampden and Bacon were at once attributed to the first minds in Britain, and it was universally conceded that neither Jeffrey nor Smith had ever thrown off a more capital piece of facetious criticism than the review of Croker's Boswell.

When in 1802, the Rev. Sidney Smith commenced the Edinburgh Review, it could little have been expected by the gay circle around him, Jeffrey (who soon became its editor,) Brougham, Brown, Horner and others, that they were erecting an engine, which, after eight and thirty years should still be making its influence felt in every continent; as little that

three of the number should continue in active service through so long a period; or that their places could be supplied by successors so illustrious. No man sets adequate value on printed books in general; but of the energy for good and evil of an established periodical work, few persons have ever formed a remote conception. Such a work, for instance, as the Edinburgh Review, comes statedly and frequently and with a large amount of matter into thousands of families. It is a welcome visiter, and even if it were conducted with only a tithe of the talent which this commands would still form the opinions in letters, politics and religion of a thousand minds. But when we consider that, in connexion with its great rival, it has for the quarter of a century stood at the very head of literary authority, that they have been appealed to as standards of language and style, and that the greatest writers of England and Scotland have contended for the honour of filling their pages, we must acknowledge that no agency connected with the press has been more potent. All the private lucubrations of Jeffrey, Brougham, Mackintosh and Macaulay, all the civil and judicial services of two of them in India and the third in England; all their public measures in cabinet and the senate; all the more elaborate volumes they have written or may write, will probably, even if taken together, fall below the measure of public influence exerted by their hurried contributions to the Edinburgh Review.

These volumes do not contain a page of dulness. The author has contrived on every subject to keep up that effervescence of genius and healthy spring of animation which writers, by profession are apt to lose. He seems never, if we may use the expression of Hannah More, to write after he is weary, and hence he does not weary his readers. The rapidity with which topic after topic arises before the mind leaves no room for exhaustion. The brilliants are moreover real, and the sparkle is that of the mine rather than the shop. It would be hard to point out a writer whose learning is so diversified or so much at his command, or who lays the profoundest vaults of heathen and chivalric lore under more successful contribution; and this not to overload, but to cheer and beautify his work. In one respect, Mr. Macaulay had the advantage of his associates, as he enjoyed the full benefit of a complete English education. But it is not every Cantabrigian, even though like Mr. Macaulay he may have gained the Chancellor's medal, or come out senior-wrangler, who could write so familiarly of every department of learning

and science. The pursuits of authors, it has been said, may be gathered from their illustrations. Those of Mr. Macaulay must be various indeed, for he whirls us with a delightful rapidity, from allusion to allusion, now showing his intimacy with the text of scripture, now with the most uncommon classics, with the fables of the east, and the romances and poems of the middle ages; being equally at home in the ancient and the modern schools: and then surprising us with the happiest allusions to the laboratory, the cabinet, and the play-house. In a word, he is an author who knows how to turn his capital with amazing rapidity, to show all his wealth, and to do so with an air of genteel negligence which even Horace Walpole might have envied. When it is considered that this exuberance of allusive learning is displayed not in mere entertainments of taste, but in setting forth some of the highest subjects which can occupy the pen of the critic, the ease and even playfulness of the manner are still more remarkable. The topics are not those indeed of abstruse philosophy or party politics, but belong chiefly to the department of history and biography; but history and biography of such a dignity, and such relations, that they bring into review some of the gravest questions for the man of taste, the statesman, and the moralist. Mr. Macaulay writes as a friend of liberty and a friend of religion. He has indeed been one of the ablest champions of the reformed ministry, and there are few of his articles, upon whatever subject, which do not show most plainly his zeal for civil and religious freedom. Hence he is the declared enemy of all servile and high-church principles, of all tyrants and persecuting priests. All things considered, therefore, the cause of human and Christian rights will not lose by the free circulation of these tracts; and we wish we could have seen among them the Review of Gladstone on Church and State, in which the same pen (we doubt not) holds up to merited ridicule the pretensions to apostolical succession, with such a union of learning, raillery, and dialectic, as has seldom been displayed in the controversy.

The articles upon Hampden, Chatham, Hallam, Mirabeau, and especially the celebrated review of Milton, are fraught with discussions of these and kindred matters. In the treatise last mentioned the author rises to his highest flight. There are few things in English literature of more serene dignity and graceful pomp and tragic pathos, than a large

portion of this article. The fame of the Puritans may, with certain exceptions, be trusted in such hands:

"We would speak first of the Puritans, the most remarkable body of men, perhaps, which the world has ever produced. The odious and ridiculous parts of their character lie on the surface. He that runs may read them; nor have there been wanting attentive and malicious observers to point them out. For many years after the Restoration, they were the theme of unmeasured invective and derision: They were exposed to the utmost licentiousness of the press and of the stage, at the time when the press and the stage were most licentious. They were not men of letters; they were as a body unpopular; they could not defend themselves; and the public would not take them under its protection. They were therefore abandoned, without reserve to the tender mercies of the satirists and dramatists. The ostentatious simplicity of their dress, their sour aspect, their nasal twang, their stiff postures, their long graces, their Hebrew names, the scriptural phrases which they introduced on every occasion, their contempt of human learning, their detestation of polite amusements, were indeed fair game for the laughers. But it is not from the laughers alone that the philosophy of history is to be learnt.

