

that the prose of Waverly might suffer before the verse of Marston. Never, indeed, has there been a poet so thoroughly Homeric as Scott; the battle—the feast—the council—the guard-room at Sterling—the dying warrior at Flodden—the fierce Bertram speeding up the isle,—all are Homeric; all live—move—breathe—and burn,—alike poetry, but alike life! There is this difference, too, marked and prominent, between his verse and his prose—the first is emphatically the verse of Scott—the latter (we mean in its style) may be the prose of any one, the striking originality, the daring boldness, the astonishing vigour of the style, in the Lay of the Last Minstrel, are lost in the Antiquary and Guy Mannering.

Scott may be said, in prose, to have no style.—There are those we know, who call this very absence of style a merit—we will not dispute it, if it be so, Scott is the first great prose writer from Bacon to Gibbon—say, from Herodotus in Greek, to Paul Courier in French—who has laid claim to it. For our own part, we think him great, in spite of the want of style, and not because of it. As a biographer, he has been unfortunate in his subjects: the two most important of the various lives he has either delineated or sketched—that of Dryden and that of Swift—are men to whose inexhaustible genius could neither give the dignity of virtue nor the interest of error. Nor, perhaps, if we may presume to say so, was the bent of the biographer's mind that of Judge he had more the spirit of veneration than that of inquiry. And in his estimate, both of men and of books, his reasoning seldom satisfies us so much as his enthusiasm charms. He was born not to compose criticism, but to create critics; and the lessons he would draw from the lives and genius of other men,—the poet—the romancer—the critic—the philosopher of future ages,—will deduce from his own.

As an historian, we confess that we prize him more highly than as a biographer. It is true, the same faults are apparent in both; but there is in the grand History of Napoleon more scope for redeeming beauties. His great, his unrivalled excellence in description, is here brought into full and ample display: his battles are vivid, with colours which no other historian ever could command. And all the errors of the history still leave scenes and touches of unrivalled majesty to the book.

As a novelist, Scott has been blamed for not imparting a more useful moral to his fictions, and for dwelling with too inconsiderable an interest on the chivalric illusions of the past. To charges of this nature all writers are liable. Mankind are divided into two classes; and he who belongs to one will ever incur the reproach of not seeing through the medium of the other. Certain it is, that we, with utterly different notions on political truths from the great writer who is no more, might feel some regret—some natural pain—that the cause which we believe the best, was not honoured by his advocacy, but when we reflect on the Real influence of his works, we are satisfied they have been directed to the noblest ends and have embraced the largest circle of human interests. We do not speak of the delight he has poured forth over the earth—the lonely hours he has charmed—of the sad hearts he has beguiled—of the beauty and the music which he has summoned to a world where all travail and none repose: this, indeed, has been a benefit to mankind. And this is a new corroborant of one among the noblest of intellectual truths,—viz that the books which please, are always books that, in one sense, benefit; and that the work which is largely and permanently popular—which sways, moulds, and softens the universal heart—cannot appeal to vulgar and unworthy passions (such appeals are never widely or long triumphant); the delight it occasions is a proof of the moral it inspires.

But this power to charm and beguile is not that moral excellence to which we refer. Scott has been the first great genius—Fielding alone excepted—who invited our thorough and uncondescending sympathy to the wide mass of the human family—who has stricken (for in this artificial world it requires an effort) into our hearts a love and respect for those chosen from the people. Shakspeare has not done this—Shakspeare paints the follies of the mob with a strong and unfriendly hand. Where, in Shakspeare, is there a Jeanie Deans? Take up which you will of those numerous works which have appeared, from 'Waverly' to the 'Chronicles of the Canongate'—open where you please, you will find portraits from the people—and your interest keeping watch beside the poor man's hearth. Not, in Scott, as they were in the dramatists of our language, are the peasant, the artificer, the former, dragged on the stage merely to be laughed at for their brogue, and made to seem ridiculous because they are useful.

He paints them, it is true, in their natural language, but the language is subservient to the character, he does not bow the man to the phrase, but the phrase to the man. Neither does he flatter on the one hand, and he does not slight on the other. Unlike the mad in pastoralists of France, he contents himself with the simple truth—he contrasts the dark shadows of Meg Merriles, or of Edie Ochiltree, with the holy and pure lights that redeem and sanctify them; he gives us the poor, even to the gipsy and the beggar, as they really are—contented, if our interest is excited, and knowing that nature is sufficient to excite it. From the palaces of kings—from the tents of warriors he comes—equally at home with man in all respects, to the cotta's hearth; he bids us turn from the pomp of the Plantagenets to bow the knee to the poor Jew's daughter; he makes us sicken at the hollowness of the royal Rothsay, to sympathize with the honest love of Hugh the Smith. No, never was there one—not even Burns himself—who forced us more intimately to knowledge, or more deeply to feel that

'The rank is but the guinea stamp—
The man's the gowd, for a' that.'

