

# SOUTHERN LITERARY MESSENGER.

JNO. R. THOMPSON, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

VOL. XV., No. 12.

DECEMBER, 1849.

Whole Number, CLXXX.

### ORIGINAL PROSE ARTICLES.

	PAGE.
1. Rhetoric, as a Part of the College Course. Imperfect definitions of Rhetoric: benefits to be derived from a study of it—examination of the leading text-books in use—qualifications of the Rhetorical Professor, &c.	705
2. The Seldens of Sherwood. Chapters XIII, XIV and XV.	710
3. Of Style in Writing. By C. C.	721
4. City and Salon. By Ik Marvel.	722
5. The Poems of Sir William Jones.	724
6. Original Novel. The Chevalier Merlin. Chapters Sixteenth and Seventeenth.	727
5. Love's Winter. A Tale.	735
6. The English Literati. A Review. Interest which attaches to lives of authors—Mr. Powell's Living Authors of England—Wordsworth, Leigh Hunt, Rogers, Tennyson, Macaulay, Browning, Jerrold, &c.; attack on Dickens, Sergeant Talfour's defence of Macready, Irving demolished by Mr. Powell, &c.	744
7. From Our Paris Correspondent. M. Melsen's discoveries relating to sugar—Introduction of the Telegraph into France, &c.	751
<b>SELECTED PROSE ARTICLE.</b>	
8. An Excellent Speech of Mr. Everett.	755

### ORIGINAL POETRY.

	PAGE.
9. The Evening Twilight.	710
10. A Lament on a Brother Deceased. By William Pembroke Mulchinnock.	724
11. Lines.	724
12. Song. From the German.	726
13. In Autumn. By Charles Wood.	734
14. Memory. To M—G—.	744
15. Nervous Fears.	754

### EDITOR'S TABLE.

Christmas—The Year Books—General Scott's reception—Sonnet of Poe—Death of Miss Mary E. Lee and Miss Mary G. Wells. 758—760

### NOTICES OF NEW WORKS:—

Redburn—Dr. Hawks' Egypt—Commentary on the Gospels—The History of Alexander the Great—Evenings at Woodlawn—The Pilot—Prof. Dabney's Address—Los Gringos—Griswold's Sacred Poets—The Jefferson Monument Magazine—The Old World—The American Almanac—Rev. B. M. Smith's Address—Southern and Western Traveller's Guide, &c., &c. 760—764

### LOCAL AGENTS.

KEITH & WOODS, St. Louis, Mo.  
 J. C. MORGAN, New Orleans,  
 GEORGE P. PUTNAM, London,  
 E. P. NASH, Petersburg, Va.  
 W. R. SCRIVEN, Petersburg, N. Y.

MACFARLANE & FERGUSON, Richmond, Va.  
 DEWITT & DAVENPORT, New York.  
 JOSEPH ROBINSON, Baltimore, Md.  
 C. C. CLEAVES, Memphis, Tenn.  
 JOHN P. WRIGHT, Lynchburg, Virginia.

THIS WORK IS PUBLISHED IN MONTHLY NUMBERS AVERAGING SIXTY-FOUR PAGES EACH, AT FIVE DOLLARS, PER ANNUM, INVARIABLY IN ADVANCE.

RICHMOND, VA.  
 MACFARLANE & FERGUSON.

1849.

# SOUTHERN LITERARY MESSENGER.

PUBLISHED MONTHLY AT FIVE DOLLARS PER ANNUM—JNO. R. THOMPSON, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

VOL. XV.

RICHMOND, DECEMBER, 1849.

NO. 12.