"Those who roused the people to resistance—who directed their measures through a long series of eventful years—who formed, out of the most unpromising materials, the finest army that Europe had ever seen—who trampled down king, church, and aristocracy—who, in the short intervals of domestic sedition and rebellion, made the name of England terrible to every nation on the face of the earth, were no vulgar fanatics. Most of their absurdities were mere external badges, like the signs of free-masonry, or the dresses of friars. We regret that these badges were not more attractive. We regret that a body, to whose courage and talents mankind has owned inestimable obligations, had not the lofty elegance which distinguished some of the adherents of Charles I., or the easy good breeding for which the court of Charles II. was celebrated. But, if we must make our choice, we shall, like Bassanio in the play, turn from the specious caskets, which contain only the Death's head and the Fool's head, and fix our choice on the plain leaden chest which conceals the treasure.

"The Puritans were men whose minds had derived a peculiar character from the daily contemplation of superior

beings and eternal interests. Not content with acknowledging, in general terms, an overruling Providence, they habitually ascribed every event to the will of the Great Being for whose power nothing was too vast, for whose inspection nothing was too minute. To know him, to serve him, to enjoy him, was with them the great end of existence. They rejected with contempt the ceremonious homage which other sects substituted for the pure worship of the soul. Instead of catching occasional glimpses of the Deity through an obscuring veil, they aspired to gaze full on the intolerable brightness, and to commune with him face to face. Hence originated their contempt for terrestrial distinctions. The difference between the greatest and meanest of mankind seemed to vanish, when compared with the boundless interval which separated the whole race from him on whom their own eyes were constantly fixed. They recognised no title to superiority but his favour; and, confident of that favour, they despised all the accomplishments and the dignities of the world. If they were unacquainted with the works of philosophers and poets, they were deeply read in the oracles of God. If their names were not found in the registers of heralds, they felt assured that they were recorded in the Book of Life. If their steps were not accompanied by a splendid train of menials, legions of ministering angels had charge over them. Their palaces were houses not made with hands; their diadems crowns of glory which should never fade away! On the rich and the eloquent, on nobles and priests, they looked down with contempt: for they esteemed themselves rich in a more precious treasure, and eloquent in a more sublime language, nobles by the right of an earlier creation, and priests by the imposition of a mightier hand. The very meanest of them was a being to whose fate a mysterious and terrible importance belonged—on whose slightest action the Spirits of light and darkness looked with anxious interest—who had been destined, before heaven and earth were created, to enjoy a felicity which should continue when heaven and earth should have passed away. Events which short-sighted politicians ascribed to earthly causes had been ordained on his account. For his sake, empires had risen, and flourished, and decayed. For his sake the Almighty had proclaimed his will by the pen of the evangelist, and the harp of the prophet. He had been rescued by no common deliverer from the grasp of no common foe. He had been ransomed by the sweat of no vulgar agony, by the

blood of no earthly sacrifice. It was for him that the sun had been darkened, that the rocks had been rent, that the dead had arisen, that all nature had shuddered at the sufferings of her expiring God!

"Thus the Puritan was made up of two different men, the one all self-abasement, penitence, gratitude, passion; the other proud, calm, inflexible, sagacious. He prostrated himself in the dust before his Maker; but he set his foot on the neck of his king. In his devotional retirement, he prayed with convulsions, and groans, and tears. He was half maddened by glorious or terrible illusions. He heard the lyres of angels, or the tempting whispers of fiends. He caught a gleam of the Beatific Vision, or woke screaming from dreams of everlasting fire. Like Vane, he thought himself intrusted with the sceptre of the millennial year. Like Fleetwood, he cried in the bitterness of his soul that God had hid his face from him. But, when he took his seat in the council, or girt on his sword for war, these tempestuous workings of the soul had left no perceptible trace behind him. People, who saw nothing of the godly but their uncouth visages, and heard nothing from them but their groans and their whining hymns, might laugh at them. But those had little reason to laugh, who encountered them in the hall of debate, or in the field of battle. These fanatics brought to civil and military affairs a coolness of judgment, and an immutability of purpose, which some writers have thought inconsistent with their religious zeal, but which were in fact the necessary effect of it. The intensity of their feelings on one subject made them tranquil on every other. One overpowering sentiment had subjected to itself pity and hatred, ambition and fear. Death had lost its terrors, and pleasure its charms. They had their smiles and their tears, their raptures and their sorrows, but not for the things of this world. Enthusiasm had made them stoics, had cleared their minds from every vulgar passion and prejudice, and raised them above the influence of danger and of corruption. It sometimes might lead them to pursue unwise ends, but never to choose unwise means. They went through the world like Sir Artegale's iron man Talus, with his flail, crushing and trampling down oppressors, mingling with human beings, but having neither part nor lot in human infirmities; insensible to fatigue, to pleasure, and to pain; not to be pierced by any weapon, not to be withstood by any barrier.