And is this being, to whom intellect taught philanthropy, to be judged by ordinary rules?—are we to gauge and mete his capacities of good, by the common measures we apply to common men? No! there was in him a large, a Catholic sympathy with all classes, all tempers, all conditions of men; and this it was redeemed his noble works from all the taint of party, and all the leaven of sectarianism; this it was that made him, if the Tory in principle, the all-embracing leader in practice. Compare with what he has done for the people, in painting the people, the works of poets called Liberal by the doctrinaires, compare the writings of Scott with those of Byron; which have really tended the most to bind us to the poor? The first has touched the homely strings of our real heart—the other

has written fine vague stanzas about freedom. Lara, the Corsair, Child Harold, Don Juan, these are the works, we will not say of the misanthrope, at least of the aristocrat. Are Scott's so? Yet Byron was a Liberal, and Scott a Tory. Alas, the sympathy with humanity is the real republicanism of a writer of fiction. Liberal and Tory are words which signify nothing out of the sphere of the politics of the day. Who shall we select from the Liberal poets of our age who has bound us to the people, like Scott? Shelley, with his metaphysical refinings? Moore, with his elaborate floridity of patriotism? No!—we feel at once that nature taught Scott more of friendship with all mankind, than the philosophy of the one or the fancy of the other. Out of print, Scott might belong to a party—in print, mankind belonged to him. Toryism, which is another name for the spirit of monopoly, foresook him at that point where his inquiries into human nature began. He is not, we apprehend, justly liable to the charge of wanting a sound moral, even a great political moral, (and political morals are the greatest of all), in the general tenor of works which have compelled the highest classes to examine and respect the lowest. In this, with far less learning, far less abstract philosophy, than Fielding, he is only exceeded by him in one character, (and that indeed the most admirable in English fiction), the character of Parson Adams. Jeanie Deans is worth a thousand such as Fanny Andrews. Fielding, Le Sage, and Cervantes, are the only three writers, since the world began, with whom, as a novelist, he can be compared. And perhaps he exceeds them, as Voltaire excelled all the writers of his nation, not by the superior merits of one work, but by the brilliant aggregate of many. Tom Jones, Gil Blas, Don Quixote, are, without doubt, greater, much greater productions than Waverly; but the authors of Tom Jones, Gil Blas, and even of Don Quixote, have not manifested the same fertile and mighty genius as the author of the Waverly Novels.

And that genius, seemingly so inexhaustible, is quenched at length! We can be charmed no more, the eloquent tongue is mute, the master's wand is broken up, the right hand hath forgot its cunning, the cord that is loosened was indeed of silver, and the bowl that is broken at the dark well was of gold beyond all price.

Death, of late, has been busy among the great men of earth; the mighty landmarks of the last age, one after one, have been removed:—Cuvier, Mackintosh, Bentham, Goethe, and now Scott. There is something, as it were, mysterious and solemn in the disappearance of so many lights of the age, within so short an interval of each other, and happening, as it does, at a period when the old elements of society are shaken to the centre, it might seem to ancient superstition as if the world were preparing itself for an unexpected era, and the removal of the chiefs of the past time betokened the event of a new order of mind suited to the new disposition of events.

When a great man dies, he leaves a chasm which eternity cannot fill. Others succeed to his fame, but never to the exact place which he held in the world's eye;—they may be greater than the one we have lost, but they are not he. Shakspeare built not his throne on the same site as Homer, nor Scott on that whence Shakspeare looked down upon the universe. The gap which Scott leaves in the world is the token of the space he filled in the homage of his times. A hundred ages hence our posterity will still see that wide interval untenanted, a vast and mighty era in the intellectual world, which will prove how spacious was 'the city and the temple, whose summit has reached to Heaven.'

POLITICAL EXTRACTS

SPIRIT OF THE BRITISH JOURNALS.