## Rhetoric, as a part of the College Course.

The Archbishop of Dublin, in the introduction to his Rhetoric, says, "two questions arise connected with the study of Rhetoric—first, whether oratorical skill is on the whole a public benefit or evil, and secondly whether any artificial system of rules is conducive to the attainment of that skill. The former of these questions was eagerly debated among the ancients; on the latter but little doubt seems to have existed. With us, on the contrary, the state of these questions seems nearly reversed. The value of the skill is generally admitted, but many, perhaps most persons, are inclined to the opinion that eloquence, either in writing or speaking, is either a natural gift, or, at least, is to be acquired by mere practice, and is not to be attained or improved by any system of rules." If we look at the printed catalogues and registers containing the course of study pursued in the literary institutions of our country, it would seem that there is a general consent that Rhetoric properly enters into the system of instruction of young men; for we suppose that there is not a college in the land from the *cuniculum* of which it is excluded. But having once noticed *La Place* set down as a text book in an institution not pre-eminently mathematical, and having other reasons to know that professors are not exempt from the weaknesses of human nature, we have learned not to rely implicitly upon the *prima facie* evidence of a printed synopsis of studies.

If we were to inquire, in a way to bring out the truth, what is the rank assigned to Rhetoric, when compared with other studies, we think that it would probably be found to be so low in most of our colleges as to be nearly equivalent to virtual abandonment.

Believing this to be the case, and believing that it is caused by an under-estimate of Rhetoric as a part of the regular college course, we would venture a few remarks upon the subject.

The object of college education is to prepare a young man for the discharge of the active duties of after life, and education is valuable just in proportion as it accomplishes this object. The test is the same, if applied to any particular branch of study. This general advantage may be resolved into two others more specific, viz: first, the developing and strengthening the men-

tal powers in general, or of any one of them in particular, and secondly, the imparting of knowledge in itself useful. Most of the usual branches of education combine these two uses, while each is, notwithstanding, more efficient for one than the other. Thus, mathematics and the languages are prized, mainly as instruments of mental improvement, while, at the same time, independent of this, they are of themselves valuable acquisitions. On the other hand the physical and moral sciences, while serving as an admirable training for some of the mental powers, are esteemed as valuable, chiefly on account of their practical character. In both these respects we deem the benefits resulting from the study of Rhetoric important and peculiar, so that the neglect of it is not compensated for by increased attention to other branches of study.

It is not very easy, perhaps, to give an unexceptionable definition of Rhetoric, and we will not trouble ourselves at present by inquiring which of several, given by different writers, is entitled to the preference. It will be sufficient to say that we mean by Rhetoric the system of rules relating to composition generally—to public speaking and to criticism. This is the ground usually gone over in the text books upon this branch, and as far as we know, the lectures of college professors are confined to the same topics. Logic and the History of English Literature are sometimes connected with it, but are obviously studies differing from it as really as mental and moral philosophy, not unfrequently taught by the same professor.

In the course of the study of Rhetoric the same powers are put into requisition which, at an earlier period of the student's course, are exercised in the study of the languages, viz: the powers of remembering, comparing, selecting and judging; and the argument used to prove that the study of languages is beneficial as a training of the mind, may be adopted with but little change by the advocate for the study of Rhetoric. We may here say, that, in our judgment, one of the principal benefits of the study of different languages is the increased facility in the use of our own—not merely because we are put into possession of the derivation of a large number of the words in our language—this is a great advantage; but it is a still greater one to have turned over in the process of oral translation, the vocabulary of our tongue so often that we have at length become

The old lady is nurtured in the faith of the old regime,—perhaps was one of the *suspecte* of Robespierre; with her, a Republic is a nightmare, and all people—*Canaille*.

---

### LINES.

This morn through many a pleasing scene  
In sun and shade my course I held,  
A weight of grief upon my heart,  
Which could not be dispelled.

In vain I sought to catch the joy  
Which seemed to move in leaf and flower,  
The breeze "came to me" from the fields,  
But with no soothing power.

Birds filled the air with noisy songs,  
The squirrel leaped from bough to bough,  
There was no cloud in Heaven to throw  
That shadow on my brow.

What secret influence was there,  
To guide my thoughts, dear Babe, to thee,  
And give relief I could not find  
In Nature's kindly glee.

The stream that wandered by, might well  
An emblem of thy life impart,  
But even its music failed to stir,  
The fancy in my heart.