"Such we believe to have been the character of the Puri-

tans. We perceive the absurdity of their manners. We dislike the sullen gloom of their domestic habits. We acknowledge that the tone of their minds was often injured by straining after things too high for mortal reach. And we know that, in spite of their hatred of Popery, they too often fell into the worst vices of that bad system, intolerance, and extravagant austerity—that they had their anchorites and their crusades, their Dunstans and their De Montforts, their Dominics and their Escobars. Yet, when all circumstances are taken into consideration, we do not hesitate to pronounce them a brave, a wise, an honest and a useful body.

"The Puritans espoused the cause of civil liberty, mainly because it was the cause of religion. There was another party, by no means numerous, but distinguished by learning and ability, which co-operated with them on very different principles. We speak of those whom Cromwell was accustomed to call the heathens, men who were, in the phraseology of that time, doubting Thomases or careless Gallios, with regard to religious subjects, but passionate worshippers of freedom. Heated by the study of ancient literature, they set up their country as their idol, and proposed to themselves the heroes of Plutarch as their examples. They seem to have borne some resemblance to the Brissotines of the French revolution. But it is not very easy to draw the line of distinction between them and their devout associates, whose tone and manner they sometimes found it convenient to affect, and sometimes, it is probable, imperceptibly adopted."

The article on History is a regular dissertation on that subject, such as none but an accomplished and a daring scholar could produce. For the writer brings in review all the Greek and Latin historians, and sometimes despatches at a single thrust the fame which many have enjoyed for ages. In the domino of the critic one may say bold things, but we question whether all the flippancies respecting Herodotus, Xenophon, and Cæsar would pass current on the Isis or the Cam.

We are here reminded of the very different feelings with which we read the same thing as from the Great Unknown of the Edinburgh, the Rhadamanthus to whom our childhood learned to bow, and as from Thomas Babington Macaulay. Whatever may be said of the probabilities of soft words with or without the editorial mask, it is very plain that the effect of anonymous writing in a periodical work is great. The dignity of the whole Areopagus is made to sustain the soli-

tary individual. The oracle is more mysteriously penetrating for coming from darkened vaults. We are aware that a different opinion has prevailed in America, and that the attempt has been made to conduct literary works with the names of all the authors. This is a politic method where *all* the authors are very great men. We are persuaded that neither the Edinburgh nor the Quarterly would have lived ten years if they had not been issued anonymously. Even Macaulay, dashing writer as he is, and high as his reputation for scholarship has ever been, would scarcely have called the Cyropædia 'a very wretched performance' in any college or hall at Cambridge, in his own proper person.

The lightest, and at the same time the most inimitable of these critiques is the Review of Croker's Edition of Boswell's Johnson. It is immeasurably above the corresponding article in the Quarterly, which is a piece of hackney adulation. Its discriminations are so subtle and yet so true, its satire so keen and yet so just, its wit so lambent, its argument so irresistible, its description so to the life, and the entire phase of the production so brilliant, that we may safely challenge the critical writings of the age to furnish a match for it. Who that ever read it has not both Boswell and Johnson in his mind with a visible, palpable reality, such as none but a master could ensure?

"Boswell was one of the smallest men that ever lived; and he has beaten them all. He was, if we are to give any credit to his own account, or to the united testimony of all who knew him, a man of the meanest and feeblest intellect. Johnson described him as a fellow who had missed his only chance of immortality, by not having been alive when the Dunciad was written. Beauclerk used his name as a proverbial expression for a bore. He was the laughingstock of the whole of that brilliant society which has owed to him the greater part of its fame. He was always laying himself at the feet of some eminent man, and begging to be spit upon and trampled upon. He was always earning some ridiculous nickname, and then 'binding it as a crown unto him'—not merely in metaphor, but literally. He exhibited himself at the Shakspeare Jubilee, to all the crowd which filled Stratford-on-Avon, with a placard around his hat, bearing the inscription of *Corsica Boswell.* In his Tour, he proclaimed to all the world, that at Edinburgh he was known by the appellation of *Paoli Boswell.* Servile and impertinent,—shallow and pedantic,—a bigot and a sot,—bloated with family pride,