LONDON MORNING CHRONICLE.—The Cabinet that met yesterday had abundant matter for deliberation, foreign and domestic. We are still persuaded, notwithstanding the ominous paragraphs in the French papers, that a General War in Europe may, and will be avoided. The unsettled state of Italy and Germany, gives to both Austria and Prussia a deep interest in the continuance of peace. We wish this country could have kept itself altogether clear of the Belgian question; but as it has mixed itself up with that question, and the King of Holland seems determined to ruin both his own country and Belgium, rather than abandon his pretensions to the latter, something seems due to a people like the Belgians, suffering under a long continued expenditure beyond their means, and whom we have not allowed to pursue their own course. We do not believe that any steps taken by France and England, in conjunction, would lead to war. But we are almost certain, that if the King of Holland is not soon brought to his senses, disturbances will take place in Belgium, which may gradually involve the other powers. We wish, therefore, the Belgian question

were well settled; and we think that the King of Holland has no reason to complain of any want of patience on the part of the conference. With respect to the other object of Lord Durham's mission, the endeavour to obtain from Russia a mitigation of the oppression of the poor Poles: we fear that there is but too much truth in the reports in the French papers, that he has not been successful. We have no doubt that his Lordship's heart was in the cause; but Russia knows, that in the case of Poland, she has nothing at present to fear from the rest of Europe. So long as Austria, Prussia, and Russia are agreed on the subject of Poland, there is no hope for that country, except a general war takes place. October 15.

SPIRIT OF THE PROVINCIAL JOURNALS.

MONTREAL GAZETTE.—The Journals of the present session of the House; we regret to say, record another expulsion of Mr Christie, the Member for Gaspe. It is singular, that clear-headed and enlightened men, as some of those are, who voted for his expulsion, can persist in a measure so palpably unjust, unconstitutional, and dangerous. We have more than once considered this question somewhat in detail, and have no intention of again extending ourselves upon it, but we should be delighted to meet from some of its more able advocates, a calm and dispassionate discussion of its merits. We should like to be informed of one sound principle (and we care not whether it be based upon recorded law or upon just reasoning) by which the expulsion can be justified. As often as the matter has been brought forward, we have patiently examined all that has been said and done—expecting that at least one supporting member might be found, who would act as the orator of his party, and give us to understand the reasons for their decision. In this expectation we have universally been disappointed. True, we have heard Honourable Members express in the strongest terms, their sense of the horrid enormity of the delinquent's conduct; others have availed themselves of the opportunity to expatiate generally upon the atrocities of the Administration, under which the alleged offence was committed; while we have heard others propound doctrines of contempt, by which the only law, either for their definition or punishment, is to be the discretion of the body offended. Yet amid this entire mass of vituperation, assertion, and idle speculation, not one has attempted a rational and argumentative justification of the measure, or even a reply to the short but pithy arguments that its opposers have entertained. To refer, for instance, to the last debate (which we do not insert conceiving it would be a mere waste of room to fill our columns with these oft-repeated debates) what do we find? Mr Bourdages tells us that 'this obnoxious man, Mr Christie, has instigated a new insult to the House, by giving rise to a project for the dismemberment of the Province; that he was a man who wanted to make a noise, and that he, Mr Bourdages, cannot see why they must have recourse to a book to expel him.' Mr Blanchard and Mr Rodier eagerly adopt the conclusion that they must vote for his expulsion, because a former Parliament had done so. Mr Neilson is of opinion that no part of the Province has a right to send a man to Parliament who was notoriously objectionable to them. Mr Vanfelson refers generally to two cases, which, if examined, will be found to decide nothing in his favor. But it is useless to go farther—enough has been said to show in what spirit and upon what grounds, this great and important constitutional question has been repeatedly decided.

ST. JOHN COURIER.—In giving publicity to the whimsical effusions of our correspondent John Gape, we would express our regret for not sooner paying our debt of gratitude to him, for so often enlivening our columns with his EXTRACTS; but in doing this we must take leave to doubt the accuracy of one 'remark' in his communication inserted in this day's Courier; we mean that part relating to the existence of a Secret Service Fund. We can hardly believe, that in the year one thousand eight hundred and thirty-two, any officer of the Government would dare even to suggest such an expedient to the Colonial Secretary; still less can we credit the fact, of such a scheme obtaining the sanction of a member of the present Imperial Government. What! can it be possible, that at the very moment when the genius of Universal Reform is striding through the Mother Country, dispensing equal rights and equal privileges to all classes—when the minutest abuses are discovered and denounced, and when every act of the Ministry is made the subject of general discussion;—can it be possible, we ask, that if at such a crisis as the present, a Member of Earl GRAY'S Ministry—the Reformed Ministry, emphatically so called—will consent to such a desperate measure as the one now under consideration? But, even admitting, that the weakness of an officer may have hurried him into a course of policy which must lead only to destruction; still, we ask, if any man shall be found in this Colony, who is bad enough, and bold enough to avow the fact,