That there are sweet similitudes  
I know, betwixt the flowers and thee,  
Yet, while a thousand flowers were near,  
Not one occurred to me.

I only know, that unannounced  
Thy image glanced across my mind,  
And like a transient sunbeam passed,  
But left no gloom behind.

AGLAUS.

---

### THE POEMS OF SIR WILLIAM JONES.

I now understood what a Poet was, namely one who could sing what he saw and felt.—*Hansen*.

The library at Ringwood is so small, that the writer is obliged to depend a good deal on his neighbors for mental entertainment. On a rainy day a short time since, a fair daughter of Eve was kind enough to send him a morceau in the Poems of Sir William Jones. His taste was never very oriental, for he has always liked a prairie better than a jungle, and a stout oak better than a banyan tree. But having nothing else to read he was reduced to the necessity of look-

ing over the volume, for *Necessitas nullam habet legem*.

It is conceded that Sir William was a remarkable man. He was born in London in 1746, and died in Bengal, India, in 1794. His life was short, and his attainments were various and extraordinary, but so well known, that an allusion to them is scarcely necessary. Our remarks will not extend to his Life of Nadir Shah—his Persian Grammar, or Dictionary—his Sacontala—or his translation of the ordinances of Menu. We leave these to be investigated by others who possess larger means for purchasing costly works. Our design is simply to make a few remarks on the Poems of this distinguished jurist.

These Poems are for the most part versions of Eastern originals; but the translator states that he has taken considerable liberties with the authors themselves. He has filled up the outline, introduced new characters, and enlarged the plan on which the pieces were at first written. They are mere careless effusions, such as any man whose pursuits are grave and profound might produce in moments of relaxation from severe study, and were to the author what her leaves were to the Cumæan Sybil, as described by Virgil in the third book of the *Æneid*,

*Nunquam deinde caro volitantia prendere saxo  
Nec revocare situs—aut jungere carmina carat.*

The mind of Sir William Jones possessed a wonderful power of apprehending what others had discovered. He could follow on any path which pioneers had opened. His attainments were out of all proportion to his original mental power, and they resulted probably from his acquiring some one language profoundly—the rest being mastered almost without exertion and as a necessary consequence. We have ceased to wonder at this great orientalist, since Professor Lee of Cambridge has rivalled him—or since Dr. Carey, at Serampore, conquered twenty-seven dialects—and Ross, in Scotland, who was a mere youth when he died, could write seventeen tongues when he died. After all, the admirable Crichtons, we think, must doff their plumes before our Learned Blacksmith. An education in things is always more utilitarian than an education in words. We are not certain but that the acquirements of Sir William would have crushed the fine genius of Burns; nor could the swan of Avon have possibly borne their weight.

No friend of morals, however, can ever wantonly depreciate the Calcutta Judge, for he was a man of unblemished virtue. We cherish for his memory the warmest veneration. His designs were magnificent, and his ardor in oriental studies was worthy of all praise. He was not the first, however, who gave an Eastern direc-

tion to the human mind. Camoens, Tasso and Milton had preceded him in time; but their researches into Eastern objects were more poetical than learned. We do not suppose that Oliver Goldy was acquainted with Chinese when he wrote like a mandarin—or that Tom Moore was versed in the dialect of Cashmir when he wrote his *Lalla Rookh*. There is something in that East, which powerfully affects the imagination. Its very gorgeousness strikes the fancy. Its formal gardens—its tanks—its stuccoed cottages—its citron groves—its rare spices and rich perfumes—its cypress trees tasselled with blossoms wound about them—its scenes of indolent repose—its sequestered woods—its stupendous rivers and its barbaric gold, are not lost on persons of sensitive temperament. Among such objects Sir William spent ten years of his valuable life, dispensing British law among the Hindoos, founding learned societies, and occasionally paying homage to the Muses. Those pieces are the fruits of that reverential homage.