and eternally blustering about the dignity of a born gentleman, yet stooping to be a talebearer, an eavesdropper, a common butt in the taverns of London,—so curious to know everybody who was talked about, that, Tory and High Churchman as he was, he manœuvred, we have been told, for an introduction to Tom Paine,—so vain of the most childish distinctions, that, when he had heen to court, he drove to the office where his book was being printed without changing his clothes, and summoned all the printer's devils to admire his new ruffles and sword:—such was this man;—and such he was content and proud to be. Everything which another man would have hidden,—everything, the publication of which would have made another man hang himself, was matter of gay and clamorous exultation to his weak and diseased mind. What silly things he said,—what bitter retorts he provoked,—how at one place he was troubled with evil presentiments which came to nothing,—how at another place, on waking from a drunken doze, he read the prayer-book, and took a hair of the dog that had bitten him,—how he went to see men hanged, and came away maudlin,—how he added five hundred pounds to the fortune of one of his babies, hecause she was not frightened at Johnson's ugly face, —how he was frightened out of his wits at sea,—and how the sailors quieted him as they would have quieted a child,—how tipsy he was at Lord Cork's one evening, and how much his merriment annoyed the ladies,—how impertinent he was to the Dutchess of Argyle, and with what stately contempt she put down his impertinence,—how colonel Macleod sneered to his face at his impudent obtrusiveness,—how his father and the very wife of his bosom laughed and fretted at his fooleries;—all these things he proclaimed to all the world, as if they had been subjects for pride and ostentatious rejoicing. All the caprices of his temper, all the illusions of his vanity, all his hypochondriac whimsies, all his castles in the air, he displayed with a cool self-complacency, a perfect unconsciousness that he was making a fool of himself, to which it is impossible to find a parallel in the whole history of mankind. He has used many people ill, but assuredly he has used nobody so ill as himself."

The portrait of Johnson is not less graphic, but we can give only a single passage. "From nature, he had received an uncouth figure, a diseased constitution, and an irritable temper. The manner in which the earlier years of his manhood had been passed, had given to his demeanour, and even

to his moral character, some peculiarities, appalling to the civilized beings who were the companions of his old age. The perverse irregularity of his hours, the slovenliness of his person, his fits of strenuous exertion, interrupted by long intervals of sluggishness; his strange abstinence, and his equally strange voracity; his active benevolence, contrasted with the constant rudeness and the occasional ferocity of his manners in society, made him, in the opinion of those with whom he lived during the last twenty years of his life, a complete original. An original he was, undoubtedly, in some respects. But if we possessed full information concerning those who shared his early hardships, we should probably find, that what we call his singularities of manner, were, for the most part, failings which he had in common with the class to which he belonged. He ate at Streatham Park as he had been used to eat behind the screen at St. John's Gate, when he was ashamed to show his ragged clothes. He ate as it was natural that a man should eat who, during a great part of his life, had passed the morning in doubt whether he should have food for the afternoon. The habits of his early life had accustomed him to bear privation with fortitude, but not to taste pleasure with moderation. He could fast; but when he did not fast, he tore his dinner like a famished wolf, with the veins swelling on his forehead, and the perspiration running down his cheeks. He scarcely ever took wine. But when he drank it, he drank it greedily, and in large tumblers. These were, in fact, mitigated symptoms of that same moral disease, which raged with such deadly malignity in his friends Savage and Boyce. The roughness and violence which he showed in society, were to be expected from a man whose temper, not naturally gentle, had been long tried by the bitterest calamities; by the want of meat, of fire, and of clothes; by the importunity of creditors, by the insolence of booksellers, by the derision of fools, by the insincerity of patrons, by that bread which is the bitterest of all food, by those stairs which are the most toilsome of all paths, by that deferred hope which makes the heart sick. Through all these things the ill-dressed, coarse, ungainly pedant had struggled manfully, up to eminence and command. It was natural, that, in the exercise of his power, he should be 'eo immitior, quia toleraverat,'—that though his heart was undoubtedly generous and humane, his demeanour in society should be harsh and despotic. For severe distress he had sympathy, and not only sympathy, but munificent relief. But for the suffering which

a harsh word inflicts upon a delicate mind, he had no pity; for it was a kind of suffering which he could scarcely conceive. He would carry home on his shoulders a sick and starving girl from the streets. He turned his house into a place of refuge for a crowd of wretched old creatures who could find no other asylum; nor could all their peevishness and ingratitude weary out his benevolence. But the pangs of wounded vanity seemed to him ridiculous; and he scarcely felt sufficient compassion even for the pangs of wounded affection. He had seen and felt so much of sharp misery, that he was not affected by paltry vexations; and he seemed to think that everybody ought to be as much hardened to those vexations as himself. He was angry with Boswell for complaining of a headache; with Mrs. Thrale for grumbling about the dust on the road, or the smell of the kitchen. These were, in his phrase, 'foppish lamentations,' which people ought to be ashamed to utter in a world so full of misery. Goldsmith crying because the Good-natured Man had failed, inspired him with no pity. Though his own health was not good, he detested and despised valetudinarians. Even great pecuniary losses, unless they reduced the loser absolutely to beggary, moved him very little. People whose hearts had been softened by prosperity might cry, he said, for such events; but all that could be expected of a plain man was not to laugh."