So late as 1772, pastoral poetry had not died out in England. Sir Philip Sidney had defended it, and Spenser, Pope and Gay had given specimens in this kind of composition. Sir William published his *Arcadia* before he left England for Calcutta, and he had before him pastorals written in Greek, Latin, Italian and Spanish. This poem is founded on a brief allegory by Addison, which appeared in the thirty-second number of the *Guardian*. At least its imitator has turned it into an allegory, and, in our judgment, the turning has not at all improved it. Addison's plot was that Menalcas, a sort of king in *Arcadia*, and father of a very pretty daughter, whose name was *Amaryllis*, had received a pipe from *Oberon* on condition that no one was to obtain his daughter in marriage unless he could play the same tune on the pipe with which *Menalcas* had been amused by the fairy. On a given day *Menalcas* sat on a green hillock with *Amaryllis* by his side, when a band of youths appeared in various costumes to contend. This was a sensible plot, for any poet would be apt to compete for such a handsome woman. Thus in his *Queen's Wake*, the *Etrick Shepherd* brings down all the Highland minstrels to *Edinburgh*, to please *Mary Queen of Scots*, upon making her entry into her Scottish capital. But when the pipe was won, the miniature story ought to have stopped, and the oaten reed should not have passed through a succession of pastoral poets; for mankind have long been tired of shepherds' songs. The complex passions must now be reached by tones more powerful than any brought out by *Gessner's* shell, or even that of *Theocritus*. Both Addison and Sir William ought to have known that the world

had heard enough of *Tityrus*, *Daphnis*, and flocks and lutes.

The poem called "Seven Fountains" is in truth a beautiful allegory. It is drawn in part from the Persian poet *Nezami*, but Sir William states that he has taken unusual liberties with the original writer. It is a piece which ought to be not only read, but pondered by every youth in America—we should say in the world, were it not that our recommendation will not be apt to extend so far. This allegory has the usual accompaniments of all Eastern poetry—such as pearls, diamonds, gems, rubies, lilies, roses and a hundred other things; but the essence of the allegory is in its profound moral. We would analyse it, but we fear that the analysis might keep some one of our readers from procuring and reading it as it deserves to be read. It will touch the heart of any ingenuous youth and inspire him with disgust at that happiness which results from sensual pursuits, in contradistinction to that which flows from virtue.

*Solima*, written in 1768, has a moral quite obvious. It celebrates an Eastern princess who erected a caravansera for the entertainment of pilgrims. The moral is the same precisely as Pope inculcated in his *Man of Ross*, where he extols the benevolence of an old bachelor who lived on the *Wye*. *Solima* is a piece simply pleasing, and the next to it in order is *Laura*, an *Elegy*, translated from the two hundred and seventieth sonnet of *Petrarch*. For twenty-one years did *Petrarch* spin out verses about that *Laura* from the loom of his *Cashmir* imagination. We wonder he did not tire of his theme. It was a poor compliment to the female sex, that he could find no other woman near *Avignon* as winsome as *Laura*. The whole of this affair shews in *Petrarch* a mental weakness that is truly astonishing, and we are surprised that *Lord Byron*, instead of praising this passion, did not apply to it the whip of satire.

The rest of this volume consists of translations of *Hafiz*, *Ferdusi* and *Meisih*, as well as other Persian and Turkish poets. The most of them are addressed to *Hindoo* gods and goddesses. They are excessively tedious. There is a good deal of splendor in the imagery employed: but from its sameness it cloyes on the taste. We regret that Sir William did not keep more on English ground, for he has given us one or two sonnets, the scene of which is laid at *Cardigan* in *Wales*, and they are interesting; but the mind of their author had been so long in an Oriental mould, that even in them Eastern imagery has the preponderance. He believed in the identity to a great extent of English and *Hindoo* objects; but the same objects are affected by climate, association, and religion. If our author had kept to

Albion he would have been a more powerful poet. The woods of India may be more sparkling than those of England—its fruits may be more succulent—its rivers may be cast on a bolder scale; but there is something in English life that makes its way to the heart. No man can acquire much reputation as a mere translator. Pope's Homer has fallen into neglect. The same is true of Dryden's Virgil, though done with elegance; and Cowper's *Odyssey*, though he was true to the Greek costume. To gain reputation it is necessary that the translator should make a new work, and this is manifestly unjust to the original writer. In Wiffen's Tasso there is quite as much of Wiffen as of the Italian poet.