From thesec haracters contained in these two volumes, it would be easy to make a collection of masterly pictures. In such moral delineation, Mr. Macaulay is almost unrivalled. The effect is produced by strong touches of the pencil and bold contrast of the colours: it is the hand rather of Tacitus than of Clarendon. No student of eloquence can fail to see the stately mien of Chatham in what follows. "On the stage, he would have been the finest Brutus or Coriolanus ever seen. Those who saw him in his decay, when his health was broken, when his mind was jangled, when he had been removed from that stormy assembly of which he thoroughly knew the temper, and over which he possessed unbounded influence, to a small, a torpid, and an unfriendly audience, say, that his speaking was then, for the most part, a low, monotonous muttering, audible only to those who sat close to him,—that, when violently excited, he sometimes raised his voice for a few minutes, but that it soon sank again into an unintelligible murmur. Such was the Earl of Chatham; but such was not William Pitt. His figure, when he first appeared in Parliament, was strikingly graceful and commanding, his fea-

tures high and noble, his eye full of fire. His voice, even when it sank to a whisper, was heard to the remotest benches; when he strained it to its full extent, the sound rose like the swell of the organ of a great cathedral, shook the house with its peal, and was heard through lobbies and down staircases, to the Court of Requests and the precincts of Westminster Hall. He cultivated all these eminent advantages with the most assiduous care. His action is described by a very malignant observer as equal to that of Garrick. His play of countenance was wonderful; he frequently disconcerted a hostile orator by a single glance of indignation or scorn. Every tone, from the impassioned cry to the thrilling aside, was perfectly at his command. It is by no means improbable that the pains which he took to improve his great personal advantages had, in some respects, a prejudicial operation, and tended to nourish in him that passion for theatrical effect, which, as we have already remarked, was one of the most conspicuous blemishes in his character." ——— "'No man,' says a critic who had often heard him, 'ever knew so little what he was going to say.' Indeed his facility amounted to a vice. He was not the master, but the slave of his own speech. So little self-command had he when once he felt the impulse, that he did not like to take part in a debate when his mind was full of an important secret of state. 'I must sit still,' he once said to Lord Shelburne on such an occasion; 'for when once I am up, everything that is in my mind comes out.'" ——— "He spoke without premeditation; but his speech followed the course of his own thoughts, and not the course of the previous discussion. He could, indeed, treasure up in his memory some detached expression of a hostile orator, and make it the text for sparkling ridicule or burning invective. Some of the most celebrated bursts of his eloquence were called forth by an unguarded word, a laugh, or a cheer. But this was the only sort of reply in which he appears to have excelled. He was perhaps the only great English orator who did not think it any advantage to have the last word; and who generally spoke by choice before his most formidable opponents. His merit was almost entirely rhetorical. He did not succeed either in exposition or in refutation; but his speeches abounded with lively illustrations, striking apothegms, well-told anecdotes, happy allusions, passionate appeals. His invective and sarcasm were tremendous. Perhaps no English orator was ever so much feared."

One more likeness from this gallery, but it shall be a mas-

terpiece. It is LAUD, ARCHBISHOP AND MARTYR, as the Oxford Tracts say. "Never," says our Reviewer, "were faces more strikingly characteristic of the individuals to whom they belonged, than those of Laud and Strafford, as they still remain portrayed by the most skilful hand of that age. The mean forehead, the pinched features, the peering eyes, of the prelate, suit admirably with his disposition. They mark him out as a lower kind of St. Dominic, differing from the fierce and gloomy enthusiast who founded the Inquisition, as we might imagine the familiar imp of a spiteful witch to differ from an archangel of darkness. When we read his judgments, when we read the report which he drew up, setting forth that he had sent some separatists to prison, and imploring the royal aid against others, we feel a movement of indignation. We turn to his Diary, and we are at once as cool as contempt can make us. There we read how his picture fell down, and how fearful he was lest the fall should be an omen; how he dreamed that the Duke of Buckingham came to bed to him; that King James walked past him; that he saw Thomas Flaxage in green garments, and the Bishop of Worcester with his shoulders wrapped in linen. In the early part of 1627, the sleep of this great ornament of the church seems to have been much disturbed. On the fifth of January, he saw a merry old man with a wrinkled countenance, named Grove, lying on the ground. On the fourteenth of the same memorable month, he saw the Bishop of Lincoln jump on a horse and ride away. A day or two after this, he dreamed that he gave the king drink in a silver cup, and that the king refused it and called for glass. Then he dreamed that he had turned Papist,—of all his dreams the only one, we suspect, which came through the gate of horn. But of these visions, our favourite is that which, as he has recorded, he enjoyed on the night of Friday the 9th of February, 1627. 'I dreamed,' says he, 'that I had the scurvy; and that forthwith all my teeth became loose. There was one in especial in my lower jaw, which I could scarcely keep in with my finger till I had called for help.' Here was a man to have the superintendence of the opinions of a great nation!"

The reviews here collected are said to have been printed in accordance with a list furnished by the author himself. It is a pity that they had not in addition received his corrections. Written hastily, as periodical contributions generally are, and at distant intervals, they show, together with the

easy flow and unchecked warmth of such productions, a negligence and sometimes a repetition which the nicety of criticism would prevent. Mr. Macaulay is never slipshod in his style, but he is often too peremptory, unqualified and rash.

His essays, however, may be recommended to all young writers as models of manly English. They will here learn that in order to be elegant they need not cease to be simple, and that perspicuity is compatible with conciseness. There is no reserving of his best things to be said afterwards—a common source of diffuseness. Macaulay agrees with Scott in believing that the mind is not like poor milk 'which will bear but one creaming.' He gives us his best things, and as fast as they come, and hence his sprightliness. Yet he does this with selection, for *le secret d' ennuyer est celui de tout dire.* No elegant writer within our knowledge better knows the value of common words. Where a cold, formal, starched pedant would deal in periphrasis, and go about in order to avoid a term of the court or the market, our author gives it to us in all its force, and effects a natural and easy descent from his highest strains to the dialect of ordinary men of sound mind and good taste. Strong common sense, the glory of Englishmen, marks every paragraph: there is no puling, there is no cant, there is no transcendentalism: indeed we do not find a German quoted from beginning to end. O, that even sermon writers would thus prepare themselves according to the prescription of Fontenelle: *En ecrivant j'ai toujours tache de m'entendre!*

The utility and the charms of simple writing merit the consideration of young preachers. Plainness, in its old sense of perspicuity, is deliberately avoided by many, lest their style should not be elevated. 'Walsh,' said Sir Herbert Croft, in a letter to Dr. Parr, who needed the hint as much as any man alive, 'advised Pope to *correctness*, which he told him the English poets had neglected, and which was left to him as a basis of fame. *Plainness* is the advice I have given myself. Tell me if the advice be good. To my knowledge, I have never met with a sermon, either in a pulpit or on paper, which I thought sufficiently plain and intelligible. But surely a gentleman may be benefited by what his servant can comprehend, though the servant will not understand a syllable of what is calculated for the meridian of the master's comprehension.'* It is not sufficiently considered, that in

* Parr's Works, Vol. vii. p. 190.

rejecting those natural expressions which usually accompany our thoughts on their first rising, we are in danger of losing or impairing the conception itself. 'For he,' says Lord Coke, 'that hunteth after affected words, and following the strong scent of great swelling promises, is many times in winding of them in, to show a little verbal pride, at the loss of the matter itself, and so *projicit ampullas et sesquipedalia verba.*'"

The style of Mr. Macaulay is that graceful idiomatic English which none but scholars write. Unlike some late-learned doctors of divinity, he does not patch English with threadbare Latin scraps, or affect a "piebald dialect," for which the vulgar must have recourse to the dictionary. The best preventive of such pedantry is learning. The taste of Macaulay, in regard to diction, is sufficiently manifest in what he says of Bunyan:

"The style of Bunyan is delightful to every reader, and invaluable as a study to every person who wishes to obtain a wide command over the English language. The vocabulary is the vocabulary of the common people. There is not an expression, if we except a few technical terms of theology, which would puzzle the rudest peasant. We have observed several pages which do not contain a single word of more than two syllables. Yet no writer has said more exactly what he meant to say. For magnificence, for pathos, for vehement exhortation, for subtle disquisition, for every purpose of the poet, the orator, and the divine, this homely dialect, the dialect of plain working men, was perfectly sufficient. There is no book in our literature on which we would so readily stake the fame of the old unpolluted English language; no book which shows so well how rich that language is in its own proper wealth, and how little it has been improved by all that it has borrowed."

In speaking of Southey, whose principles are not agreeable to Mr. Macaulay, he says, alluding to the ignominious failures of this great man: "On such occasions, his writings are preserved from utter contempt and derision, solely by the beauty and purity of the English. We find, we confess, so great a charm in Mr. Southey's style, that even when he writes nonsense we generally read it with pleasure." Mr. Macaulay never writes nonsense, but he sometimes does worse, palliating vice, and throwing the charms of his style around the serpentine fallacies of latitudinarian ethics: it is in such cases that we feel how mighty a weapon is a persua-

sive pen. These errors, however, are rare, and the instances which most offend us occur in the Review of Moore's Life of Byron, in the midst of other observations which have high moral dignity.