We deeply regret that Sir William Jones never carried out his design of writing an epic of which Britain was to be subject. He meditated such a design in the twenty-third year of his age, and the outline of his plan is contained in the volume we are examining. The world has seen but four or five Epics, and their Authors by universal consent, occupy the top of Parnassus. It must remain an undecided point, whether Sir William would have succeeded in this mental enterprise. The possibility is, that after establishing British law in India, that he anticipated retiring on a pension, and devoting the evening of his life to his epic, among the green woods of England, or the mountains of Wales. Accordingly to his outline, a Tyrian Prince, was to discover Britain some ages before the Christian era, and to pass, of course, among islands that lay between Tyre and Britain, and one can easily see what profound interest might have been awakened by the mind's being carried back to those dim ages and shadowy objects. We cannot see why the adventures of the Tyrian Prince might not have been as well wrought up as those of Ulysses, Æneas, Godfrey or Vasco de Gama.

The volume concludes with a pleasing Essay on the Poetry of the Eastern Nations. This subject has excited considerable interest in England, and has been fully treated by Bishop Lowth, in a series of Lectures delivered at the University of Oxford. The object of the Bishop, however, is limited to the Poetry of the Sacred Writings, whilst that of Sir William extends to all sorts of Arabian, Persian and Hindoo bards. This distinguished orientalist believes that Arabia, the Happy, which lies between the eleventh and fifteenth degrees of North Latitude, to be the true field of Pastoral Poetry. He prefers it to the celebrated vale of Cashmir in the North of Hindostan. Its serene skies—the simple manners which prevail among its tribes—their independence and love of liberty—its gardens—its caravans and merchandise—its spice trees—its odors—

its nightingales—its camels—its tents, entitle it to this distinction. The same is true, to a great extent, of Persia and India, but it is probable that English associations will in all time to come, affect the Muses of the Ganges and the Burrampooter. Their imagery may be less glaring, and their sobriety may be promoted by the mixture which will take place of the English language with the Eastern dialects. The East India Company obtained a footing in India, in achieving which many questionable deeds were enacted, and at one time Lord Clive and Warren Hastings, were regarded with horror. But the British power has destroyed some of the most repulsive customs which prevailed among the Hindoos. Many distinguished men have labored among the semi-barbarians of the British possessions, among whom Lord Wellington, Lord Teignmouth, Sir James McIntosh, Dr. Carey, Sir Stamford Raffles, Leyden and many others might be mentioned. The accomplished Bishop Heber found there a grave. That country has enriched England, and England may be of service to her slaves, but we hope that an emancipation may take place at no distant day, and that the course of human events may roll on a national freedom for all the colonial islands of England, and especially for any territory she may have acquired by unjust conquest.

*Ringwood, Virginia.*

### SONG.

*Translated from the German of Friedrich Matthisson.*

I think of thee  
When the nightingale's song,  
Thro' the murmuring trees,  
Is borne on the breath  
Of the soft summer breeze—  
When dost thou think of me ?

I think of thee  
In the twilight's dim shade  
By the green fountain's side—  
As I gaze on the star-beams  
That dance in its tide—  
Where dost thou think of me ?

I think of thee  
With a wild thrill of bliss—  
Thro' the depth of my heart—  
And tears that seem sweeter  
Than smiles, as they start—  
How dost thou think of me ?

Oh! think of me—  
Till our souls having winged  
Their bright passage afar—  
Shall mingle once more  
In a holier star—  
While on earth, tho' a wand'rer,  
By land and by sea—  
Ever—I'll think of thee.

P. H. H.