The style of these Reviews is that of scholar-like conversation. It is sometimes as lofty as eloquence can demand, and sometimes as colloquial as only great writers can afford to be. It is therefore more like Addison or Goldsmith than Johnson or Gibbon. As we think this a point of interest to American readers, who are not without some striking models of affectation and vulgar pomp of diction, we shall cite a passage of some length respecting Dr. Johnson, as it shows far better than any thing which we could write, to what school of English literature Mr. Macaulay belongs:

"Johnson, as Mr. Burke most justly observed, appears far greater in Boswell's books than in his own. His conversation appears to have been quite equal to his writings in matter, and far superior to them in manner. When he talked, he clothed his wit and his sense in forcible and natural expressions. As soon as he took his pen in his hand to write for the public, his style became systematically vicious. All his books are written in a learned language—in a language which nobody hears from his mother or his nurse—in a language in which nobody ever quarrels, or drives bargains, or makes love—in a language in which nobody ever thinks. It is clear, that Johnson himself did not think in the dialect in which he wrote. The expressions which came first to his tongue were simple, energetic, and picturesque. When he wrote for publication, he did his sentences out of English into Johnsonese. His letters from the Hebrides to Mrs. Thrale, are the original of that work of which the Journey to the Hebrides is the translation; and it is amusing to compare the two versions. 'When we were taken up stairs,' says he in one of his letters, 'a dirty fellow bounced out of the bed on which one of us was to lie.' This incident is recorded in the Journey as follows: 'Out of one of the beds on which we were to repose, started up, at our entrance, a man black as a Cyclops from the forge.' Sometimes Johnson translated aloud. 'The Rehearsal,' he said, very unjustly, 'has not wit enough to keep it sweet;' then, after a pause, 'it has not vitality enough to preserve it from putrefaction.'

"Mannerism is pardonable, and sometimes even agreeable, when the manner, though vicious, is natural. Few readers, for example, would be willing to part with the man-

nerism of Milton or of Burke. But a mannerism which does not sit easy on the mannerist, which has been adopted on principle, and which can be sustained only by constant effort, is always offensive. And such is the mannerism of Johnson.

"The characteristic faults of his style are so familiar to all our readers, and have been so often burlesqued, that it is almost superfluous to point them out. It is well known that he made less use than any other eminent writers of those strong plain words, Anglo-Saxon or Norman-French, of which the roots lie in the inmost depths of our language; and that he felt a vicious partiality for terms which, long after our own speech had been fixed, were borrowed from the Greek and Latin, and which, therefore, even when lawfully naturalized, must be considered as born aliens, not entled to rank with the king's English. His constant practice of padding out a sentence with useless epithets, till it became as stiff as the bust of an exquisite; his antithetical forms of expression, constantly employed even where there is no opposition in the ideas expressed; his big words wasted on little things; his harsh inversions, so widely different from those graceful and easy inversions which gave variety, spirit and sweetness to the expression of our great old writers—all these peculiarities have been imitated by his admirers, and parodied by his assailants, till the public has become sick of the subject.

"Goldsmith said to him, very wittily and very justly, 'if you were to write a fable about little fishes, doctor, you would make the little fishes talk like whales.' No man surely ever had so little talent of personation as Johnson. Whether he wrote in the character of a disappointed legacy-hunter, or an empty town fop, of a crazy virtuoso, or a flippant coquette, he wrote in the same pompous and unbending style. His speech, like Sir Piercy Shafton's Euphuistic eloquence, bewrayed him under every disguise. Euphelia and Rodoclia talk as finely as Imlac the poet, or Seged, Emperor of Ethiopia. The gay Cornelia describes her reception at the country-house of her relations, in such terms as these: 'I was surprised, after the civilities of my first reception, to find, instead of the leisure and tranquillity which a rural life always promises, and, if well conducted, might always afford, a confused wildness of care, and a tumultuous hurry of diligence, by which every face was clouded, and every motion agitated.' The gentle Tranquilla informs us, that she

'had not passed the earlier part of life without the flattery of courtship, and the joys of triumph; but had danced the round of gayety amidst the murmurs of envy and the gratulations of applause; had been attended from pleasure to pleasure by the great, the sprightly, and the vain; and had seen her regard solicited by the obsequiousness of gallantry, the gayety of wit, and the timidity of love.' "

A man may afford to talk and write simply who has such things to say as Macaulay is perpetually uttering, just as certain men may afford to wear an old coat. It requires only a looking between the leaves of these volumes to show the astonishing fulness of fact, anecdote, and literary allusion with which they abound. Some familiarity with general literature, ancient as well as modern, is necessary even to understand them. On reading the volumes, we are surprised to find how many of the pungencies and apothegms were fresh in our recollection. Though not a studied writer, Mr. Macaulay is sometimes antithetic, and it would be easy to gather a store of pithy and memorable sayings. For example: "The Inductive Method has been practised ever since the beginning of the world by every human being. It is constantly practised by the most ignorant clown, by the most thoughtless school-boy, by the very child at the breast."——"An acre in Middlesex is better than a principality in Utopia. The smallest actual good is better than the most magnificent promises of impossibilities. The wise man of the Stoics would, no doubt, be a grander object than a steam-engine. But there are steam-engines. And the wise man of the Stoics is yet to be born."——"The noble poem on the Massacres of Piedmont is strictly a collect in verse."——"It is by giving faith to the creations of the imagination that a man becomes a poet. It is by treating those creations as deceptions, and by resolving them, as nearly as possible, into their elements, that he becomes a critic. In the moment in which the skill of the artist is perceived, the spell of the art is broken."——"It may be laid down as a general rule, though subject to considerable qualifications and exceptions, that history begins in Novel and ends in Essay."——"Xenophon was as superstitious as Herodotus, but in a way far more offensive. The very peculiarities which charm us in an infant, the toothless mumbling, the stammering, the tottering, the helplessness, the causeless tears and laughter are disgusting in old age. The nonsense of Herodotus is that of a baby. The nonsense of Xenophon is that

of a dotard." ——— "It is not easy to make a simile go on all-fours. But we believe that no human ingenuity could produce such a centipede as a long allegory, in which the correspondence between the outward sign and the thing signified should be exactly preserved." —— —"Though there were many clever men in England during the latter half of the seventeenth century, there were only two great creative minds. One of these minds produced the Paradise Lost, the other the Pilgrim's Progress."

Such writing fixes itself in the mind; it has both sprightliness and sting. And let it be observed how much of this it owes to the absence of rhetorical involution and periodic rhythm. We know a popular, prolific sermon-writer, with whom the melody of the sentence is the criterion of perfection. His style lies, therefore, between blank verse and MacPherson's Ossian. A friend of ours once scanned for us twelve successive lines of regular decasyllables from one of his published discourses. Such mellowness is akin to decay. Authors who thus mistake, even though they hear not us, may heed the joint opinion of a great English and a great Roman critic. The periods of a certain author, says the Quarterly Review, are "too rythmical; this last, we must take an opportunity of saying is among the greatest faults which any style can possess, though not unusually mistaken for a beauty, particularly among the Scottish writers of English; who from want of practice in the colloquial prosody of the language, or from what other cause we know not (except indeed it be that which Cicero gives,) seem to be possessed with an idea that a way of speaking which would not be tolerated in conversation even upon the greatest subjects, nor can be approved by persons of taste even in the pulpit or at the bar, forms nevertheless the very perfection of what is commonly called fine writing. *Itaque Caria et Phrygia et Mysia, quod minime politae et minime elegantes sunt, adsciverunt suis auribus opimum quoddam et tanquam adipatae dictionis genus, quod Rhodi numquam probaverunt, Græci autem multo minus, Athenienses vero funditus repudiaverunt.*"

There is one reflection which occurs to us, from which no educated man on laying down these volumes will withhold assent. It is that the increase of moral power derived from elegant letters is incalculably great. Other men may have as bright genius, as great adroitness in argument, as thorough accomplishment in science, and yet may utterly fail to arrest,

delight and control the public mind as in the manner of Jeffrey and Macaulay. It is not enough that we present truth; we must present it agreeably, nay delightfully, and if possible irresistibly. The fertilizing influence of classical poetry, eloquence and philosophy, and of the kindred fruits of modern romantic literature on such a mind as this, must be apparent to every reader of the essays. Many an admirer, on laying aside the book, filled with rapture at what he regards as mere style, will doubtless try to do the like, and to write in the same manner. He may imitate the turn of the expression, or the structure of the periods, but after all the attempt will be ridiculously vain, unless his mind be stored with the same riches of literature.

That such accomplishments are useless, few maintain in terms; yet we fear many who are preparing for the service of the church give no time or care to the acquisition of them. Let such consider for an instant, what would be the effect of such writing as that which lies before us, if to all the fascination of taste and genius which it professes, there were added the fire of religion; if the charming effusions of Macaulay were informed by the holy zeal of his devoted father; if the spoils of gentile and of Gothic learning were laid at the feet of Christ; and he will feel that it would be sacrilege to withhold the tribute. The union is not inconceivable or chimerical. A few such men appear among the warmest followers of the Redeemer. Hall was as learned as Mackintosh; Chalmers is as commanding as Brougham; and whatever be the present condition of things in our own land,

> Learning has borne such fruit in other days
> On all her branches; Piety has found
> Friends in the friends of letters, and true prayer
> Has flowed from lips wet with Castalian dews.